

NEW ACOL
IN 1970 - TEAM WAS

HENRY ABRAHAMS/JACK ROSSE + DAVID EDWIN/MAURICE ESTERSON + ?? Max Dale ??
(CLUB HOST - AN EXCELLENT PLAYER) Ernest Serke ??

Seems likely the Acol had the same or similar
teams in 1968 and 1969

(David Edwin might
know - until recently
he owned/managed the
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THE LEDERER MEMORIAL TROPHY, 1969

By ALAN HIRON

AND 1968

THIS popular event, in which ten of
the country's top clubs compete
annually, was well won for the second
year running by the New Acol Club.

Results (VP's): New Acol 71,
Regency 63, Hamilton 62, Sussex
60, Scotland 57, Mayfair 50, Bridge
Academy 50, Crockfords 47½, Stefans
42.

The Leeds club fell prey to the
current flu bug and were last minute
non-starters. As we have come to
expect in the Lederer, the hands ran
high and among the 90 boards played
there were four excellent grand slams.
It was curious that none of the four
set any real problem in the play—it
was only the bidding machinery of
some of our leading pairs that proved
inadequate. In order to remain on
speaking terms with the majority of
my bridge friends and acquaintances
I shall refrain from giving the names
of players and just refer to their clubs.

In chronological order, these were
the four hands:

Love all; dealer West.

♠ 10 9 4	♠ A K Q J 8
♥ A J 10 8 6	6
♦ K 6	♥ K 5
♣ K 8 3	♦ A 7
	♣ A J 9

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So far, so good. Blackwood seemed
adequate, whether used by East or
West. In passing, what about the bid
of four spades by Bridge Academy's
East? Showing a solid suit, yes, but
usually played as denying any other
first round controls. Fortunately West
didn't take it that way. In retrospect
I find it difficult to admire West's
opening bid, although (for tactical
reasons) I opened myself.

Scotland

West	East
1 ♥	2 ♠
3 ♠	4 NT
5 ♦	5 NT
6 ♥	7 ♠
No	

Bridge Academy

West	East
No	2 ♠
3 ♥	4 ♠
4 NT	5 ♠
5 NT	6 ♥
7 ♠	No

New Acol

West	East
1 ♥	2 ♠
3 ♥	4 NT
5 ♦	5 NT
6 ♥	7 NT
No	

Regency

West	East
1 ♥	2 ♠
1 ♠	5 NT
6 ♣	7 ♠
No	

Hamilton

West	East
1 NT	4 ♠ (Gerber)
4 ♥	7 ♠
No	

Mayfair

West	East
1 ♥	2 ♠
3 ♠	4 NT (Roman)
5 ♦	5 NT
6 ♠	7 ♠
No	

Gerber and Roman Blackwood
and still no problems! What about
the artificial systems?

Crockfords

West	East
No	1 ♣
1 NT	7 ♠
No	

The Blue Club in action. Although
artificial systems are renowned for
round after round of cryptic bidding,
this sequence was a model of sim-
plicity. One club showed seventeen
points or more and was, of course,
forcing. One no-trump showed four
controls—two aces or an ace and two
kings.

Stefans

West	East
1 NT	4 ♠
2	5 ♠
No	

This auction also had the merit of
brevity. Four clubs and four hearts
were Gerber and five clubs was
intended to be asking for kings.
However, West did not see it in that
light. In fact the club finesse was
right, but the clubs broke five-two
and so this curious contract pro-
duced no overtricks.

Seven pairs out of eight is not too
bad, you are thinking. Well, hold on.

East-West game; dealer West.

♠ A K Q 8 7	♠ None
3	♥ A K J 9 7
♥ Q	4
♦ 10 5	♦ A J 6 3
♣ A J 8 3	♣ K Q 7

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There was only one optimum
result out of eight on this outing.

