

Sharks Swim Close To The Surface - Part 3

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to this our 51st Session of Shark's Pointers Online! We're going to continue with our theme of the past two sessions that "Sharks Swim Close To The Surface".

Without further ado, let's pick up from where we left off last week and take a look at Board 10 of the second 24 board final session of the 2021 Spring NAOBC Imp Pairs.

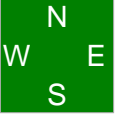
Board 10 was a big swing for our side...

Sharks Swim Close To The Surface - Part 3

Board 10

West Deals

Both Vul

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

EW 2N; EW 3♦; EW 1♠; NS 1♥; S 1♣; Par -120

West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>		<i>Jon Green</i>	<i>The Unlucky Expert</i>
1♦	1♥	Dbl	Rdbl
Pass	Pass	1♠	Dbl
Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT
All pass			

2 NT by South

I didn't know either of my opponents, but the South player's stats said he was a "World Class" player and a one-time World Champion. My stats on BBO also say I am a "World Class" player, but I have amended them to state I meant "Whirled Class - extremely erratic!" After the way he bid and played this hand, I think the South player may want to consider amending his stats as well! His partner made a very aggressive overcall and he made 3 huge overbids. When both partners overbid, it's almost always a recipe for a disaster. After the auction 1♦ - 1♥ - X, South has a very clear 1NT bid. I'll probably pass, his partner will bid 2H, and I will probably balance with 2S. If Jon is perceptive, he'll realize that the hand will play better in diamonds where he will be ruffing hearts in the short hand, and correct to 3D. His XX showed a huge hand, and I don't know what he was doing doubling 1S. His partner must have thought he only had 1 heart from this, so he ran to his 3 card club fragment. Now South had a chance to sign off in 2H, and with luck will go +110. Instead, he bid 2NT, which I think is egregious. We sure picked this one apart! I started with my 4th best diamonds. Declarer won and played a heart to dummy which won and ran to Q of spades to me. I realized that Jon must have held the missing Q of hearts, as declarer would not have led low from Qx, so I underled my heart Ace to Jon's Q and back came a diamonds. 4 rounds of diamonds and the Ace of hearts and the A-K of clubs in addition to the K of spades and the Q of hearts already won resulted in 9 tricks for +400!

We won 7.5 IMPs on this board. We'll be likely to lose 5 IMPs if South gets out of the way.

Sharks Swim Close To The Surface - Part 3

NAOBC IMP Pairs
2nd Final 3/19/21
Board 11
South Deals
None Vul

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

E 2N; EW 2♥; W 1N; E 2♦; NS 1♠; W 1♦; NS 1♣; Par -120

West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>		<i>Jon Green</i>	
Pass	1 ♠	Dbl	1 ♦
2 ♥	2 ♠	3 ♥	2 ♣
			All pass

3 ♥ by West

Board 11 is a complicated Law of Total Tricks hand and one in which evaluating honors and actively listening to the bidding is key to making the winning competitive bidding decision.

Jon had a tough decision to make on the auction as shown when 2 ♠ came back to him.

Here's what Jon should be thinking. EW have 8 hearts, NS may only have 8 spades. If there are 16 total tricks on this hand, then we should be competing to the 3 level. But the fact that his diamonds are and clubs are poorly placed, there may indeed be fewer than 16 total tricks. If NS is making 2S, then we should compete to the 3 level. It is not at all unlikely for his partner to hold 4 spades - but his partner will definitely know and is the one who should be deciding whether on not to move on to the 3 level - not West. So, I believe he should have passed, but it is definitely close. If the Spade bidder was sitting South, I think the East hand has a clear 3H bid, and if his diamonds and hearts are reversed - that is, if he held AJ62 of diamonds, and K1087 of hearts, there is more merit to bidding or better yet, KJ62 of hearts and A1062 of diamonds.

3 ♥ down 1 cost us 4 IMPs. Had we sold out to 2 ♠, we would be plus 50 and win 1.2 IMPs.

The next 3 boards were pretty flat - three cold 3 NT contracts. Board 15 was the next swing...

