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## *Imagination.*

A deeply rooted conviction that imagination is not necessary to play bridge lingers among some bridge players. Imagination is something beautiful but totally useless.

Literature, poetry, art – these are the regions where imagination reigns. I definitely do not agree with such an approach. Imagination is full of colours, fragrances and soft lines. Imagination is like a woman. Conquered by force, she is initially submissive and obedient but, sooner or later, her charm and ability to develop vanish if she is not taken care of. If we define imagination as active ability to project different shapes of bridge problems then without this true and creative ability we cannot become outstanding players. Imagination allows us to construct or model more or less possible solutions in our minds in an abstract way.

Of course, first we have to understand many things and memorise some of them. Imagination developed by solving hundreds and hundreds of bridge problems has a chance to function in other regions utilizing a tool called vision. It is imagination that will lead a player along muddled paths of analysis on uncertain, difficult and untypical hands. Imagination is a good school of intellectual perversity.

# *Chapter 1*

## *Bridge*

### *university.*

The corridor in an old university building gradually emptied. Students were disappearing inside the lecture rooms. Professor Martens was beginning his lecture in a computer room. The Bridge University was furnished with computer equipment and training could be carried out at a level worthy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## A CLEVER ONE GETS HIS OWN WAY

Professor started with a defensive problem:

♠ K 5  
♥ 7  
♦ K Q 10 9 2  
♣ A Q J 6 3

N	♠ Q J 4 3 2
W	♥ J 4 3
E	♦ 6 5 3
S	♣ 7 5

W	N	E	S
-	1♦	pass	pass
2♦*	pass	2♠	pass
3♥	pass	4♥	pass...

\* - game forcing with unknown shape.

You lead the king of diamonds, your partner plays the eight (reverse count, odd number of diamonds), declarer ducks. Plan your defence.

In total silence young people analysed the problem on their own monitors. After three minutes nobody presented a solution.

The declarer play problem soon appeared on the monitors.

♠ A 7 6 ♥ A K Q 10 9 5 ♦ A 4 ♣ K 10	N W E S	♠ Q J 4 3 2 ♥ J 4 3 ♦ 6 5 3 ♣ 7 5
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After the bidding is finished North leads the ♦K.

Ania was first to speak:

'I duck the diamond and after any return I draw two rounds of trumps, play a spade to the queen, ace of spades and a spade (the jack of hearts will be used as an entry).'

Robert: 'If South holds three trumps he will ruff the third spade and play through your club holding.'

Tomek: 'The discards show that diamonds are 5-3, which will permit a throw-in. I duck the diamond, win the next one and draw two rounds of trumps. They are 3-1 with South holding three. Now a spade to the queen, ruff a diamond and run all my hearts. A throw-in squeeze is there.'

Professor: 'Excellent, if we know the play plan then let's go back to our defensive problem.'

	♠ K 5 ♥ 7 ♦ K Q 10 9 2 ♣ A Q J 6 3	
♠ A 7 6 ♥ A K Q 10 9 5 ♦ A 4 ♣ K 10	N W E S	♠ Q J 4 3 2 ♥ J 4 3 ♦ 6 5 3 ♣ 7 5
	♠ 10 9 8 ♥ 8 6 2 ♦ J 8 7 ♣ 9 8 4 2	

Ania: 'It is essential to duck the spade, holding the king of spades doubleton, without any hesitation and we have to be prepared for that. The declarer will meticulously follow with his work to produce this ending:

	♠ K ♥ - ♦ 9 ♣ A Q J	
♠ A 7 ♥ 9 ♦ - ♣ K 10	N W E S	♠ J 4 3 2 ♥ - ♦ - ♣ 7 5
	♠ 10 9 ♥ - ♦ - ♣ 9 8 4 2	

On the nine of hearts North will discard the queen of clubs and declarer, hoping for a throw-in squeeze, will play a small club.'

Professor: 'Can we do anything against such excellent opponents' defence?'

