



County Newsletter

Issue 14

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Give the Defenders the problem

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It is a great feeling to have a hand you played well written up in a national newspaper by a World Champion. That is exactly the emotion that Joan Marray had recently, when Sunday Times bridge columnist Sally Brock featured a hand Joan played in this year's Lady Milne home internationals. Joan found a route to success by successively throwing the defenders on play and forcing them to assist her. If you did not see the article I am sure that it will appear again soon, so rather than using it, let me show you a very similar line of play on this deal which also enabled the declarer to succeed in a tricky contract.

Dealer South E/W vul.

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

Latest Results

The season opener in the Merseyside League is invariably the two session Swiss teams event. Dusty Millers Blue continued their excellent record by winning again, by a comfortable margin. The Amber team were runners-up and Hilbre, from division 2, were a commendable third.

In the Westmoreland Swiss Pairs that took place on Sept. 30th, Bernard Kaye and Roger Waddington finished equal second, on the same score as Neil Thomas, who was partnering Sue Richmond of Lancashire.

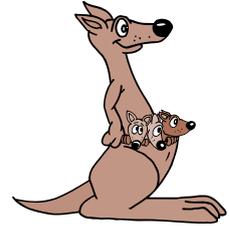
The contract at this and most tables was two hearts by West after South had opened a strong no-trump and many declarers went down. When Frank Multon (French but plays for Monaco) was at the helm he followed Joan's principle of getting the defence to do the work for him. The play usually went, spade lead and the defence took two spades and two diamonds before continuing spades, ruffed by West. All the declarers now cashed 3 rounds of clubs. Most continued by trying ace and another heart (queen or small depending upon which doubleton honour they were hoping for). However, Multon's first play in the trump suit was to exit with the trump ten. This was won by South who had the unpalatable choice of continuing trumps away from his king, or playing a spade or a diamond, either of which could be won in the dummy to provided an entry for a trump finesse. Had North won the heart jack, he would have the same problem. Well done Frank and well done Joan.

NCL Update

After three of the four rounds, Merseyside & Cheshire are struggling in all three divisions of the Northern Counties League. In Division 1 we won in round 3 but remain only fourth of the five teams and in need of a miracle to catch up. In Division 2 a modest round 3 has us currently in fifth place out of eight and of the seven teams in Division 3 we are next to last. This is disappointing after our past successes in Divisions 1 and 3 but this is a reflection of how competitive this competition is becoming.

HAND FROM DOWN UNDER

By Tim Bourke



Dealer West. N/S Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
1♥	Double	3♥	4♠
All Pass			

West began with the ace of hearts and then continued with the king and a third round of the suit. This alerted declarer to the very real prospect that the trumps were breaking 4 - 1. As it was almost certain that West held the ace of trumps, the problem was overcoming the case where West began with four trumps. (If East has four trumps the West's ace will be a singleton and declarer would be able to ruff a fourth round of hearts in the same hand as the original ruff was taken.)

As he saw that he would need a trump substitute to run through West assuming that he was the defender who held four trumps, declarer discarded the eight of clubs from dummy at trick three and ruffed the third round of hearts in his hand. Next declarer played the king and queen of trumps, both of which West correctly permitted to hold.

East's discard on the second round was not a surprise to South and so he went to his fall-back plan. All he needed was for West to have begun with a 4=5=2=2 distribution; he cashed the ace and queen of clubs followed by the ace and queen of diamonds.

Next came the king of clubs and West had no winning option. If he ruffed high, declarer would draw trumps after winning the next trick. As ruffing low was a hopeless defence, West instead discarded a heart and declarer threw a diamond from dummy. Then came the card West was hoping not to see, the club jack, much to his chagrin. As ruffing would do no good and discarding would see dummy's remaining diamond disappear, West instead folded his cards, returned them to the board and said "Well played".

