


Sometimes more is Less - Norman's Notes No. 41

Opportunity Spurned

This was Board 4 of the Bill Hughes Sim Pairs, and was a great opportunity missed by all North-South Pairs at Bury, and - it must be admitted - by over 90% of all North-Souths worldwide. And yet is it so difficult to reach the almost unbeatable slam?

Dealer West. Both vulnerable

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

After North's one spade opening bid, South has three choices:

- (a) Four spades is lazy - and wrong! The hand is too good: no need to rush to game. (The opponents are not going to intervene, are they?)
- (b) Four hearts. This is the commonly used 'splinter' bid, and shows a singleton or void in the bid suit and good support for partner. But even this may be inadequate with South's hand, and has the disadvantage of making further exploration difficult. North may check for aces, but still has to gamble that there will not be two losers.
- (c) Three clubs. A forcing bid. With South showing clubs and general strength - some of it admittedly distributional - North will be much happier after finding two aces with partner, and should press on to the spade slam.