Tomek: 'More often than not, South will give a proper count in the spade suit in such a situation. To believe the signal, one has to appreciate the opponent's level and his ducking with the king of spades doubleton and take it into consideration while designing the plan.'

## CHAMPIONS CONFUSION

Kibitzers watching the play on a vugraph could not stop sneering.

	♠ A 10 9 8 5 ♥ 9 3 ♦ Q J 8 ♣ J 7 5		
♠ 7 6 2 ♥ A K 5 4 2 ♦ A 5 ♣ A K 4	N W E S	♠ K Q J ♥ J 10 8 7 ♦ 10 9 ♣ 10 9 3 2	
	♠ 4 2 ♥ Q 6 ♦ K 7 6 4 3 2 ♣ Q 8 6		

W	N	E	S
1♥	1♠	2♥	3♦
4♥	pass...		

Lead ♦Q

‘A recognised bridge champion was the only player in the room to go down in this simple game. Tell me, how is it possible that the champion was one down?’ – The Professor set the task for the students.

Janek: ‘The champion ducked the queen of diamonds and North continued the suit. The declarer played the ace of hearts and a spade. I want to point out good play by North – he ducked although it is hard to explain why. After winning the trick with the jack of spades it was time to play the ♣10. When South followed with a small one the champion rose with the king and cashed the ace of clubs. North unblocked the jack, not really knowing why. Now, our champ played a spade again. A surprised opponent played a spade for partner to ruff.’

Ania: ‘Imagination presented somewhat a different picture of the South hand, a 6-4 shape. Bidding at a level of 3♦ invites a partner to sacrifice at the level of five so it has to be a responsible bid.’

The entire hand should look as follows:

	♠ A 10 9 8 5 ♥ Q 9 3 ♦ Q J 8 ♣ J 5	
♠ 7 6 2 ♥ A K 5 4 2 ♦ A 5 ♣ A K 4	N W E S	♠ K Q J ♥ J 10 8 7 ♦ 10 9 ♣ 10 9 3 2
	♠ 4 2 ♥ 6 ♦ K 7 6 4 3 2 ♣ Q 8 7 6	

Tomek: 'From time to time, a truly outstanding expert must pay a high price for many brilliant and admired declarer plays. Was the South hand fit to bid at the level of three? Definitely not. 3♦ bid has sense only with 6-4 shape.'

Professor: 'What was the expert's plan?'

Robert: 'After eliminating the spade suit and cashing two top clubs North would be endplayed with the queen of hearts and would have to lead for ruff and discard. You cannot draw the ace and king of hearts because the throw-in would not be possible then.'

## THE HOUSE SHOWS THE OWNER

Professor: 'Let's start with a play problem:'

♠ 9 8 6 2 ♥ K 3 ♦ A K Q 4 ♣ A 8 5	N W   E S	♠ J 4 ♥ A 9 5 ♦ J 10 9 7 3 ♣ 10 7 2
--	-----------------	--

W	N	E	S
1NT	2♥	3NT	pass....

Lead ♥6, South follows with the jack.'

Tomek: 'I shall run five diamonds, maybe something will come up.'

Professor: 'Let's see the four hands'

	♠ K 10 3 ♥ 10 8 7 6 4 2 ♦ 5 ♣ Q J 4	
♠ 8 6 4 2 ♥ K 3 ♦ A K Q 4 ♣ A 8 5	N W   E S	♠ Q J ♥ A 9 5 ♦ J 10 9 7 3 ♣ 10 7 2
	♠ A 9 7 5 ♥ Q J ♦ 8 6 2 ♣ K 10 9 3	

Janek: 'Nothing we can do, North made a very aggressive bid.'

Professor: 'Use your imagination.'

Silence.

