

# Report on Giorgio Duboin

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## Foreword

With only your side vulnerable, you deal. You hold: (1) ♠73 ♥AQ98532 ♦1072 ♣7; or (2) ♠9864 ♥KQ98652 ♦9 ♣4. What call would you make with each hand?

\* \* \*

The answers depend on personal style. An aggressive preemptor would likely open 3♥ on both (1) and (2). A conservative preemptor might preempt at the two-level with both (1) and (2). Or perhaps these hands would divide a player—he would open at the two-level with one hand and the three-level with the other. If so, it looks clear to preempt more aggressively with hand (2) than hand (1). Hand (2) has better distribution, a better offense-to-defense ratio—the aceless heart suit is an asset as declarer but of dubious value on defense—and more playing strength.

Giorgio Duboin of Italy held both of these hands. Mr. Duboin is one of the strongest and most accomplished players in the world, having won six world championships and 15 NABC+ events. He is also a prominent public figure in bridge. He serves on five WBF committees—the Executive Council, the High Level Players Commission, the Management Committee, the Masterpoint Committee, and the Rules and Regulations Committee—and he was named ACBL Sportsman of the Year in 2008.

With hand (1), Mr. Duboin opened 3♥. This was the complete deal:

15 D	N fulldiRe ♠ K1098 ♥ 7 ♦ Q3 ♣ AQ10954	W N E S P P P 3♥
W master dj ♠ A64 ♥ ♦ AJ865 ♣ KJ832	♣ 2	E JDACHE ♠ QJ52 ♥ KJ1064 ♦ K94 ♣ 6
	S giorginod ♠ 73 ♥ AQ98532 ♦ 1072 ♣ 7	3♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0

Mr. Duboin's mildly aggressive preempt encountered an unfriendly lie of the cards—an unsuitable dummy and a 5-0 trump split. The opponents should have collected 500, but they let Mr. Duboin off the hook. See <https://tinyurl.com/y626zwuz>.

On hand (2), Mr. Duboin chose a more conservative course, preferring a Multi 2♦ opening bid, showing a weak two in either major. This was the full deal:

5 D	N giorginod ♠ 9864 ♥ KQ98652 ♦ 9 ♣ 4	W N E S 2♦ P 2♥ X P P P
W mayors ♠ AK103 ♥ 10 ♦ AQJ3 ♣ AJ62	♠ K	E mutton ♠ Q2 ♥ AJ743 ♦ 8542 ♣ 95
	S gioffi ♠ J75 ♥ ♦ K1076 ♣ KQ10873	2♥x S NS: 0 EW: 0

Again, the layout was unfriendly, and this time he was doubled. See <https://tinyurl.com/y2xljjro>.

Fortunately for Mr. Duboin, his conservative 2♦ opening bid meant his partner was declaring at

the two-level, and although the doubled contract was set four tricks, -1100, this was a 7-imp gain. At the other table, North opened 3♥, was doubled, and went down five: -1400.

Why, in the same seat and at the same vulnerability, would Mr. Duboin open at the three-level with hand (1) but the two-level with hand (2)? A player of his caliber knows how to evaluate hands, so what difference did he see that we cannot?

A key difference is that these deals were played on Bridge Base Online (BBO) in two different matches. The match containing deal (1) barred players from kibitzing—that is, from watching the table’s play in real time. The match containing deal (2) allowed kibitzing, so anyone could log on to BBO and see all four players’ hands while the deal was being played—including a player at the table. After performing a thorough analysis of Mr. Duboin’s play on BBO, we have concluded—and in this report we set out to show—that during matches played on BBO that allowed kibitzing, Mr. Duboin obtained and used unauthorized information (UI). We suspect that Mr. Duboin obtained this UI through “self-kibitzing”: logging in from a second account to kibitz at his or his teammates table.

This is a serious allegation. In terms of impact on the results, obtaining UI by self-kibitzing online is akin to obtaining the deal records before a live session of bridge. In fact, it is probably even more damaging because a self-kibitzer can refer to the other hands in real time and need not memorize the layouts as he would in a live game. We are fully aware of the gravity of this report, and we would not do so unless we were confident that our conclusion was correct. In our opinion, it is clear that Giorgio Duboin obtained and used UI on BBO in matches that allowed kibitzing.

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—Sjoert Brink, Michał Nowosadzki, Steve Weinstein, and Oren Kriegel

Special thanks to Michał Nowosadzki for your exceptional analysis and tireless work to help clean up bridge. The bridge world should be aware of your service.

—Sjoert Brink, Steve Weinstein, and Oren Kriegel

# **I. Introduction**

Based on a comprehensive analysis—supplemented by statistical analysis and comparisons with other world-class players’ performances—we<sup>1</sup> conclude that Giorgio Duboin, under the username “giorginod,” obtained and used unauthorized information (UI) while playing bridge on Bridge Base Online (BBO) in team matches that allowed live kibitzing in May and June, 2020.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Duboin’s play in matches that allowed kibitzing was extraordinary, far exceeding the play of his peer players as well as his own play in online matches when kibitzers were disallowed and in face-to-face events. Mr. Duboin’s performance in matches that did not allow kibitzers was on approximately the same level as other world-class players’ performances. In our opinion, this disparity between Mr. Duboin’s performance in matches that allowed and disallowed kibitzing suggests that Mr. Duboin obtained UI through “self-kibitzing”: logging onto BBO under a second username (or anonymously) and watching the table at which he was playing.<sup>3</sup>

This section explains how and why this report came about, outlines our analytical and statistical methods and the conclusions we drew from them, and gives an overview of the rest of the report.

## **A. About this Report**

This report is the product of a team of bridge players acting independently of any formal bridge organization or authority. We are not affiliated with the World Bridge Federation (WBF),

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<sup>1</sup> When this report uses the term “we,” “us,” or “our,” it refers to the lead analysts, Sjoert Brink, Michał Nowosadzki, and Steve Weinstein.

<sup>2</sup> Matches outside than this time range are beyond the scope of this report. We examined only the deals Mr. Duboin played during this time range and therefore make no conclusions about whether Mr. Duboin was using UI during matches in other time periods. This investigation began in July and this window was a manageable amount of hands.

<sup>3</sup> A self-kibitzer would also be able to see the results from the other table and the current score of the match, as well as all four hands on any deal that had been played or was in progress at either table.



the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL), the European Bridge League (EBL), or any National Bridge Organization (NBO). Nor are we affiliated with BBO or the Credentials Advisory Team (CAT), which has advised private online tournament organizers about which players to invite to events.

We began investigating Mr. Duboin’s play on BBO in or around July 2020, after we learned about numerous suspicious actions that Mr. Duboin had taken in online team matches. Although we did not draw conclusions from this preliminary analysis, the deals were concerning enough to warrant comprehensive investigation. The problem was that Mr. Duboin was not clearly subject to any bridge authority’s jurisdiction. He had played in private tournaments on BBO that were not sanctioned by any formal bridge organization. Although the WBF and/or the EBL might have been able to exercise jurisdiction over Mr. Duboin—a member of both organizations—for misconduct in non-WBF or EBL events, we were skeptical that these organizations would take meaningful action. The WBF in particular has a very poor track record for prosecuting cheating cases by high-level players.

We decided to take action ourselves. We performed a comprehensive analysis<sup>4</sup> of the bridge Mr. Duboin played on BBO in May and June, 2020, concluding that the many suspicious actions that Mr. Duboin took and the relative frequencies of different types of decisions constituted a strong indication that Mr. Duboin was using UI in matches that allowed kibitzers.<sup>5</sup> After performing this bridge analysis, we asked two outside consultants, Nicolas Hammond and

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<sup>4</sup> Over the course of several months, each action Mr. Duboin took was scrutinized by multiple world-class players and analysts. We examined the deals and our ratings to confirm that our analysis was correct, our ratings of the bridge merits of Mr. Duboin’s actions were fair, and that we were not missing important points.

<sup>5</sup> See the detailed discussion below, in Parts II, and IV.

Jonathan Cooke, to provide statistical information on Mr. Duboin's play on BBO. The statistical data also indicated that Mr. Duboin was using UI in matches that allowed kibitzers.<sup>6</sup>

## **B. Why We Are Publishing This Report**

We believe that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers, but why should this conclusion be published openly? We have several reasons.

First, we believe this report is newsworthy. Mr. Duboin is a prominent public figure in bridge. His playing credentials are exemplary, with numerous victories in world, European, and NABC+ championships. He is a key figure in world bridge administration, sitting on five WBF committees. He is also considered by many to be a role model and was named the 2008 ACBL Sportsman of the Year. Many bridge players would be very interested in news that such an important bridge player has intentionally obtained and used UI while playing in competitive matches online.

Second, we want to provide an example of what a cheating investigation involving high-level bridge analysis looks like. The bridge-playing public lacks access to a comprehensive report like this one, and we hope that releasing this report widely will provide context for discussions about detecting online cheating. Additionally, releasing this report publicly allows readers to ask questions and push our analysis, and we welcome that. We are confident that our conclusion is correct and we hope that readers will be similarly convinced.

Third, we hope releasing this report will provide an incentive for players who have self-kibitzed while playing online to confess. The alternative to confession need not be a quiet

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<sup>6</sup> See the detailed discussion below, in Part III.

disinvitation from certain events followed by an eventual reintegration into high-level bridge. We appreciate when players own up and confess in full.

For all these reasons, we decided to release this report publicly.

## C. Outline of Methodology

As mentioned above, bridge analysis constitutes a large majority of the support for our conclusions, although it is supplemented by statistical information. We analyzed the deals Mr. Duboin played in May and June 2020 in Alt, Online Contract Bridge League (OCBL), and Bridge House tournaments (collectively known as AOB) and other team matches of at least eight boards. There were 708 such deals, and a complete set of deal records has been preserved in stable URLs and are reproduced in **Appendix A**.

We assigned each deal a rating based on our assessment of Mr. Duboin’s actions. On 47 deals (representing 6.64% of the total deals), Mr. Duboin took an action we classified as Suspicious, while on only 12 deals (1.69%) did Mr. Duboin take an action we classified as Anti-Suspicious—that is, indicative that Mr. Duboin was not using UI. A nearly 4:1 ratio of Suspicious to Anti-Suspicious actions is higher than we expected to see from a world-class player who is playing honestly.<sup>7</sup>

However, after performing our initial ratings, we noticed an unusual distribution of S- and A-rated deals: only one match out of 44 contained both a deal we rated Suspicious and a deal we rated Anti-Suspicious. We wondered whether kibitzers had been allowed for only some matches. Indeed, although the majority of matches permitted kibitzers, several matches did not:

- Kibitzers were allowed in 36 out of 44 matches, containing 548 deals;
- Kibitzers were disallowed in eight out of 44 matches, containing 160 deals.

The disparities between matches that allowed kibitzers and matches that disallowed kibitzers were stark: All 47 Suspicious deals occurred in matches that allowed kibitzing—in other words, in

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<sup>7</sup> See Part II-C, which discusses two other world-class players whose play was analyzed in the same way. In 148 deals, one player had one Suspicious deal and eight Anti-Suspicious deals; the other had zero Suspicious deals and nine Anti-Suspicious deals.

matches during which Mr. Duboin could have been self-kibitzing. Only three out of the 12 Anti-Suspicious deals occurred when kibitzers were allowed. By contrast, when kibitzers were not allowed—hence when Mr. Duboin could not have been self-kibitzing—Mr. Duboin took no actions we considered Suspicious, but he took nine actions we considered Anti-Suspicious. For a complete discussion of these ratings and patterns, see Part II. For a detailed analysis of individual deals, see Part IV.

We believe that these patterns, particularly the disparities in frequency of Suspicious and Anti-Suspicious deals when kibitzing was and was not allowed, constitute strong support for our conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI when playing on BBO in matches that allowed kibitzing.

The heart of this report and the vast majority of the evidence that we considered when reaching our conclusion is the expert bridge analysis of Mr. Duboin's actions. However, we also examined statistical reports generated by two outside consultants: Nicolas Hammond and Jonathan Cooke. Statistical analysis was done on Mr. Duboin's performance on several dimensions: declarer play, opening lead, later defense as opening leader, and defense as the opening leader's partner. As declarer and on defense, Mr. Duboin outperformed world-class players not suspected of using UI, as well as outperforming Michał Nowosadzki while Mr. Nowosadzki was self-kibitzing on BBO.<sup>8</sup> These data do not, in isolation, prove that Mr. Duboin used UI while playing on BBO, but they paint a picture of a player performing above world-champion caliber over the course of hundreds of deals. The statistical data further suggest that Mr. Duboin obtained and used UI in matches that allowed kibitzing.

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<sup>8</sup> Michał Nowosadzki is a world-class player whose victories include the 2015 and 2019 Bermuda Bowls. He confessed to cheating on BBO by self-kibitzing in July 2020. See <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/confession-of-a-self-kibitzer/>. Mr. Duboin's performance is compared to Mr. Nowosadzki's performance in matches during which Nowosadzki has admitted to self-kibitzing.

Based on bridge analysis and supported by statistical analysis, we conclude that Mr. Duboin performed suspiciously well in matches that allowed kibitzing in May and June, 2020. It is our opinion that Mr. Duboin obtained—likely by self-kibitzing—and used UI while playing on BBO in matches that allowed kibitzing in May and June 2020.

## **D. Overview of this Report**

**Part II** describes our bridge analysis methodology, the patterns we identified, and the conclusions we drew from this analysis. It also explains the analysis we performed on the world-class Dutch pair Simon de Wijs and Bauke Muller, to which we compared Mr. Duboin's performance. **Part III** explains the statistical methodology that the outside consultants used to analyze Mr. Duboin's performance. It describes and compares the statistical profile of Mr. Duboin's performance to the profiles of several world class players. **Part IV** discusses in detail all the deals we considered Suspicious or Anti-Suspicious. It also gives representative examples of the more common types of deals—Normal, Good Decision, and Bad Decision deals—and presents all deals in the less frequent Lazy and Weird categories of deals. It also addresses Mr. Duboin's inconsistent preempting style. **Part V** summarizes the foregoing analysis and restates our conclusion: that during May and June, 2020, Mr. Duboin used UI—likely obtained by self-kibitzing—in matches played on BBO that allowed kibitzing.

**Appendix A** is a complete record of the 708 deals played by Mr. Duboin, including stable URLs. **Appendix B** is a set of spreadsheets containing our ratings and brief comments on every deal. **Appendix C** is a spreadsheet containing our analyses of Simon de Wijs and Bauke Muller. **Appendix D** is a copy of the report provided to us by Nicolas Hammond.

## II. Explanation of Bridge Analysis and Findings

Part A explains the methods the expert analysts used to analyze Mr. Duboin’s actions and provides data about Mr. Duboin’s actions (1) in all matches he played during the period of the investigation, and (2) in matches that allowed kibitzers compared with matches that disallowed kibitzers. Part B explains the patterns these data show and the conclusions the analysts drew from them. Part C compares Mr. Duboin’s performance on these deals to identical analyses performed on two other world-class players.

### A. Bridge Methodology

Giorgio Duboin played 708<sup>9</sup> deals on BBO in May and June, 2020, in Alt, AOB, and OCBL tournaments, as well as private team matches of eight or more boards. See Appendix A for a complete set of hand records from these events. We analyzed all 708 of these deals, assigning each one a rating based on our evaluation of the bridge merits of Mr. Duboin’s actions. Table 1 explains the rating system we used:

Table 1: Analysts’ Rating System	
Rating	Description
N	<b>Normal:</b> The N designation indicates that Mr. Duboin took normal actions or actions that were indicated by bridge logic for a world-class player. This means that N deals often feature excellent plays because a player of Mr. Duboin’s caliber is expected to play well. <sup>10</sup> This makes Good Decision and Suspicious deals much more significant: as explained below, a Good Decision means Mr. Duboin took a winning action when a world-class player could not be sure of the right play, and a Suspicious deal features Mr. Duboin taking a successful action that would have seemed inferior to a world-class player.
G	<b>Good Decision:</b> A deal marked G means that Mr. Duboin took a successful action—in the bidding, on opening lead, later in the defense, or as declarer—in

<sup>9</sup> One deal was somehow corrupted. See <https://tinyurl.com/y4sa58g9>. The play cuts off after trick two and shows declarer claiming 13 tricks, an impossible result. Accordingly, this deal was given the Excluded designation.

<sup>10</sup> Executing an indicated double squeeze or getting a two-way guess right when there are clues pointing in the winning direction would be considered Normal plays. See <http://tinyurl.com/y6gmfqde>.

a position where he had to choose between at least two reasonable actions. Because G deals represent winning actions when a world-class player would be unable to identify a clearly correct action, a pattern of many more G deals than B deals may suggest the use of UI.

- B**     **Bad Decision:** The converse of a G, a deal rated B means that Mr. Duboin faced a decision with at least two reasonable options, and he selected a losing action. However, a large number of B deals—especially relative to G deals—may provide evidence that a player is not using UI.
- S**     **Suspicious:** A deal rated S means that Mr. Duboin took a successful action that would have appeared inferior or anti-percentage to a world-class player. That a deal is labeled S does not mean that it is a “smoking gun” or even that, standing alone, it provides strong evidence that Mr. Duboin was using UI. Our ratings are based on expert bridge analysis, so deals may be marked S for subtle reasons. For all S deals, we explain why we concluded that Mr. Duboin took a successful action that was inferior or anti-percentage.
- A**     **Anti-Suspicious:** A deal marked A suggests that Mr. Duboin did not obtain—or at least did not use—UI on that deal because he took an action that cost when we would have expected a player of his level to take the winning action. Anti-Suspicious deals encompass clear errors that cost—forgetting a point range, for example—or unusual choices that work badly—preempting aggressively and encountering a poor trump split, for example. A self-kibitzer is not expected to use UI at every possible opportunity—that would be too obvious—so the mere presence of A deals does not rebut the conclusion that a player was not using UI. However, a pattern of A deals may indicate that a player was not using UI.
- L**     **Lazy (but successful):** The L designation means that we concluded that Mr. Duboin made a careless decision, *but this decision did not cost*.<sup>11</sup> These deals generally relate to cardplay decisions such as not taking a safety play or not maximizing the chances of success, but they may also relate to bidding decisions. L-rated deals are essentially deals where Mr. Duboin would have been expected to make a Normal expert play, but he failed to—and got away with his carelessness. A large number of L deals may indicate a player is using UI because a self-kibitzer may fail to recognize that he should take a line of play that caters to a possible layout that he knows does not exist.
- W**     **Weird:** Deals marked W contain strange actions by Mr. Duboin—or occasionally Mr. Duboin and his partner—that we were unable to understand but that did not have much impact on the result. Deals in this category do not fit into one of the other categories.

Table 2 presents the number of deals in each category among the full set of 708 deals:

<sup>11</sup> A careless play that *did* cost would be rated B (Bad Decision) or A (Anti-Suspicious) depending on the severity of the mistake.



**Table 2: Giorgio Duboin—Analysis of Full Set of Deals**

Rating	Number	Percentage
N	528	74.58%
G	65	9.18%
B	26	3.67%
S	47	6.64%
A	12	1.69%
L	17	2.40%
W	12	1.69%
Excluded	1	0.14%
Total	708	100.00%

Looking at the distribution of ratings, we observe that Mr. Duboin had a higher rate of Good Decision deals than Bad Decision deals, and an even higher rate of Suspicious deals than Anti-Suspicious deals. These patterns, in our opinion, are consistent with a player who is obtaining and using UI, but they are not conclusive standing alone.

We reiterate that these ratings are not directly related to the results achieved at the table or the double-dummy effectiveness of any particular call or play. Normal-rated deals may contain large positive or negative swings if the other table or another player at Mr. Duboin's took some action that caused a swing even if Mr. Duboin's action was clear for a world-class player. Likewise, Suspicious actions may not have produced any material gain relative to the expected single-dummy outcome—they may be careless plays that nevertheless succeeded, calls that prevented partner from making a losing decision, or calls that gave an opponent a problem but the problem was solved successfully. Our analysis is based solely on the bridge merits of Mr. Duboin's actions from the perspective of a world-class player in his position who did not have UI.

In addition to analyzing the complete set of 708 deals, we sorted them into two categories: deals in matches that allowed kibitzers (548 deals) and deals in matches that disallowed kibitzers

(160 deals).<sup>12</sup> Table 3 shows the number of deals in each category in matches where kibitzers were or were not allowed:

<b>Table 3: Giorgio Duboin—Kibitzers and No Kibitzers</b>				
Rating	Kibitzers Allowed		Kibitzers Disallowed	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
N	406	74.09%	122	76.25%
G	53	9.67%	12	7.50%
B	14	2.55%	12	7.50%
<b>S</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>8.58%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
A	3	0.55%	9	5.63%
L	15	2.74%	2	1.25%
W	9	1.64%	3	1.88%
Excl.	1	0.18%	0	0.00%
Total	548	100.00%	160	100.00%

Splitting the set of deals based on whether kibitzers were allowed produces more extreme patterns. Mr. Duboin had higher percentages of Good Decision and Lazy deals when kibitzers were allowed than when kibitzers were disallowed and a lower percentage of Bad Decision deals; these numbers indicate that Mr. Duboin got close decisions right far more often when kibitzers were allowed and that he made a larger proportion of careless plays that did not cost when kibitzers were allowed. More telling is the vast difference between the relative percentages of Suspicious and Anti-Suspicious deals:

- All Suspicious decisions Mr. Duboin made occurred in matches that **allowed** kibitzers.
- Mr. Duboin made Anti-Suspicious decisions more than 10 times as frequently when kibitzers were **disallowed** than when kibitzers were allowed.

In our opinion, these patterns strongly suggest that Mr. Duboin obtained and used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers.

<sup>12</sup> On BBO, the player or director who sets up a team match chooses whether kibitzers are allowed to watch. AOB and other private online tournaments vary in whether to allow or prohibit kibitzers or to permit the teams contesting the match to decide whether or not to allow kibitzers.

To be clear, this report is a bridge analysis, not a mathematical one. However, the wide difference in ratings between Kibitzers Allowed and Kibitzers Disallowed sets for Giorgio Duboin has obvious statistical significance.

We are confident a mathematical analysis would indicate that Mr. Duboin's difference in performance between Kibitzers Allowed and Kibitzers Disallowed cannot be reasonably attributed to pure chance.

## **B. Patterns and Conclusions**

This section analyzes the proportions of each rating among the deals Mr. Duboin played in May and June, 2020. These patterns—particularly the large number of Suspicious deals compared to Anti-Suspicious deals and the large number of Good Decision deals relative to Bad Decision deals—strongly suggest that Mr. Duboin used UI during matches that allowed kibitzers while playing on BBO in May and June, 2020. We do not conclude that Mr. Duboin obtained and used UI in every match that allowed kibitzers, but there is strong evidence that Mr. Duboin used UI in at least some of these matches.

### **1. Overview of Patterns**

Examining the frequency of each rating reveals some suggestive patterns. Table 4 contains the proportion of each rating in the full set of deals, deals during which kibitzing was allowed, and deals during which kibitzing was disallowed:

**Table 4: Giorgio Duboin—Proportions of Ratings**

Rating	<u>All Deals</u>		<u>Kibitzers Allowed</u>		<u>Kibitzers Disallowed</u>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
N	528	74.58%	406	74.09%	122	76.25%
G	65	9.18%	53	9.67%	12	7.50%
B	26	3.67%	14	2.55%	12	7.50%
S	<b>47</b>	<b>6.64%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>8.58%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
A	12	1.69%	3	0.55%	9	5.63%
L	17	2.40%	15	2.74%	2	1.25%
W	12	1.69%	9	1.64%	3	1.88%
Excl.	1	0.14%	1	0.18%	0	0.00%
Total	708	100.00%	548	100.00%	160	100.00%

There are several notable points, most prominently the rise in the proportion of Suspicious deals when kibitzing was allowed relative to when it was disallowed. Additionally, the proportion of Good Decision deals was higher when kibitzers were allowed than disallowed, and the proportion of Bad Decision and Anti-Suspicious deals were lower when kibitzers were allowed than when they were disallowed. These patterns indicate that Mr. Duboin played more effectively when kibitzers were allowed than when they were disallowed, and the patterns are consistent with our conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI during matches that allowed kibitzing.

## **2. Suspicious and Anti-Suspicious Deals**

One of the most telling patterns is the proportion of Suspicious and Anti-Suspicious decisions Mr. Duboin made. Looking at the dataset as a whole, we identified 47 deals that contained Suspicious actions by Mr. Duboin or 6.64% of deals—about one deal in 15. Many deals were rated Suspicious because Mr. Duboin took an unusual or anti-percentage action that succeeded as the cards lay. A player who was not using UI would not know in advance whether

an unusual action would succeed or fail before taking that action.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, if Mr. Duboin was not using UI, we would have expected to see a sizable number of Anti-Suspicious deals—likely a higher number than Suspicious deals—because anti-percentage actions will, by definition, fail more often than they succeed. But we found only 12 Anti-Suspicious deals in the complete dataset; in other words, there were four Suspicious deals for each Anti-Suspicious deal.

Sorting the deals based on whether kibitzers were allowed reveals an even starker pattern, as shown by Table 5:

<b>Table 5: Suspicious (S) and Anti-Suspicious (A) Deals</b>			
	All Deals	Kibitzers Allowed	Kibitzers Disallowed
S Deals	47	47	0
A Deals	12	3	9
Ratio S:A	3.92:1	15.67:1	0:9

All 47 Suspicious deals occurred in matches that allowed kibitzing. Matches that allowed kibitzers contained just three out of 12 Anti-Suspicious deals; the other nine occurred in the smaller set of deals with kibitzers disallowed. The ratio of Suspicious deals to Anti-Suspicious deals was over 15:1 when kibitzers were allowed, while when kibitzers were not allowed, the ratio was 0:9. Thus, not only did Mr. Duboin only make Suspicious decisions in matches that allowed kibitzers, he made Anti-Suspicious decisions at a far lower rate when self-kibitzing was possible than when it was not. These patterns constitute strong support for the conclusion that Mr. Duboin obtained and used UI in matches that allowed kibitzing.

<sup>13</sup> Successful actions that were supported by sound bridge logic were assigned ratings of Normal or Good Decision, rather than Suspicious. Suspicious actions are ones that would appear anti-percentage or illogical to an expert in Mr. Duboin's position. Although many plays made by experts may appear extraordinary, they are usually backed up by bridge logic and thus not considered Suspicious.

### **3. Good Decision and Bad Decision Deals**

Comparing Mr. Duboin's rate of Good Decision and Bad Decision deals also indicates that he used UI during matches that allowed kibitzers. Table 6 displays this pattern:

<b>Table 6: Good Decision (G) and Bad Decision (B) Deals</b>			
	All Deals	Kibitzers Allowed	Kibitzers Disallowed
G Deals	65	53	12
B Deals	26	14	12
Ratio G:B	2.5:1	3.79:1	1:1

In the full set of 708 deals, Mr. Duboin made 65 Good Decisions and 26 Bad Decisions: 2.5 G deals for each B deal. When divided by whether kibitzers were or were not allowed, the patterns diverged. When kibitzers were allowed, Mr. Duboin's ratio of G to B deals rose to 3.79:1, while in matches that disallowed kibitzers, Mr. Duboin's ratio was exactly even, with 12 G deals and 12 B deals. Thus, Mr. Duboin made several times more Good Decisions than Bad Decisions when kibitzers were allowed but an equal number of Bad Decisions as Good Decisions when kibitzers were disallowed. We find that these patterns constitute further support for the conclusion that Mr. Duboin obtained and used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers.

### **C. Comparison with de Wijs and Muller**

We find striking the ratios of Mr. Duboin's Suspicious to Anti-Suspicious deals and Good Decision to Bad Decision deals in matches that allowed kibitzing. Mr. Duboin's performance, in our view, cannot be explained solely by his world-class skill. To be blunt, we believe that Mr. Duboin played like someone who had UI regarding the full layouts of the deals.

To check our expectations about how a world-class player playing in top form would perform, we conducted analyses on Dutch players Simon de Wijs's and Bauke Muller's online

bridge play that was identical to the analysis we performed on Mr. Duboin's play. We selected de Wijs and Muller because they are world-class players in one of the most successful partnerships in bridge, and they are not under suspicion of cheating. Among numerous other victories, they have won two open world championships as partners, and Mr. Muller won a third world championship playing with a different partner.<sup>14</sup>

To ensure that we examined deals played when de Wijs and Muller were performing in good form, the analysts searched for an event played online in which de Wijs and Muller achieved strong results. The analysts selected the 3rd OCBL Open Teams, held on BBO from July 15-19, 2020, because de Wijs and Muller played as partners for the entire event; their team won the event;<sup>15</sup> and de Wijs and Muller achieved a high Butler score in the round-robin, outscoring the average score of the field by 1.2 imps per board.<sup>16</sup> De Wijs and Muller's performance clearly qualifies as a strong showing by a world-class pair.

De Wijs and Muller played 148 deals during the 3rd OCBL: 88 during the round-robin phase and 60 during the knockout phase. We analyzed each deal using the methodology described above. We assigned de Wijs and Muller an independent rating on each deal. Table 7 provides the results of these analyses, compared with Mr. Duboin's performance on full set of 708 deals:

<b>Table 7: de Wijs and Muller compared to Mr. Duboin's complete set of deals</b>						
<u>Player</u>	<u>Simon de Wijs</u>		<u>Bauke Muller</u>		<u>Giorgio Duboin</u>	
<u>Rating</u>	<u># Deals</u>	<u>% Deals</u>	<u># Deals</u>	<u>% Deals</u>	<u># Deals</u>	<u>% Deals</u>
N	118	79.73%	127	85.81%	528	74.58%
G	11	7.43%	7	4.73%	65	9.18%
B	8	5.41%	4	2.70%	26	3.67%
S	1	<b>0.68%</b>	0	<b>0.00%</b>	47	<b>6.64%</b>

<sup>14</sup> See the WBF's player database: <http://www.worldbridge.org/people-finder/>.

<sup>15</sup> See <https://ocbl.org/3ocblopen/>.

<sup>16</sup> The Butler score is a measure of a pair's performance relative to the field's, irrespective of their teammates performances or the imps won or lost on any given board. The score is calculated by comparing the pair's score against the field's average score (datum); de Wijs and Muller outscored the datum by 106 imps over 88 boards, for a Butler of 1.2 imps/board. See <https://ocbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/3OCBLTBUTLER.pdf>.

A	8	5.41%	9	6.08%	12	1.69%
L	2	1.35%	1	0.68%	17	2.40%
W	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	12	1.69%
Excl.	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.14%
Total	148	100.00%	148	100.00%	708	100.00%

De Wijs's and Muller's numbers are similar but not identical to each other, and they are approximately what we expected to see: Anti-Suspicious deals, encompassing clear errors and unusual actions that failed, outnumbered Suspicious deals, and the numbers of Good Decision and Bad Decision deals were roughly equivalent. Based on the numbers, it appears that Mr. Muller played more effectively than Mr. de Wijs during the 3rd OCBL with lower rates of Bad Decision and Anti-Suspicious deals than Mr. de Wijs. That two of Mr. Muller's deals were rated Suspicious indicates that two of his unusual actions succeeded, while Mr. de Wijs's lack of Suspicious deals indicates that he did not take any clearly inferior but successful actions. The Lazy ratings indicate that Mr. de Wijs took two careless actions that succeeded and that Mr. Muller took one careless action that succeeded. The lack of Weird ratings indicates that neither player took any action that we could not classify.

Despite de Wijs and Muller's strong performance in the 3rd OCBL, Mr. Duboin's numbers outstrip both de Wijs's and Muller's in the direction suggesting better results: Mr. Duboin has a higher proportion of Suspicious and Good Decision deals and a lower proportion of Anti-Suspicious and Bad Decision deals. Additionally, Mr. Duboin has a higher proportion of Lazy ratings than either de Wijs or Muller, indicating that Mr. Duboin's careless plays cost less often than de Wijs's or Muller's.

When deals were divided into whether kibitzers were or were not allowed, Mr. Duboin's ratings further from de Wijs's and Muller's. Table 8 shows these results:



**Table 8: de Wijs and Muller compared to Mr. Duboin kibitzers/no kibitzers**

<u>Player</u>	<u>Simon de Wijs</u>		<u>Bauke Muller</u>		<u>Giorgio Duboin</u> Kib. Disallowed		<u>Giorgio Duboin</u> Kib. Allowed	
Rating	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
N	118	79.73%	127	85.81%	122	76.25%	406	74.09%
G	11	7.43%	7	4.73%	12	7.50%	53	9.67%
B	8	5.41%	4	2.70%	12	7.50%	14	2.55%
<b>S</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.68%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>8.58%</b>
A	8	5.41%	9	6.08%	9	5.63%	3	0.55%
L	2	1.35%	1	0.68%	2	1.25%	15	2.74%
W	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	1.88%	9	1.64%
Excl.	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.18%
Total	148	100.00%	148	100.00%	160	100.00%	548	100.00%

Mr. Duboin's performance when kibitzers were disallowed resembles de Wijs's and Muller's, with the proportion of Normal, Suspicious, Bad Decision, and Anti-Suspicious deals falling between de Wijs's and Muller's numbers. Mr. Duboin appears to have performed somewhat worse than de Wijs and Muller over this set of deals, though, with a lower Good Decision deal proportion than either Dutch player.