Sharks Swim Close To The Surface - Part 3

Board 15
 South Deals
 N-S Vul

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

♠ K J 10 9	<table border="1" style="background-color: #008000; color: white; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ Q 7 4 2
N					
W E					
S					
♥ A K 5 4		♥ 8 6			
♦ 7 4		♦ K 8 6 2			
♣ Q J 9		♣ A 7 5			

NS 4♣; E 2♥; NS 1N; E 2♦; E 1♠; W 1♥; W 1♦; Par +130

West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>		<i>Jon Green</i>	
			1 ♣
Dbl	2 NT	3 ♠	Dbl
Pass	3 NT	All pass	

Opening Lead 2 of ♦

3 NT by North

After South opened the bidding 1C, I made a very light takeout double. T

North's 2 NT was alerted as showing a limit raise or better in clubs. In fact, my hand is so light, my bid might be aptly called a "fakeout double". I have a rule of thumb when at favorable vulnerability, that a takeout double has at least 3 cards in each of the unbid suits, no more than 2 cards in the suit bid, and 2 defensive tricks. My hand qualified - if you consider my red suit holdings together might amount to 1 defensive trick. The advantages of making light takeout doubles are numerous. First, it helps your side get off to the winning lead, and second, it gets in the way of your opponents' constructive auctions. Every once in a while it gets you to makeable contracts that nobody else will find.

As you can see from the double dummy analysis, 3Sx was probably getting set 2 tricks, but who can blame the North player to think he might have at least 9 tricks in NT after his partner opened the bidding 1C. Having been warned off my South's double of 3S, Jon had little problem finding the killing lead of a diamond. South won the A and played a club to his Q and the J of clubs - Jon correctly holding up twice with my pitching a heart. The double dummy analysis suggests NS can make 1 NT. This is true - provided that after winning the first two clubs, he turns his attention to spades. He can set up 2 ♠, 2 ♥, 1 ♦, and 2 ♣. In reality, he continued clubs and Jon shifted to a heart. I won and led the 10 of ♦, covered and won by Jon. After the smoke cleared, we set the contract 3 tricks. +300 was worth 7.5 IMPs. Board 16 was inconsequential, now 17:

Sharks Swim Close To The Surface - Part 3

NAOBC IMP Pairs
2nd Final 3/19/21

Board 17

North Deals
None Vul

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

♠ A 9	<table border="1" style="background-color: #008000; color: white; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ Q 8 6 5
N					
W E					
S					
♥ K 10 2		♥ 8 4			
♦ A J 7 6		♦ K Q 9 8 4 3			
♣ A J 3 2		♣ 7			

Opening Lead 5 of ♦

West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>		<i>Jon Green</i>	
	Pass	Pass	1 ♦
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

1 ♦ × by South

Notice that this hand is quite similar - yet different - from Board 15. In both cases, I might have overcalled 1 ♥, but opted for the more flexible double. In both cases we won 7.5 IMPS! This time, I had full values. I was quite surprised that 1Dx became the final contract, but I led my trump. Jon defended well and we beat 1Dx 3 tricks.

Board 18 was another basically flat NT game, and on the next round our opps were quite generous - providing us with a couple of nice gifts...

Sharks Swim Close To The Surface - Part 3

NAOBC IMP Pairs
2nd Final 3/19/21

Board 19

South Deals
E-W Vul

♠ A J 9	♠ K 7 6	♠ Q 10 5 4 2						
♥ 6 2	♥ A J 7 4 3	♥ Q 10 8						
♦ K Q 10 8 6	♦ J 9 5 2	♦ 7 3						
♣ Q 4 3	♣ 8	♣ 9 7 5						
<table style="border: 2px solid green; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W</td><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td><td style="padding: 5px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;"></td><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td><td style="padding: 5px;"></td></tr> </table>			W	N	E		S	
W	N	E						
	S							
♠ 8 3	♥ K 9 5	♦ A 4						
♣ A K J 10 6 2								

Opening Lead K of ♦

West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>		<i>Jon Green</i>	
1 ♦	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♣
All pass			3 ♣
3 ♣ by South			

On Board 19 pictured above , I would have opened the South hand 1 NT - not 1C. I am sure our side would get to 4H - losing only 1 ♠. 1 ♥, and 1 ♦ - making for a score of +420. At our table, our opps bid as shown and only bid to 3S making for +110 and a 4 IMP gain for our side.

Board 20 was another nice little gift...

