

Almost every year since 1974, a Bridge Personality of the Year has been named. Some have been famous names in bridge, such as Easley Blackwood (1984 winner). Others achieved fame elsewhere, as with Warren Buffett and Bill Gates (joint winners, 2006), businessmen and philanthropists who also support bridge.

Many achieved fame both in bridge *and* other fields. One example is Barry Crane (1985 winner), who received the first posthumous award in the IBPA's history. He was a prolific television producer and director, and played social bridge on the set with Peter Graves of *Mission: Impossible*, Mike Connors of *Mannix*, and Lee Majors of *The Six-Million-Dollar Man*.

Crane was murdered in his apartment in Studio City in Los Angeles on 5 July, 1985, in an unsolved homicide. At the time, his team had reached the finals of a regional tournament. His place in that was taken by Kerri Shuman, with whom he had won the World Mixed Pairs in 1978, and the Crane team went on to win the event.

Crane had amassed more masterpoints than any other player in America to that time, having overtaken Oswald Jacoby in 1968.

Oswald Jacoby was another winner of the award (1983). He was responsible for Jacoby Transfers (used by most players in response to a notrump opening), the Jacoby 2NT reply to a major opening (see later), and weak jump overcalls.

Jacoby was born in 1902. At the age of 15, he joined the army and served in the First World War. At 21, he became the youngest person to have passed the actuarial exam. Sidney Lenz chose him as his partner in the celebrated "Bridge Battle of the Century" against Ely Culbertson in 1931.

Jacoby was playing in the North American Championships on 7 December, 1941, when word came through that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. He rose from the table and did not return for four years. He had been first in the American masterpoint rankings but by the time he returned from the war, Charles Goren and four others had overtaken him. Jacoby regained top spot in 1962, by which time he was also turning out columns for hundreds of newspapers.

It was at Pearl Harbor in 1944 that Jacoby faced a court martial and was found guilty of the crime of gambling (poker), in a case brought by Admiral Nimitz, commander of naval forces in the Pacific. However he was merely fined \$200, a lenient verdict that so disturbed Nimitz that he entered a formal reprimand in the record of each of the seven members of the court, five of whom were admirals or generals. The lawyer who defended Jacoby was given an autographed copy of his book, *Jacoby on Poker*, as his fee.

On the following deal, South opened 1H and North responded 2NT, Jacoby, showing 13+ points and four or more hearts, making it easy for South to push on to 6H. It would have been wrong for North to bid an immediate 4H in response to 1H, because that shows a weak, shapely hand (a shutout bid).

NORTH	
S K9	
H KJ432	
D Q8	
C KJ32	
WEST	EAST
S QJT3	S 6542
H —	H QT7
D T95432	D J76
C 874	C QT9
SOUTH	
S A87	
H A9865	
D AK	
C A65	

The SQ was led against 6H, won by dummy's SK. Next, a heart was played to the ace. If hearts had been 2-1, slam would have been easy. Even if the three missing hearts had all been with West, declarer could have finessed to the HJ on the second round of the suit. With East having all the hearts, sitting over dummy's jack with the Q-10-x, there is no way to avoid a trump loser. How can you avoid losing another trick?

There is a way to avoid relying on the club finesse to make the contract. After winning the two top hearts, cash the A-K of diamonds and the SA, and ruff a spade. Now play a third round of hearts to throw East on lead. If East leads a club, run this around to dummy, allowing the jack to score. If East instead leads a diamond or a spade, the club loser is simply discarded from hand, while dummy ruffs.