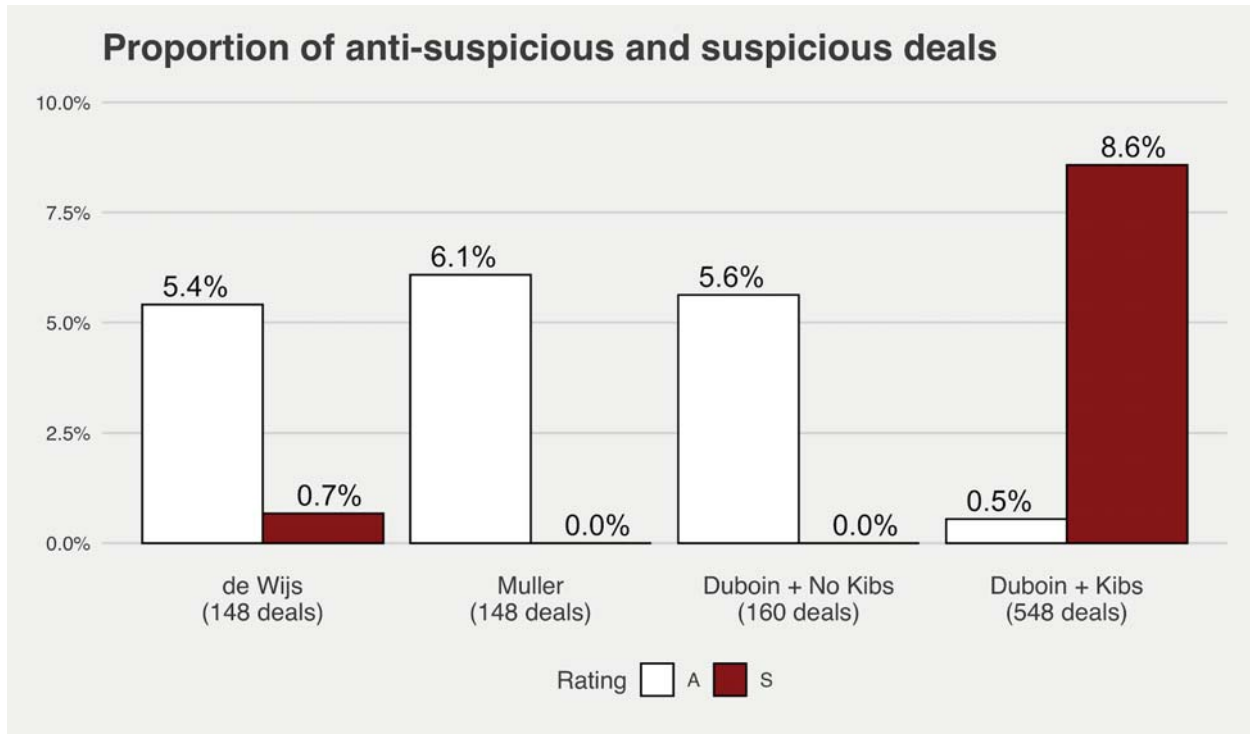


Figure 1. The ratio of A and S hands for de Wijs, Muller, and Duboin

When kibitzers were allowed, however, Mr. Duboin's performance was far better than de Wijs's and Muller's. Mr. Duboin's Good Decision proportion is only slightly higher, but his Bad Decision and Anti-Suspicious proportions—indicating decisions that worked badly—are far lower than either Dutch player's, and his Suspicious deal proportion—indicating decisions that worked well—is far higher than either Dutch player's. Figure 1 displays that Mr. Duboin had a typical amount of A deals when kibitzers were disallowed, while there was a substantial increase in S deals when Mr. Duboin played in matches that allowed kibitzers. Thus, the comparison between Mr. Duboin's performance and de Wijs's and Muller's performances further supports the conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers.

### **III. Analytics Findings**

Although our opinion that Mr. Duboin obtained and used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers is based on bridge analysis, not statistics, we recruited two well-known experts in bridge analytics to our investigative team. The two consultants were Nicolas Hammond and Jonathan Cooke.

Part A discusses Mr. Hammond’s methodology, findings, and conclusions. Part B gives a detailed description of Mr. Cooke’s methodology, which analyzes a player’s performance in four categories: (1) declarer play; (2) defense by the opening leader’s partner; (3) defense by the opening leader excluding the opening lead; and (4) the opening lead. Part C describes the statistical profiles of several world-class bridge players in each of these four metrics—four players strongly believed to be honest and one player who confessed to have been self-kibitzing. Part D describes Mr. Duboin’s statistical profile and compares it to other world class players’ profiles. It also divides the deals Mr. Duboin played into two categories based on whether kibitzers were allowed or not. It compares his performance with kibitzers to his performance without kibitzers.

The statistical data provided by Mr. Hammond and Mr. Cooke support our conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers while playing bridge on BBO in May and June, 2020.

#### **A. Methodology and Findings—Nicolas Hammond**

We asked Mr. Hammond to analyze the same set of 708 deals played by Mr. Duboin online in May and June, 2020, that we analyzed. Mr. Hammond prepared a report, which is attached as **Appendix D**. This section describes the most relevant findings of Mr. Hammond’s report.

Mr. Hammond calculated statistics on declarer play, opening leads, and defensive play after the opening lead. His report explains how he calculated these statistics:

For declarer play, every card played from hand or dummy was compared against double dummy. If the card did not give up a trick, it is considered a 'good' card, if it gives up a trick it is considered a 'bad' card. To enable true comparisons with other players that are independent of the time of the claim, the number of 'bad' cards was compared to the maximum number of possible cards played, this is known as the declarer weighted error rate (DECWER).

For opening leads, every opening lead was compared against double dummy. If the card did not give up a trick, it is considered a 'good' card, if it gives up a trick it is considered a 'bad' card. The double dummy opening lead accuracy rate (DDOLAR) can then be calculated.

For defensive play, every card played after the opening lead was compared against double dummy. If the card did not give up a trick, it is considered a 'good' card, if it gives up a trick it is considered a 'bad' card. To enable true comparisons with other players that are independent of the time of the claim, the number of 'bad' cards was compared to the maximum number of possible cards played, this is known as the defensive weighted error rate (DEFWER).

Appendix D, pp. 5-6. Mr. Hammond made several relevant findings. They were:

**Defensive play:** Mr. Hammond found that Mr. Duboin had a defensive weighted error rate of 0.73% when playing online in events that allowed kibitzers. Mr. Duboin's weighted error rate was 1.66% in matches that disallowed kibitzers.

If, in face-to-face bridge, Mr. Duboin achieved a weighted error rate of 0.73%, he would rank second among all players Mr. Hammond has data on. Only Lotan Fisher, who was expelled from the ACBL for cheating,<sup>17</sup> has a lower defensive weighted error rate, which is 0.72%. Mr. Duboin's own defensive error rate in face-to-face bridge is 1.18%. See Appendix D, pp. 20-21.

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<sup>17</sup> See <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/acbl-expells-fisher-and-schwartz/>. This is not the only disciplinary action taken against Mr. Fisher.

**Declarer Play:** Mr. Hammond found that Mr. Duboin is a more effective declarer playing online than playing face-to-face. In matches that allowed kibitzers, Mr. Duboin’s weighted error rate was 1.28%. If Mr. Duboin had achieved this error rate in face-to-face bridge, it would be the lowest error rate among all players Mr. Hammond has data on. Mr. Duboin’s weighted error rate in face-to-face bridge is 1.70%. When playing online in matches with kibitzers disallowed, Mr. Duboin’s weighted error rate was 1.39%. See Appendix D, p. 19.

**Opening leads:** Mr. Hammond found that he could not make statistically valid findings about Mr. Duboin’s performance on opening lead because Mr. Duboin made “too few [opening] leads for statistics to be relevant.” See Appendix D, p. 20.

\*       \*       \*

Mr. Hammond provided statistics only; he expressed no opinions about what conclusions may be drawn from Mr. Duboin’s statistics or his statistics in comparison with other players’ statistics. We, however, believe that these statistics are evidence that supports our conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches played online that allowed kibitzing. Mr. Duboin’s online statistics are exceptional, and the fact that Mr. Duboin’s statistics—particularly his defensive statistics—fall when kibitzers are disallowed, and are much better than his face-to-face statistics, lends further support to our conclusion.

## **B. Methodology—Jonathan Cooke**

Like Mr. Hammond’s, Mr. Cooke’s statistical analysis uses double-dummy results as a proxy for performance. However, Mr. Cooke focuses on the number of tricks a player costs, rather than the percentage of plays that cost. Although actions that cost one or more tricks compared to double-dummy are not necessarily poor choices (nor actions that obtain the best double-dummy

result necessarily good ones), the statistical merit of these figures is premised on the idea that on average double-dummy efficacy is a good proxy for single-dummy performance. In particular, over a large number of actions, luck tends to even out. We believe that these statistical measures, while not conclusive proof standing alone, provide valuable context about how well bridge players perform. Three of the categories are calculated in the same way: (1) declarer play; (2) defense by the opening leader's partner; and (3) defense by the opening leader excluding the opening lead. The final category, (4) opening leads, is calculated differently.

### **1. Declarer Play**

Declarer play efficacy is measured by calculating the average number of tricks a declarer loses per deal, relative to double-dummy. At each turn to play from declarer's hand or dummy, the possible double-dummy results are calculated by a double-dummy solver. Then, the number of tricks declarer's choice costs, if any, is calculated. A play that preserves the best double-dummy result possible costs no tricks and receives the score of 0. A play that loses one or more tricks receives a score of -1, -2, and so on. After each deal, the total number of tricks lost relative to double-dummy is calculated, and this score is divided by the number of deals examined. Because the number of tricks lost is calculated, the number is always negative and the closer to 0, the better a player's declarer play.

This method of calculating declarer play efficacy has two clear strengths:

1. It is unaffected by early claims. When a claim occurs, it becomes a player's final play on the deal. If the claim is for fewer than the double-dummy number of tricks, declarer receives a negative score to add to his total for the deal. If he claims the double-dummy number, he gets a 0 to add to his score.

2. It is independent of the opponents' play. The double-dummy calculation is redone as each card is played, so at each decision point, declarer is measured against the number of tricks *then available* at double-dummy. If an opponent's opening lead costs a trick and declarer subsequently gives the trick back in the play, declarer receives a -1 even though he took the number of tricks originally available at double-dummy.

## **2. Defense by the Non-Leader**

The second measure is the effectiveness of defensive plays by the non-leader—the partner of the opening leader. It is calculated identically to how declarer play effectiveness is measured: each of the non-leader's plays is assigned a score (0 or a negative integer) based on how many tricks it cost relative to double-dummy. The total result on a deal is the aggregate number of tricks lost relative to double-dummy, and these scores are averaged to produce a player's non-leader score. The upsides of calculating declarer play effectiveness apply here also, and note that the opening leader's choices do not affect the non-leader's score.

## **3. Defense by Opening Leader**

Calculated with the same method as a player's score as non-leader, the opening lead score checks each play for how many tricks it costs compared to double-dummy with the exception of the opening lead. The rationale for excluding the opening lead from this measure is that the opening lead is a distinct skill from defending once dummy is revealed.

#### **4. Opening Lead**

The final measure is a player's accuracy on opening lead.<sup>18</sup> This measurement is calculated by comparing the opening lead chosen to the double-dummy results. A lead is considered safe if it does not cost any tricks relative to double-dummy. A lead is considered unsafe if it costs at least one trick compared to double-dummy. Unlike the other three measurements, the number of tricks a lead costs does not affect a player's opening lead score, which takes the form of a percentage. The percentage given for a player's opening lead score is the percentage of leads that cost one or more tricks compared to double-dummy. The lower the percentage, the more accurate a player's leads.

### **C. Player Profiles**

#### **1. Giorgio Duboin**

Mr. Duboin was not the dummy on 546 deals,<sup>19</sup> and of these he made the opening lead on 161 deals. Table 9 presents the statistical profile generated by Mr. Cooke:

<b>Table 9: Giorgio Duboin Statistical Profile</b>		
Category	Statistic	Explanation
Declarer	-0.35	As declarer, Mr. Duboin cost on average 0.353 tricks per deal compared to double-dummy best.
Opening Leader (after opening lead)	-0.11	As opening leader—but excluding the opening lead—Mr. Duboin cost on average 0.112 tricks per deal compared to double-dummy best.
Non-Opening Leader	-0.11	As the partner of the opening leader, Mr. Duboin cost on average 0.109 tricks per deal compared to double-dummy best.

<sup>18</sup> As discussed above, Mr. Hammond

<sup>19</sup> Mr. Cooke's algorithm omits deals on which the player became dummy as the analysis only examines the play of the hand, in which dummy takes no part. This explains the disparity between the number of deals referred to in this section and the number of deals referred to in other sections. The deals on which Mr. Duboin became dummy are nonetheless relevant to other bridge analysis which consider the bidding, not just the play of the hand and defense.



Opening Lead	13.7%	Mr. Duboin's opening leads cost one or more tricks compared to double-dummy 13.7% of the time.
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Between May 7 and June 26, Mr. Duboin, on average, dropped 0.35 tricks per deal as declarer, 0.11 tricks per deal as the opening leader after dummy came down, and 0.11 tricks per deal as the partner of the opening leader, compared to the double-dummy best results. Additionally, Mr. Duboin's opening leads cost one or more tricks compared to double-dummy best 13.7% of the time.

This statistical profile, of course, is meaningless without placing it into context by comparing it to other top players' profiles.

## **2. Other World-Class Players**

As a comparison for Mr. Duboin's statistical profile, we asked Mr. Cooke to analyze the online performances of and generate statistical profiles of several other world-class players. These profiles serve to put Mr. Duboin's statistical profile into context with how his peers have performed when playing online. In selecting players to compare Mr. Duboin to, we looked for indisputably world-class players<sup>20</sup> from several countries who had played a large number of deals on BBO and were under no suspicion of cheating.

The players we selected were Thomas Bessis (France), Jeff Meckstroth (USA), Alfredo Versace (Italy), and Zia Mahmood (USA/UK/Pakistan). In addition, we asked Mr. Cooke to prepare a statistical profile of Michał Nowosadzki (Poland), a world-class player who confessed

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<sup>20</sup> To examine the playing records of these players in high-level events, see <https://web3.acbl.org/nabcwinnersbyname> (ABCL database); <http://www.worldbridge.org/people-finder/> (WBF database).

to self-kibitzing on BBO.<sup>21</sup> Table 10 presents the statistical profiles of the five other players and compares them to Mr. Duboin's profile:

<b>Table 10: Statistical Profile Comparison</b>				
Player (# deals)	Avg. tricks lost as declarer	Avg. tricks lost as opening leader	Avg. tricks lost as non-leader	Opening leads that cost
Zia (765)	-0.49	-0.17	-0.17	27.4%
Meckstroth (3342)	-0.49	-0.16	-0.17	19.1%
Versace (3450)	-0.45	-0.19	-0.17	16.5%
Bessis (778)	-0.44	-0.18	-0.17	18.4%
Nowosadzki (895)	-0.42	-0.13	-0.11	14.1%
Duboin (546)	-0.35	-0.11	-0.11	13.7%

Figures 2-3 present the same information visually:

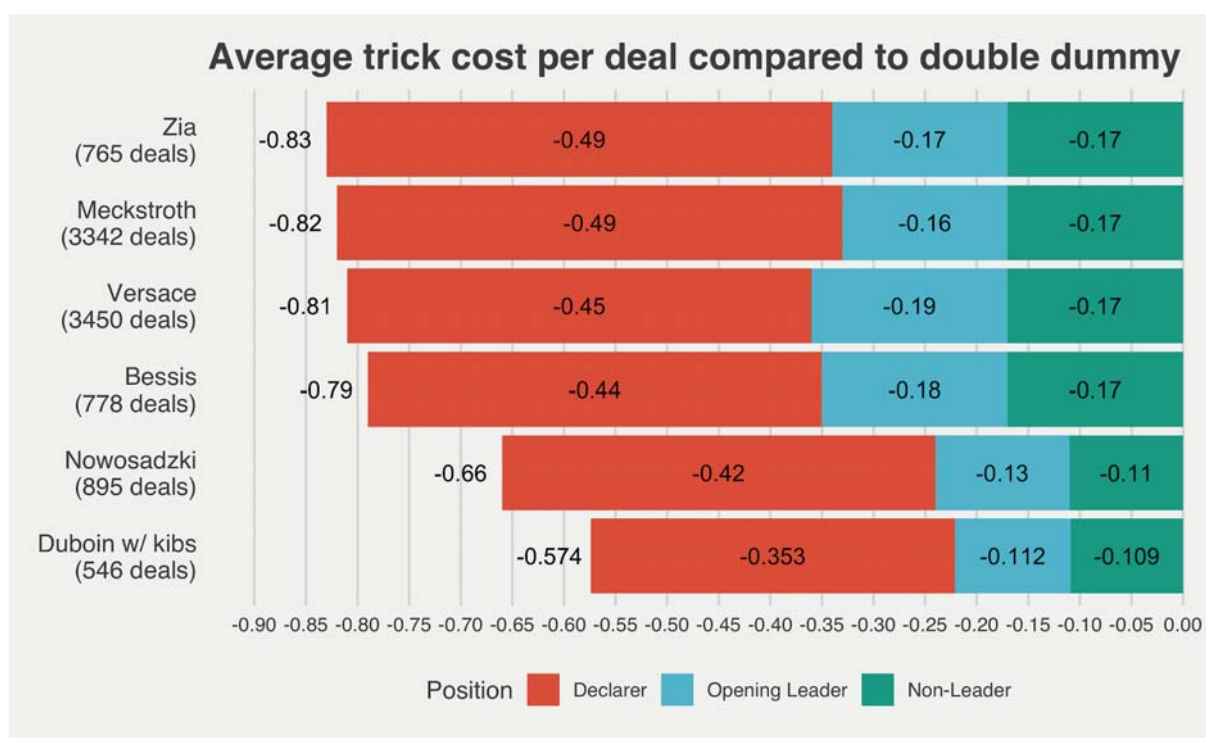


Figure 2: Statistical Comparison—Declarer Play and Defense

<sup>21</sup> See <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/confession-of-a-self-kibitzer/>

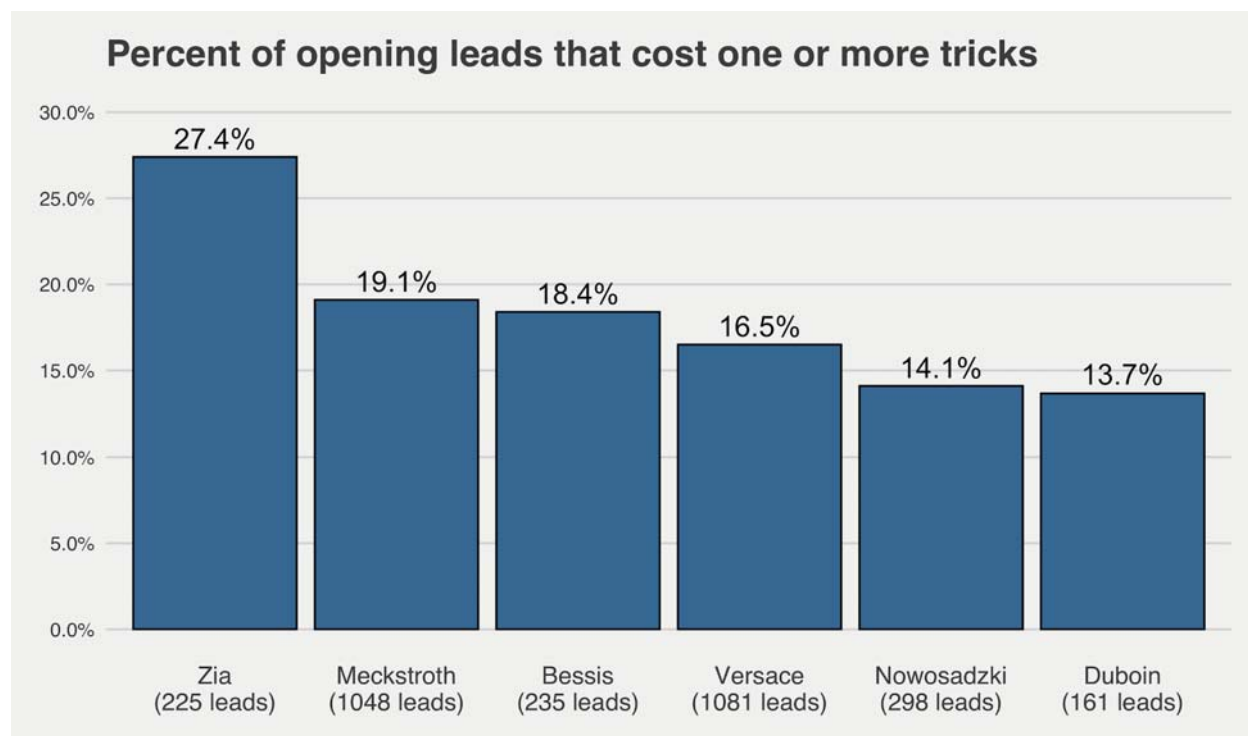


Figure 3: Statistical Comparison—Opening Lead

As Table 10 and Figures 2-3 show, Mr. Duboin's statistics are better than the other five players' statistics in all four measures with one exception: Mr. Duboin's defense as the non-leader is roughly equal to Mr. Nowosadzki's.

We reiterate that our conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI in online matches that allowed kibitzing is based primarily on bridge analysis, not statistics. Nevertheless, these statistical profiles are consistent with and support the conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI. Mr. Duboin's performance was markedly better than any of the world-class players we analyzed. Combined with the bridge analysis outlined above and discussed in detail below, these statistics indicate that Mr. Duboin was using UI while playing on BBO in matches that allowed kibitzing in May and June, 2020.

## IV. Detailed Analysis of Mr. Duboin's Play

Previous sections have explained the overview of the case against Mr. Duboin from the bridge perspective—explaining the methodology and the overall findings by the expert analysts—and the statistical perspective—examining Mr. Duboin's performance between May 7 and June 26 compared to that of other top players. This section explains in detail the evidence against Mr. Duboin.

**Part A** gives examples of Normal (N), Good Decision (G), and Bad Decision (B) deals, which constitute the vast majority of the deals played by Mr. Duboin. These deals are too numerous for us to address each one, but we provide several representative examples in each category to give the reader context for what a Normal, Good Decision, or Bad Decision rating resembles. **Part B** presents the deals we identified as Suspicious (S): 47 from matches that allowed kibitzing and zero from matches that disallowed kibitzing. Every deal is presented and analyzed. **Part C** performs the same analysis on deals rated Anti-Suspicious (A). There were 12 such deals, three from matches that allowed kibitzing and nine from matches that disallowed kibitzing. **Part D** presents the Lazy deals, and **Part E** the Weird deals. **Part F** presents an analysis of Mr. Duboin's preempting style; we observed that his style is inconsistent but highly successful—both his aggressive and his conservative preempts work well. This discussion illustrates an area of bidding where a player can make a number of decisions which, standing alone, are unsuspicious, but taken together suggest the use of UI.

### A. Normal, Good Decision, and Bad Decision Deals

This section explains and gives examples of deals considered Normal (N), Good Decisions (G), or Bad Decisions (B). As discussed above, in Part III, an N deal is essentially one where Mr. Duboin made decisions that would have been clear for a player at his level, a G deal is one where Mr. Duboin chose a winning action among at least two reasonable choices, and a B deal is one where he chose a losing action among at least two reasonable choices. Table 11 provides a breakdown of Mr. Duboin's numbers of N, G, and B deals:

<b>Table 11: Giorgio Duboin—Proportions of N, G, B Deals</b>						
Rating	<u>All Deals</u>		<u>Kibitzers Allowed</u>		<u>Kibitzers Disallowed</u>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
N	528	74.58%	406	74.09%	122	76.25%
G	65	9.18%	53	9.67%	12	7.50%
B	26	3.67%	14	2.55%	12	7.50%

N deals are by far the most common type of deal, making up approximately 75% of the deals Mr. Duboin played, regardless of whether or not kibitzers were allowed. Overall, Mr. Duboin's Good Decision deals outnumbered his Bad Decision deals 65-26, but there was a clear difference in these categories based on whether or not kibitzers were allowed. When kibitzers were allowed, G deals outnumbered B deals 53-14, for a ratio of 3.79:1. But when kibitzers were disallowed, the numbers were equal: 12 G deals and 12 B deals, a ratio of 1:1.

There are too many deals in these three categories to address every one of them. Instead, this section provides representative examples of each category. Subsection 1 addresses N deals, subsection 2 discusses G deals, and subsection 3 covers B deals.

### **1. Normal Deals**

Normal deals made up a clear majority—approximately 75%—of deals played by Mr. Duboin, whether kibitzers were allowed or not, as well as a clear majority of deals played by de Wijs (79.73%) and Muller (85.81%). Table 12 compares Mr. Duboin’s rates of N deals with de Wijs’ and Muller’s rates:

<b>Table 12: Normal (N) Deal Comparison</b>			
Player	# N deals	Total # deals	% of S deals
Giorgio Duboin (Kibs Allowed)	406	548	74.09%
Giorgio Duboin (Kibs Disallowed)	122	160	76.25%
Simon de Wijs	118	148	79.73%
Bauke Muller	127	148	85.81%

N deals encompass flat boards with nothing of interest, successful decisions that are clear for a world-class player, and poor results produced by clear world-class play, such as taking a finesse that is the percentage play when an anti-percentage line would have done better on the actual deal. We reiterate that playing at a world-class level does not necessarily result in Good Decision or Suspicious ratings—elite play is Normal if it is supported by solid bridge reasoning. Four examples of N deals follow.

#3586 ULI v Rippey, Board 14

<https://tinyurl.com/y6gmfqde>

<div>14</div>		<b>N</b> giacomopr ♠ A4 ♥ A10 ♦ KJ76532 ♣ K7	<table> <tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td>X</td><td>XX</td><td>1♣</td><td>1♥</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>4♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	X	XX	1♣	1♥	P	4♥	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																
X	XX	1♣	1♥																
P	4♥	P	P																
P																			
<b>W</b> 100dog ♠ 86532 ♥ J ♦ 1084 ♣ A1043	♠ 2	<b>E</b> Giova007 ♠ QJ7 ♥ 8762 ♦ AQ ♣ Q986																	
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ K109 ♥ KQ9543 ♦ 9 ♣ J52		4♥ S      NS: 0 EW: 0																

- X: likely 4-5 spades
- 1♠: 3 spades (with 4 East would have jumped to 2♠)

Mr. Duboin played this deal beautifully. He won the spade lead in his hand and led a diamond to the ♦J and ♦Q. He won the spade return and ruffed a diamond, which established the suit. He ruffed his spade loser, cashed the ♥A, noting the fall of the ♥J, and played another diamond, ruffed and overruffed.

At this point, although Mr. Duboin could have made the contract by drawing trumps and relying on the ♣A to be onside, he made the expert play of drawing just one round of trumps and then *exiting in hearts* to endplay East. Mr. Duboin knew the distribution based on the bidding and the carding in spades, so East was down to all clubs left. If the ♣A had been offside, Mr. Duboin's play would have been necessary to make the contract.

This line of play is Normal for a player of Mr. Duboin's caliber.

OCBL-1, RR4, Board 01

<https://tinyurl.com/y436bc48>

D	N lucadm	W	N	E	S
1	♠ KJ ♥ AKQ2 ♦ J8 ♣ AKJ93		2♣	4♦	7NT
		P	P	P	
W pierced	♦ 2	E malpaluche			
♠ 108432 ♥ J754 ♦ 2 ♣ 542		♠ 6 ♥ 1086 ♦ Q10976543 ♣ 8			
	S giorginod				
	♠ AQ975 ♥ 93 ♦ AK ♣ Q1076				
		7NT S			NS: 0 EW: 0

Mr. Duboin successfully leaps to 7NT on the first round of the auction. This deal was rated Normal because the partnership had little chance to meaningfully investigate, and 7NT was overwhelmingly likely to succeed.



OCBL-2, QF, Board 13

<https://tinyurl.com/y4oz7ot6>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>13</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ KQ107654            ♥ 7            ♦ Q63            ♣ 94         </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>3♠ P P P</div>
<div>W hultahult</div> <div>           ♠ A93            ♥ J62            ♦ 9875            ♣ AQ8         </div>	<div>♣ 2</div>	<div>E Rerack</div> <div>           ♠ J8            ♥ A93            ♦ K102            ♣ J10732         </div>	
	<div>S berny75</div> <div>           ♠ 2            ♥ KQ10854            ♦ AJ4            ♣ K65         </div>		<div>3♠ N NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin's 3♠ opening bid is perfectly Normal, as is his play. The defense started with two rounds of clubs and a diamond shift. Needing to hold his spade losers to one, Mr. Duboin made the percentage play of low to the ♠10, which lost to the doubleton ♠J offside.

Although Mr. Duboin could have made the contract by playing the spade honors from the top, an expert would know that was the wrong play, so this deal is considered Normal, not a Bad Decision. Mr. Duboin had only one reasonable option available.

#6880 Those F\*\*kers v ULI, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/y5pblxku>

<div><div></div><div>8</div></div>	<div>N itsgrim</div> <div>♠ J8</div> <div>♥ 8542</div> <div>♦ KQ</div> <div>♣ Q10954</div>	<div><div>W</div><div>N</div><div>E</div><div>S</div></div> <div><div>1NT</div><div>P</div><div>2♦</div><div>P</div></div> <div><div>3♣</div><div>P</div><div>3♦</div><div>P</div></div> <div><div>3♥</div><div>P</div><div>3♠</div><div>P</div></div> <div><div>4♦</div><div>P</div><div>4♥</div><div>P</div></div> <div><div>P</div><div>P</div><div></div><div></div></div>
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ K</div> <div>♥ AKJ10</div> <div>♦ AJ86</div> <div>♣ J862</div>	<div>♣ 10</div>	<div>E Giacomopr</div> <div>♠ A76532</div> <div>♥ Q973</div> <div>♦ 2</div> <div>♣ A3</div>
	<div>S Etttleton</div> <div>♠ Q1094</div> <div>♥ 6</div> <div>♦ 1097543</div> <div>♣ K7</div>	<div>4♥ W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

- 2♦: 4+ hearts
- 3♣: maximum with 4 hearts
- 3♦: retransfer

Mr. Duboin's decision to open 1NT looks correct to us, with the singleton ♠K and strong hearts. After his super-acceptance and the retransfer, his partner made a move toward slam. Mr. Duboin cooperated, but when his partner could not move over his 4♦ cue, he subsided because the partnership could have been missing a club control from his point of view.

Although 12 tricks would have been possible on some lies of the opponents' cards, on the actual layout 11 tricks was the limit, and Mr. Duboin duly made 11 tricks.

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin made sound Normal choices on this deal.

## 2. Good Decision Deals

Next, we present four Good Decision deals, on each of which Mr. Duboin selected a winning action among at least two reasonable options.

#2963 ULI v Austria Israel, Board 13

<https://tinyurl.com/y4hztrnq>

<div>D</div> <div>13</div>	<div>N saurus53</div> <div>♠ J532</div> <div>♥ A52</div> <div>♦ 76</div> <div>♣ J1087</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>2♦ P 1♥ P</div> <div>3♣ P 3♦ P</div> <div>P P 4♣ X</div> <div>4♠ P 5♥ P</div>
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ AK97</div> <div>♥ 106</div> <div>♦ AK832</div> <div>♣ 63</div>	<div>♣ J</div>	<div>E Giacomopr</div> <div>♠ 10</div> <div>♥ KJ987</div> <div>♦ QJ954</div> <div>♣ KQ</div>
	<div>S dr_crazy</div> <div>♠ Q864</div> <div>♥ Q43</div> <div>♦ 10</div> <div>♣ A9542</div>	<div>5♦ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin declared 5♦ after a club lead to the ♣A and a spade shift. He drew trumps and led the ♥6, facing what appears to us to be a pure guess whether to play the ♥K or ♥J. He made the Good Decision to put up the ♥K and make his game.

#2487 GOMMOD v ULI, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/y5a37k3x>

<div><div></div><div>8</div><div></div></div>	<div>NfulldiRe</div> <div><div>♠AKQ65</div><div>♥97652</div><div>♦J9</div><div>♣10</div></div>	<table><tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>2♦</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♦</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>3♥</td><td>P</td><td>3NT</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr></table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♠	P	2♦	P	2♥	P	3♦	P	3♥	P	3NT	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																			
P	1♠	P	2♦																			
P	2♥	P	3♦																			
P	3♥	P	3NT																			
P	P	P																				
<div>Wgabi bi jr</div> <div><div>♠972</div><div>♥AKQ103</div><div>♦65</div><div>♣J94</div></div>	<div>♥A</div>	<div>Efede00</div> <div><div>♠J84</div><div>♥8</div><div>♦1072</div><div>♣Q87532</div></div>																				
	<div>Sgiorginod</div> <div><div>♠103</div><div>♥J4</div><div>♦AKQ843</div><div>♣AK6</div></div>	<div>3NTS</div> <div>NS: 0EW: 0</div>																				

With a promising hand for slam, Mr. Duboin makes a conservative 3NT call on the third round of the auction, essentially giving up on slam. It would have been reasonable for Mr. Duboin to take stronger action, such as a quantitative 4NT, but he made a Good Decision to stay low because West had four heart tricks to cash on opening lead.