Regency

West	East
1 ♠	2 ♥
3 ♠	3 ♦
4 ♠	4 NT*
5 NT	7 NT
No	

*Culbertson 4-5

It is interesting to note East's
decision not to force. Not because he
was void in spades but because the

start of one spade three hearts makes bidding very cramped. As the auction went East was able to gauge that partner held excellent values on his own and that, even if the queen of hearts was missing, other gaps would be filled. Hence his decision to call the slam in no-trumps, not relying on the solidity of any particular suit.

Three Easts forced, with mixed results.

Scotland

West	East
1 ♠	3 ♥
3 ♠	4 ♥
5 ♠	5 ♠
6 ♥	No

New Acol

West	East
1 ♠	3 ♥
3 ♠	4 ♠
5 ♠	5 NT
6 NT	No

Mayfair

West	East
1 ♠	3 ♥
3 ♠	4 ♠
5 ♠	5 ♥
6 ♥	No

The Scottish auction looks well balanced as far as it goes, but a final 'one for the road' by East was surely marked. The other two Easts had little idea of the strength of West's hand or of his vital queen of hearts.

Three more Easts followed the non-forcing path.

Bridge Academy

West	East
1 ♠	2 ♥
4 ♠	6 ♥
No	

Sussex

West	East
1 ♠	2 ♥
3 ♣	3 ♠
3 ♠	4 ♣
4 ♠	6 ♣
No	

Stefans

West	East
1 ♠	2 ♥
3 ♣	3 ♠
4 ♠	4 NT
5 ♥	5 NT
7 ♠	No

The four spades call by Bridge Academy's West fails to appeal. It raises the question whether the inference is the same as after, for example, one heart-one spade-four hearts, when a fit in the responder's suit is implied. The Stefan's declarer did not find ♠ J 10 9 bare in either defender's hand.

Finally, another tragedy after West had rated his hand as worth an Acoll two-bid.

Crockfords

West	East
2 ♠	3 ♥
3 ♠	4 ♠
4 ♠	5 ♣
6 ♣	6 ♣

As the cards lay, a defender held ♠ J 10 9 x x and even six spades had to founder.

Love all; dealer East.

	♠ K J 10 8 6	
	♥ A 4	
	♦ 10 7 3	
	♣ 10 6 5	
♠ None		♠ 2
♥ Q J 8 6 5 2		♥ 10
♦ K Q 6		♦ J 9 8 5 4 2
♣ J 8 7 4		♣ K Q 9 3 2
	♠ A Q 9 7 5 4 3	
	♥ K 9 7 3	
	♦ A	
	♣ A	

A triumph for Asking Bids perhaps? Surely some more South players could have found out about North's vital first and third round controls in hearts. In fact there was only one successful North-South pair and they had more interference bidding than all the other North-Souths put together . . .

Regency

East	South	West	North
No	2 ♠	No	3 ♠
3 NT	4 ♠	4 NT	5 ♥
5 NT	6 ♥	6 NT	7 ♠
No	No	Dble.	No
No	No		

Some opened one spade . . .

New Acoll

South	North
1 ♠ (2 ♥)	3 ♠
6 ♠	No

Stefans

South	North
1 ♠ (2 ♥)	2 ♠
3 ♥	4 ♠
6 ♠	No

Crockfords

South	North
1 ♠	3 ♠
4 ♥	5 ♥
5 NT	6 ♠

Stefan's North should surely have bid four hearts on the second round instead of four spades. Crockfords were very nearly there, for South's bidding suggests no interest in the minor suits whatever in which case North's hand is ideal. Even if you fear that the queen of spades may be missing North can display interest with six clubs or six diamonds over the grand slam try of five no-trumps.

Others preferred two spades . . .

