



Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association County Bulletin

Issue 46

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Editor's News

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Chester Congress

by Bob Pitts

As mentioned above, this year's Congress was a great success. I was only able to play in the pairs but thoroughly enjoyed the event.

We all know that you need to strain for over/undertricks to be successful playing pairs, but do not underestimate the value of accurate slam bidding. Look at this pair of hands from the pairs qualifier.

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| <i>North</i> | <i>South</i> |
| ♠ Q 4 | ♠ A K 10 9 8 |
| ♥ K J 6 | ♥ Q 8 5 |
| ♦ A Q J 10 7 3 | ♦ K |
| ♣ Q 2 | ♣ A 9 6 4 |

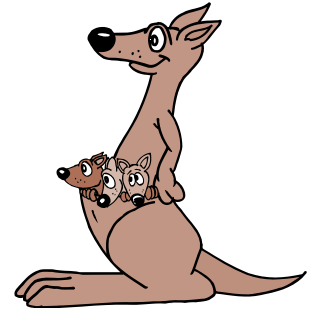
North opens and playing standard methods with a weak no-trump the auction will probably begin 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♦ - ? So what would you bid with now with the South hand. Four clubs will probably get preference to spades and now the best spot of 6NT could be missed. There is much to be said for a raw blast to the no-trump slam on the second round, though one player I spoke to (who did not play in the event) suggested a raise to four diamonds, though I am not sure that would get the baby bathed. Peter Kaufmann and I bid 1NT (15-17) - 2♥ (transfer) - 2♠ - 3♣ - 3NT - 4NT(invitational) - 6♦ (choice of slams) - 6NT. Only 5 pairs out of 20 reached a slam, one of those being in spades rather than no-trumps. As to the play of the hand, the spade jack was coming down doubleton so even a testing club lead through the ace did not beat the contract.

HAND FROM DOWN UNDER

by Tim Bourke

Dealer North. E/W vul.

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



| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|--------|-------|
| | 1♣ | Double | 1♠ |
| 3♥ | 3♠ | 4♥ | 4♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

West led the queen of hearts. Declarer threw a diamond from dummy and East took this trick with the heart ace and shifted to the two of clubs. West won with the ace and gave East a club ruff. The king of trumps later meant the contract was one down.

Declarer complained about his bad luck but his partner was not sympathetic.

“On the opening lead, you can place East with the ace of hearts,” said North. “You should win the trick by ruffing in dummy and playing on clubs. If West ducks his ace you continue with a second club.”

“Suppose West gives East a club ruff after taking the ace. East can do no better than exit with the king of diamonds. You win with the ace of diamonds and play the queen of trumps. You have to retain the spade ace at this point, otherwise you will not be able to ruff a second heart in dummy for you game-going trick. Suppose East takes the queen of trumps. He can try to cash a diamond or lead a second trump, either way you would be able to ruff another heart in the dummy. You would make ten tricks - four trumps in hand, two heart ruffs in dummy, one diamond and three clubs.”

South asked, “Can that plan survive a red suit shift after the ace of clubs is taken?”

“If West exits with a heart, you can discard a diamond from dummy and would be in full control. A diamond exit is no better; you win with the diamond ace and play the ace and then queen of trumps and if the latter holds you play the trump three next.”

“ You would always make four trumps, a heart ruff, the ace of diamonds and four clubs on a red suit switch from West.”

Travails with my Grandson

by Paul Roberts

Playing in a high standard competition with my grandson Josh, who is pretty inexperienced, I picked up the unexciting ♠ J x x ♥ Q J x x ♦ A 10 9 8 x ♣ x and we are vulnerable.

Josh opened 2NT (20-22) and I responded three clubs (baron) with Josh responding three diamonds. On the off chance of there also being a heart fit I tried three hearts with was raised to game.

Since we were not doing too well, I decide a forward move was in order and bid four no-trumps (RKCB) to which Josh replied five clubs showing 1 or 4 key cards. With all five of the key cards between us (he couldn't have had only one) and a double fit I decided on the heart slam as the 4-4 fit might deliver an extra trick as opposed to the likely 5-4 diamond fit, quite apart from the possible better score.

At the end of the auction my RHO thought for a very long time before passing out six hearts. What was he thinking about? Was he contemplating a Lightner double? Did he have 5 hearts? Was he considering a belated sacrifice? A high club was led and dummy went down with

♠ A K x ♥ A K x x ♦ Q J x x ♣ A x

I won the lead with the ace, then the heart ace and another to my queen. RHO showed out on the second heart, but the contract was safe provided I played carefully. Spade to the ace and run the diamond queen (If RHO has the king it doesn't matter if LHO shows out as I can afford him to ruff once. If LHO has the king, RHO cannot ruff a diamond continuation). LHO wins with the king of diamonds and tries another club, but I ruff, cash the trump jack and cross to dummy with a top spade to draw the final trump, after which I just run my winners.

At this stage halfway through the event six hearts bid and made was a clear top, with the diamond slam going one down.

Distracting Declarer

by Paddy Murphy

This deal arose in match in the Manchester League :

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

What do you think of your chances of beating 1NT after the North-South auction one club - one spade - one no-trump. West led the five of hearts. Declarer won with the ace over East's queen and placed the spade ace on the table, West quickly dropped the jack. When a second spade was led West followed with the three and South had to decided what his left-hand opponent was up to - if West had started with J 3 doubleton nothing mattered but was he being devious with J 10 3, K J 10 3 or the actual holding. Eventually, declarer decided K J 3 was the least likely and played the nine from dummy and 7 sure tricks became 6. The distraction of dropping the spade jack on the first round had worked.

Merseyside & Cheshire Bridge Association

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the County website

Calendar

All events here are correct at time of publishing but you are advised to take the precaution of checking with the organisers in all cases.

February

25th Jean Keen trophy (Women's Teams) Deva BC

March

4th Eric Howarth trophy (Open GP Swiss teams) Deva BC

18th National Pairs regional heats Bradford BC

May

20th John Armstrong trophy (GP Swiss pairs) Deva BC

June

6th Liverpool Open Pairs LBC

21st County AGM MBC

26th Bill Hughes simultaneous pairs various clubs inc. Deva BC

30th President's Cup

Lady Connell Trophy

by Bob Pitts

The Lady Connell is our main County knockout teams event and the winners get the opportunity to represent the County in the Pachabo Cup. It is thus a shame that there are not more entries. I feel that players in the County do not play teams often enough and it shows in events like the Northern League.

This deal arose in one of this season's semi-final matches. Can you see the winning line for South in 3NT on a heart lead?

Dealer East N/S vul

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

East had done all of the bidding for his side so was marked with most of the missing values. Even if the diamond suit produces 5 tricks, a ninth trick needs to be established, so at trick 2 declarer ran the spade ten, which held (the contract is definitely home if East wins the king). Now a top diamond from the South hand revealed the lie of that suit so with no entry to dummy for any extra spade tricks that could be established it was essential to try to squeeze East. Three more rounds of diamonds would ruin his hand as he has to retain two spades so must throw a heart and two clubs or vice-versa. After four rounds of diamonds, South can cash the other top heart and exit with a club and East will have only four winners to cash before leading into dummy's spade tenace. Was the right line found at the table? I am not telling.