OCBL-2, RR6, Board 11 <https://tinyurl.com/y2qmawlv>

<div>11</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>♠ 87632</div> <div>♥ K102</div> <div>♦ J</div> <div>♣ K1094</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>3♦ X P 1NT</div> <div>P P</div>
<div>W przedpelk</div> <div>♠ K104</div> <div>♥</div> <div>♦ K109876</div> <div>♣ A763</div>	♣ 10	<div>E konrad80</div> <div>♠ Q95</div> <div>♥ AJ987643</div> <div>♦</div> <div>♣ 82</div>	
	<div>S berny75</div> <div>♠ AJ</div> <div>♥ Q5</div> <div>♦ AQ5432</div> <div>♣ QJ5</div>		<div>3♦ x W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

After the 3♦ overcall, Mr. Duboin had three possible options: pass, double, and show spades (perhaps via 3♥, a common expert treatment). We think there would be some experts in each camp, and Mr. Duboin's choice to double was obviously a Good Decision when his partner was able to pass for penalty.

OCBL-2, SF, Board 15

<https://tinyurl.com/y85f7yq2>

<div>15</div> <div>D</div>		N bareket	W N E S			
		♠ 96532	P	P	1♠	P
		♥ Q9643	2♣	P	2♣	P
		♦ J93	3♣	P	P	P
W giorginod				E berny75		
♠ A964				♠ K8532		
♥ A74				♥ QJ8		
♦ 82				♦ A105		
♣ KQ62				♣ 105		
		S lengy				
		♠ QJ107				
		♥ K10				
		♦ KJ7				
		♣ A874				
				3♣ E NS: 0 EW: 0		

Even facing a balancing 1♠ overcall, it would have been very reasonable to drive to game with Mr. Duboin's hand. On the actual layout, game is good—cold on 2-2 trumps and with chances on 3-1 trumps. Mr. Duboin's conservative sequence, simply cuebidding and then inviting, was a Good Decision when the opponents' spades divided 4-0 and game was hopeless. The heart and club finesses were onside, so 3♠ succeeded.

### 3. Bad Decision Deals

The final category of deals discussed in this section is Bad Decision deals. These are the counterpart of Good Decision deals. On each of these four deals, Mr. Duboin faced a choice between at least two reasonable options and selected an unsuccessful one.

#49 ULI v SELIGMAN, Board 02 <https://tinyurl.com/yy5n93v8>

<div>2</div>		<b>N</b> Giacomopr ♠ Q32 ♥ 87 ♦ 10984 ♣ A954	<b>W</b> N E S P 1NT P 1♥ P 2♥ P 2♣ P P
<b>W</b> koistinen ♠ K1074 ♥ AQ ♦ Q52 ♣ 8632	♠ 7	<b>E</b> muppe ♠ J65 ♥ 10932 ♦ J ♣ KQJ107	
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ A98 ♥ KJ654 ♦ AK763 ♣		2♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0

- 2♣: Gazzilli, either clubs or 16+ HCP
- 2♥: preference, fewer than 8 HCP

Playing Gazzilli, Mr. Duboin had to choose whether to treat his hand as 11-15 HCP and show his diamond suit immediately or as 16+ HCP and delay showing his second suit—or perhaps never show it at all, as on this auction. Although the hand is certainly worth more than some 15 HCP point hands, rebidding 2♦ was a viable alternative to using Gazzilli because Mr. Duboin would have been too weak to continue with 3♦ over the weakness-showing 2♥ call. By suppressing diamonds, he reached a tenuous 2♥ contract rather than the cold 3♦.

Although a club lead would have put the defense in control, West guessed to lead a spade. Mr. Duboin could have made the contract easily by putting up the ♠Q from dummy, but he guessed to play low, winning the ♠J with the ♠A. He was still in fine shape if he had started trumps immediately, leading low out of his hand (and then leading low again after the ♥Q popped up on his left), but he played a high diamond and then a spade.

The defense could have prevailed after this start, so we conclude that Mr. Duboin made Bad Decisions in both the bidding and the play, even though he was allowed to make his contract by misdefense.



#49 ULI v SELIGMAN, Board 16 <https://tinyurl.com/y2f4rbd8>

<div>16</div>		<b>N</b> Giacomopr ♠ KJ1085 ♥ K73 ♦ 10 ♣ Q986	<div>W N E S</div> <div>1♥ 1♠ 3♥ 4♥</div> <div>4♣ P 5♥ 5♠</div> <div>X P P P</div>
<b>W</b> passell ♠ Q ♥ AQJ86 ♦ AQ982 ♣ A10			<b>E</b> mslair ♠ 42 ♥ 109542 ♦ K5 ♣ J752
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ A9763 ♥ ♦ J7643 ♣ K43		<div>5♦x N NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin's 5♠ bid was reasonable, but it was a Bad Decision. If he had passed, North likely would have doubled. 5♥-X would have gone down two tricks for +500, which is adequate compensation for North-South's game. 5♠ is a poor spot, requiring a friendly club layout and even though declarer received it, 5♠ could have been beaten.<sup>22</sup> Even though Mr. Duboin's call did not cost in practice, it was a Bad Decision because a reasonable alternative—passing—would have ensured a good score for his side.

<sup>22</sup> After a spade or club lead. A club lead is not realistic, but a trump lead to cut down on ruffs would have been a logical choice, and it would have been the killer on the actual layout.

#2963 ULI v Austria Israel, Board 11

<https://tinyurl.com/y5t56az7>

11 D	N saurus53 ♠ J6 ♥ 9765 ♦ K1062 ♣ A53	W N E S			
		P	1NT	P	1♠
W giorginod ♠ K5 ♥ K1032 ♦ QJ95 ♣ Q86	♦ Q	P	P	P	2♣
S dr_crazy ♠ AQ10943 ♥ QJ ♦ A43 ♣ 74	E Giacomopr ♠ 872 ♥ A84 ♦ 87 ♣ KJ1092				
		2♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

Mr. Duboin declined to make an aggressive takeout double of 1♠ that would have gotten his partnership to a making 3♣ rather than defending a making 2♠. Although his pass was reasonable, it was a Bad Decision. Mr. Duboin also made the normal opening lead of the ♦Q, which cost an overtrick.

OCBL-Cup-1, R6, Board 07

<https://tinyurl.com/y6nevj8b>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>	<div>N</div> <div>berny75</div> <div>♠ J97</div> <div>♥ J983</div> <div>♦ K86</div> <div>♣ 1095</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>1♣</div> <div>P 1♥ 1♠ X</div> <div>2♥ P 2♠ X</div> <div>P 3♣ 3♠ P</div> <div>P P</div>
<div>W</div> <div>Skrzat96</div> <div>♠ K65</div> <div>♥ 64</div> <div>♦ A432</div> <div>♣ 7432</div>	<div>♣ A</div>	<div>E</div> <div>badaud4</div> <div>♠ AQ10842</div> <div>♥ K1052</div> <div>♦ 75</div> <div>♣ 8</div>
	<div>S</div> <div>giorginod</div> <div>♠ 3</div> <div>♥ AQ7</div> <div>♦ QJ109</div> <div>♣ AKQJ6</div>	<div>3♣ E</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin chose unsuccessfully to defend against 3♠, which made, instead of competing to the making 4♣. This was a Bad Decision.

## B. Suspicious Deals

Next, we turn to analyzing the Suspicious deals that Mr. Duboin played. In the complete dataset, we identified 47 Suspicious deals (6.64% of the total), but these deals were not evenly distributed across matches that allowed kibitzers and those that disallowed kibitzers. No Suspicious deals occurred in matches in which kibitzers were disallowed, while all 47 Suspicious deals arose in matches that allowed kibitzers. By comparison, world-class pair Simon de Wijs and Bauke Muller had one and zero Suspicious deals, respectively, out of a set of 148 deals. Table 13 compares these proportions of Suspicious deals:

<b>Table 13: Suspicious (S) Deal Comparison</b>			
Player	# S deals	Total # deals	% of S deals
Giorgio Duboin (kibs allowed)	47	548	8.58%
Giorgio Duboin (kibs disallowed)	0	160	0.00%
Simon de Wijs	1	148	0.68%
Bauke Muller	0	148	0.00%

Mr. Duboin's proportion of Suspicious deals when kibitzers were disallowed is roughly equivalent to de Wijs's and Muller's proportions. Mr. Duboin's proportion of Suspicious deals when kibitzers were allowed, however, is far higher.

In this section, we present all 47 deals we rated as Suspicious, along with our reasons for assigning them that rating. The actions Mr. Duboin took on these deals—without a proportionate number of deals that indicate Mr. Duboin was not using UI—lead us to the conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers. Subsection 1 analyzes the Suspicious deals from matches that allowed kibitzers. Subsection 2 notes that we identified no Suspicious deals in matches that disallowed kibitzers.

## 1. Matches that Allowed Kibitzers

Due to the large number of Suspicious deals from matches that allowed kibitzers, the deals are further divided into four categories, based on whether the action occurred in the bidding, on opening lead, later in the defense, or as declarer.

### *Suspicious Actions in the Bidding*

A recurring theme in this set of deals was that Mr. Duboin took inconsistent actions or adopted different styles in similar bidding situations. For example, his bidding style after finding a fit is variable but highly successful. Sometimes he is extraordinarily aggressive:

Major Alt-1, R6, Board 03     <https://tinyurl.com/y5jl2phn>

<div>W</div> <div>3</div> <div>D</div>	<div>N</div> <div>phicro2</div> <div>♠ AQ982</div> <div>♥ J102</div> <div>♦ A72</div> <div>♣ J4</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>P</div> <div>1♠</div> <div>P</div> <div>2♣</div> <div>P</div> <div>2NT</div> <div>P</div> <div>3NT</div> <div>P</div> <div>D</div>
<div>W</div> <div>bebe2112</div> <div>♠ K107</div> <div>♥ A765</div> <div>♦ 1093</div> <div>♣ 1097</div>	<div>♥ 6</div>	<div>E</div> <div>lucrezio14</div> <div>♠ 65</div> <div>♥ K983</div> <div>♦ J54</div> <div>♣ AQ32</div>
	<div>S</div> <div>giorginod</div> <div>♠ J43</div> <div>♥ Q4</div> <div>♦ KQ86</div> <div>♣ K865</div>	<div>3NT S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

In our opinion, it is unreasonable to bid on over 2♠ with Mr. Duboin's hand, and his 2NT call was Suspicious. Over Mr. Duboin's 2♣ Drury bid, opener's 2♠ rebid was the weakest action, cautioning responder not to bid again without a good reason. Mr. Duboin's hand—balanced with only three spades and no aces, tens, or nines—is nowhere near what most experts would classify as a hand worth bidding again in the face of partner's signoff. Third-seat opening bids can be

lighter than normal, and favorable vulnerability is the most likely time for opener to be light in third seat. The 2NT call reached a poor 3NT contract. Against a heart or club lead, the contract will likely depend on playing spades for no loser, a roughly 25% proposition.

On the actual deal, the spade suit lay favorably for declarer, and Mr. Duboin's extremely aggressive action succeeded.

OCBL-2, QF, Board 23

<https://tinyurl.com/y6pe5fkr>

<div>23</div> <div>D</div>	<div>N giorginod</div> <div>♠ J98</div> <div>♥ J3</div> <div>♦ J632</div> <div>♣ Q852</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>P 2♦ P 1♦</div> <div>P 3♦ P 2♠</div> <div>P 5♦ P 4♦</div> <div>D P</div>
<div>W hultahult</div> <div>♠ A63</div> <div>♥ 108764</div> <div>♦ Q7</div> <div>♣ 1093</div>		<div>E Rerack</div> <div>♠ 754</div> <div>♥ K95</div> <div>♦ 98</div> <div>♣ AKJ64</div>
	<div>S berny75</div> <div>♠ KQ102</div> <div>♥ AQ2</div> <div>♦ AK1054</div> <div>♣ 7</div>	<div>5♦ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin's bidding was extremely aggressive. We (along with many experts) would pass 1♦, and we rate the 2♦ call as highly aggressive. At this vulnerability, there is less upside in stealing a contract, and Mr. Duboin's scattered honors indicate that East-West probably lack enough strength to make game on power. Bidding 2♦ also risks going minus when partner has a sound hand because partner is likely to expect a more useful hand.

The 5♦ call is even more aggressive. 4♦ is nonforcing; South had many other forcing options available such as 3♥, and on South's actual hand he might have forced to game (we would have). Raising to game with no singleton, only four trumps, and no ace or king—or even the ♦Q—is impossible in our view.

Even opposite South's super-maximum hand, 5♦ is a poor contract, requiring the ♦Q to drop, to avoid a spade ruff, and, depending on the defense, perhaps the heart finesse to win. However, 5♦ succeeded on this very friendly layout of the cards. In our opinion, the fact that Mr. Duboin's extreme aggression worked makes this deal Suspicious.

Major Alt-1, QF4, Board 02 <https://tinyurl.com/y3nv8yxe>

<div> <div>2</div> <div>♠</div> </div>		<b>N</b> phicro2 ♠ K652 ♥ KJ104 ♦ 983 ♣ 63	<div> <div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div>
			1♠ X P 2♥ P 3♥ P 4♥ P P P
<b>W</b> ronpa ♠ 109 ♥ 873 ♦ A104 ♣ J8752			<b>E</b> dzeronimo ♠ QJ843 ♥ Q9 ♦ K65 ♣ KQ4
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ A7 ♥ A652 ♦ QJ72 ♣ A109		
		4♥ N      NS: 0 EW: 0	

Mr. Duboin's raise to 3♥ is highly aggressive. North could have held a Yarborough on the bidding,<sup>23</sup> and we consider Mr. Duboin's raise to 3♥ clearly anti-percentage. North might have accepted the invitation with a weaker or poorer-fitting hand than he actually held, making 4♥ poor or hopeless.<sup>24</sup>

However, Mr. Duboin's raise worked well on the actual layout because North held a maximum for 2♥ with useful distribution, and game was a reasonable contract. 4♥ would have made if North had played the opening bidder for the ♥Q, but in practice, declarer went down.

The fact that his side achieved a minus score does not make Mr. Duboin's choice less Suspicious. He took an unusually aggressive choice, finding his partner with a fitting maximum and reaching a game that could have—and perhaps should have—made. Our ratings are based on single-dummy bridge logic, not just results.

<sup>23</sup> Although some pairs play an advancing structure under which 2♥ would have shown some values, Mr. Duboin's partnership appears not to have had this agreement based on North's failure to alert and his 4♥ bid. If 2♥ had already shown values, North would have a minimum for his 2♥ call and would have passed 3♥.

<sup>24</sup> If North held the same honors but 4=4=2=3 distribution, 4♥ would have been virtually hopeless, and even 3♥ would have been in jeopardy.





Sometimes, however, Mr. Duboin is conservative after finding a fit:

OCBL-Cup-1, R10, Board 07

<https://tinyurl.com/yxtr89jk>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>		<b>N ICEBALDI</b> ♠ 5 ♥ J653 ♦ AQJ74 ♣ 1083	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>1♠</td><td>1♣</td></tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td><td>4♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♥	1♠	1♣	3♣	4♥	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																
P	1♥	1♠	1♣																
3♣	4♥	P	P																
P																			
<b>W berny75</b> ♠ J742 ♥ Q1074 ♦ 932 ♣ 76	<div>♠ 3</div>	<b>E giorginod</b> ♠ K9863 ♥ A ♦ K1086 ♣ KQ5																	
	<b>S dagur</b> ♠ AQ10 ♥ K982 ♦ 5 ♣ AJ942		4♥ N      NS: 0 EW: 0																

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin's pass over 4♥ is Suspicious because we consider 4♠ automatic. His vulnerable partner raised at the three level (we disapprove of the raise), which is not a preemptive call and thus carries no connotation of weakness. Mr. Duboin should have been able to count on some values in his partner's hand, but West has almost nothing, and his best values are in the opponents' suit. Mr. Duboin's conservative choice not to bid 4♠ was a success, though—4♠ could have been beaten three tricks and have been doubled, while the opponents' 4♥ contract failed.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> 4♥ could have been made as the cards lay, and if Mr. Duboin doubled (perhaps showing an offensively-oriented hand in his bidding style) declarer might have deduced the layout and made the contract. This makes Mr. Duboin's passing despite holding substantial extra values for the 1♠ overcall look even more successful.

OCBL-Cup-1, R6, Board 04

<https://tinyurl.com/y5f9ruxq>

<div> <div>4</div> </div>	<div>N berny75</div> <div>           ♠ 974            ♥ Q10872            ♦ Q652            ♣ J         </div>	<div>W N E C+S</div> <div>           P P 1♦ 3♣            3♦ 3♣ P P            P         </div>
	<div>W Skrzat96</div> <div>           ♠ 105            ♥ AJ4            ♦ A874            ♣ 10876         </div>	<div>E badaud4</div> <div>           ♠ AJ8            ♥ 65            ♦ KJ1093            ♣ A53         </div>
	<div>S giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ KQ632            ♥ K93            ♦            ♣ KQ942         </div>	<div>3♣ N NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

We regard Mr. Duboin's pass of 3♣ as Suspicious. He has a void and sound values, and his partner bid voluntarily at the three-level, vulnerable. In our opinion Mr. Duboin should have expected a more useful hand than his partner held for the 3♣ bid,<sup>26</sup> and Mr. Duboin had an automatic 4♠ call.

On the actual layout, though, Mr. Duboin's partnership did exactly right: both 3♦ and 3♣ make. Mr. Duboin's decision to pass found his partner bidding with a sub-minimum hand and nine tricks was the limit of the hand.

<sup>26</sup> Although North would have had to bid 3♣ with a spade preference if West had passed, West's 3♦ call takes North off the hook. North only expects an eight-card fit, and he has poor values with no aces or kings. His red suit length and strength looks more useful on defense than offense. We would have passed with the North hand.

OCBL-Cup-1, R6, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/yxfmd73k>

<div>2</div> <div>♠</div>		<div>N</div> berny75		<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div>			
		♠ KQJ876		5+♥ 5+♦ P P			
		♥ AJ974		2♦ 4♦ P P			
		♦ Q9					
		♣					
<div>W</div> Skrzat96				<div>E</div> badaud4			
♠ K108763				♠ Q954			
♥ A3				♥ 1052			
♦ 32				♦ KQ10			
♣ J75				♣ A102			
		<div>S</div> giorginod					
		♠ AJ2					
		♥ 94					
		♦ 865					
		♣ K8643					
				4♦ N NS: 0 EW: 0			

- 2♦: Multi, weak two in a major

We consider Mr. Duboin's pass of the unfavorable-vulnerability Leaping Michaels call Suspicious. 4♦ is already down, and bidding on would have made things worse for Mr. Duboin's partnership, possibly attracting a double. Not only do many partnerships play Leaping Michaels as forcing, Mr. Duboin's hand is far from worthless facing a two-suited hand, and we think it is right to bid even if 4♦ was agreed as nonforcing.<sup>27</sup>

Note that without the unusual agreement that 4♦ showed diamonds and hearts specifically, Mr. Duboin's pass would not have been an option. If 4♦ could have contained length in either major (because West's suit was unknown), Mr. Duboin would have had to keep 4♠ in play. We would have bid 4♠, pass-or-correct, because it is unlikely North has a longer major than diamonds.<sup>28</sup> We would have reached 5♦, likely doubled; Mr. Duboin did far better.

<sup>27</sup> A hand like ♠x ♥KQJxx ♦AQJxx ♣Ax (a normal hand at these colors) makes 5♦ a reasonable contract, and adding the ♥10 or ♦10 would improve prospects further. North could have a better or more distributional hand too.

<sup>28</sup> (1) As a passed hand, Mr. Duboin could not have a spade suit long or strong enough to suggest as trumps on this auction, so if North's major were unknown 4♠ would clearly be pass-or-correct. (2) Experts tend to avoid showing a major-minor two-suited hand with greater length in the major suit than the minor. Missing a major fit is very risky.

OCBL-2, RR3, Board 07

<https://tinyurl.com/y3uqquvv>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N nickfg1</div> <div>♠ 3</div> <div>♥ KJ1097</div> <div>♦ J943</div> <div>♣ 764</div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>♣</td><td></td><td></td><td>♠ 1♣</td></tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	♣			♠ 1♣	1NT	P	2♣	P	P	2♥	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																				
♣			♠ 1♣																				
1NT	P	2♣	P																				
P	2♥	P	P																				
P																							
<div>W berny75</div> <div>♠ Q54</div> <div>♥ 642</div> <div>♦ Q5</div> <div>♣ AK832</div>	<div>♣ Q</div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div>♠ 10986</div> <div>♥ Q85</div> <div>♦ K72</div> <div>♣ QJ10</div>																					
	<div>S AMesbur</div> <div>♠ AKJ72</div> <div>♥ A3</div> <div>♦ A1086</div> <div>♣ 95</div>		<div>2♥ N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

- 1♣ = strong, artificial, forcing
- 1NT = transfer overcall, showing clubs

In our opinion, it is Suspicious that Mr. Duboin—with good three-card support and two side cards—failed to “raise” his partner’s vulnerable overcall to 3♣ on the first round or to compete with 3♣ after bidding 2♣.

The direct 3♣ call could have been an effective preempt against an opener who had not yet described his distribution. Even after having gone low with 2♣ on the first round, competing with 3♣ had a real chance to gain, particularly if partner held a six-card club suit, which is common for a vulnerable overcall that commits the partnership to the two-level. Mr. Duboin’s conservative course was successful here, avoiding a 3♣ contract which would have been down three.

Mr. Duboin is also variably aggressive and conservative when deciding whether to enter or re-enter the auction. On some deals, he is bold:

OCBL-1, RR2, Board 09

<https://tinyurl.com/y5llslyf>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>9</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>             ♠ A8532              ♥ AQ95              ♦ 3              ♣ 762           </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>P</td><td>1♣</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td><td>P</td><td>1NT</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>X</td><td>P</td><td>2♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S		P	1♣	P	1♣	P	1NT	P	P	X	P	2♥	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																				
	P	1♣	P																				
1♣	P	1NT	P																				
P	X	P	2♥																				
P	P	P																					
<div>W pikolo</div> <div>             ♠ KJ76              ♥ 8              ♦ Q742              ♣ K543           </div>		<div>E bljosef</div> <div>             ♠ Q4              ♥ J42              ♦ AK108              ♣ A1098           </div>																					
	<div>S gioffi</div> <div>             ♠ 109              ♥ K10763              ♦ J965              ♣ QJ           </div>		<div>2♥ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin's double of 1NT is Suspicious. 1NT would have succeeded, while 2♥ made for +110, so Mr. Duboin's double turned a minus into a plus. Doubling 1NT for takeout<sup>29</sup> with a singleton diamond is extremely risky. Diamonds is likely to be South's longest suit, and there may be no safe place to run if partner pulls the double to 2♦.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Although this double is commonly played as penalty by an unpassed hand, it is more naturally played as takeout by a passed hand. South's removing the double indicates that the double was interpreted as takeout.

<sup>30</sup> Consider a distribution like 2=2=5=4 or 2=2=4=5.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW8, Board 03

<https://tinyurl.com/y2bv89zy>

<div> <div>3</div> <div>D</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div> ♠ 74  ♥ AJ10  ♦ AJ2  ♣ QJ975 </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>1♣</td><td>1♠</td><td>X</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>3♣</td><td>P</td><td>3NT</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♣	1♠	X	2♥	3♣	P	3NT	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																
P	1♣	1♠	X																
2♥	3♣	P	3NT																
P	P	P																	
<div>W malorencs</div> <div> ♠ 862  ♥ 842  ♦ Q74  ♣ AK43 </div>		<div>E MajjaLat</div> <div> ♠ KQJ109  ♥ Q75  ♦ 10986  ♣ 8 </div>																	
	<div>S eledub1</div> <div> ♠ A53  ♥ K963  ♦ K53  ♣ 1062 </div>		<div>3NT S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																

Mr. Duboin's choice of 3♣ over 2♥ is extremely unusual. First, a negative double does not imply any support for clubs. The only suit shown by a negative double is hearts. South could easily have held a singleton club in a distribution such as 3=4=5=1. South would have no reason to remove 3♣ to a five-card red suit, which would result in reaching a six-card fit rather than an eight-card fit. Second, West's artificial raise guaranteed Mr. Duboin another chance to compete for a partscore if the auction was going to die in 2♠.<sup>31</sup> Third, delayed action might have allowed Mr. Duboin to better describe his hand. For example, he could plan to double 2♠ for takeout suggested support for the unbid suits.

If Mr. Duboin's goal was to compete for a partscore, he had numerous bidding sequences available clearly superior to his direct 3♣ call. What the 3♣ call achieved was to enable his partner to rebid 3NT, reaching a highly anti-percentage contract that made against an extremely friendly lie of the cards. Passing over 2♥ followed by rebidding 3♣ or doubling might not have achieved this success.

<sup>31</sup> Compare this auction to a 2♠ raise by West. If opener passes over 2♠, he might not get another chance to act.

OCBL-2, RR6, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/y2lhzpp4>

<div><div>d</div><div>8</div></div>	<div><div>N</div><div>giorginod</div><div><div>♠</div>A84</div><div><div>♥</div>J92</div><div><div>♦</div>J10</div><div><div>♣</div>J10872</div></div>	<div><div><div>W</div><div>1♥</div></div><div><div>N</div><div>P</div></div><div><div>E</div><div>2♥</div></div><div><div>S</div><div>X</div></div><div><div>3♦</div><div>P</div></div><div><div>3♥</div><div>P</div></div><div><div>P</div><div>4♣</div></div><div><div>P</div><div>P</div></div><div><div>P</div><div></div></div></div>
<div><div>W</div><div>przedpelk</div><div><div>♠</div>K</div><div><div>♥</div>AK1087</div><div><div>♦</div>K7654</div><div><div>♣</div>64</div></div>	<div><div>♥5</div></div>	<div><div><div>E</div><div>konrad80</div><div><div>♠</div>Q107632</div><div><div>♥</div>Q53</div><div><div>♦</div>Q32</div><div><div>♣</div>9</div></div></div>
	<div><div><div>S</div><div>berny75</div><div><div>♠</div>J95</div><div><div>♥</div>64</div><div><div>♦</div>A98</div><div><div>♣</div>AKQ53</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>4♣</div><div>N</div></div><div><div>NS: 0</div><div>EW: 0</div></div></div>

Mr. Duboin's decision to bid 4♣ on a five-card suit with a balanced hand is very aggressive and would be rejected nearly unanimously by experts. It is Suspicious that he chose this call when his partner held such exceptional support for clubs.

Mr. Duboin's 4♣ call was a successful one. 3♥ would have succeeded for -140, while 4♣ went down one for -50, but a greater success might have occurred. The 4♣ call also could have induced the opponents to compete to 4♥, which would have failed. Bidding 4♣, although highly unusual, was a winner on the layout and was Mr. Duboin's only chance at going plus on the deal.

Other times, he is timid:

#6726 Nickell v Uli, Board 10

<https://tinyurl.com/y2bk3r98>

<div>10<sub>D</sub></div>		<b>N</b> ilaria75 ♠ K4 ♥ Q102 ♦ 10976 ♣ 8752	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			1♥	P	1NT	P	2♣	P	2♥	P	P	P
W	N	E	S																
		1♥	P																
1NT	P	2♣	P																
2♥	P	P	P																
<b>W</b> Stevo ♠ Q1083 ♥ 87 ♦ AK53 ♣ J63	♦2	<b>E</b> levin ♠ 95 ♥ AJ953 ♦ Q8 ♣ AK104																	
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ AJ762 ♥ K64 ♦ J42 ♣ Q9		2♥ E      NS: 0 EW: 0																

Mr. Duboin passed over 1♥, despite holding a normal 1♠ overcall. Although the spade suit is mediocre, it does contain two honors, and the 11 HCP would make this a clear 1♠ overcall to virtually all experts, even vulnerable.

However, Mr. Duboin's extreme conservatism worked well. He avoided the chance of a penalty (and even 1♠ undoubled is an ugly contract), but far more importantly he prevented his opponents from accurately evaluating their hands. 3NT makes on the combined 24 HCP, and West would have been able to evaluate his spade holding as worth more than 2 points if Mr. Duboin had overcalled 1♠. With no overcall, West had no reason to be bullish about game prospects and East-West settled in a partscore.

Because Mr. Duboin chose the perfect time not to make a routine overcall, we rated this deal as Suspicious.



The previous example was not the only time Mr. Duboin successfully declined to make a routine overcall:

#2381 Untitled, Board 11

<https://tinyurl.com/yxs6xcv3>

<div>11</div> <div>D</div>		<b>N mno83</b> ♠ KQ1085 ♥ K65 ♦ 942 ♣ Q2	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>1NT</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>3♥</td><td>P</td><td>4♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S				1♥	P	1♠	P	1NT	P	3♥	P	4♥	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																				
			1♥																				
P	1♠	P	1NT																				
P	3♥	P	4♥																				
P	P	P																					
<b>W eledub1</b> ♠ 763 ♥ J7 ♦ J10763 ♣ 754	<div>♦6</div>	<b>E giorginod</b> ♠ AJ9 ♥ 832 ♦ Q8 ♣ AKJ98																					
	<b>S Arkuri</b> ♠ 42 ♥ AQ1094 ♦ AK5 ♣ 1063		4♥ S      NS: 0 EW: 0																				



Mr. Duboin's choice not to overcall 2♣ is unusual and very conservative, given the vulnerability and quality of the club suit and the overall strength of his hand. However, pass worked well when North-South reached an aggressive game and went down two after good defense (down one was declarer's best double-dummy result). If Mr. Duboin had overcalled 2♣, South would have had an automatic pass, and North would have had the opportunity to downgrade his hand based on the suspect ♣Q and bid 2♥. This would likely have resulted in a minus score for East-West on defense against 2♥.

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin's pass over 1♠ is Suspicious.

Mr. Duboin returns to aggression:

Major Alt-1, R6, Board 07

<https://tinyurl.com/y2ey765d>

	<b>N</b> phicro2 ♠ J6 ♥ Q653 ♦ Q982 ♣ Q62	<table><tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>X</td><td>1♦</td></tr><tr><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>1NT</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>2♦</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>D</td><td>D</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♥	X	1♦	1♠	P	P	1NT	P	2♦	2♣	P	D	D		
W	N	E	S																			
P	1♥	X	1♦																			
1♠	P	P	1NT																			
P	2♦	2♣	P																			
D	D																					
<b>W</b> bebe2112 ♠ Q82 ♥ J8742 ♦ 1076 ♣ J4		<b>E</b> lucrezio14 ♠ A1095 ♥ A9 ♦ KJ ♣ A10983																				
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ K743 ♥ K10 ♦ A543 ♣ K75	2♠ W      NS: 0 EW: 0																				

Mr. Duboin's natural 1NT call is aggressive and far from safe. Mr. Duboin's hand is minimum with very poor spot cards, and he had already shown his values with his opening bid. Additionally, at these colors, there is less upside in competing aggressively for a partscore.<sup>32</sup> The 1NT call worked on the actual deal; Mr. Duboin's partner held four-card diamond support that he had previously suppressed, and East had an automatic 2♠ bid, which had a chance to fail.

Mr. Duboin put up the best possible defense, by winning the ♠K at trick one and shifting to the ♦A and another diamond. This play was reasonable but unintuitive. Declarer is relatively short of entries to dummy, and playing a diamond might have helped declarer by conceding a trick outright or by letting him take a finesse he would have been unable to take.

On the actual layout, the diamond shift made things most challenging for declarer, who did not find the double-dummy winning line. If Mr. Duboin had chosen to defend against 1♠, his side would certainly have gone minus.

<sup>32</sup> With both sides vulnerable, the risk of competing when it is wrong is higher (100-point undertricks if your contract fails), while the reward of defending when it is right is higher (you collect 100-point undertricks).

OCBL-Mix-1, SW7, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/yyy4jw7g>

<div> <div>2</div> <div>♠</div> </div>		<b>N</b> giorginod ♠ AJ4 ♥ A876 ♦ QJ10 ♣ J108	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>X</td><td>P</td><td>3♦</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♥	P	2♣	P	2♥	X	P	3♦	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																
1♥	P	2♣	P																
2♥	X	P	3♦																
P	P	P																	
<b>W</b> maqeda ♠ K106 ♥ K10542 ♦ 93 ♣ Q95		<b>E</b> halko ♠ Q932 ♥ Q93 ♦ A62 ♣ K73																	
	<b>S</b> eledub1 ♠ 875 ♥ J ♦ K8754 ♣ A642		3♦ S      NS: 0 EW: 0																

We consider Mr. Duboin's pre-balancing double highly unusual and aggressive on this auction. Because the 1♥ opening bid was made in third seat, nonvulnerable, it might have been made on a four-card suit, and therefore opponents have been in a 4-3 fit, and he has no four-card suit apart from the opponents' suit. Additionally, it gives East the chance to redouble to show a maximum and seek a penalty without risking getting higher, and Mr. Duboin had no clear safety. Furthermore, Mr. Duboin's side is vulnerable, increasing the risk factor; double could easily be risking -500 or more against an opposing partscore that was not certain to be making.