DO COMPETE by Bob Pitts

Quite often you can miss out on finding your best contract by failing to compete on hands with shape but few high cards. The fear of going for a large penalty sometimes outvotes the voice in your head that says 'go on you need to get into the action here'. This type of cautious approach can be seen at all levels of the game but it is important to get into the bidding, despite the risks - it will be worth it in the long run. If the opposition have used a conventional bid, you might be able to turn this to your advantage as long as you have some agreements about how their bid might help to describe your hand-type. Have a look at this deal from the recent Bridge Mind Sports event (previously known as the Bridge Olympiad).

Dealer South E/W vul.

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

After South opened 1NT, North usually showed spades via a transfer call of 2♥, over which some Easts came in with 2♠. Bidding the opponent's suit here to show the other major and a minor suit is quite a common agreement and it can be very handy. Using that call enabled E/W to reach the vulnerable heart game, even when they were pushed to the five level. Playing against France, the Chinese East took no action in the same situation and he lost a game swing as a consequence. Italy got there when East cue bid 2♦ after his opponents had started 1♦ - 1♠. Gabriel Chagas of Brazil jumped to 2♠ with the North hand when his partner opened 1♦ as they play weak jump shift responses, but there East just doubled for take out and the result was 5♥ making after N/S had tried to sacrifice in 4♠. The big doings were in the match between the English and Scottish Women's teams. When Scotland were N/S, it was not clear whether South's 1NT opener was weak or strong, but when North jumped to 3♠ in response, East was fixed. Worse was to follow when South went on to game and West kept the wrong cards in the end game to let the contract through. At the other table, the English North bid the same as Chagas, but East was in with 2NT, which they must play as a two-suited take out, and they also had no problem reaching 4♥. The Scots won the match, but England had the last laugh, winning the event and retaining their World title.

Generally, the competitive options for East after the opponents start 1NT - 2♥ are

Double = showing a decent heart suit, or any good hand that will usually bid again

Bidding 2♠ = at least 5/5 in hearts and a minor

Bidding 2NT = both minors

Bids at the three level are natural apart from 3♠ which is again hearts and a minor but very strong and game forcing.

Of course you might want to tweak these but as long as you and your partner are playing the same methods, all should be fine.

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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.

October

9th	Lady Connell qualifier	LBC
12th	Lady Connell qualifier	Deva BC
13th	Northern Counties League	Round 4
18th	Lady Connell qualifier	MBC
21st	Chester Bowl (charity pairs)	Deva BC

November

12th	'Children in Need' sim. pairs	MBC
24th/25th	Llangollen Swiss Teams	

December

9th	Waterworth Cup (County Pairs)	MBC
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January

7th - 11th	BGB simultaneous pairs	Clubs
19th/20th	Chester Congress	Deva BC

The CHESTER BOWL is almost full - to check availability contact Phil Nuttall (01829 771468) or John Dawe (01244 819346)

Bridge Terminology

The Moysian Fit

When I revived the newsletter, I made a conscious decision not to include any obituaries. This will be the one minor exception and for a very good reason. A couple of weeks ago Margaret Warburton died. For many years she played at the Deva club, represented the County and took part in many tournaments. Her and her late husband Ken, stopped playing quite some years ago but those of us who knew them still remember them fondly, and especially their penchant for playing Moysian fits. It was only when I mentioned this to various people that I discovered that quite a few players are unaware of the term, so here in their memory is an explanation in the terminology column.

The term is named after American Alphonse Moysse who was a keen advocate of playing 4-3 trump fits, despite most of his peers being convinced of the superiority of 5 card major systems. Obviously such weak trump fits require some care in the play, as can be seen in this example.

Dealer South Love All

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

So how do you play a contract of four spades on the lead of the heart king after the following auction 1NT - 2H - 3H - pass - 3S - pass - 4S? Whilst dummy has only 3 trumps, you have certainly reached the best contract, but there is a good chance that the missing trumps will not be 3 - 3. Well you must keep trump control and to ensure this it is important to duck the first trick. If hearts are continued you can ruff in dummy, retaining the heart ace. Now you can play on trumps to knock out the ace. When East wins and plays a diamond, you win, continue spades and run the club suit for an overtrick. Should you win the heart ace at trick one and take an immediate ruff, East can duck the first round of trumps and thereafter you will almost certainly fail in your contract.