

# IBPA Awards 2021



## The Justin Lall Declarer Play of the Year Award Winner: **Boye Brogeland (Norway)** Journalist: **Christina Lund Madsen (Denmark)**

### Dazzling Declarer Play from the Alts Christina Lund Madsen, Hellerup, Denmark

Board 13. North. Both Vul.

<p>♠ 9 2          ♥ A 8 2          ♦ A 8 2          ♣ A K 7 6 5</p>	<p>♠ 8 7 6 5 4 3          ♥ 6 5 4 3          ♦ K 9 7          ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ A K J          ♥ K          ♦ 10 6 5 4 3          ♣ Q 9 8 4</p>
	<p>♠ Q 10          ♥ Q J 10 9 7          ♦ Q J          ♣ J 10 3 2</p>	

West	North	East	South
<i>Brogeland</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>
—	Pass	1♦	1♥
2♣	3♥ <sup>1</sup>	4♣	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦	Pass
5♥ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	5♠ <sup>3</sup>	Pass
6♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Pre-emptive
2. Asks for the queen of clubs; grand-slam interest
3. Queen of clubs and king of spades

Hurd led the four of hearts to dummy's king, South playing the queen. At trick two, Brogeland played the three of diamonds to the jack and his ace (a way to make the contract with clubs splitting is to play for two-honours-doubleton or the doubleton-king in either hand and eliminate the other suits for a ruff and sluff, but to prevent the hand with doubleton-king from unblocking, the play must be made early).

Brogeland carefully ruffed a heart with the eight of clubs. He continued with the queen of clubs and saw the bad split. The nine of clubs followed, South playing the ten, won by West's king. Next was a spade to the ace, the four of clubs from dummy, finessing with the seven, the ace of clubs and then a diamond exit. Had North put up the king, there would have been no second diamond loser, so he ducked it to South's queen. South returned a heart to the ace, and Brogeland played his last club. North had to discard a spade to hold on to the king of diamonds, and now Brogeland played a spade to the king, knowing that the remaining spades were 1-1 and that North had been show-up squeezed. That was 12 well-played tricks and plus 1370 was rewarded by 17 IMPs when declarer went down in five clubs in the other room.

# The Gidwani Family Trust Award for Defence of the Year

## Winner: Kjell Jonsen (Norway)

## Journalist: Knut Kjærnsrød (Norway)

**Ett September Brev fra Norge (Letter from Norway)**  
**Knut Kjærnsrød, Tored, Norway**

This deal is from a local tournament. The player who performed the following defensive feat was Kjell Jonsen of Oslo:

**Dealer South. Both Vul.**

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2♦ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2♥ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	2NT <sup>3</sup>
Pass	3♥ <sup>4</sup>	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT <sup>5</sup>	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Multi: either major or big balanced
2. Pass or correct
3. 20-21 balanced
4. Transfer
5. Choice of games

West started with queen of hearts to South's king. Declarer played the king and queen of spades and, on the queen, West followed in tempo with the knave! South suddenly saw that he had two entries to dummy to play diamonds toward his hand and overtook the queen with the ace, soon realizing that he had accepted a losing option.

# The Yeh Bros. Bidding of the Year Award

## Winners: JJ Wang & Hailong Ao (USA)

### Journalist: Jerry Li (China)

#### Special Key-Card Ask Jerry Li, Beijing

While chatting with my long-time friend Dr. Jian-Jian (J.J.) Wang recently, I learned about the following deal with great interest (maybe a candidate for the 2021 Best Bidding of the Year award?). It's from the 2020 ACBL Grand National Team District 6 Final.

#### Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Hailong Ao</i>		<i>J.J. Wang</i>	
—	1♠	Double	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	5♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass
5♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	5♠ <sup>3</sup>	Pass
6♠ <sup>4</sup>	Pass	7♥ <sup>5</sup>	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Based on their agreements: four spades and four notrumps here are cuebid (opponent's suit) and Kickback RKCB, respectively. And, five clubs is a Special Keycard Ask (more details in the following text).
2. 1430 answer showing one ace (nothing about trump king at this moment).
3. Relay, asking for trump queen (or king). When five spades is an asking bid over five hearts, it also shows grand-slam interest.
4. Heart queen (or king) plus spade king (an answer over six hearts commits to 6NT at least).
5. Thank you, partner!

Seven hearts is an easy make after picking up North's marked heart king. If using ordinary Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB), the best East/West can do is to reach six hearts because of a missing key card. Making seven hearts was a 14-IMP pickup for their team as the opponents played in five hearts at the other table.

That was a memorable deal right before all bridge tournaments going online due to the pandemic!