On the actual deal, Mr. Duboin's choice was successful. 3♦ made, while the opponents were likely to make 2♥, and South had a weak enough hand that she might not have balanced over 2♥ herself. Importantly, Mr. Duboin's doubling style is not consistently aggressive. See <https://tinyurl.com/y2mln8nd>, also discussed below at on pg 100.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW5, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/y4gquzc6>

<div> <div>8</div> </div>	<div>N firechief</div> <div> <div>♠ Q7543</div> <div>♥ AJ</div> <div>♦ Q7643</div> <div>♣ A</div> </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div> <div>3♣ 3♣ 5♣ 5♣</div> <div>P P P</div> </div>
	<div>W eledub1</div> <div> <div>♠ J</div> <div>♥ 632</div> <div>♦ KJ9</div> <div>♣ KQ8653</div> </div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div> <div>♠ 10962</div> <div>♥ KQ987</div> <div>♦ 10</div> <div>♣ J104</div> </div>
	<div>S jodewagon</div> <div> <div>♠ AK8</div> <div>♥ 1054</div> <div>♦ A852</div> <div>♣ 972</div> </div>	

The partnership does well to put pressure on the opponents on this deal. We regard the 3♣ opening as aggressive but reasonable and the 5♣ call very suspicious. The opponents have significant values but no known fit, and the 5♣ call might leave them with no alternative but to double and collect a penalty against uncertain game prospects (not only the possibility that game might fail but also the possibility that the opponents would reach the wrong game).

However, Mr. Duboin's 5♣ call was the perfect choice on the full layout. South had sound support for spades and bid 5♠ rather than doubling, and West's ♠J meant that Mr. Duboin had a trump trick. Even if South had doubled and North had passed, the result would have been -300, a good save against the making 4♠.

And Mr. Duboin displays more conservatism:

#1955 Untitled, Board 03

<https://tinyurl.com/y3rxd6fg>

<div>3</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N lucrezio14</div> <div>           ♠ KQ            ♥ 94            ♦ Q9763            ♣ QJ102         </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>3♦ P P P 2♥</div>
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ J8            ♥ A83            ♦ AKJ1042            ♣ A4         </div>	<div>♥ 9</div>	<div>E eledub1</div> <div>           ♠ A9765            ♥ 107            ♦ 8            ♣ 98653         </div>	
	<div>S bebe2112</div> <div>           ♠ 10432            ♥ KQJ652            ♦ 5            ♣ K7         </div>		<div>3♦ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin did extraordinarily well to merely overcall 3♦ with this hand, rather than taking stronger action—such as bidding notrump with a heart stopper and a likely source of tricks. His partner holds a weak, misfitting hand, and the poor diamond split means there are two diamond losers. If Mr. Duboin had chosen a more expert-favored bidding sequence, the partnership would likely have ended up in 3NT, which would have been down three. The 2♥ opening bid was not a weak two; it showed 9-13 HCP, so North would have had enough strength to make doubling 3NT a good prospect, even though he was unwilling to double 3♦.<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, although Mr. Duboin's 3♦ contract failed by two tricks, going -200 on this deal was as good as he could have done, and he did in fact win 12imps. We find his conservative choice of 3♦ Suspicious.

<sup>33</sup> Not only does doubling 3♦ mean the opponents score the game bonus if they make 3♦, from North's point of view the opponents would usually have a spade fit, and doubling would give them a chance to run to spades.

The next two deals are a pair, showing just how inconsistent—yet consistently successful—Mr. Duboin’s competitive judgment is:

#9563 Untitled, Board 09

<https://tinyurl.com/y4nqkan6>

<div>D</div> <div>9</div>		<div>N</div> <div>lot</div> <div>♠ 4</div> <div>♥ 1086532</div> <div>♦ K63</div> <div>♣ AK10</div>		<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>2♦</div> <div>2♥</div> <div>2♣</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>3♣</div> <div>P</div>			
<div>W</div> <div>eledub1</div> <div>♠ K10862</div> <div>♥ AKQJ</div> <div>♦</div> <div>♣ Q543</div>				<div>E</div> <div>giorginod</div> <div>♠ A75</div> <div>♥ 974</div> <div>♦ J1095</div> <div>♣ J87</div>			
		<div>S</div> <div>unonero</div> <div>♠ QJ93</div> <div>♥</div> <div>♦ AQ8742</div> <div>♣ 962</div>					
				<div>3♣ W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>			

2♦ was Multi, and 2♥ was pass or correct. Mr. Duboin’s choice to compete to 3♠ over 3♦ is scarcely believable. Numerous factors pointed toward defending:

1. The opponents were not known to be in a fit; North had shown no diamond length.
2. Mr. Duboin’s side was vulnerable, making 3♠ a higher-risk and lower-reward proposition.
3. Mr. Duboin held a sure trump trick that was unlikely to be useful on offense.
4. Mr. Duboin held no ruffing power.
5. Mr. Duboin had no expectation of his partner being able to make 3♠ on power.
6. The ♠A would be useful on defense as well as offense.

Despite the many reasons that make passing 3♦ clear, Mr. Duboin’s 3♠ was the winner because both 3♦ and 3♠ were making (barring an unlikely heart lead).

Although the previous deal would have been Suspicious standing alone, it becomes even more Suspicious when compared with this deal (which is rated Normal):

OCBL-Mix-1, SW6, Board 01

<https://tinyurl.com/y6ktvlmf>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>1</div> </div>		<div>N Silver11</div> <div>           ♠ K75            ♥ AQ953            ♦ A1095            ♣ 6         </div>	<table> <tr> <td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td><td>2♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td><td>3♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S		1♥	P	2♥	2♠	3♥	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																
	1♥	P	2♥																
2♠	3♥	P	P																
P																			
<div>W eledub1</div> <div>           ♠ QJ1096            ♥ K4            ♦ K43            ♣ QJ4         </div>	<div>♠ 3</div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ 432            ♥ 1086            ♦ Q82            ♣ A872         </div>																	
	<div>S Monkey1</div> <div>           ♠ A8            ♥ J72            ♦ J76            ♣ K10953         </div>		<div>3♥ N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																

Again, Mr. Duboin was faced with a decision whether to compete “three over three” with a 4-3-3-3 6-count. Here, he passed, and although his decision seems clear, it was far more attractive for him to compete on this deal than the previous one:

1. The opponents were *known to be in a fit*, making competing more attractive.
2. *Neither side was vulnerable*, making competing lower-risk, higher-reward.
3. Mr. Duboin held *no likely trump trick* or *wasted heart values*, better for competing.
4. *As above*, Mr. Duboin held no ruffing power.
5. *As above*, Mr. Duboin had no expectation of his partner being able to make 3♠ on power.
6. *As above*, Mr. Duboin’s ace would be useful on offense and defense.

Apparently inconsistently with his judgment on the previous deal, Mr. Duboin chose to pass. This was the winning decision: his opponents made 3♥, but 3♠ would likely have been down three.. In our view, this deal makes the previous one seem more Suspicious.

Another area of Suspicious success for Mr. Duboin is pulling his partners' doubles or not doubling when they would be likely to pass:

OCBL-Cup-1, R6, Board 03 <https://tinyurl.com/y29jek4c>

<div>3</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N matushko</div> <div>           ♠ AKQJ98            ♥ 103            ♦ AK5            ♣ J10         </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>           1♣ X P 1♦            1♥ 1♠ P P            3♣ 3♠ P P            X P 4♣ P         </div>
<div>W berny75</div> <div>           ♠ 2            ♥ AQ52            ♦ 4            ♣ AKQ5432         </div>			<div>E giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ 107653            ♥ K64            ♦ 10762            ♣ 9         </div>
	<div>S coreman</div> <div>           ♠ 4            ♥ J987            ♦ QJ983            ♣ 876         </div>		<div>4♣ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

In our opinion, it is automatic to pass the double of 3♠ with Mr. Duboin's hand. The hand was quite suitable for defense, including a likely trump trick, a singleton club—perhaps allowing for promoting another trump trick—and the ♥K, a probable defensive asset. For offense, the ♥K is valuable, but Mr. Duboin's hand contains no other positive feature. The singleton club is a disappointment; his partner need not have had seven clubs on this auction. The overall weakness of his hand combined with the suitability for defending against a spade contract makes it clear to try going plus on defense rather than remove to 4♣. Nor can his call be justified on risk-avoidance grounds. If the deal is unfavorable for offense, it would be very possible for East-West to get doubled, perhaps conceding 500 or 800.

The pull to 4♣ did not gain much in a technical sense—just 30 total points and a possible imp for going +130 instead of +100. However, the pull may be understandable based on seeing all four hands. If the defense takes two rounds of clubs and then West shifts to a diamond, 3♠-X will



make. This would require poor defense by West. The ♣9 lead would mark Mr. Duboin with a singleton club, making it safe for West to continue with a second high club. Then, when Mr. Duboin discourages diamonds on the second round of clubs, West should work out to play the ♥A rather than attempt to get a diamond ruff.

The fact that the pull to 4♣ showed little technical gain does not undermine the suspiciousness of the 4♣ call. It is very plausible that a player who had UI about the full layout of the hand would choose for his side to declarer in a safe (on the layout) partscore rather than risk a defensive disaster against a doubled partscore.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW8, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/y5cdbmxh>

<div><div></div><div>8</div></div>		<div>Ngiorginod</div> <div><div>♠3</div><div>♥K103</div><div>♦AJ983</div><div>♣AQJ10</div></div>	<div><div>W</div><div>N</div><div>E</div><div>S</div></div> <div><div>P</div><div>1♦</div><div>3♣</div><div>X</div></div> <div><div>4♣</div><div>4NT</div><div>P</div><div>5♣</div></div> <div><div>P</div><div>P</div><div>P</div><div></div></div>			
<div>Wmalorencs</div> <div><div>♠K94</div><div>♥987</div><div>♦KQ42</div><div>♣854</div></div>			<div>E</div> <div>MaijaLat</div> <div><div>♠AQJ10865</div><div>♥J64</div><div>♦106</div><div>♣9</div></div>			
		<div>S</div> <div>eledub1</div> <div><div>♠72</div><div>♥AQ52</div><div>♦75</div><div>♣K7632</div></div>				
				<div>5♣S</div> <div>NS: 0EW: 0</div>		

In the Italian bidding style, an offense-showing double of 4♠ seems automatic to us. Bidding 4NT unilaterally commits the partnership to the five-level when there is no known fit, and we would consider 10 cards in two suits the normal distribution here. 4NT with this distribution strikes us as very strange.

Despite risking the five-level without security, Mr. Duboin's choice was the winner. Doubling 4♠ would likely have secured only +300 whereas 5♣ made for +400.

OCBL-1, RR2, Board 13

<https://tinyurl.com/y5lwfpjr>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>13</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>             ♠ 832              ♥ AK973              ♦ Q10654              ♣           </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>2♠</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>4♣</td><td>4NT</td><td>P</td><td>5♣</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	2♠	P		4♣	4NT	P	5♣	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																
P	2♠	P																	
4♣	4NT	P	5♣																
P	P	P																	
<div>W pikolo</div> <div>             ♠ KJ105              ♥ AQJ54              ♦ 42              ♣ 82           </div>		<div>E bljosef</div> <div>             ♠ 987643              ♥ K107              ♦ Q6              ♣ K3           </div>																	
	<div>S gioffi</div> <div>             ♠ AQ2              ♥ 96              ♦ J1085              ♣ AJ97           </div>		<div>5♣ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																

If you decide to enter the auction over 4♠ with the North hand, we think it is clear to double, not to bid 4NT. Given North's passed hand status, South would not expect more in terms of HCP or defensive tricks, so double does not overstate North's strength. Looking at the North hand alone, defending against 4♠ doubled will often be the partnership's best result: South will often hold three or four spades on this auction, and North-South will often be unable to make a five-level contract. Additionally, holding three hearts makes the North hand suitable for playing in hearts if South has long hearts and insufficient strength to overcall 3♥ on the previous round. 4NT precludes defending and playing in 5♥, which makes it look anti-percentage.

However, Mr. Duboin chose to overcall 4NT, which was the best action on the actual layout. 4♠ doubled will fail by two tricks for +500, while 5♣ (South's clear preference) was cold on the layout. East-West were unlikely to cash their hearts on opening lead (in practice, they did not), but even if they had, after taking the club finesse, South would have formed a likely count of the hand and played diamonds correctly.

Mr. Duboin's pattern of inconsistent but successful judgment also applies elsewhere, such as when to open 1NT:

OCBL-2, SF, Board 22

<https://tinyurl.com/yddljp6v>

<div>22 D</div>		<div>N bareket</div> <div>♠ 6</div> <div>♥ KQJ9</div> <div>♦ K7652</div> <div>♣ K93</div>		<div>W N E S</div> <div>MINOR MAGOR P P</div> <div>1NT X 4♥ 4NT</div> <div>X 5♦ X P</div> <div>P P</div>	
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ A54</div> <div>♥ A64</div> <div>♦ 1093</div> <div>♣ AQ82</div>		<div>♠ K</div>		<div>E berny75</div> <div>♠ KQ9873</div> <div>♥ 108532</div> <div>♦ 8</div> <div>♣ 10</div>	
		<div>S lengy</div> <div>♠ J102</div> <div>♥ 7</div> <div>♦ AQJ4</div> <div>♣ J7654</div>		<div>5♦x N NS: 0 EW: 0</div>	

Mr. Duboin upgrades to a 15-17 1NT for no discernable reason. His distribution is poor, the vulnerability is unfavorable, and his partner is a passed hand. Although he has three aces and one ten, these assets do not outweigh the hand's negative features. Moreover, it is not Mr. Duboin's style to upgrade to 1NT aggressively.<sup>34</sup>

On the full deal, however, Mr. Duboin's 1NT opening was a big winner. Facing a 15-17-point hand, Mr. Duboin's partner was happy to take a shot at game, which would have made despite the minimal values *but only from the West side*. Declared by East, South's singleton heart lead eventually defeats 4♠—South discards diamonds on hearts and eventually scores a trump promotion—while the ♥K lead against West's 4♠ lets the contract make easily.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, <https://tinyurl.com/yct7rgvm> (no upgrade in 1st seat, all vul, with ♠AJ85 ♥AQ10 ♦85 ♣K1065); <https://tinyurl.com/y2mublsu> (no upgrade in 1st seat, none vul, with ♠AQJ2 ♥A97 ♦96 ♣QJ87); <https://tinyurl.com/y4e2vmbs> (no upgrade in 1st seat, none vul, with ♠QJ3 ♥AQ109 ♦K983 ♣Q4, making it easier to find a sacrifice than opening 1NT would have).

The 1NT opening made it likely that East-West would reach 4♠ from the right side or, as here, that North-South would sacrifice. We consider this deal highly Suspicious.

Major Alt-1, F2, Board 09

<https://tinyurl.com/y6gyfrxf>

D		N H Bertens		W N E S			
9		♠ J742 ♥ 10965 ♦ QJ5 ♣ K8		P P 1♦ 2♣ P P X P 2♥ P 3♦ P P P			
W phicro2				E giorginod			
♠ Q93 ♥ A742 ♦ 872 ♣ 742		♣A		♠ K105 ♥ KJ ♦ AK10963 ♣ J10			
		S curtis					
		♠ A86 ♥ Q83 ♦ 4 ♣ AQ9653					
				3♦ E NS: 0 EW: 0			

Although many experts would have preferred to open 1NT, Mr. Duboin reasonably chose to open 1♦, which was successful. A 1NT opening might have ended the auction, and Mr. Duboin would have been defeated by one or two tricks. After the 1♦ opening, the partnership reached diamonds, and Mr. Duboin made 3♦ after finessing North for the ♠J, which was the percentage play given the bidding.

This deal might have merited only a Good Decision rating, but Mr. Duboin opened 1NT rather than 1♦ with a similar hand elsewhere in the set of deals (although not in the same seat and vulnerability). See <https://tinyurl.com/y64xn3ok> (successfully opening 1NT, not 1♦). Because Mr. Duboin chose inconsistent calls with similar hands, both successfully, we determined that this deal was Suspicious.

Mr. Duboin is also very successful when he chooses not to look for a major-suit fit:

OCBL-Mix-1, SW4, Board 07

<https://tinyurl.com/y3vcjw4b>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>		<b>N</b> poetka ♠ Q109 ♥ Q872 ♦ Q843 ♣ J6	<div>W N E S</div> <div>1NT P 6NT P</div> <div>P P</div>
<b>W</b> eledub1 ♠ AJ73 ♥ AJ103 ♦ J2 ♣ A73			<b>E</b> giorginod ♠ K865 ♥ K964 ♦ AK ♣ KQ5
	<b>S</b> pierced ♠ 42 ♥ 5 ♦ 109765 ♣ 109842		<div>6NT W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin's failure to look for a major-suit fit is incredibly Suspicious. His hand is quite suitable for play in a suit contract, especially if a 5-4 fit exists: a ruff might be the twelfth trick or allow declarer to set up a side suit, and a grand slam is very possible with third-round control in one major and five cards in the other. Consider ♠AQxxx ♥Ax ♦xxx ♣Axx, only a 14-count, or other permutations.<sup>35</sup> On the actual layout, however, Mr. Duboin's failure to use Stayman was a winner because major-suit fits existed, but the distribution was a perfect mirror, making 6NT the best slam. For example, playing in 6NT declarer could have chosen to test other suits before committing to a play in hearts, but this would not have been a safe option if hearts were trump.

<sup>35</sup> E.g., ♠AQxxx ♥Axx ♦xxx ♣Ax or, with full values to make up for a poor mesh, ♠AQxxx ♥AQx ♦xx ♣Axx.

OCBL-Cup-1, QF1, Board 04

<https://tinyurl.com/y3p9thef>

<div><div>D</div><div>4</div></div>	N	matushko	W	N	E	S
	♠	AQ6	1♣	P	1♥	P
	♥	QJ6	2♦	P	2♥	P
	♦	K9853	3NT	P	P	P
	♣	105				
W	giorginod	<div><div>♦</div><div>9</div></div>	E	berny75		
♠	K542		♠	98		
♥	A		♥	K107542		
♦	A4		♦	QJ6		
♣	AKQJ98		♣	32		
	S	YuKh				
	♠	J1073	3NT W			
	♥	983	NS: 0 EW: 0			
	♦	1072				
	♣	764				

- 1♣: 2+ clubs
- 2♦: multi-way, never three hearts
- 3NT: strong with 6+ clubs

Based on their alerts, Mr. Duboin never showed his spade suit despite the fact that his partner could have held four spades. Although Mr. Duboin has eight likely tricks in notrump, it could easily be right to play in a suit contract rather than notrump.

In practice, Mr. Duboin right-sided 3NT, while a 2♠ rebid over 2♥ would have garnered 2NT by partner. Although 3NT is not cold from the East hand, on the actual layout 3NT by East will make after a spade lead is ducked. However, if East makes the poor play of playing the spade king on the opening lead, 3NT will fail. We consider Mr. Duboin's failure to show his spade suit Suspicious even though it did not gain anything material on the actual layout, and we note that it was not Mr. Duboin's consistent style to conceal side suits.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Compare this deal with, for example, <https://tinyurl.com/y6pmzlwk> (rated N), where Mr. Duboin locates a heart fit but nevertheless searches for a 4-4 spade fit and reaches the making 4♠ rather than the failing 4♥.

Mr. Duboin is successful when he insists on playing in suits partner might have no support for:

Major Alt-1, R10, Board 11 <https://tinyurl.com/y3y7evxo>

<div>11</div> <div>D</div>	<div>N phicro2</div> <div>♠ 97</div> <div>♥ A852</div> <div>♦ 1096</div> <div>♣ QJ87</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>P 1♥ P 1♣</div> <div>P 1NT P 2♣</div> <div>P 3♣ P P</div> <div>D</div>
<div>W sroch</div> <div>♠ AJ84</div> <div>♥ QJ</div> <div>♦ KQ83</div> <div>♣ 1093</div>	<div>♣ 3</div>	<div>E amiri</div> <div>♠ 1063</div> <div>♥ K97643</div> <div>♦ A52</div> <div>♣ 5</div>
	<div>S giorginod</div> <div>♠ KQ52</div> <div>♥ 10</div> <div>♦ J74</div> <div>♣ AK642</div>	<div>3♣ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

We view Mr. Duboin's 2♣ rebid as quite unusual, and we expect a 2♣ rebid among experts to be the choice of a small minority. Although there are some auctions on which rebidding a five-card minor over 1NT is sensible—such as 1♣ - 1NT, which typically delivers at least three-card club support and always contains at least two clubs—this is not such an auction. There is no inference on this auction that North holds a balanced hand. Distributions of 3=5=4=1 or 2=5=5=1 are very possible, and 3=4=5=1 might be possible based on partnership style (a Walsh-style partnership that bypasses diamonds to bid a four-card major suit might bid 1♥ then 1NT on that distribution). Furthermore, running from 1NT makes little sense when the danger suit is the only one partner is guaranteed to hold length in.

Mr. Duboin's unusual action succeeded. 3♣ made an overtrick, while 1NT would have been defeated by a heart or diamond lead. We consider the 2♣ rebid Suspicious.



OCBL-Cup-1, QF1, Board 17

<https://tinyurl.com/yya93o6r>

D 17		N matushko	W N E S			
		♠ J93	1♠	P	1NT	P
		♥ 1092	2♣	P	2♦	P
		♦ AJ1054	2♥	P	2♠	P
		♣ 92	3♣	P	3NT	P
W giorginod		♥ 9	E berny75			
♠ A107642			♠ Q8			
♥ A83			♥ KQ5			
♦			♦ Q987			
♣ AK104			♣ Q865			
		S coreman				
		♠ K5				
		♥ J764				
		♦ K632				
		♣ J73				
			4♠ W NS: 0 EW: 0			
			2♥	P	2♠	P
			3♣	P	3NT	P
			4♠	P	P	P

- 2♣: Gazzilli, clubs or 16+ HCP any shape
- 2♦: artificial, 8+ points any shape
- 2♥: 16+ HCP, 3+♥
- 2♠: artificial, asking for more information, does not show spade support

In our opinion, it is Suspicious that Mr. Duboin pulled 3NT to 4♠, despite having shown 12 of his 13 cards and facing a possible spade void on his partner's bidding. On the auction, Mr. Duboin had shown his exact shape within one card: five spades, three hearts and four clubs, thus informing his partner of short diamonds. Opposite this description, his partner had chosen 3NT despite ample room to suggest doubt about the contract with a 3♦ stall or 3♠ preference, suggesting East had the diamonds well covered.

4♠ was trivial to make, while 3NT would have required complete double-dummy play on the good lead of a heart.<sup>37</sup> Regardless of whether 3NT might have succeeded in practice, Mr. Duboin's 4♠ call ensured his partnership would make game.

<sup>37</sup> We consider a heart lead correct. A diamond lead would be a poor choice. Declarer has announced he is prepared for a diamond lead, and a diamond lead would better be made by North. 3NT might make on a diamond lead.

Mr. Duboin was also successful when deciding whether to explore a possible slam<sup>38</sup>:

OCBL-Mix-1, SW7, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/yxznabhy>

<div> <div>8</div> </div>	<div>N giorginod</div> <div> <div>♠ A64</div> <div>♥ 5</div> <div>♦ AK1052</div> <div>♣ QJ92</div> </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div> <div>2♣ 3♦ P 3♥</div> <div>P 4♣ P 4♠</div> <div>P 4NT P 6♣</div> <div>P P P</div> </div>
	<div>W maqeda</div> <div> <div>♠ KQ10953</div> <div>♥ QJ9</div> <div>♦ 93</div> <div>♣ 84</div> </div>	<div>E halko</div> <div> <div>♠ J87</div> <div>♥ 8732</div> <div>♦ Q74</div> <div>♣ 1065</div> </div>
	<div>S eledub1</div> <div> <div>♠ 2</div> <div>♥ AK1064</div> <div>♦ J86</div> <div>♣ AK73</div> </div>	

♠7

6♣ N NS: 0 EW: 0

Mr. Duboin's 4♣ call is one of the most Suspicious actions he took; we consider it inconceivable not to bid 3♠ or 3NT with Mr. Duboin's hand. For a 3♦ overcall, Mr. Duboin's hand is minimum with relatively poor distribution—no sixth diamond or fifth club. There is no guarantee of a fit in any suit. In fact, the deal looks more like a misfit facing 2=6 or 3=6 in the majors. Bypassing what will very often be the best contract, 3NT, with no extra strength or distribution and no indication of a fit is a highly aggressive view.

One might argue that rebidding 3NT with only one stopper in spades is a poor choice, but that line of thinking does not indicate 4♣ is the correct call. First, Mr. Duboin's stopper is ♠Axx, which gives him the flexibility to hold up in spades; compare to a holding like ♠QJx which appears more notrump-oriented but might enable the defenders to duck an early round of the suit to maintain an entry to the West hand. Second, even if Mr. Duboin did not want to rebid 3NT, he

<sup>38</sup> See also <https://tinyurl.com/yxln4xam> (driving to slam when the partnership might be missing three keycards), discussed below in the Suspicious Declarer Play section.

could have stalled with 3♠. A cuebid on this auction carries no specific message—it simply tells partner he has no clear direction. This would have catered to partner bidding 3NT if she also had spade values, which Mr. Duboin should have been happy to pass.

Thus, we regard Mr. Duboin's 4♣ call as Suspicious. From his point of view, without UI, he should not have been willing to forgo 3NT as a contract.

OCBL-2, RR1, Board 03

<https://tinyurl.com/yxln4xam>

<div>3</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N bareket</div> <div>♠ 985</div> <div>♥ K75</div> <div>♦ K7</div> <div>♣ K10862</div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td><td>P</td><td>2♦</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♦</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♠</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>4♥</td><td>P</td><td>6♦</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♥	P	2♦	P	2♥	P	3♦	P	3♥	P	3♠	P	4♥	P	6♦	P
W	N	E	S																				
1♥	P	2♦	P																				
2♥	P	3♦	P																				
3♥	P	3♠	P																				
4♥	P	6♦	P																				
<div>W berny75</div> <div>♠ A4</div> <div>♥ AQ106432</div> <div>♦ 4</div> <div>♣ QJ7</div>	<div>♣ A</div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div>♠ KJ102</div> <div>♥ J</div> <div>♦ AQJ109653</div> <div>♣</div>																					
	<div>S lengy</div> <div>♠ Q763</div> <div>♥ 98</div> <div>♦ 82</div> <div>♣ A9543</div>		<div>6♦ E</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

Mr. Duboin's leap to slam, when West made no encouraging moves at any point, is highly Suspicious. For slam to succeed, West must cover three of Mr. Duboin's four losers (the ♠AQ, ♥A, and ♦K). A more reasonable call aimed at slam would have been 5♣, but that might have risked a misunderstanding—if, for example, West thought 5♣ announced that hearts was the agreed suit and bid 6♥ over it.

Mr. Duboin's line of play is Lazy. He ruffed the opening lead, crossed to the ♥A, and finessed in diamonds. Had ♦K(x) not been onside, Mr. Duboin would have had to play spades for no loser (likely by playing North for the ♠Q, which maintains the best squeeze chances) or to execute a squeeze. A better line would have been to cross in spades, lead the ♣Q for a ruffing finesse, then ruff a spade in dummy, discard a spade on the ♣J if necessary, and concede a trump trick. If the club ruffing finesse failed, Mr. Duboin could have fallen back on finding ♦K(x) onside. Mr. Duboin took a careless line of play that succeeded, making his play Lazy.

Major Alt-1, F2, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/y4axptcx>

<div>2</div>		N H Bertens ♠ A108 ♥ 4 ♦ J9642 ♣ KJ96	W N good 4M S 4♣ P 3NT P P P 5♥ P
W phicro2 ♠ J543 ♥ KQ10 ♦ KQ ♣ A1054	♠ 6	E giorginod ♠ KQ2 ♥ A9876532 ♦ 85 ♣	
	S curtis ♠ 976 ♥ J ♦ A1073 ♣ Q8732		5♥ E NS: 0 EW: 0

Depending on partnership agreement, it may be correct to define the East hand as a good 4♥ opening, although many players would want a stronger heart suit. West's 4♣ call is pass or correct, and by committing to the five-level facing a heart suit, it shows slam interest.

Given that Mr. Duboin's hand is evidently within range for the 3NT opening bid, we believe it would have been normal to cuebid 5♣ with the club void. This call would have clarified that Mr. Duboin's long suit was hearts (with spades, he would have passed), and the partnership was already committed to 5♥, which also carries the implication of slam interest in hearts.<sup>39</sup> Mr. Duboin's hand is suitable for slam with potentially-useful spade values, the ♥A (a good value for slam), and a void. If West's ♦KQ were the ♦A, slam would have been virtually cold, and other small changes would also produce a slam.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Without slam interest in hearts, West would have bid 4♥, not 4♣.

<sup>40</sup> Even as little as ♠xx ♥Kxx ♦AKxx ♣xxxx or ♠xx ♥Kxx ♦Axxx ♣Axxx would have produced a slam.

Mr. Duboin's conservative choice not to cooperate with West's slam-try was a success on the lie of the cards because it avoided the chance that West would drive to slam off two aces. His actions on this deal were Suspicious.

OCBL-1, RR4, Board 03

<https://tinyurl.com/y2l5t2mv>

<div>3</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N lucadm</div> <div>♠ A863</div> <div>♥ Q5</div> <div>♦ AQ95</div> <div>♣ 1075</div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>2NT</td><td>P</td><td>3♣</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>3♦</td><td>P</td><td>3♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>3NT</td><td>P</td><td>4NT</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	2♣	P	2♣	P	2NT	P	3♣	P	3♦	P	3♥	P	3NT	P	4NT
W	N	E	S																				
P	2♣	P	2♣																				
P	2NT	P	3♣																				
P	3♦	P	3♥																				
P	3NT	P	4NT																				
<div>W pierced</div> <div>♠ J4</div> <div>♥ 10942</div> <div>♦ 8742</div> <div>♣ J82</div>	<div>♠ 5</div>	<div>E malpaluche</div> <div>♠ 10752</div> <div>♥ K8</div> <div>♦ K1063</div> <div>♣ 964</div>																					
	<div>S giorginod</div> <div>♠ KQ9</div> <div>♥ AJ763</div> <div>♦ J</div> <div>♣ AKQ3</div>		<div>4NT N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

- 1♥ opening by South occluded in screenshot
- 2♣: artificial, game-forcing
- 2♠: 5 hearts, 4+ clubs, 15+ HCP
- 2NT: relay
- 3♣: exactly 5 hearts and 4 clubs
- 3♦: relay
- 3♥: short diamonds (i.e. 5=3=1=4)

With 20 HCP facing a nonvulnerable 2/1 game-force, it is conservative not to drive to slam. South at the other table drove to slam, failing in 6NT. Note, however, that 6♣—on the 4-3 fit—is makeable and might have been reached if Mr. Duboin had chosen to drive to slam. Nevertheless, if Mr. Duboin was self-kibitzing, he could have known that the other table had failed in 6NT, so by merely inviting with 6NT, he would have guaranteed a double-digit swing while avoiding the risk of his partner converting a makeable 6♣ to a failing 6NT.

We consider Mr. Duboin's choice of 4NT, rather than 4♣, Suspicious as well. If he were attempting to investigate the best contract, he would have emphasized his strong club suit. There would have been no risk of his partner thinking he had a five-card suit because he had shown his exact distribution. A 4♣ call would have allowed his partner to evaluate his hand effectively while suggesting a possible—and winning, on the layout—trump suit. We think that Mr. Duboin's bidding sequence suggests he was not conducting a genuine slam investigation.



The remaining Suspicious deal do not fit neatly into one category:

#1955 Untitled, Board 12

<https://tinyurl.com/y3gnspls>

<div>12</div>	<b>N</b> lucrezio14 ♠ A742 ♥ K543 ♦ 2 ♣ AJ73	<b>W</b> picche quadri <b>S</b> P 1♣ 3♣ P 3♦ P P P
<b>W</b> giorginod ♠ J1097 ♥ 943 ♦ KQ10954	<div>♦ 2</div>	<b>E</b> eledub1 ♠ K9863 ♥ A2 ♦ AQJ1075 ♣
	<b>S</b> bebe2112 ♠ QJ105 ♥ Q86 ♦ K86 ♣ 862	<div>3♦ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin had a normal 3♣ opening at favorable vulnerability. Although a few experts might not preempt with this hand, in the modern style we think it is a standard 3♣ opening—for many experts, holding a four-card heart suit is not a serious deterrent. On the layout, opening 3♣ would have been a losing decision because East has a club void and the partnership belongs in diamonds. After Mr. Duboin's pass, the partnership was able to find their diamond fit. We consider this Suspicious.

OCBL-2, RR5, Board 05

<https://tinyurl.com/y6a3dzeg>

<div>D</div>		<div>N giorginod</div>		<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div>			
<div>5</div>		<div>♠ 43</div> <div>♥ Q8</div> <div>♦ 73</div> <div>♣ KJ109653</div>		<div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>1NT</div> <div>3♣</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>1♥</div> <div>2♣</div> <div>P</div>			
<div>W phantoma</div>		<div>E begse</div>					
<div>♠ J106</div> <div>♥ K1095</div> <div>♦ KQ865</div> <div>♣ 7</div>		<div>♠ A752</div> <div>♥ 74</div> <div>♦ J1092</div> <div>♣ Q84</div>					
<div>S berny75</div>							
<div>♠ KQ98</div> <div>♥ AJ632</div> <div>♦ A4</div> <div>♣ A2</div>							
				<div>3♣ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW:</div>			

- 2♣: Gazzilli (unaltered), clubs or 16+ HCP any shape
- 3♣, long clubs, fewer than 8 HCP

Passing as dealer was the winning decision. If Mr. Duboin had preempted with 3♣, his partner would have driven to game, and the most likely result would have been 3NT going down. South might have continued over Mr. Duboin's 3♣ rebid at the table, but in practice 3♣ made five after a spade lead.