Professor: 'Imagine a slightly different shape'

	♠ K 10 3 ♥ 10 8 7 6 4 2 ♦ 5 ♣ Q J 4	
♠ 8 6 4 2 ♥ K Q 3 ♦ K Q ♣ A K 5 2	N W E S	♠ Q J ♥ A 9 5 ♦ J 10 9 7 3 ♣ 10 7 2
	♠ A 9 7 5 ♥ J ♦ A 8 6 4 2 ♣ 9 6 3	

'The declarer plays the king and queen of diamonds and a heart. What should the opponent do?'

Karol: 'He should rise with the ten to remove the second entry.'

Professor: 'Well done, so now we know how to play in the first example.'

Ania: 'The king and queen of diamonds and a heart. I would like to see the expert's face that with a teasing smile rises with the ten and collides with partner's queen.'



## WRONG TRACK

Professor: 'Here is one more defensive problem'

♠ A Q 3  
♥ K J 10 8 7 2  
♦ 3  
♣ Q J 10

N	♠ J 10 8 2
W	♥ Q 9 5
S	♦ A 9 7 3
	♣ A 2

W	N	E	S
1NT	2♥	2NT*	pass
3♣**	pass	3NT***	pass
4♠	pass....		

\* - one version of Lebensohl

\*\* - waiting

\*\*\* - four spades with a stopper in hearts.

'You lead the queen of clubs. Declarer wins with the ace, your partner signalling an odd number of clubs, followed by the jack of spades from the dummy. How will you plan your defence?'

Tomek: 'Partner has small cards only. I cannot see the way to beat the contract.'

Professor: 'Look at the four hands'

♠ A Q 3 ♥ K J 10 8 7 2 ♦ 3 ♣ Q J 10		
♠ K 9 6 4 ♥ A 6 3 ♦ K Q 4 ♣ K 6 5	N W E S	♠ J 10 8 2 ♥ Q 9 5 ♦ A 9 7 3 ♣ A 2
	♠ 7 5 ♥ 4 ♦ J 10 8 6 4 ♣ 9 8 7 4 3	

Agata: 'It is even worse'.

Professor: 'Let's change the defender's hand slightly'.

♠ A Q  
 ♥ K J 10 8 7 2  
 ♦ J 3  
 ♣ Q J 10

N	♠ J 10 8 2
W	♥ Q 9 5
S	♦ A 9 7 3
	♣ A 2

'You lead the queen of clubs. Declarer wins with the ace, your partner signalling an odd number of clubs, followed by the jack of spades from the dummy. How will you plan your defence?'

Janek: 'This is a piece of cake. Play the king of hearts, the declarer wins with the ace and plays a trump again. North wins the trick and plays the jack of hearts, queen from the dummy ruffed by partner. You have to find the ten of diamonds with partner'.

Professor: 'Look at the full deal'.

	♠ A Q ♥ K J 10 8 7 2 ♦ J 3 ♣ Q J 10	
♠ K 9 6 4 ♥ A 6 3 ♦ K Q 4 ♣ K 6 5	N W E S	♠ J 10 8 2 ♥ Q 9 5 ♦ A 9 7 3 ♣ A 2
	♠ 7 5 3 ♥ 4 ♦ 10 8 6 4 ♣ 9 8 7 4 3	

Tomek: 'Excellent defence but the declarer may be still protected thanks to the nine of diamonds. Win the king with the ace, eliminate the clubs, play the king and queen of diamonds followed by the second round of spades.'

This is the final position:

	♠ - ♥ J 10 8 7 2 ♦ - ♣ -	
♠ K 9 ♥ 6 3 ♦ 4 ♣ -	N W E S	♠ 10 ♥ Q 9 ♦ A 9 ♣ -
	♠ 7 ♥ - ♦ 10 8 ♣ 9 8	

North will play the jack of hearts after winning the trick with the ace of spades. South after ruffing will be endplayed.

Agata: 'So now you have found a solution to your initial defensive problem. After winning the trick with the queen of spades by playing the king of hearts we should pretend that we want to give partner a ruff. The declarer will cash the king and queen of diamonds and will give the ruff himself.'