It is well known that RKCB, in which the king of trumps is treated as a fifth ace, has a clear advantage over plain Blackwood in most situations. However, we may also learn from experience that trump king is NOT always equal to an ace. For instance:

- When our side has 11 or 12 trumps, we have 52% or 100% chance, respectively, to drop the missing trump king, but not the trump ace;
- If an opponent has made a strength-showing bid (but not a pre-emptive bid), we should have a much better chance than 50% to successfully finesse against his/her trump king, but there would be a sure loser if missing an ace;
- Sometime we need a swing (or just feel lucky), and therefore are willing to play a slam relying on a successful finesse of the trump king, but not when risking a missing ace.

In brief, under certain circumstances, it is crucial for us to distinguish among the trump ace, a side ace, and the trump king to decide if a slam is plausible. These are the times when Special Keycard Asking (SKCA), invented by J.J. a few years ago, comes into play. The method is simple and effective: use one step above the ordinary keycard ask as SKCA, provided that it does not conflict with a more useful meaning (e.g., Exclusion RKC).

The Asker should be missing both the trump ace and king if in FRONT of the stronger opponent (hoping partner's trump ace can catch LHO's trump king), but hold the trump ace only if BEHIND the stronger opponent (hoping the trump ace in hand can catch RHO's trump king).

The Teller's replies to SKCA are relatively simple:

- If the Asker is BEHIND the stronger opponent (and therefore will hold the trump ace): Teller replies to the SKCA with the same steps as in ordinary Blackwood, i.e., but not treating the trump king as a key card (Asker expects a successful finesse of the trump king if needed).
- If the Asker is in FRONT of the stronger opponent (and therefore will lack both the trump ace and king), the Teller's step replies are:
  - 1st step = 0-0.5 or 2.5;
  - 2nd step = 1 or 3;
  - 3rd step = 1.5 or 3.5; and
  - 4th step = 2 or 4 key cards,

respectively, where the trump ace counts as 1.5 key cards, a side ace counts as 1 keycard, and the trump king counts as 0.5 keycard.

The unusual definitions of key cards and step answers lets you play a small slam if (a.) the trump ace is missing, or (b.) the trump king is missing along with a side ace (1.5 key cards in both cases), but avoids reaching a slam missing both the trump ace and king (2 key cards).

Later, if Asker, having hoped to reach seven on a trump-king finesse if partner has the trump ace, receives a 0-0.5 key card reply to a special ask, he can make the cheapest bid outside the agreed trump suit to ask for the trump king (0.5 key cards) for a small slam.

All other follow-ups to SKCA, including trump queen (or king if Asker is BEHIND the stronger opponent), specific king asks, etc., are similar to those after ordinary key card asks.

# The Richard Freeman Junior Deal of the Year

## Winner: Jin Kai (China)

## Journalist: Jerry Li (China)

2020 Chinese Premier League  
Jerry Li, Beijing

### First Leg

With the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, live bridge has changed to online bridge. The Chinese Premier League is played as a double round robin over two legs. This year, the first leg was from September 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, and was held online; the platform was the Chinese App: *Bridge-Friends*. The second leg was also held online from 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> October; after the double Round Robin, the top four teams qualified for the Final.

The Chinese Premier League is the highest level of bridge tournament in China. This year, the difference was that it could not be as face-to-face bridge is played. In order to avoid cheating and unfair competition, the Chinese Contract Bridge Association (CCBA) adopted these strict measures:

1. There were 11 playing areas in nine cities, all under the supervision of TD supervisors.
2. The players used only computers, laptops and pads. All tournament equipment was checked to ensure there was no social media and other communication software.
3. Any delay, disconnect or pause caused by the network had to be notified to the TD.
4. All matches were broadcast live on the internet with a delay of half an hour.
5. There was a professional TD team and Appeals Committee.

Sixteen teams played a round-robin format of 15 boards per round. All match records can be watched and researched on the internet; gathering statistics is very easy. All players were actors in this film, the new height of bridge broadcasting.

### Repeat Endplay

#### Leg 2. RR 7. Board 5. Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

West      North      East      South

—	<i>Jin Kai</i>		
	1♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	1♥ <sup>2</sup>
4♥	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Two or more clubs
2. Spades

Jin Kai is a young player who is Zhu Chenyu's partner (the player who made four spades on Board 5 from Round Robin 9 in the first leg). Jin Kai is also a member of the Chinese U-26 team. Here he was declarer in four spades.

When East led the ace of hearts and another heart, Jin Kai ruffed. According to the auction and opening lead, declarer knew that West had eight hearts, so the trumps were almost certain to be three-one or four-zero. So, Jin played the queen of spades! The East player was endplayed at the third trick.

If East won and played a club, declarer would avoid a club loser; if he played a diamond, declarer would win and cash the trump ace and the diamonds. Then, if East ruffed, he was endplayed again; if he didn't ruff, declarer could throw him in with a trump to lead a club.

Jin Kai was the only declarer to make four spades.