Mr. Duboin's pass in first seat is reasonable, and some experts would choose to pass. The shape is the worst possible for a vulnerable, three-level preempt, and the vulnerability is unfavorable. However, Mr. Duboin's hand is roughly equivalent in playing strength to another three-level preempt; holding ♠QJ98754 ♥8 ♦J65 ♣Q8, Mr. Duboin opened 3♠ in first seat with both sides vulnerable. See <https://tinyurl.com/y4olpfda>. We find it Suspicious that on these two deals, Mr. Duboin chose to preempt once and pass once in close cases, and both were the winning actions.

OCBL-2, RR6, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/y2em75zc>

<div>2<sup>♠</sup></div>		<b>N</b> giorginod ♠ A9862 ♥ KQ6 ♦ 9 ♣ Q1062	<table><tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1♦</td></tr><tr><td>2♣</td><td>X</td><td>P</td><td>2♥</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>3♣</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>				W	N	E	S			1♣	1♦	2♣	X	P	2♥	P	P	3♣	P	P	P		
W	N	E	S																							
		1♣	1♦																							
2♣	X	P	2♥																							
P	P	3♣	P																							
P	P																									
<b>W</b> przedpelk ♠ Q5 ♥ 98 ♦ 8653 ♣ AK875				<b>E</b> konrad80 ♠ 10743 ♥ A104 ♦ AQJ ♣ J43																						
		<div>♥2</div>																								
		<b>S</b> berny75 ♠ KJ ♥ J7532 ♦ K10742 ♣ 9																								
				3♣ E      NS: 0 EW: 0																						

We find this deal bizarre on several points. Mr. Duboin's choice to make a responsive (takeout) double with a two-card disparity in the major suits is odd, but his follow-up sequence of passing 2♥ is Suspicious—he never shows his long spade suit, perhaps missing an eight-card fit (facing 3=4=5=1) and maybe even playing in a six-card fit along the way (facing 3=3=5=2). After South's odd decision to overcall 1♦, Mr. Duboin's responsive double and subsequent pass was the only way to get his side to their eight-card heart fit.

Mr. Duboin erred slightly in the defense, giving declarer a chance to escape for down two at trick 8, but declarer gave the trick back. This small defensive slip does little to counteract a very Suspicious bidding phase.

OCBL-2, SF, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/ybrzod2y>

D 8	N sroch	W N E S
	♠ QJ43 ♥ 4 ♦ Q10 ♣ AKJ542	1♦ 2♣ 4♦ X P 4♣ P P 5♦ P P X P P P
W giorginod	♣ A	E berny75
♠ 10987 ♥ A2 ♦ AK652 ♣ 86		♠ 2 ♥ J9876 ♦ J9843 ♣ Q10
	S amiri	
	♠ AK65 ♥ KQ1053 ♦ 7 ♣ 973	
		5♦x W NS: 0 EW: 0

Mr. Duboin's choice to sacrifice in 5♦ seems odd. The risk seems clearly to outweigh the benefit—indeed, he finds his partner with a suitable dummy with no defensive wastage, and his sacrifice was still down two at equal vulnerability. He has reasonable defense, a poor hand for offense, and it is not certain the opponents will make their contract. The risk-reward seems to weigh in favor of defending, but Mr. Duboin chose to sacrifice, which worked well on the layout. In our opinion, this decision is Suspicious.

\* \* \*

This concludes the Suspicious bidding decisions. The main theme running through Mr. Duboin's Suspicious bidding decisions is that he successfully varies his style, taking unusually aggressive or conservative decisions on different deals. We regard this as an especially telling pattern.

*Suspicious Opening Leads*

#9563 Untitled, Board 03

<https://tinyurl.com/y3hc3ypj>

<div>3</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N lot</div> <div>♠ Q106</div> <div>♥ AK65</div> <div>♦ KJ6</div> <div>♣ A63</div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td><td>1NT</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>3NT</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♦	1NT	P	P	P	P	P	3NT
W	N	E	S												
1♦	1NT	P	P												
P	P	P	3NT												
<div>W eledub1</div> <div>♠ A94</div> <div>♥ Q92</div> <div>♦ A1085</div> <div>♣ K97</div>	<div>♣ J</div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div>♠ J8753</div> <div>♥ 1043</div> <div>♦ 9</div> <div>♣ J1052</div>													
	<div>S unonero</div> <div>♠ K2</div> <div>♥ J87</div> <div>♦ Q7432</div> <div>♣ Q84</div>		<div>3NT N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>												

We consider Mr. Duboin's choice to lead the ♣J bizarre and very Suspicious. A spade lead would be the majority choice among experts, preferring not to lead a singleton in partner's suit and selecting the suit with the best chance to establish tricks if partner is found with length and/or strength. Mr. Duboin's choice of a club lead is highly unusual. A spade lead would have allowed declarer to make the contract at double-dummy by picking up the spade suit on the first trick, while Mr. Duboin's club lead would produce down one at double-dummy (as would a diamond or low-heart lead). In practice, declarer went down two.

There is no inference from this auction that West holds more club than spade length—if anything, the auction makes the spade lead more attractive, because at least some of the time when South held four spades, he would have searched for a fit there. On this auction, South was likely to hold length in one or both minor suits, and a club lead would often give away the suit to declarer. Mr. Duboin's winning choice of a club lead was therefore Suspicious.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW1, Board 04

<https://tinyurl.com/ybnnlkcz>

<div><div>D</div><div>4</div></div>	<div>Nwaldorf1</div> <div><div>♠</div>AQJ73</div> <div><div>♥</div>AK96</div> <div><div>♦</div>Q762</div> <div><div>♣</div></div>	<table><tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>1NT</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♥</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>4♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♠	P	1NT	P	2♥	P	3♥	P	4♥	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																			
P	1♠	P	1NT																			
P	2♥	P	3♥																			
P	4♥	P	P																			
P																						
<div>Weledub1</div> <div><div>♠</div>K109862</div> <div><div>♥</div></div> <div><div>♦</div>95</div> <div><div>♣</div>Q9853</div>	<div>♦K</div>	<div>Egiorginod</div> <div><div>♠</div>54</div> <div><div>♥</div>QJ732</div> <div><div>♦</div>K4</div> <div><div>♣</div>AJ104</div>																				
	<div>Ssylvias</div> <div><div>♠</div></div> <div><div>♥</div>10854</div> <div><div>♦</div>AJ1083</div> <div><div>♣</div>K762</div>	<div>4♥N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

Mr. Duboin's aggressive lead of the ♦K caught a great layout. The ♦A was in dummy, so the ♦K lead did not cost a trick, and it made declarer's life difficult. On another lead, it would have been easy to make 4♥, even with the 5-0 trump split. The ♦K lead gave nothing away, however, and it gave declarer a chance to go wrong, and he duly lost his way in the play. We consider this opening lead Suspicious.

#24 BURGAY VS DE MICHELIS, Board 06

<https://tinyurl.com/yxzy458c>

<div>6</div>		<div>N lallo79</div> <div> <p>♠ 4</p> <p>♥ KQ10</p> <p>♦ J1064</p> <p>♣ AKQ109</p> </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div> <p>3♥ X 2♦ P</p> <p>P 4♣ P 4♦</p> <p>P 5♦ P P</p> </div>
<div>W giorginod</div> <div> <p>♠ A1092</p> <p>♥ A63</p> <p>♦ 7</p> <p>♣ 87543</p> </div>	<div>♣ 3</div>	<div>E lucadm</div> <div> <p>♠ KQ8765</p> <p>♥ 987</p> <p>♦ Q93</p> <p>♣ 2</p> </div>	
	<div>S fede00</div> <div> <p>♠ J3</p> <p>♥ J542</p> <p>♦ AK852</p> <p>♣ J6</p> </div>		<div>5♦ S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin's choice of a club lead is unusual. The more typical choice of the ♠A (partner's suit) would have succeeded when East held the ♥K and the deal was a simple cashout, and it would usually have preserved the opportunity to shift to clubs if that was the right decision. Only when the ♠A is ruffed, East holds club shortness, *and* a trump trick can the ♠A lead realistically cost. If East held a club void, he might well have made a Lightner double.

Additionally, Mr. Duboin's club lead raised declarer's chances of going down. If West had taken his aces, declarer could have checked for singleton ♦Q with West before finessing East for the ♦Q. After the club lead, with no fast, safe reentry to dummy, declarer would have needed to finesse on the first round of the suit if he adopted that plan. It is arguable whether declarer would have considered or adopted this line of play had Mr. Duboin led the ♠A, but a club lead looks like the best lead to maximize the defense's chances of a plus score, making it virtually impossible for declarer to make their contract.

#24 BURGAY VS DE MICHELIS, Board 11 <https://tinyurl.com/y5xgmr55>

11 D		N lallo79	W N E S			
		♠ A1094				
		♥ 104				
		♦ KQ10942				
		♣ 4				
W giorginod			P	1NT	2♥	3♥
♠ QJ8			3♣	4♥	P	P
♥ Q93		♣ 6	P			
♦ AJ5						
♣ J962						
	S fede00		E lucadm			
	♠ 6		♠ K7532			
	♥ AKJ652		♥ 87			
	♦ 876		♦ 3			
	♣ K87		♣ AQ1053			
			4♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

In the bidding, Mr. Duboin did very well not to bid 4♠, which would have been a phantom sacrifice on the actual layout, but could have been a successful sacrifice or—even on the actual East-West hands, from a single-dummy perspective—a makeable game.

Mr. Duboin led a club, which is highly Suspicious. The normal opening lead in Mr. Duboin's position is the spade queen, the only suit East is known to hold.<sup>41</sup> A club lead could have cost the setting trick or a critical tempo, while the ♠Q lead would have been quite safe and might have been necessary to establish a winner or cash any spade tricks the defense were entitled to before they went away, perhaps on club winners.

The defense would have been able to succeed after the lead of the ♠Q. If declarer does not immediately draw two rounds of trumps, Mr. Duboin can give East a ruff when he gains the lead. If declarer does draw trumps, then Mr. Duboin can duck two rounds of diamonds, leaving declarer with two club losers to go with the ♦A and ♥Q.

<sup>41</sup> In standard methods, the cuebid is Michaels, showing spades and an unknown minor. Although it is possible to define the call differently, Mr. Duboin's partnership does not appear to have done so. East alerted as "spero bic," which translates from Italian as "I hope bicolor [two-suited]," showing that they were not on firm ground as to the meaning of the cuebid. Mr. Duboin thus could not count on his partner to hold club length.



The fact that the club lead did not gain anything material does not undermine this deal's evidentiary value. That the ♠Q is a winning lead is not immediately apparent, while a quick glance shows that a club lead will succeed. Having to maintain a normal tempo may leave a player with insufficient time to perform a full analysis (or to use the GIB double-dummy function on the second device if self-kibitzing to determine the winning play) before selecting an action, and it is difficult to judge in real time which actions may or may not look suspicious.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW8, Board 05

<https://tinyurl.com/y6a8uuee>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>5</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ QJ9762            ♥ Q42            ♦ J82            ♣ 3         </div>	<div> <div>W</div> <div>Multy</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div> <div>           2♦ X 3♥            5♦ P P P         </div>
<div>W malorencs</div> <div>           ♠ 4            ♥ 98            ♦ AQ10965            ♣ Q1062         </div>	<div>♠ Q</div>	<div>E MaijaLat</div> <div>           ♠ K10            ♥ AJ1075            ♦ 3            ♣ AKJ85         </div>	
	<div>S eledub1</div> <div>           ♠ A853            ♥ K63            ♦ K74            ♣ 974         </div>		<div>5♦ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

(1) 2♦: weak two in one of the majors

(2) 3♥: pass or correct

Mr. Duboin's preempting style is inconsistent but extremely successful. See part II-F below. Here, Mr. Duboin opens an extremely aggressive Multi 2♦, which is not consistent with his style.<sup>42</sup> The 2♦ opening was highly successful because it pushed East-West into the wrong game. If Mr. Duboin had passed as dealer, East-West would likely have conducted an uncontested auction (or if the auction became contested, East would be able to show his distribution accurately) ending in 5♣, which would have made in comfort. After the 2♦ opening, West hoped for more diamond length in East's hand and chose 5♦.

Mr. Duboin's most Suspicious action on this deal, however, is his opening lead. In our opinion, it is extremely surprising that Mr. Duboin did not lead his singleton club, but his choice of the ♠Q was a killing lead on this deal. After a club lead, declarer can finesse the ♦Q and play three rounds of trumps before the ♥A is driven out. On the ♠Q lead—covered by the ♠K and ♠A—

<sup>42</sup> Compare to <https://tinyurl.com/y2xljjro> (opening Multi 2♦ on ♠9864 ♥KQ98652 ♦9 ♣4 in first seat at unfavorable vulnerability). Mr. Duboin tends to preempt aggressively or conservatively as the layout requires.

South was able to make an excellent shift to hearts into dummy's tenace, establishing the setting trick. We conclude that Mr. Duboin's decisions on this deal—particularly his opening lead—are highly irregular and Suspicious.

OCBL-1, RR7, Board 10

<https://tinyurl.com/y4nr5zgj>

<div>10<sup>D</sup></div>		N giorginod ♠ Q8 ♥ J2 ♦ J964 ♣ J10854	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td><td>P</td><td>2♦</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♣</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>6NT</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			1♠	P	2♣	P	2♦	P	2♥	P	3♣	P	6NT	P	P	P
W	N	E	S																				
		1♠	P																				
2♣	P	2♦	P																				
2♥	P	3♣	P																				
6NT	P	P	P																				
W mayors ♠ KJ ♥ KQ96 ♦ AKQ7 ♣ KQ6	♥J	E mutton ♠ A6532 ♥ A85 ♦ 5 ♣ A973																					
	S gioffi ♠ 10974 ♥ 10743 ♦ 10832 ♣ 2		6NT W    NS: 0 EW: 0																				

- (1) 2♣: game forcing, clubs or balanced
- (2) 2♦: multi option
- (3) 2♥: relay
- (4) 3♣: club raise, minimum hand

Mr. Duboin had several plausible lead options, and he selected the offbeat ♥J. We regard this choice as unusual and anti-percentage, yet it was the only lead to give the defense a chance of success.

A spade or club lead concedes the contract immediately (a club lead will either give declarer a marked finesse or see declarer win the first trick cheaply), while a diamond lead will see declarer lose a spade finesse and then execute a routine major-suit squeeze against South. The ♥J lead might induce declarer to err by winning in the West hand, then leading to dummy's ♥8. Declarer should not (and did not—he successfully squeezed South) make this play, but only Mr. Duboin's choice of lead gave the defense a chance of going plus. Thus, we rated this deal as Suspicious.

*Suspicious Defensive Plays*

OCBL-2, QF, Board 21

<https://tinyurl.com/yxvcaatk>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>21</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ A974            ♥ Q6            ♦ 95            ♣ 109765         </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>           P 1♣ 1♥            X P 1♠ P            4♣ P P P         </div>
<div>W hultahult</div> <div>           ♠ K863            ♥ J72            ♦ AKQ84            ♣ J         </div>	<div>♥ A</div>	<div>E Rerack</div> <div>           ♠ J102            ♥ 1098            ♦ 32            ♣ AKQ82         </div>	
	<div>S berny75</div> <div>           ♠ Q5            ♥ AK543            ♦ J1076            ♣ 43         </div>		<div>4♣ E NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

In our opinion, failing to ruff the third round of hearts is inconceivable without knowledge of the deal or some other irregularity. The ruff might have been the setting trick, might have been the only way to defeat the contract, and could not have cost. If partner holds a spade honor, then ruffing will defeat the contract whenever that is possible.<sup>43</sup>

It was possible for failing to ruff to have cost the contract, for example if declarer held ♠QJ10 ♥xxx ♦xxx ♣AKQx or similar honor structure with 4=3=2=4 or 4=3=3=3 distribution. 1♠ could have been three-card support but was not alerted as promising three-card support. Further, South should not have played another heart from a six-card suit, knowing East could overruff. South's only hope for tricks are in trumps (or the ♣A, which cannot go away), and leading a heart for North and East to ruff could only compromise Mr. Duboin's spade holding. Thus, the intuitive play of ruffing would have ensured defeating 4♣ unless South had erred.

<sup>43</sup> If partner holds the singleton ♠Q or ♠J along with six hearts, declarer can still succeed if Mr. Duboin discards on the third heart if he reads the spade layout correctly.

OCBL-2, SF, Board 03

<https://tinyurl.com/ycpealfv>

<div>3</div> <div>D</div>	<div>N sroch</div> <div>♠ 872</div> <div>♥ J1093</div> <div>♦ 72</div> <div>♣ A863</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>X P P P</div> <div>1NT</div>
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ 106</div> <div>♥ AK764</div> <div>♦ A83</div> <div>♣ KQ9</div>	<div>♥ A</div>	<div>E berny75</div> <div>♠ KJ954</div> <div>♥ 82</div> <div>♦ KJ9</div> <div>♣ 1074</div>
	<div>S amiri</div> <div>♠ AQ3</div> <div>♥ Q5</div> <div>♦ Q10654</div> <div>♣ J52</div>	<div>1NTx S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin's ♥A lead was reasonable, although many experts would have led a low heart. Playing the ♠10 at trick two defied logic in our opinion. It is clear to shift to a club honor to kill dummy's entry to the long hearts. Mr. Duboin's ♠10 shift was extremely risky in two ways: First, declarer might hold four spades and shifting to spades might expose partner's holding, particularly given dummy's lack of entries. Second, if declarer wins the spade shift, he can establish dummy's hearts while the ♣A remains intact.

On the actual layout, however, the ♠10 worked just as well as a high club would have, garnering down two. When Mr. Duboin's ♠10 shift was allowed to win trick two, he duly switched to the king of clubs (winning) and queen of clubs, the standout defense before the spade shift, but with a spade trick already in the bag.

OCBL-2, RR3, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/y2mln8nd>

<div> <div>8</div> </div>		N nickfg1 ♠ KQ4 ♥ AJ9543 ♦ 2 ♣ J63	<table> <tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td><td>2♦</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>4♥</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♥	P	2♦	P	2♥	P	4♥	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																
P	1♥	P	2♦																
P	2♥	P	4♥																
P	P	P																	
W berny75 ♠ J76 ♥ Q72 ♦ J54 ♣ 9854	<div>♣A</div>	E giorginod ♠ 10953 ♥ K ♦ K876 ♣ AK107																	
	S AMesbur ♠ A82 ♥ 1086 ♦ AQ1093 ♣ Q2		4♥ N      NS: 0 EW: 0																

Mr. Duboin failed to make a normal—albeit minimum—takeout double of 1♥. This choice cost nothing because his partner had a very weak hand, and it avoided the possibility of being penalized (although the opponents would likely have simply bid their game instead).

Mr. Duboin's defense was also unusual. He started with his high clubs, on which West played ♣8-5. The intuitive play at trick three would have been a spade, especially because West might have played his highest plainly affordable clubs at each opportunity (from ♣J854<sup>44</sup>), signaling suit preference for spades. But Mr. Duboin shifted to diamonds. This choice also did not cost on the layout, but it easily could have. Imagine declarer holding ♠Qx ♥AQJxxx ♦Jx ♣963, where after a spade shift at trick three declarer will go down after losing a heart finesse, while on Mr. Duboin's diamond shift declarer would dispose of his spade loser on diamonds.

We think Mr. Duboin's failure to double 1♥ when his partner held a very weak hand and failure to shift to a spade—the obvious best chance for the defense—when his partner could easily

<sup>44</sup> Or ♣J85 or ♣854; declarer might have been put to a guess on a spade shift holding ♠QJ ♥AQJxxx ♦x ♣Jxxx (or the same distribution without the ♣J), but declarer could have guessed correctly.

have been signaling for that shift makes this deal Suspicious, even though he did not gain on the deal.



OCBL-Mix-1, SW1, Board 10

<https://tinyurl.com/ybzztdfo>

<div>10<sup>D</sup></div>		<b>N</b> waldorf1 ♠ 10986 ♥ AKJ5 ♦ Q ♣ K987	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1♦</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td><td>2♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>3♣</td><td>P</td><td>3♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			1♣	1♦	P	1♥	P	2♥	P	3♣	P	3♥	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																				
		1♣	1♦																				
P	1♥	P	2♥																				
P	3♣	P	3♥																				
P	P	P																					
<b>W</b> eledub1 ♠ 543 ♥ Q82 ♦ KJ102 ♣ J53	<div>♠K</div>	<b>E</b> giorginod ♠ KQJ ♥ 74 ♦ 743 ♣ AQ642																					
	<b>S</b> sylviash ♠ A72 ♥ 10963 ♦ A9865 ♣ 10																						

3♥ N NS: 0 EW: 0

Mr. Duboin led the ♠K to dummy's ace, and the ♣10 was ducked to his queen. Mr. Duboin switched to a diamond when it was clear to cash the spades, because he could not have stopped declarer from discarding one or both spades from dummy by taking a ruffing finesse in clubs (from a holding like ♣KJ9x or ♣KJxx). On the actual layout, however, the club suit is not so threatening, and cashing the spades will let declarer make his contract easily.

The actual diamond shift made life difficult on declarer, and although he could still have succeeded, he lost his way and failed. We consider Mr. Duboin's failure to take winners that were at risk of going away Suspicious.

*Suspicious Declarer Play*

OCBL-1, RR7, Board 14

<https://tinyurl.com/yxsulo72>

<div>14</div>	<div>N giorginod</div> <div>♠ AJ1065</div> <div>♥ Q95</div> <div>♦ 109</div> <div>♣ 973</div>	<table><tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	W	N	E	S			1♣	X	P	2♣	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S															
		1♣	X															
P	2♣	P	P															
P																		
<div>W mayors</div> <div>♠ 432</div> <div>♥ K72</div> <div>♦ K865</div> <div>♣ Q82</div>	<div>♦Q</div>	<div>E mutton</div> <div>♠ 87</div> <div>♥ A1083</div> <div>♦ QJ4</div> <div>♣ KJ104</div>																
	<div>S gioffi</div> <div>♠ KQ9</div> <div>♥ J64</div> <div>♦ A732</div> <div>♣ A65</div>	<div>2♣ N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																

Rather than take a roughly 40% chance to make his contract legitimately, Mr. Duboin played for West to make a serious error in a position where the right play should have been clear to him. In effect, to make 2♠, Mr. Duboin needed to take one heart trick. The normal play is a heart to the ♥J followed by a heart to the ♥9, taking a trick when East holds the ♥AK, West holds the ♥10, or West errs from ♥AKx(x) and plays high on the second round of the suit. On the bidding, there was an inference that hearts were 3=4 with the ♥AK split, however, so the normal approach to hearts was less likely to succeed—there was only about a 40% chance that West held the ♥10 (assuming that West held two low hearts compared to East's three).

Rather than take this straightforward chance to make his contract legitimately, Mr. Duboin embarked on a complex line of play (follow the URL to see the details) that banked on West making a grave defensive error. In the four-card ending, he led a heart from dummy to the ♥Q and East's ♥A, which endplayed East to concede a heart trick or a ruff-sluff. However, West should have risen with the ♥K and played his last trump, which would have guaranteed defeating the

contract no matter where the ♥10 was. This play should have been obvious to West, because East was marked with the ♥A and the last club.

It is strange to play for such a clear defensive error when there is a viable legitimate chance to make the contract. However, on the actual layout, the legitimate line would have failed, so Mr. Duboin's only hope was for the defensive error, and he duly played for and received it. We consider Mr. Duboin's chosen line Suspicious.

#9563 Untitled, Board 14

<https://tinyurl.com/y2hpudyo>

14 D		N lot	W N E S			
		♠ J42	1♥ P			
		♥ A52	2♣ P	2♦ P	P	
		♦ K853	4♥ P	P	P	
		♣ K72				
W eledub1			E giorginod			
♠ K			♠ A95			
♥ Q87			♥ K10943			
♦ J964			♦ A10			
♣ AQ1053			♣ 864			
		♠ 3				
		S unonero				
		♠ Q108763				
		♥ J6				
		♦ Q72				
		♣ J9				
		4♥ E		NS: 0 EW:		

Mr. Duboin took an counterintuitive and anti-percentage (but successful) line of play on this deal. He won with dummy's ♠K and led a heart to the ♥K, which succeeded as the cards lay, but it gave up chances in the heart suit—for example, North's ♥Jxx(x) or ♥AJx(x)—without gaining against similar holdings in the South hand. South's ♥AJxx cannot be picked up after a heart to the ♥K, and the possibility of having to ruff a spade in dummy means Mr. Duboin might not even have been able to cope with South's ♥AJx or ♥Jxx.

A stronger line would have been to lead a low heart to the ♥10, which is a better play in the heart suit itself and would have retained the ♥K as an entry to the East hand. Most normal lines of play involve eventually losing a finesse to South's ♥J and therefore going down, but Mr. Duboin's anti-percentage trump play picked up the suit for one loser and allowed him to make his game.

## **2. Matches that Disallowed Kibitzers**

We identified no Suspicious deals from the matches that disallowed kibitzers. This is not an unexpected result for a player who is not using UI. A world-class player who is playing honestly will almost always select actions that are supported by sound bridge logic. Actions supported by bridge logic are not considered Suspicious. They are considered Normal, Good Decision, or Bad Decisions depending on whether there were alternatives to the actions Mr. Duboin selected and how successful his choices were.

Mr. Duboin's zero Suspicious deals in 160 boards is comparable to Mr. de Wijs's zero Suspicious deals in 148 boards and Mr. Muller's one Suspicious deal in 148 boards. Although a world-class player who is not using UI may occasionally take inferior or anti-percentage actions that succeed, it is far from shocking that over about 150 deals he does not make any.

### C. Anti-Suspicious Deals

This section analyzes the Anti-Suspicious deals we detected. Deals rated A are deals that indicate that a player was not using UI—at least on that deal. They involve costly errors or offbeat decisions that worked poorly, such as preempting aggressively and running into an unfriendly trump split. If, as we believe, Mr. Duboin was obtaining and using UI by self-kibitzing, he would be expected to have more Anti-Suspicious deals in matches that disallowed kibitzing than matches that allowed kibitzing because it would be easy to avoid these costly errors if he could see all the cards. However, the presence of *some* A deals while kibitzing is allowed is not proof that Mr. Duboin was not using UI on *any* deals where self-kibitzing was possible; there are a number of reasons why a self-kibitzing player might not choose to self-kibitz or to use the information gained from self-kibitzing on each and every deal.

The deal records are consistent with this pattern. We detected 12 Anti-Suspicious deals in the full set of deals, representing 1.69% of the total deals. However, only three of the A deals occurred during the 548 deals on which kibitzing was allowed (0.55%) while the remaining nine A deals occurred during the 160 deals on which kibitzing was disallowed (5.63%), more than ten times the rate as when kibitzing was allowed. Table 14 compares Mr. Duboin's rates of A deals with de Wijs's and Muller's rates:

<b>Table 14: Anti-Suspicious (A) Deal Comparison</b>			
Player	# A deals	Total # deals	% of A deals
Giorgio Duboin (kibs allowed)	3	548	0.55%
Giorgio Duboin (kibs disallowed)	9	160	5.63%
Simon de Wijs	8	148	5.41%
Bauke Muller	9	148	6.08%

As with the rates of Suspicious actions, Mr. Duboin's rate of Anti-Suspicious actions when playing in matches that disallowed kibitzers is in the same general range as de Wijs's and Muller's. When kibitzers were allowed, however, Mr. Duboin's rate is far lower than either Dutch player's. In other words, Mr. Duboin made far fewer costly errors when he had the ability to self-kibitz. We believe that these patterns support our conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches during which kibitzing was allowed.

This section addresses all 12 deals we determined were Anti-Suspicious, as well as one deal that might appear to be Anti-Suspicious but we believe is not.

**1. Matches that Allowed Kibitzers**

OCBL-Cup-1, SF1, Board 01

<https://tinyurl.com/y6voqzki>

<div>D</div> <div>1</div>	<div>N boulevard1</div> <div>♠ 1093</div> <div>♥ QJ93</div> <div>♦ AJ</div> <div>♣ K983</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>1♣</div> <div>P</div> <div>1NT</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div>
<div>W berny75</div> <div>♠ AJ87</div> <div>♥ A7</div> <div>♦ 10876</div> <div>♣ 1075</div>	<div>♥ 2</div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div>♠ 5</div> <div>♥ K1082</div> <div>♦ K942</div> <div>♣ AQ42</div>
	<div>S Caucase</div> <div>♠ KQ642</div> <div>♥ 654</div> <div>♦ Q53</div> <div>♣ J6</div>	<div>1NT N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

It is possible that Mr. Duboin's failure to double 1NT suggests he was not using UI on this deal. If the partnership plays the double as takeout of spades, it seems normal to double, while if the double is penalty of clubs, it is still plausible but less clear to double. Doubling 1NT is not without risks, but it would have worked well here, allowing East-West to penalize the opponents. We therefore rated this hand Anti-Suspicious because Mr. Duboin could have improved his score without arousing suspicion if he had UI about the full layout.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Although the fact that this deal was the first board in the match did not figure into our rating, we note that it would not surprise us to see more Anti-Suspicious deals at the beginnings of matches than later in matches because a self-kibitzer might not immediately log on and start kibitzing as soon as a match begins. In fact, the two other Anti-Suspicious deals that occurred in matches that allowed kibitzers were the first and third deals of a single match. See <http://tinyurl.com/yxzxmqzs>; <http://tinyurl.com/y5vbrg4z>. When kibitzers were disallowed, Anti-Suspicious deals were more evenly distributed in matches. See Appendix B.



*Match Against Nickell*

Two of the three Anti-Suspicious deals that occurred in matches that allowed kibitzing took place in a single 20-board match against the Nickell team. We believe it is likely that Mr. Duboin declined to use UI during the early part of this match.<sup>46</sup> There are many reasons why a player who self-kibitzed during some matches might choose not to take advantage of UI throughout an entire match, or against certain opponents. We decline to speculate about Mr. Duboin's motives during the first part of this Nickell match.

Despite our belief that while Mr. Duboin used UI in some matches that allowed kibitzers, he may not have used UI in the early part of this match, our methodology required us to treat them the same as any other Anti-Suspicious deal that occurred when kibitzing was allowed. them as Anti-Suspicious. In other words, these deals count as A-rated deals for purposes of our analysis.

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<sup>46</sup> A Suspicious deal occurred later in this match, see <http://tinyurl.com/y2bk3r98>, which suggests that Mr. Duboin might have logged in under a second account partway through the match. We would be interested to see any connection data held by BBO about this match to confirm or deny our suspicion that Mr. Duboin might have been self-kibitzing for only part of this match, and we invite Mr. Duboin to give BBO consent to release this data if he would like to resolve this issue.

#6726 Nickell v Uli, Board 01

<https://tinyurl.com/yxzxmqqs>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>1</div> </div>		<div>N ilaria75</div> <div> <div>♠ AQ3</div> <div>♥ Q62</div> <div>♦ J7</div> <div>♣ A9765</div> </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1NT</td><td>2♦</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>X</td></tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td><td>3NT</td><td>P</td><td>4NT</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>6♣</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1NT	2♦	P		2♥	P	2♣	X	3♥	3NT	P	4NT	P	6♣	P	P
W	N	E	S																				
1NT	2♦	P																					
2♥	P	2♣	X																				
3♥	3NT	P	4NT																				
P	6♣	P	P																				
<div>W Stevo</div> <div> <div>♠ 5</div> <div>♥ KJ107543</div> <div>♦ 6542</div> <div>♣ 4</div> </div>		<div>E levin</div> <div> <div>♠ K109642</div> <div>♥ 8</div> <div>♦ KQ98</div> <div>♣ 82</div> </div>																					
	<div>S giorginod</div> <div> <div>♠ J87</div> <div>♥ A9</div> <div>♦ A103</div> <div>♣ KQJ103</div> </div>																						
		6♣ N	NS: 0 EW: 0																				

- 1NT: 10-13
- 2♦: one major
- Pass: forcing on North if 2♦ is passed by West (North-South cannot defend 2♦)
- 2♥: pass or correct
- Double: takeout
- 3♥: now natural

This is a classic A deal. Mr. Duboin made what appears to be a careless mistake that could clearly have been avoided—and avoided without arousing any suspicion—if Mr. Duboin had been using UI. North's 1NT opening bid showed 10-13 points, but Mr. Duboin seems to have forgotten the range, driving to a virtually no-play slam on at most a combined 28 HCP and two balanced hands. His error cost 11 imps.

This deal provides basically as strong evidence as possible that Mr. Duboin was not using UI on this deal, but as discussed above, we do not believe the two deals from the Nickell match indicate that Mr. Duboin was not using UI in general. Even world-class players have mental lapses, but Mr. Duboin made almost none when kibitzers were allowed except for in this match.