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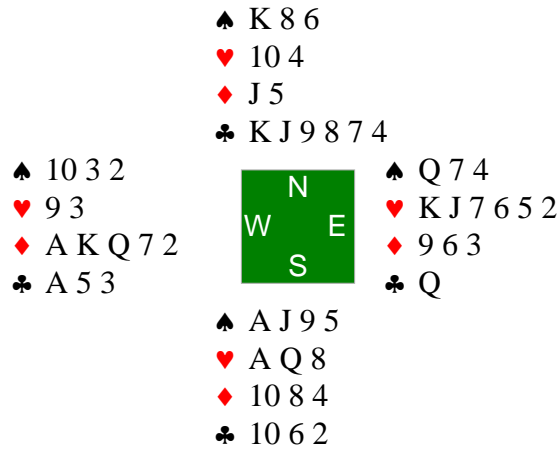
NAOBC IMP Pairs

2nd Final 3/19/21

Board 20

West Deals

Both Vul



West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>		<i>Jon Green</i>	
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 ♥	All pass

Opening Lead 2 of ♣

2 ♥ by East

South led the 2 of ♣ against Jon's 2 ♥ contract. Jon rose with the A, and returned the 9 of ♥, that was covered by the 10 and J -losing to South's Q. South continued a club which was ruffed by declarer and a diamond to dummy was followed by a second heart to declarer's K and South's Ace. South now cashed the 8 of hearts and returned a club! At IMPs, South has an obvious shift to a small spade - which would result in a one trick set. This isn't very difficult. South can see that declarer has 3 hearts, 1 club and 5 diamonds.

Setting 2H one trick would have resulted in a 2 IMP loss for us - instead we were given a 3.9 IMP gain.

On board 21, we got to a normal game and won 1.2 IMPs. On board 22, we got too high ...

Sharks Swim Close To The Surface - Part 3

NAOBC IMP Pairs

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Board 22

East Deals

E-W Vul

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

West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>	<i>Mitch Dunitz</i>	<i>Jon Green</i>	<i>Ralph Katz</i>
		1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

Opening Lead A of ♣

4 ♥ by East

We were actually lucky to go down only 1 undoubled and lose just 4.4 IMPs considering we were playing against two truly World Class players - Mitch Dunitz from CA, and Ralph Katz from the Chicago area. The defense started with 3 rounds of clubs, which gave Jon the timing he needed to ruff one round of diamonds. Jon played a spade to dummy and led a diamond to his Jack. Ralph shifted to a trump now, cutting down 1 ruff, but Jon was still able to ruff one diamond loser and get out for -100.

The last two boards were also quite interesting...

Sharks Swim Close To The Surface - Part 3

NAOBC IMP Pairs

2nd Final 3/19/21

Board 23

South Deals

Both Vul

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

W 3N; W 3♠; EW 4♣; E 2N; EW 2♦; E 1♠; EW 1♥; Par -600

West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>		<i>Jon Green</i>	
			Pass
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	All pass		

2 ♣ by West

We had a normal auction, playing 2 ♣ making 4 to lose 2.2 IMPS. A few pairs bid and made 3 NT - although only 1 pair bid it from the West side which, as you can see from the double dummy analysis, is the only side from which the contract is actually cold - on any defense.

We ended up with a little more luck...

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NAOBC IMP Pairs
2nd Final 3/19/21

Board 24

West Deals
None Vul

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

W 2♣; W 1♠; NS 1♥; NS 1♦; E 1♣; Par -90

West	North	East	South
<i>The Shark</i>		<i>Jon Green</i>	
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 NT	All pass

Opening Lead 6 of ♦

2 NT by East

I stretched to open 1 ♠ in first seat. That is really not a smart tactic, but I got rewarded for a bad bid when the opps let Jon make 2 NT. South led his 4th best diamond (correct lead from this holding is the 10), and Jon rose with the J in dummy which won the trick. Next Jon led the Q of clubs from dummy, which both opponents ducked. At this point, I probably would have led a spade to my 10. If the opponents won, they would have to find a way to win 5 more tricks to set me before I could score 4 spades, 3 diamonds and 1 club. But Jon continued with a club, and NS could still have set him but they got confused. South shifted to the 2 of hearts, North won, and came back a diamond. Jon rose and now cashed his other diamond and dummy's 4 spade tricks.

So, we won 4.2 IMPs. Our score for the 2nd Final session was the best of all EW pairs +40.4! But BBO only immediately posted the EW Scores - not the overall results. So, I wasn't sure we had won the event for several minutes after the round finished. I got a text message from Harrison Luba that said, "Congratulations!" - I rechecked my results and saw that we had actually won by 25 IMPs over the pair that had been leading the event with one round to play - Ron Gerard and Adam Wildalvsky!

Thanks for joining me on this journey as we went thru these exciting hands. If you learned nothing else from all of this, please remember that when things are going terrible, you must find a way to forget the bad results ASAP and when things are going great - forget the good results ASAP as well. Take one hand at a time and just keep swimming close to the surface!