Scotland

South	North
2 ♠ (2 NT)	3 ♠ (4 ♣)
4 ♥	5 ♥ (6 ♣)
6 ♠	6 ♠

Bridge Academy

South	North
2 ♠	3 ♠ (4 NT)
5 ♥ (6 ♣)	6 ♠

Sussex

South	North
2 ♠	3 ♠
4 ♣	4 ♥
5 ♠	6 ♠

Mayfair

South	North
2 ♠ (3 ♥) 4 ♠	
6 ♠	No

The last auction raises some theoretical points. It is generally played that a raise of an Acol Two bid to Three promises an ace, while the raise of a two bid to four denies any first round controls but shows good values. After intervention, however, the raise to three must sometimes be made with aceless hands for fear of pre-emptive action. There seems no valid reason why the second part of the theory has to be scrapped after intervention. As it was, South must have had considerable doubts as to whether even six spades was on.

The final hand in the series saw five out of eight pairs achieve their goal.

Love all; dealer South.

♠ A J 8 4		♠ Q 9 7 3
♥ A 7		♥ 10 8 4 2
♦ K Q 8 5		♦ 7 4 2
♣ 7 4 3		♣ 9 8
♠ K 10 5 2		♠ J 10 6 5 2
♥ J 9 6 3		♥ None
♦ None		♦ None
♣ J 10 6 5 2		♣ None

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♠ 6
♥ K Q 5
♦ A J 10 9 6 3
♣ A K Q

First, two specialized conventions

were brought to bear.

Crockfords	
South	North
1 ♣	2 ♣
2 ♦	4 ♦
7 NT	No

Regency	
South	North
1 ♦ (2 ♦!)	Dble.
4 NT	5 ♠
7 ♦	No

The Crockfords sequence was the Blue Club in action again. The response of two clubs showed five controls (one for a king, two for an ace), two diamonds was natural and four diamonds showed good support.

The Regency pair employed Byzantine Blackwood and the response of five spades showed the king and queen of diamonds and two aces. Their only chuck was not to bid the slam in no-trumps.

New Acol

South	North
2 ♦	3 ♦
4 ♣	4 ♥
5 ♣	5 ♠
5 NT	7 ♦
No	

Sussex

South	North
2 ♦	3 ♦
4 ♣	4 ♥
4 NT	5 ♥
5 NT	7 ♦
No	

Two tidy enough auctions. For the New Acol, a conversion to seven no-trumps was dangerous as one of North's cue-bids might be based on a void. Less excuse for Sussex, however, where Blackwood had confirmed all the aces.

Hamilton

South	North
2 ♦ (Dble.)	Redble.
No (3 ♣)	4 ♣
4 ♦	4 NT
5 ♥	6 ♦
No	

Mayfair

South	North
2 ♦	3 ♦
4 ♣	4 ♠
4 NT	5 ♥
6 ♦	No

The Hamilton seemed completely put off their stroke by some timely but sporting interference. Four clubs was surely an error of judgment with four diamonds as a simple, natural and purposeful alternative. As the auction went, the wrong player Blackwooded.

The Mayfair bid of six diamonds looks very cautious. Tries of either five no-trumps or six clubs would not have been out of place and could hardly get the partnership too high. North would have re-acted favourably to either.

The last two teams preferred a one diamond opening bid.

Scotland

South	North
1 ♦	2 NT
3 ♦	3 ♠
4 ♣	4 ♥
5 NT	7 ♦
No	

Bridge Academy

South	North
1 ♦	2 ♠
3 ♦	3 NT
4 ♣	4 ♦
5 NT	6 ♦
6 NT	No

In the Scottish auction the response of two no-trumps was forcing and when followed by three spades showed that the force was based on good diamond support.

The Bridge Academy auction was a curious mixture of good and bad.

Summary. Overall this meant that fourteen out of a possible 32 grand slams were reached.

Conclusion. Not good.

Recommendations. Remove the 2s, 3s, 4s and 5s from a pack of cards, lock yourself and your partner away for a year, and keep dealing and bidding two hands from the remaining 36 cards. Your slam bidding will then make you and your club natural choices for the Lederer Memorial next year and you should sweep the field.