#6726 Nickell v Uli, Board 03

<https://tinyurl.com/y5vbrg4z>

<div>3</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N ilaria75</div> <div>           ♠ AJ972            ♥ A43            ♦ K63            ♣ Q4         </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>           P 2♥ P 2♠            P 3NT P 4♠            P P P         </div>
<div>W Stevo</div> <div>           ♠ Q3            ♥ KJ982            ♦ 10874            ♣ 73         </div>	<div>♣ 7</div>	<div>E levin</div> <div>           ♠ 1085            ♥ 65            ♦ 92            ♣ AKJ1098         </div>	
	<div>S giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ K64            ♥ Q107            ♦ AQJ5            ♣ 652         </div>		<div>4♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

This deal also provides strong evidence that Mr. Duboin was not using UI, at least during the play of the hand. The choice to convert 3NT to 4♠ is reasonable, but it would also have been reasonable to pass 3NT with 4-3-3-3 distribution, which would have made on the expected heart lead. (Once East fails to double 3NT, it is virtually inconceivable that West would have led a club.) 4♠, however, was cold as the cards lay, and Mr. Duboin may have feared a club lead against 3NT, which would actually have been the killer.

In the play of the hand, Mr. Duboin made an unbelievable error for a player of his caliber. After three rounds of clubs, West ruffed with the ♠Q. Duboin could have virtually claimed by discarding a heart loser from dummy (failing only if East held the other four spades, a layout against which there would be no winning choice). Instead, he overruffed and had to go down one.

An expert player in Mr. Duboin's position would never be questioned for finding the correct play on this deal, so if he had been using UI he would have been able to make the winning play with no fear of being suspected for that decision. The only explanation for his actual play is a mental blackout, an unfortunate reality for all bridge players but one that self-kibitzing virtually eliminates. We consider this deal evidence only that Mr. Duboin was not using UI on this deal.



*One Deal that is Not Anti-Suspicious*

We want to address one deal that may appear on first look to be Anti-Suspicious but that we believe is better classified as Normal:

OCBL-Cup-1, QF1, Board 12

<https://tinyurl.com/y4e5cu96>

<div> <div>12</div> </div>		<div>N matushko</div> <div> <div>♠ AK5</div> <div>♥ J63</div> <div>♦ 1053</div> <div>♣ A1062</div> </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div> <div>P 1♣ P 1♥</div> <div>P 1NT P 4♥</div> <div>P P P</div> </div>
<div>W giorginod</div> <div> <div>♠ 1092</div> <div>♥ A108</div> <div>♦ Q862</div> <div>♣ J95</div> </div>	<div>♠ 10</div>	<div>E berny75</div> <div> <div>♠ J643</div> <div>♥ 4</div> <div>♦ A974</div> <div>♣ KQ83</div> </div>	
	<div>S yukh</div> <div> <div>♠ Q87</div> <div>♥ KQ9752</div> <div>♦ KJ</div> <div>♣ 74</div> </div>		<div>4♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

After leading the ♠10 and seeing declarer lose a diamond finesse, a club shift would have set the contract. Failing to find this shift might indicate that Mr. Duboin was not using UI on this deal. However, looking at other deals Mr. Duboin played with this partner, it appears that they used upside-down attitude signals at trick one,<sup>47</sup> meaning East's signal encouraged Mr. Duboin to continue spades.

If East's signal was encouraging, then in our opinion Mr. Duboin would have felt compelled to continue spades even if he was self-kibitzing and therefore knew that a club shift was the winning play. For an expert to receive an encouraging signal from partner and to shift when continuing could be the right play would be extremely suspicious. From Mr. Duboin's single-

<sup>47</sup> See, for example: <https://tinyurl.com/y2mln8nd> (berny75's trick-one card is consistent with upside-down attitude but inconsistent with upside-down count); <https://tinyurl.com/y4fw9ocg> (berny75's trick-one card is consistent with upside-down attitude but inconsistent with upside-down count); <https://tinyurl.com/y5cxw5n3> (berny75's card is consistent with both upside-down attitude and count).

dummy perspective, a spade continuation could easily have been the only winning play (changing East's black suits to ♠Qxxx and ♣Qxxx, for instance). A self-kibitzer who was conscious of how his plays would appear to observers would have continued spades on this deal even though he knew it would allow the opponents to make a vulnerable game.

We believe that Mr. Duboin could not have made the winning play on this deal without arousing extreme suspicion. Thus, we do not consider this deal as Anti-Suspicious because we think he would have made the same losing play whether he was self-kibitzing or not. We believe Mr. Duboin's partner painted him into a corner, forcing Mr. Duboin to make the losing play either by steering him wrong when he was honestly relying on East's signal or by preventing Mr. Duboin from making the winning play without arousing suspicion if he was self-kibitzing.

We therefore classified this deal as Normal.

## **2. Matches that Disallowed Kibitzers**

We rated 9 deals as Anti-Suspicious out of 160 deals in matches that disallowed kibitzers (5.63% of deals). This means that Mr. Duboin made a play that suggested he was not using UI a little more than 1 time in 20 deals. This rate is comparable to de Wijs's (7.43%) and Muller's (4.73%) the rate of Anti-Suspicious deals, so we believe that Mr. Duboin made a typical number of Anti-Suspicious plays for a world-class player not using UI. Recall that when kibitzers were allowed, Mr. Duboin's proportion of Anti-Suspicious deals was just 0.55%. That Mr. Duboin's rate of Anti-Suspicious deals was similar to de Wijs's and Muller's when kibitzers were disallowed but much lower when kibitzers were allowed is consistent with our conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches that allowed kibitzing.

The nine A-rated deals from matches that disallowed kibitzers are analyzed below.

#4225 Agoraphobia v Uli, Board 17 <https://tinyurl.com/yxg3xofm>

<div>D</div> <div>17</div>		<div>N firechief</div> <div>♠ 72</div> <div>♥ J954</div> <div>♦ K84</div> <div>♣ A652</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>P</div> <div>1♦</div> <div>P</div> <div>1♣</div> <div>P</div> <div>4♥</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div>	
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ QJ63</div> <div>♥ 1062</div> <div>♦ AQ76</div> <div>♣ 107</div>		<div>♠ Q</div>	<div>E Giacomopr</div> <div>♠ 1094</div> <div>♥ KQ</div> <div>♦ J10932</div> <div>♣ KJ4</div>	
		<div>S drg</div> <div>♠ AK85</div> <div>♥ A873</div> <div>♦ 5</div> <div>♣ Q983</div>		
		<div>4♥ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>		

- 1♦: four or more hearts

Mr. Duboin's ♠Q lead was normal, although a club lead would have put the defense on track to defeat the contract. Declarer, not knowing that the heart suit was so friendly for him, led a diamond. This gave Mr. Duboin a chance to defeat the contract by rising with the ♦A, but he played low, which was fatal (in fact, declarer made an overtrick).

Ducking the ♦A was a clear error. Holding the ♦A-Q, it is unlikely that taking the ♦A would have cost a trick in the suit,<sup>48</sup> while the best chance to defeat 4♥ appears to be what would have worked on the actual deal: take the ♦A and shift to clubs, hoping East holds the ♣K and a trump trick and can give Mr. Duboin a club ruff when he gains the lead.

No player, even a world-class player in top form, is immune to errors. If Mr. Duboin had been playing without UI in all matches, we would have expected to see errors like this one distributed among the entire set of deals. Instead, Mr. Duboin made virtually no clear defensive errors that cost in the 548 deals that allowed kibitzers. In our opinion, this disparity is one of the strongest indications that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers.

<sup>48</sup> Declarer would need to have started with exactly ♦J9xx and to guess to lead the ♦J next, pinning East's ♦10.



#4225 Agoraphobia v Uli, Board 09 <https://tinyurl.com/yymvmsfp>

D	N firechief	W	N	E	S
9	♠ K943		P	P	1♣
	♥ KJ108	P	1♦	P	1♥
	♦ 9865	P	1♠	P	P
	♣ 2	P			
W giorginod		E Giacomopr			
♠ Q108		♠ 762			
♥ 764	♠ 2	♥ A95			
♦ KQ42		♦ A3			
♣ AJ4		♣ Q9865			
	S drg				
	♠ AJ5				
	♥ Q32				
	♦ J107				
	♣ K1073				
		1♠ N			NS: 0 EW: 0

- 1♣: two or more clubs
- 1♦: four or more hearts
- 1♥: two or three hearts
- 1♠: natural, non-forcing

Mr. Duboin did poorly on this deal in the bidding and the play. In the bidding, he could , say. have balanced with 1NT over 1♠. Although the vulnerability was unfavorable, it would not have been unusual to contest a one-level auction.<sup>49</sup> 1NT would have made on the layout.<sup>50</sup>

In the play, after a spade to the low, 10, and king, declarer led a diamond. East went in with the ♦A and continued the suit, a strong indication that he could ruff the third round of the suit. Giving East a ruff was the only winning play because it would have enabled East to play another spade, and Mr. Duboin would have then been able to play a third round before declarer could ruff

<sup>49</sup> Compare to <https://tinyurl.com/y2ey765d>, where Mr. Duboin balances with 1NT as opener with both vul.

<sup>50</sup> After the best defense of a heart lead, declarer eventually wins and needs to play on clubs. It is clear to lead the ♣Q followed by running the ♣9 if the ♣Q is covered. This is not the percentage play in isolation in the club suit, but it is clear after the 1♣ opening bid. The 1♣ opening could have been short, but unless South was 3=3=5=2 (a distribution with which he would or might have opened 1♦, depending on partnership agreement), South would be marked with three or more clubs on the bidding, and leading the ♣Q would have been the only hope for three tricks.

his losing diamond. This defense was indicated, but Mr. Duboin erred by cashing the ♦K on the third round of the suit rather than giving his partner a ruff.

If Mr. Duboin had been using UI on this deal, it is likely he would have gone right at one of these junctures, and making the winning choices would not have raised any eyebrows.

#3586 ULI v Rippey, Board 18

<https://tinyurl.com/y3n2oy4n>

<div>18</div>		N giacomopr	W N E S			
		♠ QJ108765	P P			
		♥ 65	2♦ 2♠	X P		P
		♦ 43	3♥	P	3♠	P
		♣ Q4	3NT	P	P	P
W 100dog		♠ Q	E Giova007			
♠ AK4			♠ 932			
♥ Q974			♥ A83			
♦ AK			♦ QJ102			
♣ K876			♣ 1095			
		S giorginod				
		♠				
		♥ KJ102				
		♦ 98765				
		♣ AJ32				
			3NT W NS: 0 EW: 0			

- 2♦: 17-19 balanced

On this deal, Mr. Duboin chose a non-intuitive defense that failed, while the intuitive play would have succeeded with best defense thereafter. Declarer won North's spade lead (diamond discard by Mr. Duboin), took two rounds of diamonds, and led a heart to the ♥8 and ♥10.

At this point, Mr. Duboin's intuitive return would have been a low club, leading up to dummy's weakness and attacking the suit that declarer has not yet played. This play would have given the defenders the power to defeat the contract.<sup>51</sup>

Mr. Duboin instead returned the ♥2, a dubious play that could have been right but looks anti-percentage. In practice, the heart return made it easy for declarer to make the contract. This is the sort of play—anti-percentage and losing on the layout—that appeared more often when kibitzers were disallowed than when kibitzers were allowed.

<sup>51</sup> If declarer rises with the ♣K, he will next cross to dummy's ♥A and take both remaining diamonds (failing to do so will leave him short of tricks and cashing the ♠A will let Mr. Duboin arrange for North to win the ♣Q and enjoy his spade winners). He can afford to discard a spade on the third diamond, but the fourth one will squeeze his hand, giving Duboin an extra winner in whichever suit he discards. If declarer ducks the ♣K, North wins the ♣Q and must play a spade honor, which results in a similar squeeze—in this variation, a strip-squeeze.

#2963 ULI v Austria Israel, Board 07 <https://tinyurl.com/y5m9rnbf>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N saurus53</div> <div>♠ 9732</div> <div>♥ 109</div> <div>♦ K62</div> <div>♣ AJ109</div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>X</td><td>2♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	P	X	2♥	3♠	P	P	P
W	N	E	S												
P	P	X	2♥												
3♠	P	P	P												
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ A10854</div> <div>♥ 74</div> <div>♦ AJ94</div> <div>♣ 75</div>	<div>♥ 10</div>	<div>E Giacomopr</div> <div>♠ QJ6</div> <div>♥ KJ</div> <div>♦ Q873</div> <div>♣ KQ63</div>													
	<div>S dr_crazy</div> <div>♠ K</div> <div>♥ AQ86532</div> <div>♦ 105</div> <div>♣ 842</div>		<div>3♠ W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>												

After two rounds of hearts, South shifted to a diamond, which was ducked to North's king. The diamond return was taken in dummy. Mr. Duboin made the intuitive-seeming play of leading the ♠Q, but this was an error. South had to have the ♠K for the contract to succeed, and the alternative play of a low spade from dummy would have gained against South's singleton ♠K and only cost to South's ♠Kxx (or ♠Kxxx, which is even less likely on the following analysis).

If South held ♠Kxx, his only realistic distribution would have been 3=6=2=2. If he held a minor-suit singleton, he would have shifted to it, so once he followed to the second round of diamonds, Mr. Duboin could place him with at least two clubs as well. If South was 3=6=2=2, then not only would North have passed 2♥ with three-card support and a doubleton spade, but North would have led high from ♥109x when most experts would have led low because knowing how many hearts partner has is more important on this auction than knowing about the 10-9 sequence. South was thus more likely to hold singleton ♠K than ♠Kxx.

In our opinion, it was an error—albeit an understandable one—for Mr. Duboin to lead the ♠Q from dummy instead of the ♠6, so we consider this deal Anti-Suspicious.

#8046 HARRIS v ULI, Board 15 <https://tinyurl.com/y626zwuz>

<div>15</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N fulldiRe</div> <div>♠ K1098</div> <div>♥ 7</div> <div>♦ Q3</div> <div>♣ AQ10954</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>P P P 3♥</div>
<div>W master dj</div> <div>♠ A64</div> <div>♥</div> <div>♦ AJ865</div> <div>♣ KJ832</div>	<div>♣ 2</div>	<div>E JDACHE</div> <div>♠ QJ52</div> <div>♥ KJ1064</div> <div>♦ K94</div> <div>♣ 6</div>	
	<div>S giorginod</div> <div>♠ 73</div> <div>♥ AQ98532</div> <div>♦ 1072</div> <div>♣ 7</div>		<div>3♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

It would have been well within Mr. Duboin's preempting style to preempt at the two-level with this hand.<sup>52</sup> Given the vulnerability and lack of internal solidity of the heart suit, he would have a lot of expert company with that choice, and it would not have been at all suspicious to preempt conservatively on this deal.

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin's choice of a slightly-aggressive preempt catching a poor lie of the opponents' cards—he should have been doubled and beaten 500—suggests that Mr. Duboin was not using UI on this deal. This is as expected, of course, because kibitzers were not allowed during this match.

<sup>52</sup> See <https://tinyurl.com/y2xljjro> (where Duboin opens a Multi 2♦ in first seat at unfavorable vulnerability holding ♠9864 ♥KQ98652 ♦9 ♣4).

#4225 Agoraphobia v Uli, Board 20 <https://tinyurl.com/y5c99kpw>

D 20	N firechief	W N E S
	♠ K63	P P X 3♦
	♥ 9632	3♠ P 4♠ P
	♦ AK7	P X P P
	♣ 1074	5♣ X P P
W giorginod		E Giacomopr
♠ QJ74		♠ A1098
♥ 87		♥ AK105
♦ 985		♦ 2
♣ J986		♣ KQ52
	S drg	
	♠ 52	
	♥ QJ4	
	♦ QJ10643	
	♣ A3	
		5♠x E NS: 0 EW: 0

W	N	E	S
P	P	1♣	1♦
P	2♣	X	2♦
P	P	X	3♦

Mr. Duboin did poorly in the bidding, running from 4♠-X to 5♣-X. Both contracts make 11 tricks, and we can see no reason to run from what was known to be a 4-4 spade fit.

#2963 ULI v Austria Israel, Board 14 <https://tinyurl.com/y66enobs>

14		N saurus53	W N E S			
		♠ 10974	no 4S 1♣ 1♥			
		♥ A76	1♠ 2♥ P 2♠			
		♦ J3	P 3♥ P P			
		♣ J963	P			
W giorginod			E Giacomopr			
♠ Q5			♠ KJ2			
♥ 1042	♥ 2		♥ Q8			
♦ Q875			♦ K1062			
♣ KQ72			♣ A1084			
		S dr_crazy				
		♠ A863				
		♥ KJ953				
		♦ A94				
		♣ 5				
			3♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

Mr. Duboin led a trump against 3♥, which declarer won in hand to play a diamond toward dummy. After winning the ♦Q, Mr. Duboin continued with a second trump. Declarer now had time to ruff a diamond, draw trumps, and eventually establish a second spade trick to make the contract.

Mr. Duboin's defense allowed 3♥ to make when tapping declarer in clubs produces an easy down one. A club opening lead—totally unsuspecting given his partner's opening bid and Mr. Duboin's holding—would have put the partnership on the winning track, as would have shifting to clubs when Mr. Duboin won the ♦Q.

Mr. Duboin could have made the winning play without arousing any suspicion, so this deal is Anti-Suspicious.

#4225 Agoraphobia v Uli, Board 07 <https://tinyurl.com/yyqesm2l>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N firechief</div> <div>♠ K73</div> <div>♥ KJ102</div> <div>♦ J2</div> <div>♣ 7652</div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td><td>1NT</td><td>P</td><td>1♦</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♥	1NT	P	1♦	P			P
W	N	E	S												
1♥	1NT	P	1♦												
P			P												
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ AJ</div> <div>♥ A98765</div> <div>♦ 108</div> <div>♣ K43</div>	<div>♠ 6</div>	<div>E Giacomopr</div> <div>♠ 109654</div> <div>♥ Q</div> <div>♦ K9765</div> <div>♣ Q9</div>													
	<div>S drg</div> <div>♠ Q82</div> <div>♥ 43</div> <div>♦ AQ43</div> <div>♣ AJ108</div>		<div>1NT N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>												

After the low spade lead to the ♠J and ♠K, declarer lost a club finesse to Mr. Duboin. He shifted to a heart to the ♥J and ♥Q, and East returned a spade. Declarer made the normal misguess, putting up dummy's ♠Q (playing East for the ♠A rather than West for exactly ♠AJ doubleton). Mr. Duboin should have cashed the ♥A and exited in a club,<sup>53</sup> which would have endplayed dummy and eventually forced access to East's spade winners to defeat the contract. This play was indicated—if declarer held the ♦K or the ♣Q, the contract would have been cold, and if partner held those cards, then there would be no way for declarer to reach his hand to cash his winning hearts. Eventually, declarer would lose seven tricks.

In practice, though, Mr. Duboin exited in diamonds without cashing the ♥A. This gave declarer a chance to succeed, but he went down anyway. Mr. Duboin's play could not have gained and on the actual layout conceded the contract had declarer taken advantage of Mr. Duboin's error. Thus, this deal is Anti-Suspicious.

<sup>53</sup> On the actual layout, either minor works, but a club is correct. A diamond lead would cost if declarer held ♦J9-doubleton. A club lead, by contrast, is safe. East's playing the ♣9 on the first round of the suit suggests a holding of ♣Q9-doubleton, so a club shift will give away nothing—the ♣Q will fall under the ♣A anyway.



#6880 Those F\*\*kers v ULI, Board 15 <https://tinyurl.com/yyzfx7r>

<div>15</div> <div>D</div>		N itsgrim	W N E S	
		♠ Q8642	weak 1♣	
		♥ 63	2♥ P P P	
		♦ K65		
		♣ 954		
W giorginod	♣ 4	E Giacomopr		
♠ J97		♠ AK3		
♥ KJ10842		♥ 9		
♦ 842		♦ QJ109		
♣ 3		♣ J10872		
		S Etttleton		
		♠ 105		
		♥ AQ75		
		♦ A73		
		♣ AKQ6		
		2♥ W NS: 0 EW: 0		

This deal is Anti-Suspicious because Mr. Duboin erred in the play of 2♥, and his error should have cost the contract. South won the ♣Q and led the ♣K (North played the ♣5, suit-preference for diamonds), which Mr. Duboin ruffed. A diamond was taken by South's ♦A, and South shifted to the ♠10, covered all around.

Because Mr. Duboin held the ♠9, he knew the ♠10 was from a likely doubleton, and a 5-2 spade split was therefore a serious risk. Mr. Duboin needed to drive out North's entry,<sup>54</sup> and it seemed likely that North's entry was in diamonds: North had given signaled suit preference for diamonds, and South had won with the ♦A. Unless the opponents had executed a coordinated deceptive effort, North was marked with the ♦K, and it was critical to lead a diamond.

Instead, Mr. Duboin led a heart, which should have cost the contract. From South's perspective, it was clear to rise with the ♥A and play a second spade, but he unaccountably played

<sup>54</sup> If Mr. Duboin played a suit South could win a trick in, he would be able to play a second spade while North's entry was intact. Then, North would gain the lead and could give South a ruff for the setting trick. Playing the suit North held an entry in would avoid the risk of a spade ruff.

low. Although Mr. Duboin escaped unscathed, we consider this deal Anti-Suspicious because Mr. Duboin played for a counter-indicated position and put the contract at risk.

## **D. Lazy Deals**

The following deals were rated Lazy (L), a classification that indicates that Mr. Duboin made a careless or inferior choice that happened not to cost on the actual layout. These deals are not inherently Suspicious. All players make careless plays from time to time, and sometimes these plays go unpunished. However, one pattern we have observed in other self-kibitzing cases is that players who are self-kibitzing are more likely to make careless plays than they otherwise would be, when they know it does not matter on the actual layout. A higher rate of Lazy deals in matches that allow kibitzers than matches that disallow kibitzers may indicate self-kibitzing.

We classified 17 deals as Lazy out of the complete set of 708 deals (2.40%). Most of those deals occurred when kibitzers were allowed—15 out of 548 deals, a rate of 2.74%—while the rate was lower when kibitzers were disallowed—2 out of 160, a rate of 1.25%. These numbers are consistent with the conclusion that Mr. Duboin used UI in matches that allowed kibitzers. A player with knowledge of the full deal can see whether a certain line of play will succeed or fail, whether a safety play is or is not necessary, or whether the opponents' contract is cold or beatable. Bridge analysis is difficult even for the most talented players, and doing it in real time is even more so. A player who can see all the cards will have his perception skewed, and he might take a line of play that seems normal from his perspective but is an error at single-dummy because it fails to cater to some other lie of the cards. A player who is self-kibitzing is more prone to make these types of Lazy plays because he does not need to think hard about how to maximize his chances of success—he can see what will work. Thus, we believe Mr. Duboin's higher rate of Lazy deals when kibitzers were allowed makes perfect sense: he was more careful—that is, less Lazy—when he was unable to self-kibitz.

The 17 Lazy deals are analyzed below.

# 1. Matches that Allowed Kibitzers

Major Alt-1, SF1, Board 28

<https://tinyurl.com/y5sy94an>

D28	Ngiorginod	Warderl	EClas 72	S
	♠ 7 ♥ K1087 ♦ AK63 ♣ K1098			

Mr. Duboin was Lazy at trick one here: he won the opening lead in dummy and led a low spade to the ♠7 and ♠9, but it was better to win in hand and lead toward dummy's spades in case East held ♠J-9 doubleton. After the ♣J shift, he won in dummy and made another Lazy play by leading a low spade. It was superior to lead the ♠Q in case the ♠J had been doubleton—finding a doubleton ♠A or ♠K would not have produced an additional trick. The only spade doubleton that could profitable be picked up was Jx, and leading the queen on the second round is a routine play for an expert player.

This type of card combination would be considered trivial for an expert, so seeing a world-class player like Mr. Duboin fail to make the correct play is very strange. Mr. Duboin's carelessness did not cost on the actual layout of the cards, and the manner in which he played spades made no difference to the outcome on the deal.

OCBL-Cup-1, R12, Board 04

<https://tinyurl.com/y2ose5zl>

<div>D</div> <div>4</div>		<div>N</div> <div>curtis</div> <div>♠ 873</div> <div>♥ 10543</div> <div>♦ Q8</div> <div>♣ AK76</div>	<table><tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td>1♣</td><td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>1♠</td></tr><tr><td>2♥</td><td>2♠</td><td>P</td><td>4♠</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr></table>				W	N	E	S	1♣	P	1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠	P	4♠	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																			
1♣	P	1♥	1♠																			
2♥	2♠	P	4♠																			
P	P	P																				
<div>W</div> <div>berny75</div> <div>♠ Q6</div> <div>♥ KQ62</div> <div>♦ KJ</div> <div>♣ J10952</div>	<div>♣ J</div>		<div>E</div> <div>giorginod</div> <div>♠ 102</div> <div>♥ J987</div> <div>♦ A1097</div> <div>♣ Q43</div>																			
		<div>S</div> <div>h bertens</div> <div>♠ AKJ954</div> <div>♥ A</div> <div>♦ 65432</div> <div>♣ 8</div>																				
				4♠ S		NS: 0 EW: 0																

After the club lead to dummy, a diamond ducked to West's ♦J, and the ♥K to declarer's ♥A, declarer led a low diamond. Mr. Duboin allowed West's ♦K to win the trick, which was a Lazy play that did not cost.

He should have overtaken with the ♦A and shifted to a spade. This would have helped his partner find the right defense of playing ♠A from 2=4=2=5 with ♠A-x (leaving declarer with an unavoidable diamond loser) and overtaking to shift to diamonds would have been necessary to defeat the contract if West held 3=4=2=4 with the ♠K. On the actual deal, however, nothing mattered, and the opponents were always cold for their contract. Mr. Duboin's Lazy play suggests that he was not concentrating fully on how to maximize his chances to defeat the contract or to help partner find the winning defense, and we believe that this was because viewing the other players' hands would have revealed that the contract could not be defeated.

OCBL-1, RR4, Board 10

<https://tinyurl.com/y5lvjjnq>

<div>10<sub>D</sub></div>		<b>N</b> lucadm ♠ J87 ♥ KQ3 ♦ 8764 ♣ A108	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td><td>P</td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td><td>P</td><td>4♠</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♦	P	1♠	P	2♣	P	4♠	P	P	P		
W	N	E	S																
1♦	P	1♠	P																
2♣	P	4♠	P																
P	P																		
<b>W</b> pierced ♠ AQ63 ♥ 9865 ♦ KJ52 ♣ J	<div>♥2</div>	<b>E</b> malpaluche ♠ K942 ♥ A ♦ 1093 ♣ K9432																	
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ 105 ♥ J10742 ♦ AQ ♣ Q765		4♠ E      NS: 0 EW: 0																

Mr. Duboin's choice of a heart opening lead is best on the layout but looks normal. After a heart to the queen and ace, declarer played the ♦10 to the queen and king. Declarer led dummy's club. North took the ace and played a diamond to Mr. Duboin's ace. Although chances do not look good, Mr. Duboin's best play is a heart, hoping North has an entry—either the second heart lives or North can ruff (East's 4=3=3=3 distribution might have been possible in the French style of only raising responder's major with four-card support)—and can give Mr. Duboin a diamond ruff.

Instead, Mr. Duboin shifted to a trump, which could not realistically have gained and could have cost. If partner held the spade king (very unlikely on the bidding), leading a spade would not have made it more likely that declarer took the finesse rather than rising with the ♠A and continuing the suit.

On the actual deal, there was no chance for the defense, so Mr. Duboin's Lazy spade play did not cost.

#24 BURGAY VS DE MICHELIS, Board 12 <https://tinyurl.com/yyftndm9>

D	12	N	lallo79		W	N	E	S
		♠	96	1NT	P	3NT	P	
		♥	965		P	P		
		♦	7643					
		♣	KQJ10					
W	giorginod		♣K	E	lucadm			
♠	K73			♠	A108			
♥	K4			♥	Q10			
♦	AKQJ10			♦	952			
♣	983			♣	A7642			
		S	fede00					
		♠	QJ542					
		♥	AJ8732					
		♦	8					
		♣	5					
					3NT W		NS: 0 EW:	

Mr. Duboin risked going down in his cold game. He ducked the ♣K lead, and North shifted to a low heart to the ♥10, ♥J, and ♥K. Mr. Duboin ran his diamond winners, on which North discarded a club and South discarded two hearts and two spades. Mr. Duboin now led a club to dummy's ♣A, and South discarded another heart.

Mr. Duboin exited in hearts, which gained him nothing, but it would have cost the contract if North was 1=4=4=4 with the ♥A: he would have had two more hearts and one club to cash. The early play in no way eliminated this type of layout from declarer's perspective. It is shocking that a player of Mr. Duboin's caliber put his contract in jeopardy like this, but Mr. Duboin's Lazy error did not cost.



#24 BURGAY VS DE MICHELIS, Board 16 <https://tinyurl.com/yyuts6a8>

<div> <div>16</div> </div>		<div>N lallo79</div> <div>           ♠ Q1052            ♥            ♦ AKQJ974            ♣ 103         </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td><td>2♦</td><td>2NT</td><td>3♦</td></tr> <tr> <td>X</td><td>3NT</td><td>4♥</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♥	2♦	2NT	3♦	X	3NT	4♥	P	P	P		
W	N	E	S																
1♥	2♦	2NT	3♦																
X	3NT	4♥	P																
P	P																		
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ A843            ♥ QJ732            ♦            ♣ AJ95         </div>	<div>♦K</div>	<div>E lucadm</div> <div>           ♠ J6            ♥ A864            ♦ 865            ♣ KQ76         </div>																	
	<div>S fede00</div> <div>           ♠ K97            ♥ K1095            ♦ 1032            ♣ 842         </div>		<div>4♥ W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																

- 2NT: four or more hearts, limit raise or better

Mr. Duboin ruffed the opening lead and led the ♥Q. When North showed out, he ducked to South's ♥K. South played another diamond, ruffed. Mr. Duboin crossed to dummy in clubs, ruffed the last diamond, and cashed the ♥J. Mr. Duboin crossed again in clubs, took the ♥A, and started playing his winners. He eventually lost a spade and trump trick for making four.

This line of play would have failed if South held a singleton club (in perhaps 5=4=3=1 or 4=4=4=1 distribution). When Mr. Duboin tried to cross with the second round of clubs, South would ruff and exit in spades. As long as North held a spade honor, Mr. Duboin could not avoid losing a trick to North, at which point North would give South another ruff. Mr. Duboin would have then lost a spade trick and *three* trump tricks.

Mr. Duboin could have prevented this possibility by ducking a spade at trick four—a scissors coup, cutting the defense's communications. No matter which defender won the spade or what they returned, the contract would have been secure. There was no cost to making this play, and we would have expected a player at Mr. Duboin's level to find it. It was careless of him not to do so, but it did not cost because South had to follow to two rounds of clubs.

OCBL-1, RR2, Board 11

<https://tinyurl.com/y3j2bgwt>

<div>11</div> <div>D</div>	<div>N giorginod</div> <div>♠ AQ53</div> <div>♥ 4</div> <div>♦ AK53</div> <div>♣ QJ108</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>P 2♥ P P</div> <div>2♦</div>
<div>W pikolo</div> <div>♠ 8762</div> <div>♥ KJ92</div> <div>♦</div> <div>♣ AK974</div>	<div>♣ 5</div>	<div>E bljosef</div> <div>♠ 1094</div> <div>♥ A7</div> <div>♦ J97642</div> <div>♣ 65</div>
	<div>S gioffi</div> <div>♠ KJ</div> <div>♥ Q108653</div> <div>♦ Q108</div> <div>♣ 32</div>	<div>2♥ N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin's choice of 2♥ is normal, but his declarer play is worth noting. After the opponents take both their club tricks, declarer's only hope for the contract is to lose just three heart tricks, which will require 3-3 hearts or a very friendly layout, as well as no opposing trump promotion. It is preferable to lead hearts toward dummy, yet Mr. Duboin won the spade shift at trick three in dummy and led a low heart, conceding his edge in the trump suit.

Nor can we understand Mr. Duboin's failure to play dummy's ♦Q on the trick-five diamond shift after East won the ♥7. His only hope is to limit the opponents to three trump tricks, so it is imperative for declarer to win the diamond shift in dummy continue the attack on trumps. Playing the ♦Q puts him in the correct hand whenever the contract could possibly be made, and a world-class player who still had a chance to make his contract would routinely make this play. Mr. Duboin's failure to play to play the ♦Q suggests he knew West could ruff it and he had given up on making 2♥. However, if Mr. Duboin had seen only his hand and dummy, defeat would not have been a foregone conclusion, and therefore his failure to make his best play for his contract

constitutes a Lazy play. On the actual layout, of course, declarer was doomed no matter what he did, so Mr. Duboin's Lazy play cost nothing.

