

JEAN-PAUL MEYER
**GUARANTEE
YOUR
CONTRACT**



Translated and Edited by Mark Horton

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Foreword

As a young man I was an avid reader of Bridge Magazine, which contained articles by the best players and writers in the world. One of them was Jean-Paul Meyer, who, later in life, I was fortunate enough to both meet and partner, discovering that he most certainly played as well as he wrote. When he asked me to translate this book I quickly discovered that his star has not diminished. I doubt anyone has ever produced a better set of problems that are sure to improve one's understanding of declarer play.

Mark Horton

Shrewsbury, June 2024

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THE AUTHOR

Jean- Paul Meyer was previously an engineer and member of the management committee of a French firm specialising in transport and deep freezing.

He was Chief Editor of *Le Bridgeur* and wrote contributions for many French periodicals, *Minute*, *L'Express*, *Journal du Dimanche* & *Figaro*.

Before *Contrat Sous Garantie*, he wrote *Le Bridge Raconté à Juliette* and *Du non classé à l'expert*

As a player, he was three times a member of the French team in the European Championships, winning the European Pairs Championship with Gerard Le Royer. He captained the French Open team on numerous occasions, including Beijing 1995 when they finished third. He served for many years as Vice President of the FFB.

For many years he was a member of the Daily Bulletin and VuGraph teams for the EBL and WBF.

Method of Use

When you play a contract, there may be several lines available to you and the analysis can require considerable thought. The various lines may require some calculations of the relevant probabilities, which bridge players can find troublesome.

On the other hand it can happen that there is a line of play that will prove successful whatever the distribution of the outstanding cards and/or honours.

This is what you are asked to do in following 100 problems.

You should approach the problems as if playing in a team match (or as in the 'olden' days of Rubber Bridge), it is the sure trick you need to find. We are not interested in the line that will gain an IMP one in ten times or fewer risking the contract; this will prove a loss in the long term against the value of the game or the slam.

Should you play in the same manner in a pairs tournament?

At pairs the choice is more nuanced; if you judge that you have arrived in a contract others will find difficult to bid then you should take no chances with the contract.

Problems 1–10

Problem 1

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ KJ82
♥ 5
♦ KQ8
♣ KQJ72



♠ Q65
♥ AQ10
♦ AJ109
♣ 654

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	1♦
Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Difficulty: **


Contract: 3NT by South

Lead: ♥6 to the jack from East

Note on the Auction

With a game-going hand North should choose 2♣ as his first bid as a minor-suit slam is not impossible. It is essential to show your distribution.

Solution Problem 1

	♠ KJ82	
	♥ 5	
	♦ KQ8	
	♣ KQJ72	
♠ 94		♠ A1073
♥ K9863		♥ J542
♦ 76542		♦ 3
♣ 9		♣ A1083
	♠ Q65	
	♥ AQ10	
	♦ AJ109	
	♣ 654	

Declarer has six red tricks. It seems natural to attack the club suit at trick two. East will take this trick and shoot back a heart to your ten and West's king and then clear the heart suit. The bad split in clubs will mean you need to set up a spade trick to get up to nine tricks but then the defence will beat the contract with three hearts and two black aces.

To counteract the possible bad club split, cross to dummy and lead a spade towards your queen. There are three scenarios.

- 1) The ace is with West and he cannot profitably continue the attack in hearts so you have time to establish club tricks and your contract.
- 2) The ace is with East and he plays small and your queen wins. With a spade trick in the bag you can now attack clubs and guarantee your contract.
- 3) The ace is with East and he plays it immediately. You now have three spade tricks to go with your six red-suit tricks for your contract.

At Matchpoints

Play a club immediately at trick two and follow the field, as for you will often make ten tricks. However, the recommended line is far from unreasonable.

Problem 2

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ A 10 3

♥ K J 5 4

♦ J 4

♣ A J 7 6



♠ K 6 4

♥ A 7 3

♦ A K Q

♣ 10 5 4 3

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Difficulty: *

Contract: 3NT by South

Lead: ♦6

Note on the Auction

With 14 points, no fit and no singleton precludes North from making any effort above the level of game.

Solution Problem 2

	♠ A103	
	♥ KJ54	
	♦ J4	
	♣ AJ76	
♠ Q72	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W E </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">S</div> </div>	♠ J985
♥ 92		♥ Q1086
♦ 10876		♦ 9532
♣ K982		♣ Q
	♠ K64	
	♥ A73	
	♦ AKQ	
	♣ 10543	

With eight top tricks you need to find a second trick from the club suit. The sure-trick handling of the club trick is to cash the ace and lead towards the ten. No matter how the club suit is divided you will come to a second trick.

At Matchpoints

The field will play a small club for the jack and when the club suit fails to deliver they will take their second chance in the heart suit. Assuring your contract will perhaps give you a poor score at pairs if there are some favourable placements of the cards. We do not recommend the 100% line.

FIND THE 100% LINE

If there is one thing that satisfies a bridge player, it is making their contract. If there is one that annoys them, it is going down in a contract that they could have made. This book presents a series of problems for which a 100% solution exists. In other words, if you play well, you cannot fail. Deals are of varying degrees of difficulty, identified by a system of stars, allowing readers, if they choose, to select a homogeneous route.

The techniques needed to make your contract are many and varied. However, as the author points out, if you set out to solve the problems in the order in which they are presented, your ability to solve them will increase as you read! Are the optimal lines of play valid in Pairs tournaments? Not always, of course, by the very nature of the exercise. But the author addresses this, indicating if a different line of play is more appropriate at Pairs, which will satisfy the increasing number of practitioners of this form of bridge.



JEAN-PAUL MEYER was Chief Editor of *Le Bridgeur* and wrote contributions for French periodicals such as *Minute*, *L'Express*, *Journal du Dimanche* and *Figaro*. European Pairs Champion, French International player and Captain, he served as Vice President of the FFB. For many years he was a member of the Daily Bulletin and VuGraph teams for the EBL and WBF. Previous books include *Le Bridge Raconté à Juliette* and *Du non classé à l'expert*.