#1955 Untitled, Board 01

<https://tinyurl.com/y63f8unr>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>1</div> </div>		<div>N lucrezio14</div> <div>           ♠ 95            ♥ K954            ♦ AJ10            ♣ J1063         </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>P</td><td>1♦</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♥</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S		P	1♦	P	1♠	P	2♣	P	2♥	P	3♥	P	3NT	P	P	P
W	N	E	S																				
	P	1♦	P																				
1♠	P	2♣	P																				
2♥	P	3♥	P																				
3NT	P	P	P																				
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ AQ62            ♥ Q82            ♦ K6            ♣ Q954         </div>	<div>♠ 9</div>	<div>E eledub1</div> <div>           ♠ J7            ♥ A6            ♦ Q7543            ♣ AK82         </div>																					
	<div>S bebe2112</div> <div>           ♠ K10843            ♥ J1073            ♦ 982            ♣ 7         </div>		<div>3NT W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

Against Mr. Duboin's 3NT contract, the ♠9 lead was covered by the ♠J, ♠K, and ♠A. Needing at least one and possibly more diamond tricks, it was clear to cross to dummy in clubs and lead a diamond to the ♦K. Declarer must find a friendly diamond layout, and leading from dummy allows declarer to take two diamond tricks when South holds the singleton or doubleton ♦A.

Instead, Mr. Duboin led the ♦K from his hand at trick two, which changed nothing on the actual layout but could have been costly. A declarer at Mr. Duboin's level who fails to cross to dummy to lead a diamond toward the ♦K has made a Lazy play.

OCBL-2, RR6, Board 09

<https://tinyurl.com/y54rq477>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>9</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div> <div>♠</div> <div>AJ965</div> </div> <div> <div>♥</div> <div>653</div> </div> <div> <div>♦</div> <div>A5</div> </div> <div> <div>♣</div> <div>863</div> </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>1NT</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td><td>P</td><td>2♦</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td><td>P</td><td>3NT</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S		P	1♥	P	1♠	P	1NT	P	2♣	P	2♦	P	2NT	P	3NT	P
W	N	E	S																				
	P	1♥	P																				
1♠	P	1NT	P																				
2♣	P	2♦	P																				
2NT	P	3NT	P																				
<div>W przedpelk</div> <div> <div>♠</div> <div>10872</div> </div> <div> <div>♥</div> <div>KJ</div> </div> <div> <div>♦</div> <div>Q74</div> </div> <div> <div>♣</div> <div>AJ95</div> </div>	<div>♦J</div>	<div>E konrad80</div> <div> <div>♠</div> <div>Q</div> </div> <div> <div>♥</div> <div>AQ1087</div> </div> <div> <div>♦</div> <div>K963</div> </div> <div> <div>♣</div> <div>Q107</div> </div>																					
	<div>S berny75</div> <div> <div>♠</div> <div>K43</div> </div> <div> <div>♥</div> <div>942</div> </div> <div> <div>♦</div> <div>J1082</div> </div> <div> <div>♣</div> <div>K42</div> </div>		<div>3NT E</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

After the ♦J to his ace, Mr. Duboin shifted to a low spade. We think this is a Lazy play, catering specifically to partner's ♠Qx ♥Axx ♦J10xxx ♣xxx (or the same HCP in 2=3=4=4 distribution), a holding that requires partner to find an unblock of the ♠Q after declarer puts up the ♠K at trick two.<sup>55</sup> A low-spade shift could cost the contract if East held the singleton ♠K, a type of layout we rate as more likely than the specific layout where cashing the ♠A costs. If East holds the singleton ♠K, there are more combinations of honors that produce a construction consistent with the bidding than if East holds the ♠Kx.

Leading the ♠A and underleading in spades broke even on the actual deal, but in our opinion Mr. Duboin's low-spade lead was Lazy.

<sup>55</sup> A similar construction with the spade honors reversed would also require a low-spade shift to defeat the contract (taking three spade tricks plus the ♥A), but this is not a plausible layout on the bidding. Declarer would hold something like ♠Qx ♥Q10xxx ♦Kxx ♣KQx, but with a poor 12-count he would have passed the invitational 2NT.

OCBL-2, QF, Board 20

<https://tinyurl.com/y26hex45>

<div> <div>20</div> </div>		N giorginod ♠ J8763 ♥ 10874 ♦ 2 ♣ AQ4	<table> <tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>1♦</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>2NT</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>3♣</td><td>P</td><td>3♠</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>4♠</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td></td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	P	P	1♦	P	1♠	P	2NT	P	3♣	P	3♠	P	4♠	P	P	P		P	
W	N	E	S																								
P	P	P	1♦																								
P	1♠	P	2NT																								
P	3♣	P	3♠																								
P	4♠	P	P																								
P		P																									
W hultahult ♠ 1052 ♥ KQ ♦ J65 ♣ KJ873	<div>♣5</div>	E Rerack ♠ Q9 ♥ J532 ♦ A73 ♣ 10652																									
	S berny75 ♠ AK4 ♥ A96 ♦ KQ10984 ♣ 9																										
		4♠ N      NS: 0 EW: 0																									

- 2NT: artificial, strong, unbalanced (18-20 balanced would open 2♦)
- 3♣: asking
- 3♠: three spades and six or more diamonds

After a club lead to the king and ace, declarer led a diamond to the king followed by a diamond ruff in hand. A spade to the ace was followed by another diamond ruff, the suit breaking 3-3.

At trick six, declarer had a sure-tricks line by ruffing the ♣4 with the ♠4 and cashing the ♠K. Leading dummy's high diamonds with the ♥A and ♣Q intact would have limited the defense to at most two trumps and one heart, even if trumps split 4-1. Mr. Duboin's actual line—cashing the ♣Q and then leading a spade to the ♠K—would have led to defeat if East held both remaining trumps. East can ruff a diamond, cash the ♠Q to draw Mr. Duboin's last two trumps, and enjoy his club winners thanks to declarer's gift of unnecessarily releasing the ♣Q.

Mr. Duboin's actual line could only have cost if East had unnecessarily followed with the ♠9 from ♠Q1095, so it risked little, but it also *gained nothing*. East is an expert and very capable

of making a tricky play, and a world-class player like Mr. Duboin surely would have realized he could claim by leading a second spade. Mr. Duboin's choice to put a game on the line—and gain nothing in return—by gambling that East had not made a good falsecard from a dangerous trump holding is a Lazy play.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW8, Board 10

<https://tinyurl.com/y2fce34u>

<div>10 D</div>		<b>N</b> giorginod ♠ 32 ♥ Q9852 ♦ 65 ♣ A1082	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>1NT</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>2♦</td><td>P</td><td>2♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>2♠</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>3♣</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			1♠	1NT	P	2♦	P	2♥	P	P	2♠	P	P	3♣	P	P
W	N	E	S																				
		1♠	1NT																				
P	2♦	P	2♥																				
P	P	2♠	P																				
P	3♣	P	P																				
<b>W</b> malorencs ♠ K10 ♥ J43 ♦ 98742 ♣ 965	<div>♠ Q</div>	<b>E</b> MaijaLat ♠ QJ9764 ♥ A106 ♦ AK ♣ 43																					
	<b>S</b> eledub1 ♠ A85 ♥ K7 ♦ QJ103 ♣ KQJ7		3♣ N      NS: 0 EW: 0																				

Mr. Duboin's decision to bid 3♣ is reasonable—his partner would not routinely compete to 3♥ over 2♠ with three-card support, so there were two chances to catch a fit.

In the play, though, Mr. Duboin was careless. After winning trick one with dummy's ♠A, he should have led a spade at once to cut the defenders' communications in case East was 6=1=3=3 with the singleton ♥A and both diamond honors (a live possibility—an opening lead of the singleton ace in declarer's primary suit would be unattractive). Mr. Duboin's actual play of leading the ♥K heart first would allow East to cross to West in spades for a killing ruff on the dangerous layout. The actual layout was not dangerous, and therefore Mr. Duboin was not punished for his Lazy play.



Major Alt-1, R8, Board 13

<https://tinyurl.com/y77aew6k>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>13</div> </div>		<div>N mrxxx</div> <div>             ♠ 82              ♥ KQ109              ♦ Q86              ♣ AJ93           </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td><td>P</td><td>2♠</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♣	P	2♠	P	P	P		
W	N	E	S												
1♣	P	2♠	P												
P	P														
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>             ♠ A10654              ♥ 864              ♦ AK7              ♣ 75           </div>	♥K	<div>E phicro2</div> <div>             ♠ J73              ♥ A73              ♦ J432              ♣ K82           </div>													
	<div>S mrs_m</div> <div>             ♠ KQ9              ♥ J52              ♦ 1095              ♣ Q1064           </div>		<div>2♣ W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>												

After the ♥K lead, ducked, North shifted to the ♦8, which was taken by dummy's ♦J. The best play at this point depends on whether declarer believes diamonds are 3-3 or not. If declarer concludes diamonds are 3-3, it is routine to cross to the ♠A and unblock the ♦AK. Taking a finesse in spades without unblocking diamonds may allow the opponents to drive out dummy's ♥A, risking the contract if the ♣A was offside.

If declarer is not convinced diamonds are 3-3, he must decide how to play spades. We think it is best to play opener for the doubleton and lead the ♠J from dummy, planning to duck the next round of spades if South covers.

Mr. Duboin chose neither of these plans. He led a low spade and inserted the ♠10 when South played the ♠9. This play produced an overtrick on the actual layout, but it would have risked the contract if North held a doubleton spade honor and the club finesse was offside. We conclude that this was a Lazy line of play.

OCBL-2, RR6, Board 04

<https://tinyurl.com/yxzvylnz>

<div>D</div> <div>4</div>	N giorginod	W N E S			
	♠ KQ7643	1♥	1♠	X	2♠
	♥ 9875	3♥	P	4♥	P
	♦ 10	P	P		
	♣ A7				
W przedpelk	♠ K	E konrad80			
♠ A2		♠ J9			
♥ AQ10632		♥ J			
♦ A6		♦ K87432			
♣ Q108		♣ KJ54			
	S berny75				
	♠ 1085				
	♥ K4				
	♦ QJ95				
	♣ 9632				
		4♥ W NS: 0 EW: 0			

Mr. Duboin might well have competed with 3♠, but the focus on this deal is Mr. Duboin's defense. Mr. Duboin led the ♠K to declarer's ♠A, and his partner came on lead at trick two with the ♥K. South continued with a spade to Mr. Duboin's ♠Q.

The best play at this point appears to be the ♣7 to attempt to take two club tricks. Underleading the ♣A gives declarer a chance to misguess in clubs if partner holds the ♣Q, and playing ♣A and a club is hopeless in such cases. Underleading the ♣A appears to cost only when declarer has the singleton ♣Q *and* Mr. Duboin's remaining trumps constitute an unexpected trump trick (declarer holding e.g. ♠Ax ♥AQxxxx ♦Axxx ♣Q). If declarer holds something like ♠Ax ♥AQ10xxx ♦AQ ♣xxx, after ♣A and a club, South will be subject to a simple squeeze in the minors. If Mr. Duboin shifted to the ♣7 on this layout, declarer could make by playing the ♣K and then ducking a club (South can later be caught in a stepping-stone squeeze), but this play is far from clear.

Another sound reason for Mr. Duboin to shift to a low club is that his partner's choices of spade plays hinted at suit preference for clubs rather than diamonds. When South has the diamonds locked up (as on this deal), it is normal to signal with the ♠10 on the first trick and perhaps risk the

♠8 on the next trick. South's actual choice of spade plays were lower cards in the suit, hinting that South was open to a club shift (a mistake given South's hand).

Instead of shifting to a low club, Mr. Duboin continued spades at trick four, a Lazy play that would have gained only on the anti-percentage layout where he had a trump trick but otherwise would have allowed declarer to gain more distributional information before committing to an approach in the minor suits and risked declarer running the diamond suit and discarding all of his clubs if declarer held ♦AQx or a similar holding.

OCBL-Cup-1, R10, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/yyo8lodl>

D	8	N	ICEBALDI	W	N	E	S
		♠	8754	P	P	1NT	P
		♥	K943	2♦	P	2♥	P
		♦	5	3NT	P	P	P
		♣	A985				
W	berny75			E	giorginod		
♠	92			♠	KQ6		
♥	AQJ65			♥	107		
♦	K943			♦	AJ86		
♣	32			♣	KQ104		
		♦	2				
		S	dagur				
		♠	AJ103				
		♥	82				
		♦	Q1072				
		♣	J76				
				3NT E	NS: 0 EW: 0		

After a diamond lead to his ♦8, the ♥10 ducked, and a heart to the ♥J and ♥K, North shifted to the ♠8: ♠Q, ♠A. South returned the ♠10, a falsecard, which Mr. Duboin won. This strikes us as a careless play. It could not possibly have gained unless South had falsecarded—as he had—and taking the ♠K on the second round exposed Mr. Duboin to a legitimate defeat if North had ♠J87xx and South held the ♣A.

On the actual layout, however, North became convinced that Mr. Duboin had the ♠KQJ based on his partner's falsecard and misdefended by ducking the ♣A in the ending. If Mr. Duboin had held up on the second round of spades, North himself would have held the setting tricks and would not have erred.

OCBL-2, RR1, Board 07 <https://tinyurl.com/y3kxg4do>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>		<b>N</b> bareket ♠ KQ102 ♥ Q9 ♦ 9742 ♣ Q96	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td><td>1♣</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♥	P	1♣	P	P	P	2♣
W	N	E	S												
P	1♥	P	1♣												
P	P	P	2♣												
<b>W</b> berny75 ♠ 54 ♥ A532 ♦ KQ ♣ 107432	♦K	<b>E</b> giorginod ♠ J87 ♥ 1064 ♦ A10863 ♣ KJ													
	<b>S</b> lengy ♠ A963 ♥ KJ87 ♦ J5 ♣ A85		2♣ S      NS: 0 EW: 0												

West led the ♦K, followed by the ♦Q, which Mr. Duboin overtook to continue with a third diamond. We consider this play Lazy: it essentially gave up on defeating the contract, while there is a realistic chance to beat the contract. In our view, the best chance is if West holds ♠A9-doubleton, in which case it is essential to get a club shift at trick three, setting up an eventual defensive crossruff: After a club to the, say, ♣Q, ♣K, and ♣A, suppose declarer plays a spade. West rises with the ♠A, crosses to Mr. Duboin in clubs, receives an overruff in diamonds, and gives Mr. Duboin a club ruff.

To get the defense on the right track, Mr. Duboin should have allowed West to win trick two while playing a low diamond, giving suit preference for club shift. His actual play was Lazy.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW1, Board 05

<https://tinyurl.com/y7sr4q3y>

<div>D</div> <div>5</div>	<div>N waldorf1</div> <div>♠ Q3</div> <div>♥ KQ854</div> <div>♦ K53</div> <div>♣ A107</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>1♥ 1♠ 4♥</div> <div>4♣ P P P</div>
<div>W eledub1</div> <div>♠ KJ102</div> <div>♥ J3</div> <div>♦ J1064</div> <div>♣ KQ3</div>	<div>♥ A</div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div>♠ A87654</div> <div>♥ 7</div> <div>♦ AQ7</div> <div>♣ 954</div>
	<div>S sylviaash</div> <div>♠ 9</div> <div>♥ A10962</div> <div>♦ 982</div> <div>♣ J862</div>	<div>4♣ E NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

After the ♥A and two rounds of clubs, Mr. Duboin cashed dummy's ♠K. When trumps split 2-1, he could afford to draw the last trump, cross back to dummy, and finesse diamonds. Instead, Mr. Duboin finessed in diamonds first, which was safe on the full layout but risked losing a ruff unnecessarily. We consider this play Lazy.

## 2. Matches that Disallowed Kibitzers

#8046 HARRIS v ULI, Board 16

<https://tinyurl.com/y6tkweoj>

<div>16</div>		<b>N</b> fulldiRe ♠ Q ♥ A9762 ♦ 8762 ♣ A42	<b>W</b> N E S P P 1♠ P 2♣ X 3♣ 4♦ P P P
<b>W</b> master dj ♠ 843 ♥ QJ1084 ♦ Q5 ♣ 1096	♠ 8	<b>E</b> JDACHE ♠ AJ1096 ♥ 5 ♦ K10 ♣ KJ875	
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ K752 ♥ K3 ♦ AJ943 ♣ Q3		4♦ S NS: 0 EW: 0

Mr. Duboin's 4♦ bid is questionable. He has good defense, and he might be competing at the four-level on a deal where both sides have only an eight-card fit. On the actual deal, his choice was perhaps a small loser because 3♠ was down at least one and possibly more.

Mr. Duboin was Lazy in the play. A spade lead went to East's ace, and East shifted to his singleton heart. Mr. Duboin won with the ♥K and played two rounds of trumps. This play was inferior to ruffing a spade, crossing to the ♦A, ruffing another spade, and then playing the last diamond; if one of the opponents had held three diamonds, declarer's line of play would allow the defense to draw a third round of trumps before declarer had ruffed both of his losing diamonds. On the actual layout, it made no difference because trumps broke 2-2.

#3586 ULI v Rippey, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/y2kghtdf>

<div>2</div>		<b>N</b> giacomopr ♠ K1092 ♥ AQ64 ♦ 6 ♣ AJ76	<b>W</b> <b>N</b> <b>E</b> <b>S</b> 2NT 3♥ 2♥ 2♠ 5♥ 3♥ 4♥ 4♠ P P X P
<b>W</b> 100dog ♠ 5 ♥ K85 ♦ K10874 ♣ K984	♥5	<b>E</b> Giova007 ♠ 743 ♥ J109732 ♦ AQ ♣ 53	
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ AQJ86 ♥ ♦ J9532 ♣ Q102		6♠x S NS: 0 EW: 0

Mr. Duboin's bidding was normal, but his line of play was inferior. He finessed the ♥Q, throwing a club, and gave up a diamond. East won and shifted to a trump, which Mr. Duboin won in hand to lead the ♣Q, which was covered. Mr. Duboin crossed back to his hand with the ♣10, ruffed a diamond, and eventually made six on a crossruff.

After the ♣Q was covered, Mr. Duboin had to choose between two lines of play: (1) Cross to the ♣10 in his hand or (2) play a second trump. The three relevant distributions for East are 2=6=4=1 (making West 2=3=3=5), 3=6=3=1 (West is 1=3=4=5), and 1=6=2=4 (West is 3=3=5=2). Against the first two distributions, Mr. Duboin must draw a second round of trumps: East's 2=6=4=1 is an immediate claim, and against 3=6=3=1 declarer makes on a minor-suit squeeze against West. If East is 1=6=2=4, Mr. Duboin must play as he did.

Although Mr. Duboin's play could have been the winner, it is clearly anti-percentage because it requires West to have an improbable shape (3=3=5=2) given his choices of 2NT followed by 5♥. Leading a second trump, by contrast, gains against a similarly improbable shape (2=3=3=5) but also gains when West is 1=3=4=5, which is far more consistent with the bidding. Mr. Duboin's anti-percentage but successful play was Lazy.



## **E. Weird Deals**

The final rating not yet discussed is the Weird deal. These were deals that did not fit well in any other category. They typically indicate that Mr. Duboin and perhaps his partner did something strange that had little noticeable effect on the result. We detected 12 deals in this category (1.69% of the total); nine of these deals occurred when kibitzers were allowed (1.64%), while three occurred in a match that disallowed kibitzers (1.88%). These deals were difficult to analyze and we draw no strong conclusions from the pattern.

For purposes of comparison, in our analysis of de Wijs and Muller we did not detect any Weird decisions by either Dutch player. We were comfortable classifying all of their actions in one of the other categories. The 12 Weird deals from Mr. Duboin are presented below.

**1. Matches that Allowed Kibitzers**

OCBL-2, RR1, Board 09

<https://tinyurl.com/yyhdwxc5>

<div>D</div> <div>9</div>	<div>N</div> <div>bareket</div> <div>♠ 10432</div> <div>♥ 86</div> <div>♦ 984</div> <div>♣ K643</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>1NT</div> <div>2♦</div> <div>2NT</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>1♥</div> <div>2♣</div> <div>2♠</div> <div>3NT</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div>
<div>W</div> <div>berny75</div> <div>♠ Q8</div> <div>♥ Q</div> <div>♦ J7653</div> <div>♣ AQ975</div>		<div>E</div> <div>giorginod</div> <div>♠ A965</div> <div>♥ AK943</div> <div>♦ AQ10</div> <div>♣ 2</div>
	<div>S</div> <div>lengy</div> <div>♠ KJ7</div> <div>♥ J10752</div> <div>♦ K2</div> <div>♣ J108</div>	
		<div>35(32)</div> <div>17-19</div> <div>P</div> <div>3NT</div>
		<div>3NT W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

This deal was considered Weird because Mr. Duboin's explanation of his 3NT call—ostensibly showing  $3=5=(3-2)$  with 17-19 HCP—does not match his hand. It is unclear what effect this might have had on the bidding or defense. It seems unlikely, though perhaps possible, that West would have moved toward slam if Mr. Duboin had shown his actual distribution, while his choice made it easier to reach 3NT, the best contract. We did not conclude that this deal rose to the level of Suspicious, but it struck us as odd.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW6, Board 06

<https://tinyurl.com/y5by8j4w>

<div>6 <small>D</small></div>		<b>N</b> Silver11 ♠ K98764 ♥ A98 ♦ J1084 ♣ J1084	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td><td>1♠</td><td>X</td><td>2♣</td></tr> <tr> <td>3♦</td><td>3♠</td><td>3NT</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>4♠</td><td>4NT</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♦	1♠	X	2♣	3♦	3♠	3NT	P	P	4♠	4NT	P
W	N	E	S																
1♦	1♠	X	2♣																
3♦	3♠	3NT	P																
P	4♠	4NT	P																
<b>W</b> eledub1 ♠ 103 ♥ Q5 ♦ AK8643 ♣ KQ6	<div>♠ 2</div>	<b>E</b> giorginod ♠ AQ ♥ K1073 ♦ J1095 ♣ 953																	
	<b>S</b> Monkey1 ♠ J52 ♥ J642 ♦ Q72 ♣ A72		4NT E      NS: 0 EW: 0																

We found this deal difficult to analyze because Mr. Duboin made several choices, some winning and some losing. 4♠ could have been doubled for 500, but at single-dummy 4NT is a sound contract. If there are six diamond tricks, then the contract will make if declarer chooses a winning Morton's Fork Coup, leading a club or heart through the defender who holds the ace.<sup>56</sup> However, diamonds were 3-0, and while this does not cost a trick in the suit, it scrambles declarer's entries. When Mr. Duboin led the ♦J to the ♦A, he had to play on hearts.

The legitimate line of play would be to lead dummy's ♥Q, playing North for the ♥J. Doing so would have built two tricks in hearts while untangling the entries. On the actual layout, this would have failed. Mr. Duboin tried for a swindle, and relying on a defensive error was his only hope at that point. He led the ♥5 from dummy. If North had ducked, the ♥K would have scored, letting Mr. Duboin finesse in diamonds and build the tenth trick in clubs. North was not fooled, however, and he rose with the ♥A, after which declarer could not recover. Playing for a defensive

<sup>56</sup> Leading through an ace results in the defender having to make a no-win choice: rise—giving declarer two tricks in the suit—or duck—letting declarer shift to the other suit for the game-going trick. The intuitive fork on this deal is to lead toward dummy's ♥Q, which gives declarer the additional chance of falling back on the heart finesse if the ♥Q loses to the ♥A. This play would have failed on the layout.

error rather than a legitimate chance struck us as Weird, but given that Mr. Duboin could have succeeded with a different earlier play it did not qualify as Suspicious.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW7, Board 07

<https://tinyurl.com/y2eefsbs>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>♠ A104</div> <div>♥ 65</div> <div>♦ AK53</div> <div>♣ 8643</div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td><td>X</td><td>P</td><td>1♠</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>4♣</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	3♥	X	P	1♠	P	4♣	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																
3♥	X	P	1♠																
P	4♣	P	P																
P																			
<div>W maqeda</div> <div>♠ 93</div> <div>♥ AJ109432</div> <div>♦ J94</div> <div>♣ 10</div>		<div>E halko</div> <div>♠ Q82</div> <div>♥ 87</div> <div>♦ Q1072</div> <div>♣ KQJ5</div>																	
	<div>S eledub1</div> <div>♠ KJ765</div> <div>♥ KQ</div> <div>♦ 86</div> <div>♣ A972</div>																		
		<div>4♣ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																	

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin's double is unusual. With spade support, it seems more natural to simply bid the value of the hand: 4♣. However, the double gave the partnership a chance to reach 3NT if his partner had bid it. This would have been a great success on the full deal because 3NT makes by playing the non-preemptor for the ♠Q, while 4♣ has no hope against the 4-1 club split (and the likely club lead extinguishes any hope of East splitting in clubs and crashing his partner's ♣10).

However, South rebid 3♠—a call we do not understand because a negative double on this auction does not imply spade support, and 3NT is the most likely game—so the partnership arrived at the normal failing contract of 4♣, but we conclude that the way in which they reached 4♣ is Weird.

OCBL-Cup-1, R6, Board 10

<https://tinyurl.com/y2erohza>

<div>10 D</div>		<b>N</b> berny75 ♠ AQJ ♥ A8743 ♦ 5 ♣ Q942	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>P</td><td>1♦</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td><td>2♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>4♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			P	1♦	P	1♥	P	2♥	P	4♥	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																				
		P	1♦																				
P	1♥	P	2♥																				
P	4♥	P	P																				
P																							
<b>W</b> Skrzat96 ♠ 10754 ♥ 952 ♦ AQ10 ♣ 1063			<b>E</b> badaud4 ♠ 9863 ♥ Q ♦ J432 ♣ K875																				
	<b>S</b> giorginod ♠ K2 ♥ KJ106 ♦ K9876 ♣ AJ		<div>4♥ N NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

In our opinion, Mr. Duboin adopted a Weird plan on this deal. He failed to open 1NT, which would have been routine for many experts. (Mr. Duboin himself is not against opening 1NT offshape. See <https://tinyurl.com/y64xn3ok>.) After opening 1♦, he takes quite a conservative view on the next round of the bidding, raising to only 2♥. It was normal to stay out of slam, as the partnership was missing one keycard and the ♥Q.

OCBL-Cup-1, R12, Board 05

<https://tinyurl.com/y5ltboe8>

D		N curtis		W				N	E	S
5		♠ 1084		P				2NT		P
		♥ 9865		3♦				P		3♥ P
		♦ 98		4♥				P		P
		♣ AQ73								
W berny75				E giorginod						
♠ Q62				♠ A75						
♥ KJ742				♥ AQ						
♦ 63				♦ AKJ752						
♣ 854				♣ J2						
		S h bertens								
		♠ KJ93								
		♥ 103								
		♦ Q104								
		♣ K1096								
				4♥ E		NS: 0 EW: 0				

3NT will go down one or two; 4♥ will succeed on a diamond lead but in practice went down one. We found the auction Weird because one member of the partnership bid strangely, but we are not familiar enough with the partnership's methods to know who. In some pairs' methods, completing a transfer over a 2NT opening is the default action; taking some other action is some sort of super-acceptance. In other pairs' methods, completing the transfer shows a fit and opener does something else with no fit.

If this partnership uses the first set of methods, then West's raise to 4♥ is highly unusual—3NT would be the routine call. Under the second set of methods, however, Mr. Duboin's 3♥ call is irregular. It would be strange to treat a hand with only two hearts as three-card support, and although some extreme hands make this a reasonable action, this hand does not seem like the right type of hand—the diamond suit is a promising source of tricks for playing in notrump.

As we are unable to determine whether Mr. Duboin's action was Suspicious, we classify this deal as Weird.

4♥ failed by only one trick, while 3NT would have failed by at least one trick.

Major Alt-1, SF1, Board 17

<https://tinyurl.com/y3mxj6m8>

D	N giorginod	W	N	E	S
17	♠ Q83		1♣	P	1♠
	♥ Q	X	P	2♥	2♠
	♦ K94	P	3♠	P	P
	♣ AQ10965	P			
W arderi		E Clas 72			
♠ J4		♠ 1096			
♥ A1082		♥ K764			
♦ J108652		♦ AQ3			
♣ K		♣ J83			
	S phicro2				
	♠ AK752				
	♥ J953				
	♦ 7				
	♣ 742				
		3♠ S			
			NS: 0	EW: 0	

In our view, Mr. Duboin's pass over West's double was quite unusual. Assuming the partnership did not use support redoubles, which appears likely given how the auction continued, Mr. Duboin still had a normal 2♣ rebid. His pass allowed his partner to rebid 2♠—itself not an automatic choice allowing the partnership to find its spade fit rather than its club fit.

There was no real effect on the result, though. 3♠ made exactly, for +140, and there are 10 tricks in clubs, for +130. Still, we consider this deal Weird.



Major Alt-1, R5, Board 12

<https://tinyurl.com/yy7qpb9y>

<div><div></div><div>12</div></div>		<div>N phicro2</div> <div>♠ 852</div> <div>♥ A3</div> <div>♦ AQ765</div> <div>♣ Q84</div>	<div><div>W</div><div>N</div><div>E</div><div>S</div></div> <div><div>1♣</div><div>1♦</div><div>2♥</div><div>P</div></div> <div><div>3♣</div><div>P</div><div>4♣</div><div>P</div></div> <div><div>P</div><div>P</div><div></div><div></div></div>				
<div>W rosenknopp</div> <div>♠ AK7</div> <div>♥ KJ109</div> <div>♦ 842</div> <div>♣ K107</div>		<div>♠ 5</div>	<div>E annkafu</div> <div>♠ QJ10943</div> <div>♥ 4</div> <div>♦ K10</div> <div>♣ J962</div>				
		<div>S giorginod</div> <div>♠ 6</div> <div>♥ Q87652</div> <div>♦ J93</div> <div>♣ A53</div>					
				4♣ W		NS: 0 EW: 0	

In our opinion, failing to act over 2♥—either doubling or raising diamonds—is unusual, but it had no effect on the outcome. We therefore rated it as a Weird deal.

OCBL-2, RR3, Board 13

<https://tinyurl.com/y4qvqqyu>

D	N nickfg1		W N E S			
13	♠ 1098 ♥ 1074 ♦ J987 ♣ J98		P P 2♦ P 3♣ P 3♦ P 3♠ P 3NT P P P			
W berny75			E giorginod			
♠ K2 ♥ A952 ♦ 1042 ♣ K543	♣ 10		♠ AJ76 ♥ QJ8 ♦ AQ ♣ AQ72			
	S AMesbur					
	♠ Q543 ♥ K63 ♦ K653 ♣ 106					
			3NT E NS: 0 EW: 0			

Mr. Duboin appears to have miscounted his HCP, portraying 18-19 HCP when he holds 20. We do not believe it affected the outcome.

OCBL-2, RR5, Board 16

<https://tinyurl.com/y3llex2j>

<div>W</div> <div>D16</div>	<div>Ngiorginod</div> <div>♠K8632</div> <div>♥J10853</div> <div>♦6</div> <div>♣K8</div>	<div>W</div> <div>1♣</div> <div>2NT</div> <div>P</div>	<div>N</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div>	<div>E</div> <div>1♦</div> <div>3NT</div>	<div>S</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div>
<div>W</div> <div>phantoma</div> <div>♠AJ5</div> <div>♥KQ4</div> <div>♦AQ87</div> <div>♣QJ9</div>	<div>♠2</div>	<div>E</div> <div>begse</div> <div>♠Q7</div> <div>♥A962</div> <div>♦KJ3</div> <div>♣7532</div>			
	<div>S</div> <div>berny75</div> <div>♠1094</div> <div>♥7</div> <div>♦109542</div> <div>♣A1064</div>				
		<div>3NT W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>			

We find Mr. Duboin's failure to show the majors unusual, especially at favorable vulnerability, but we do not believe it affected the result.

## 2. Matches that Disallowed Kibitzers

#2487 GOMMOD v ULI, Board 05 <https://tinyurl.com/y4ahyvc5>

<div>D</div> <div>5</div>	<div>N fulldiRe</div> <div>♠ KJ86</div> <div>♥ KQ43</div> <div>♦ 1052</div> <div>♣ AQ</div>	<div>W N E quadri</div> <div>1NT P 2NT</div> <div>P 3♣ P 3♦</div> <div>P P P</div>
<div>W gabi bi jr</div> <div>♠ Q10</div> <div>♥ AJ97</div> <div>♦ AKJ</div> <div>♣ J985</div>	<div>♦ A</div>	<div>E fede00</div> <div>♠ A52</div> <div>♥ 108652</div> <div>♦ Q9</div> <div>♣ 1073</div>
	<div>S giorginod</div> <div>♠ 9743</div> <div>♥</div> <div>♦ 87643</div> <div>♣ K642</div>	<div>3♦ S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

- 2NT: transfer to diamonds
- 3♣: negative for diamonds

Mr. Duboin's decision to transfer to 3♦ on a weak five-card suit is unusual, but it achieved no real gain. 3♦ failed by one trick, while 1NT would have failed by one or possibly two tricks.

#2751 ULI v ZEE GREATEST, Board 13 <https://tinyurl.com/y4f4t73z>


<div>D</div> <div>13</div>	<div>N Brad</div> <div>♠ K873</div> <div>♥ 854</div> <div>♦ QJ9</div> <div>♣ QJ2</div>	<table><tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>1♦</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	W	N	E	S		P	P	P	1♦	P	2♣	P	P	P		
W	N	E	S															
	P	P	P															
1♦	P	2♣	P															
P	P																	
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ AQ6</div> <div>♥ K972</div> <div>♦ A10432</div> <div>♣ 3</div>		<div>E ilaria75</div> <div>♠ 542</div> <div>♥ Q6</div> <div>♦ 85</div> <div>♣ AK10976</div>																
	<div>S joegrue</div> <div>♠ J109</div> <div>♥ AJ103</div> <div>♦ K76</div> <div>♣ 854</div>	<div>2♣ E</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																

We consider Mr. Duboin's pass of 2♣ as Weird because in many players' methods the 2♣ response would frequently be made on a 5-card suit and East would typically have 2-3 diamonds. On the actual deal, 2♣ made in comfort, but 2♦ would also have made easily after a trump lead and could have made after other leads as well, so Mr. Duboin's choice did not have much impact on the result.

We acknowledge that this decision is influenced by partnership style, but we considered Mr. Duboin's choice strange enough to rate this deal as Weird.

#6880 Those F\*\*kers v ULI, Board 04

<https://tinyurl.com/y69ghyla>

	N itsgrim	<table><tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td>1♦</td><td>2♣</td><td>2♣</td><td>3♣</td></tr><tr><td>3♣</td><td>P</td><td>4♣</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>				W	N	E	S	1♦	2♣	2♣	3♣	3♣	P	4♣	P	P	P		
W	N	E	S																		
1♦	2♣	2♣	3♣																		
3♣	P	4♣	P																		
P	P																				
	♠ 6 ♥ Q72 ♦ 8742 ♣ AK763																				
W giorginod		E Giacomopr																			
♠ 972 ♥ A983 ♦ AKJ93 ♣ 4		♠ AKJ1084 ♥ J106 ♦ 5 ♣ J95																			
	S Ettleton																				
	♠ Q53 ♥ K54 ♦ Q106 ♣ Q1082																				
		4♣ E NS: 0 EW: 0																			

We consider Mr. Duboin's 3♠ call Weird. In standard methods, this raise is nonforcing, and it seems like a very conservative valuation to be willing to play partscore facing a competitive two-level response with this hand. Mr. Duboin has several positive features that make this hand better than an ordinary minimum: two aces, a singleton in the opponents' suit, and a likely source of tricks in diamonds.

However, Mr. Duboin's choice did not affect the result when East bid game anyway. Nevertheless, we considered this deal Weird because we do not understand the 3♠ call.

## **F. Mr. Duboin's Preempting Style**

This section discusses the preemptive opening bids and preemptive overcalls made by Mr. Duboin across the 708 hands analyzed, as well as times when Mr. Duboin had the opportunity to make a preemptive opening bid or overcall but chose not to. Although there are insufficient deals to produce compelling evidence, the deals indicate that Mr. Duboin's preempting style was inconsistent, rather than regularly conservative or regularly aggressive. Mr. Duboin's preempting choices were also generally successful: when the layout favored aggressive action, Mr. Duboin tended to preempt or to preempt aggressively; when the layout was unfavorable for preemption, Mr. Duboin tended to be more conservative. However, no choice is inherently suspicious, and even taken as a whole this set of deals does not provide strong evidence of use of illicit information. Rather, this section should be considered in light of the rest of the deals.

# 1. Vulnerable Preemptive Decisions

Mr. Duboin preempted at the three-level as opener or overcaller four times. Three of them—one overcall and two opening bids—could be classified as mainstream preempts:

OCBL-Cup-1, R8, Board 09

<https://tinyurl.com/y4boqt3f>

D	N	Goblin2000	W	N	E	S
9	♠ K2	♥ A84	4♠	1♦ P	3♠ P	X P
	♦ J10753	♣ QJ6				
W	berny75		E	giorginod		
♠ 94			♠ AQJ10765			
♥ J2			♥ 1065			
♦ KQ86			♦ 4			
♣ AK743			♣ 108			

The 3♠ overcall would be the near-unanimous expert choice. 4♣ made in comfort.

OCBL-2, QF, Board 13

<https://tinyurl.com/y4oz7ot6>

<div>D</div> <div>13</div>	<div>N</div> <div>giorginod</div> <div>♠ KQ107654</div> <div>♥ 7</div> <div>♦ Q63</div> <div>♣ 94</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>3♠</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div>
<div>W</div> <div>hultahult</div> <div>♠ A93</div> <div>♥ J62</div> <div>♦ 9875</div> <div>♣ AQ8</div>	<div>♣2</div>	<div>E</div> <div>Rerack</div> <div>♠ J8</div> <div>♥ A93</div> <div>♦ K102</div> <div>♣ J10732</div>
	<div>S</div> <div>berny75</div> <div>♠ 2</div> <div>♥ KQ10854</div> <div>♦ AJ4</div> <div>♣ K65</div>	<div>3♠ N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

3♠ was a routine opening bid. Leading a spade to the ♠10 was the normal losing play.

#8046 HARRIS v ULI, Board 15

<https://tinyurl.com/y626zwuz>

<div>15</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N fulldiRe</div> <div>♠ K1098</div> <div>♥ 7</div> <div>♦ Q3</div> <div>♣ AQ10954</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>P P P 3♥</div>
<div>W master dj</div> <div>♠ A64</div> <div>♥</div> <div>♦ AJ865</div> <div>♣ KJ832</div>	<div>♣ 2</div>	<div>E JDACHE</div> <div>♠ QJ52</div> <div>♥ KJ1064</div> <div>♦ K94</div> <div>♣ 6</div>	
	<div>S giorginod</div> <div>♠ 73</div> <div>♥ AQ98532</div> <div>♦ 1072</div> <div>♣ 7</div>		<div>3♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

3♥ would not be a unanimous choice among experts. Holding a seven-card suit without internal solidity, some conservative preemptors would choose to open 2♥ (or Multi 2♦) rather than 3♥. However, 3♥ is the mainstream call. The layout was poor for the 3♥ opening, but this deal does not weaken the hypothesis that Mr. Duboin was self-kibitzing, because this match disallowed kibitzers.



Mr. Duboin's fourth vulnerable preempt at the three-level was an aggressive call:

OCBL-2, RR5, Board 13

<https://tinyurl.com/y4olpfda>

D	N giorginod	W	N	E	S
13	♠ QJ98754 ♥ 8 ♦ J65 ♣ Q8		3♠ P P	P 4NT 5♥ P	4♠ P P
W phantoma		E begse			
♠ A ♥ Q432 ♦ K842 ♣ KJ75	♠ 2	♠ 106 ♥ K10975 ♦ A9 ♣ A1043			
	S berny75				
	♠ K32 ♥ AJ6 ♦ Q1073 ♣ 962				
		5♥ E	NS: 0 EW: 0		

The 3♠ opening is aggressive but reasonable. Mr. Duboin's partner held spade support, and preempting 3♠ was the best action on the hand. His partner's raise risked -800 if the opponents had doubled 4♠, but they were highly unlikely to do so. Instead, the preemptive bid and raise pushed East-West to the five-level, where Mr. Duboin's pair had a chance to go plus if declarer misguessed trumps. (In fact, declarer guessed trumps correctly, which was likely.)

Although 3♠ did not win imps, it was highly unlikely to lose imps, and it gave North-South a chance to go plus. A two-level preempt would likely have resulted in defending against 4♥, which could not have failed.

In playing strength, this hand is considerably weaker than ♠9864 ♥KQ98652 ♦9 ♣4, with which Mr. Duboin chose to open with a Multi 2♦ (see <https://tinyurl.com/y2xljjro>). This stylistic difference seems greater than the degree to which an expert would typically adjust his style in first seat with both sides vulnerable compared with first seat at unfavorable vulnerability.

Compare the previous deal with this one, where Mr. Duboin passed in first seat:

OCBL-2, RR5, Board 05

<https://tinyurl.com/y6a3dzeg>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>5</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div> <div>♠ 43</div> <div>♥ Q8</div> <div>♦ 73</div> <div>♣ KJ109653</div> </div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>1♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>1NT</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>3♣</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	P	P	1♥	P	1NT	P	2♣	P	3♣	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																				
P	P	P	1♥																				
P	1NT	P	2♣																				
P	3♣	P	P																				
P																							
<div>W phantoma</div> <div> <div>♠ J106</div> <div>♥ K1095</div> <div>♦ KQ865</div> <div>♣ 7</div> </div>		<div>E begse</div> <div> <div>♠ A752</div> <div>♥ 74</div> <div>♦ J1092</div> <div>♣ Q84</div> </div>																					
	<div>S berny75</div> <div> <div>♠ KQ98</div> <div>♥ AJ632</div> <div>♦ A4</div> <div>♣ A2</div> </div>		<div>3♣ S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

2♣: Gazzilli (unaltered), clubs or 16+ HCP any shape; 3♣, long clubs, less than 8 HCP

As discussed on page 87, Mr. Duboin's pass as dealer was the winning action. We concluded that this choice was Suspicious because he successfully chose to pass with this hand and successfully chose to preempt with a hand of similar strength, opening 3♣ in first seat with both vulnerable with ♠QJ98754 ♥8 ♦J65 ♣Q8. See <https://tinyurl.com/y4olpfda>.

Sometimes Mr. Duboin chose to preempt at the two-level with hands stronger than ones he preempted at the three-level:

OCBL-1, RR7, Board 05

<https://tinyurl.com/y2xljjro>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>5</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ 9864            ♥ KQ98652            ♦ 9            ♣ 4         </div>	<div>W</div> <div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div> <div>           2♦ P 2♥            X P P P         </div>
<div>W mayors</div> <div>           ♠ AK103            ♥ 10            ♦ AQJ3            ♣ AJ62         </div>	<div>♠ K</div>	<div>E mutton</div> <div>           ♠ Q2            ♥ AJ743            ♦ 8542            ♣ 95         </div>	
	<div>S gioffi</div> <div>           ♠ J75            ♥            ♦ K1076            ♣ KQ10873         </div>		<div>2♥x S</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

On the unfriendly layout, Mr. Duboin's conservative choice to open with a Multi 2♦ worked better than a 3♥ opening would have, against which the likely auction would have been two passes to West, whose double would have ended the auction. 2♥-X went -1100 to win 7 imps compared with 3♥-X -1400 at the other table.

In the abstract, choosing not to preempt at the three-level at unfavorable vulnerability with this hand is reasonable. The heart suit is not internally solid, and the four-card side suit is poor. However, Mr. Duboin's choice to open with a Multi 2♦ seems inconsistent with some of his other choices:

- Mr. Duboin's 3♠ in first seat with both sides vulnerable, holding ♠QJ98754 ♥8 ♦J65 ♣Q8 (see <https://tinyurl.com/y4olpfda>). Although the difference in vulnerability might partially explain this difference, Mr. Duboin's divergent choices seem farther apart than what one

would normally attribute to the variance between an expert's preempting style at unfavorable vulnerability compared with both sides vulnerable.

- In the same seat at unfavorable, Mr. Duboin opened 3♥ holding ♠73 ♥AQ98532 ♦1072 ♣7 (see <https://tinyurl.com/y626zwuz>). These hands are similar in strength—if anything, the hand Mr. Duboin opened 2♦ with may be stronger—yet Mr. Duboin made different choices.
- This hand is even close in strength to ♠AQJ10765 ♥1065 ♦4 ♣108, with which Mr. Duboin overcalled 3♠ at unfavorable vulnerability (see <https://tinyurl.com/y4boqt3f>).

Mr. Duboin's choice to open Multi 2♦ with 7-4 distribution might suggest that his vulnerable two-level preempts are relatively sound or at least contain playing strength. However, his style here too is inconsistent:

OCBL-Mix-1, SW8, Board 05

<https://tinyurl.com/y6a8uuee>

<div> <div>D</div> <div>5</div> </div>		<div>N giorginod</div> <div>           ♠ QJ9762            ♥ Q42            ♦ J82            ♣ 3         </div>	<div> <div>W</div> <div>Multy</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> </div> <div>           2♦ X 3♥            5♦ P P P         </div>
<div>W malorencs</div> <div>           ♠ 4            ♥ 98            ♦ AQ10965            ♣ Q1062         </div>	<div>♠ Q</div>	<div>E MaijaLat</div> <div>           ♠ K10            ♥ AJ1075            ♦ 3            ♣ AKJ85         </div>	
	<div>S eledub1</div> <div>           ♠ A853            ♥ K63            ♦ K74            ♣ 974         </div>		<div>5♦ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin opens Multi at unfavorable vulnerability with a poor hand, mediocre suit, and no extreme distribution. This was the same seat and vulnerability as his Multi 2♦ opening on ♠9864 ♥KQ98652 ♦9 ♣4 (see <https://tinyurl.com/y2xljjro>). This is an extremely wide range in playing strength.

The 2♦ opening on this deal was highly successful, robbing East-West of valuable room that propelled them into the wrong game. If Mr. Duboin had passed as dealer, East-West would likely have conducted an uncontested auction (or if the auction became contested, East would be able to show his distribution accurately) ending in 5♣, which would have made in comfort. After the 2♦ opening, West hoped for more diamond length in East's hand and chose 5♦. The defense to defeat 5♦ was analyzed above on page 95.

OCBL-Cup-1, QF1, Board 07

<https://tinyurl.com/yxldkbc3>

<div>7</div> <div>D</div>		<div>N matushko</div> <div>♠ A843</div> <div>♥ 97</div> <div>♦ QJ65</div> <div>♣ QJ9</div>	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	2♥	P	P	P
W	N	E	S								
2♥	P	P	P								
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ Q9</div> <div>♥ AKJ865</div> <div>♦ 1084</div> <div>♣ 65</div>	<div>♣ J</div>	<div>E berny75</div> <div>♠ K10652</div> <div>♥ 10</div> <div>♦ AK7</div> <div>♣ A1073</div>									
	<div>S YuKh</div> <div>♠ J7</div> <div>♥ Q432</div> <div>♦ 932</div> <div>♣ K842</div>		<div>2♥ W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>								

In second seat with both sides vulnerable, Mr. Duboin opens 2♥,<sup>57</sup> a reasonable but conservative choice on a hand that some experts would have opened at the one-level. In fact, Mr. Duboin's partner opened 1♥ on a similar hand, ♠A7 ♥AQ7542 ♦873 ♣42, in second seat with both sides vulnerable (see <http://tinyurl.com/ybyrubhv>).

<sup>57</sup> Note that Mr. Duboin opened 2♥ on the above hand, but 2♦ Multi on other hands presented in this report. This may appear to be a point of inconsistency with our data. The difference, however, can be explained by Mr. Duboin's different partners. With berny75, Mr. Duboin plays the 2♦ opening as 18-19 balanced (see <https://tinyurl.com/y4qvqqyu>). With gioffi and others, Mr. Duboin plays the 2♦ opening as a Multi, usually a weak two in major (see <https://tinyurl.com/y3j2bgwt>, <https://tinyurl.com/yxzy458c>). Thus, a natural 2♥ or 2♠ opening instead of a Multi 2♦ opening does not imply a difference in valuation by Mr. Duboin, but rather a different system depending on who his partner is.

OCBL-1, RR7, Board 04

<https://tinyurl.com/y6s492s3>

<div><div>D</div><div>4</div></div>		<div><div>N</div><div>giorginod</div></div> <div><div>♠</div><div>K109654</div></div> <div><div>♥</div><div>109</div></div> <div><div>♦</div><div>6532</div></div> <div><div>♣</div><div>7</div></div>	<div><div>W</div><div>N</div><div>E</div><div>S</div></div> <div><div>P</div><div>2♦</div><div>3♥</div><div>4♠</div></div> <div><div>P</div><div>P</div><div>P</div><div></div></div>			
<div><div>W</div><div>mayors</div></div> <div><div>♠</div><div>QJ7</div></div> <div><div>♥</div><div>86</div></div> <div><div>♦</div><div>J1098</div></div> <div><div>♣</div><div>8642</div></div>				<div><div>E</div><div>mutton</div></div> <div><div>♠</div><div>3</div></div> <div><div>♥</div><div>AKQ753</div></div> <div><div>♦</div><div>Q7</div></div> <div><div>♣</div><div>AJ103</div></div>		
		<div><div>S</div><div>gioffi</div></div> <div><div>♠</div><div>A82</div></div> <div><div>♥</div><div>J42</div></div> <div><div>♦</div><div>AK4</div></div> <div><div>♣</div><div>KQ95</div></div>				
				<div><div>4♠ S</div><div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div></div>		

Again in second seat with both sides vulnerable, Mr. Duboin preempts at the two-level with a much weaker hand. 2♦ is reasonable but aggressive with 6-4 distribution and lack of wasted values outside spades. Mr. Duboin's preempting style seems to be very wide-ranging if both this and the previous hand qualify for two-level preempts in second seat with both sides vulnerable.

The choice to open 2♦ does not appear successful on its face. The 2♦ opening essentially guarantees that South will drive to 4♠ (an undesirable but not hopeless contract looking only at the North-South cards), which fails on the lie of the cards, while the opponents can make only eight tricks in hearts. Passing, which would not be suspicious, would give North-South a chance to buy the contract for a spade partscore or go plus on defense.

However, at the other table, East competed to 5♥, which was doubled and went -800. If Mr. Duboin was self-kibitzing on this deal, he might have seen this result, which makes the choice to open 2♦ and reach a failing 4♠ contract more understandable. The only chance to salvage the board was to hope East at this table would duplicate Mr. Duboin's teammate's 5♥ call. Failing to preempt and trying to go plus in a partscore or on defense at the four-level or below would have

stood to gain very few imps. The actual result was a loss of 14 imps. If North-South had played 3♠ making +140, Mr. Duboin's team would still have lost 12 imps.



OCBL-Cup-1, SF1, Board 13

<https://tinyurl.com/y537vo55>

<div>D</div> <div>13</div>	<div>N dzeronimo</div> <div>♠ K54</div> <div>♥ A43</div> <div>♦ J732</div> <div>♣ K72</div>	<table><tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>1♦</td></tr><tr><td>1NT</td><td>X</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>2♠</td><td>2NT</td><td>3♠</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	W	N	E	S		P	P	1♦	1NT	X	2♥	P	2♠	2NT	3♠	P	P	P		
W	N	E	S																			
	P	P	1♦																			
1NT	X	2♥	P																			
2♠	2NT	3♠	P																			
P	P																					
<div>W berny75</div> <div>♠ Q10</div> <div>♥ QJ72</div> <div>♦ K108</div> <div>♣ AQJ6</div>		<div>E giorginod</div> <div>♠ AJ9763</div> <div>♥ 986</div> <div>♦ 4</div> <div>♣ 1093</div>																				
	<div>S ronpa</div> <div>♠ 82</div> <div>♥ K105</div> <div>♦ AQ965</div> <div>♣ 854</div>	<div>3♠ W</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>																				

This deal provides further evidence that Mr. Duboin's preempting style is not only wide-ranging but inconsistent. Preempting at the two-level with ♠K109654 ♥109 ♦6532 ♣7 but not this the East hand above is unusual (see the previous hand, <https://tinyurl.com/y6s492s3>). Although 6-4 distribution is better than 6-3-3-1 distribution, a player who preempts aggressively would likely do so with both hands.

Mr. Duboin's choice not to preempt worked well. 4♠ is against the odds, and it would have failed on this deal, but if Mr. Duboin had preempted, it is possible that his partner would have driven to game. After the initial pass, East-West stayed at a safe level.

OCBL-2, SF, Board 23

<https://tinyurl.com/y8ajw8mt>

<div>23</div> <div>D</div>	<div>Nbareket</div> <div>♠K63</div> <div>♥62</div> <div>♦53</div> <div>♣KJ6432</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>1♠3♣X1♣</div> <div>P3♠P3♦</div> <div>PPP4♣</div>
<div>Wgiorginod</div> <div>♠AQJ1095</div> <div>♥J104</div> <div>♦982</div> <div>♣Q</div>	<div>♥J</div>	<div>Eberny75</div> <div>♠842</div> <div>♥AKQ53</div> <div>♦J1076</div> <div>♣7</div>
	<div>Slengy</div> <div>♠7</div> <div>♥987</div> <div>♦AKQ4</div> <div>♣A10985</div>	<div>4♠S</div> <div>NS: 0EW: 0</div>

This deal is a rough equivalent of one where Mr. Duboin overcalled 3♠ at unfavorable vulnerability, holding ♠AQJ10765 ♥1065 ♦4 ♣108 (see <https://tinyurl.com/y4boqt3f>). The choice not to overcall 2♠ is unremarkable, but the 1♠ call might have given his partnership the best chance to go plus. If East had raised directly to 4♠, South would have been hard-pressed to pass, when either 4♠ or 5♣ could have been making. A likely result would thus have been 5♣ down one against 4♠ going down two.

However, if West had overcalled 2♠ and the auction continued 3♣ by North, 4♠ by East, South would have less reason to bid 5♣ because the 3♣ call on this auction would indicate—or at least could contain—more strength and less club length relative to the jump-raise on the actual auction.

## 2. Nonvulnerable Preemptive Decisions

Due to the wider ranges typical for nonvulnerable preempts, it is common to see variations in suit quality and overall strength that would be more surprising to see in vulnerable preempts. Accordingly, no strong pattern emerged, and Mr. Duboin's preempts are largely consistent with a normal expert preempting style. Mr. Duboin's preemptive choices were successful.

OCBL-1, RR7, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/y38qn929>

8

N

giorginod

♠

1097

♥

J10

♦

9

♣

KQJ10876

W

N

E

S

1♠

P

1NT

P

2♣

3♣

3♦

P

P

P

W

mayors

♠

AQ532

♥

AQ2

♦

A62

♣

53

♣A

E

mutton

♠

6

♥

753

♦

KQ107543

♣

92

S

gioffi

♠

KJ84

♥

K9864

♦

J8

♣

A4

3♦E

NS: 0 EW: 0

Mr. Duboin's failure to overcall 3♣ appears unusual, but 3♣ overcall was likely agreed as a two-suited call. See <http://tinyurl.com/y5f9ruxq>.

Major Alt-1, F2, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/y4axptcx>

<div> <div>2</div> <div>♠</div> </div>		<div>N H Bertens</div> <div> ♠ A108  ♥ 4  ♦ J9642  ♣ KJ96 </div>	<div>W N good 4M S</div> <div> 4♣ P 3NT P  P P 5♥ P </div>
<div>W phicro2</div> <div> ♠ J543  ♥ KQ10  ♦ KQ  ♣ A1054 </div>	<div>♠ 6</div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div> ♠ KQ2  ♥ A9876532  ♦ 85  ♣ </div>	
	<div>S curtis</div> <div> ♠ 976  ♥ J  ♦ A1073  ♣ Q8732 </div>		<div>5♥ E NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Mr. Duboin's Suspicious decision not to cooperate with his partner's slam-try is discussed above on page 83.

This section considers his preemptive decision. Some partnerships might agree to treat the East hand as a "good" 4♥ opening, but this decision would not be universal—many partnerships would require a stronger heart suit. The decision to open 3NT rather than 4♥ does not strike us as an especially meaningful one.

OCBL-1, RR7, Board 09

<https://tinyurl.com/yxzl4ade>

D	N giorginod	W	N	E	S
9	♠ 107 ♥ Q75 ♦ KQ97653 ♣ 3		3♦ P	P P	3NT
W mayors		E mutton			
♠ 52 ♥ 9643 ♦ 4 ♣ QJ10764		♠ AK984 ♥ 102 ♦ 108 ♣ K852			
	S gioffi				
	♠ QJ63 ♥ AKJ8 ♦ AJ2 ♣ A9				

Mr. Duboin's 3♦ opening was normal, and the result was a normal making game.

OCBL-Mix-1, SW5, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/y5u3qegz>

<div><div></div><div>2</div><div>D</div></div>	<div>N firechief</div> <div>♠ AQ84</div> <div>♥ K3</div> <div>♦ AQ82</div> <div>♣ Q52</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div></div> <div>3♦</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>3NT</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div>
<div>W eledub1</div> <div>♠ 76532</div> <div>♥ AJ1062</div> <div>♦</div> <div>♣ KJ10</div>	<div>♥9</div>	<div>E giorginod</div> <div>♠ 10</div> <div>♥ 984</div> <div>♦ KJ97653</div> <div>♣ 96</div>
	<div>S jodewagon</div> <div>♠ KJ9</div> <div>♥ Q75</div> <div>♦ 104</div> <div>♣ A8743</div>	<div>3NT N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

The 3♦ opening bid was typical for a favorable-vulnerability preempt, and it produced a normal result.

#1955 Untitled, Board 12

<https://tinyurl.com/y3gnspls>

<div>12</div>	<div>N lucrezio14</div> <div>♠ A742</div> <div>♥ K543</div> <div>♦ 2</div> <div>♣ AJ73</div>	<div>W picche quadri S</div> <div>P 1♣ 3♣ P</div> <div>3♦ P P P</div>
<div>W giorginod</div> <div>♠ J1097</div> <div>♥ 943</div> <div>♦ KQ10954</div>	<div>♦ 2</div>	<div>E eledub1</div> <div>♠ K9863</div> <div>♥ A2</div> <div>♦ AQJ1075</div> <div>♣</div>
	<div>S bebe2112</div> <div>♠ QJ105</div> <div>♥ Q86</div> <div>♦ K86</div> <div>♣ 862</div>	<div>3♦ W NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

Here, however, Mr. Duboin failed to open 3♣ at favorable vulnerability in first seat. As discussed above on page 86, we consider a 3♣ opening bid standard in the modern style. Mr. Duboin's pass was a success, though, as it allowed his partnership to reach 3♦.

OCBL-2, RR6, Board 16

<https://tinyurl.com/y5uzk5oa>

<div>16</div>	<div>N giorginod</div> <div>♠ 54</div> <div>♥ J8</div> <div>♦ A987643</div> <div>♣ A5</div>		<div>W N E S</div> <div>P 3♦ 3♠ 5♦</div> <div>P P P</div>			
	<div>W przedpelk</div> <div>♠ Q92</div> <div>♥ A62</div> <div>♦ 5</div> <div>♣ 1097632</div>		<div>E konrad80</div> <div>♠ AKJ1086</div> <div>♥ KQ95</div> <div>♦ 2</div> <div>♣ J4</div>			
		<div>S berny75</div> <div>♠ 73</div> <div>♥ 10743</div> <div>♦ KQJ10</div> <div>♣ KQ8</div>				
				<div>5♦ N NS: 0 EW: 0</div>		

Mr. Duboin's 3♦ opening was within normal limits but was heavy—holding two aces makes Mr. Duboin's hand more valuable on defense than expected for a favorable-vulnerability preempt. Compare to the previous two examples. The opening bid was successful. The preemptive barrage led to going -100 (the board was a push) when the opponents can make 620 in 4♠ or collect 300 against 5♦-X.

OCBL-2, QF, Board 16

<https://tinyurl.com/y3lht9zf>

<div>D</div> <div>16</div>		<div>N</div> <div>giorginod</div> <div>♠ AKJ10965</div> <div>♥ K6</div> <div>♦ 102</div> <div>♣ J5</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>1♥</div> <div>4♣</div> <div>X</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div>	
<div>W</div> <div>hultahult</div> <div>♠ 84</div> <div>♥ QJ9743</div> <div>♦ A84</div> <div>♣ KQ</div>	<div>♠ 3</div>		<div>E</div> <div>Rerack</div> <div>♠ Q3</div> <div>♥ A105</div> <div>♦ KQ65</div> <div>♣ A843</div>	
		<div>S</div> <div>berny75</div> <div>♠ 72</div> <div>♥ 82</div> <div>♦ J973</div> <div>♣ 109762</div>		
				<div>4♣x N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

An aggressive but reasonable 4♠ overcall at favorable vulnerability. Mr. Duboin could also have bid 1♠ but 4♠-X was a likely result in any case, and -500 was a good sacrifice.



OCBL-Cup-1, QF1, Board 08

<https://tinyurl.com/yyfsxq64>

<div>8</div>		<div>N</div> matushko <div>♠ Q109</div> <div>♥ J6</div> <div>♦ KQ62</div> <div>♣ KQ103</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>6+♥</div> <div>S</div> <div>2♠</div> <div>P</div> <div>3♣</div> <div>X</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>3♥</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>X</div> <div>P</div> <div>3♣</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>4♣</div> <div>P</div> <div>P</div> <div>♠</div>
<div>W</div> giorginod <div>♠ KJ8743</div> <div>♥ 4</div> <div>♦ 109843</div> <div>♣ 6</div>	<div>♥A</div>	<div>E</div> berny75 <div>♠</div> <div>♥ AKQ8753</div> <div>♦ 75</div> <div>♣ 9542</div>	
	<div>S</div> YuKh <div>♠ A652</div> <div>♥ 1092</div> <div>♦ AJ</div> <div>♣ AJ87</div>		<div>4♠ N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

A conservative but rational 2♠ opening bid, although some would prefer 3♠ with 6-5 distribution. The 2♠ call was more successful than 3♠ opening would have been, which virtually would have guaranteed a minus score. It was difficult for North-South to realize that their best result would be to defend against 3♥-X for +300, but they did well to stop in 4♣, which made.

#9563 Untitled, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/y2mumjvz>

<div> <div>2</div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> </div> </div>		N lot ♠ J64 ♥ KQ3 ♦ K92 ♣ K1064	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>2♦</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>X</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>3NT</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			2♦	P	2♥	P	P	X	P	3NT	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																				
		2♦	P																				
2♥	P	P	X																				
P	3NT	P	P																				
P																							
W eledub1 ♠ KQ1085 ♥ 82 ♦ QJ3 ♣ J98		♥ J	E giorginod ♠ 9 ♥ J109754 ♦ A1086 ♣ Q7																				
	S unonero ♠ A732 ♥ A6 ♦ 754 ♣ A532																						
		3NT N      NS: 0 EW: 0																					

A reasonable choice to open Multi 2♦, although 3♥ would also be a popular expert choice. The 2♦ opening bid was the winner, because it allowed South easy entrance to the auction, leading to 3NT down two (no swing). Opening 3♥ would likely have ended the auction, resulting in a minus score for East-West unless South made an aggressive takeout double.

Major Alt-1, R1, Board 02

<https://tinyurl.com/y5ncsnmv>

<div>2</div>		<div>N csaboka13</div> <div>♠ K10542</div> <div>♥ K62</div> <div>♦ AJ75</div> <div>♣ A</div>	<div>W</div> <div>N</div> <div>E</div> <div>S</div> <div>3♥ 3♠ 2♥ P 4♠</div> <div>P P P</div>	
<div>W phicro2</div> <div>♠ AQ9</div> <div>♥ A85</div> <div>♦ 964</div> <div>♣ 10942</div>	<div>♥Q</div>		<div>E giorginod</div> <div>♠ 63</div> <div>♥ QJ10973</div> <div>♦ 1083</div> <div>♣ Q5</div>	
		<div>S korszurku</div> <div>♠ J87</div> <div>♥ 4</div> <div>♦ KQ2</div> <div>♣ KJ8763</div>		
				<div>4♠ N</div> <div>NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

A normal minimum favorable preempt. The opponents found their normal contract.

OCBL-2, F, Board 16

<https://tinyurl.com/yxr9u86x>

D

16

N

berny75

♠ 9876

♥ 85

♦ 1076

♣ J864

W

N

E

S

1♣

P

1♥

3♥

P

P

X

P

3♣

P

4♠

P

P

P

W

Mostovoi

♠ AK104

♥ KJ

♦ A3

♣ AQ953

♥ 8

E

F\_Nystrom

♠ QJ32

♥ Q9

♦ KQ952

♣ 102

S

giorginod

♠ 5

♥ A1076432

♦ J84

♣ K7

4♠ W

NS: 0 EW: 0

A normal 3♥ overcall, producing a normal result.

#24 BURGAY VS DE MICHELIS, Board 14 <https://tinyurl.com/y2oyr2tr>

14	D	N lallo79	W N E S
		♠ Q32 ♥ 7654 ♦ 1052 ♣ AK4	4♠ P P 1♣ P P P
W giorginod	♣ K	E lucadm	
♠ AKJ10984 ♥ ♦ AJ3 ♣ 732		♠ 75 ♥ A1082 ♦ Q84 ♣ QJ98	
	S fede00		
	♠ 6 ♥ KQJ93 ♦ K976 ♣ 1065		
		4♠ W NS: 0 EW: 0	

A normal 4♠ overcall, particularly given Mr. Duboin's partner's passed hand status. 4♠ succeeded despite the trump loser because of the friendly lie of the minor suits.

#6880 Those F\*\*kers v ULI, Board 15 <https://tinyurl.com/yyzfx7r>

15	D	N itsgrim	W N E S
		♠ Q8642 ♥ 63 ♦ K65 ♣ 954	weak 2♥ P P 1♣ P P P
W giorginod	♣ 4	E Giacomopr	
♠ J97 ♥ KJ10842 ♦ 842 ♣ 3		♠ AK3 ♥ 9 ♦ QJ109 ♣ J10872	
	S Etttleton		
	♠ 105 ♥ AQ75 ♦ A73 ♣ AKQ6		
		2♥ W NS: 0 EW: 0	

A normal 2♥ overcall. This deal was discussed above on page 125. Mr. Duboin misplayed 2♥ but made anyway due to a defensive error.

## V. Conclusion

For all the above reasons, we conclude that Mr. Duboin obtained and used UI in matches he played on BBO in May and June, 2020, that allowed kibitzers.

/s/ Sjoert Brink  
Sjoert Brink

/s/ Michał Nowosadzki  
Michał Nowosadzki

/s/ Steve Weinstein  
Steve Weinstein

/s/ Oren Kriegel  
Oren Kriegel

/s/ Bob Hamman  
Bob Hamman

/s/ Geir Helgemo  
Geir Helgemo

November 5, 2020