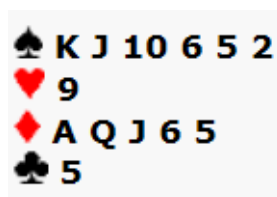


17/02/20 Hand of the week 1: 2 suited hands

I have volunteered to do a 'hand-of-the-week' to support the pairs improvement lessons being delivered by Andrew and David. I will try and review hands played in the club which have a learning point from bidding or card play, some will be brilliant successes, others terrible catastrophes! (Hopefully more of the former)

I will start with a hand from the simultaneous pairs played on Thursday 13th February. I do like a distributional hand, as it often gives you an opportunity to get in on the bidding, and can lead to some interesting declarer play and defence. Playing with Martin Evans, I picked up this hand early on in the evening

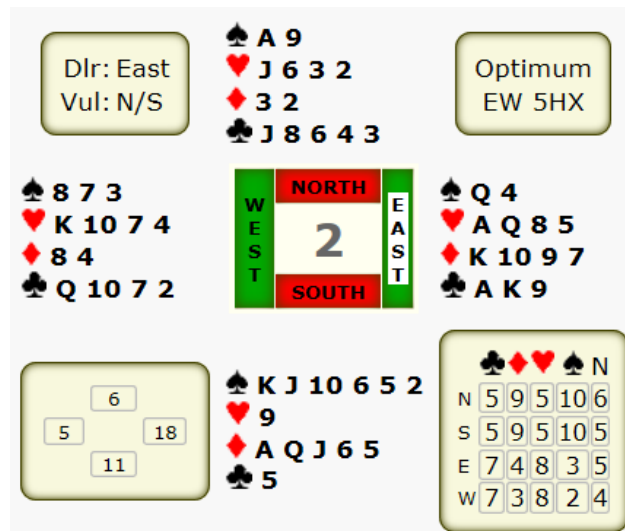


Andrew Mitchell, playing on my right, duly opened 1♥. There are a number of ways of bidding 5-5 hands. One option is use the Michaels Cue Bid- over a major the cue bid shows the other major and an unspecified minor, over a minor it shows both majors. Usually, this would be played with the Unusual 2NT- over a major an overcall of 2NT shows both minors, and over a minor it would show a major and the other minor. Although this means all 5-5 hands can be bid it can lead to a little bit of confusion when trying to find out partners suits. For this reason Martin and I have recently started playing CRO. The benefit is that it more accurately describes your hand with 1 bid, so helps partner if there is further bidding from your opponents, the downside is that you lose out on the option of pre-empting in clubs. The bids are:

| | | |
|---|---------|--|
| C | Cue bid | 5-5 in suits of same colour (♣&♠ or ♦&♥) |
| R | 2NT | 5-5 in suits of same rank (♣&♦ or ♥&♠) |
| O | 3♣ | 5-5 in the other suit combination (♣&♥ or ♦&♠) |

I bid 3♣, Martin 3♠ and I converted to 4♠

The full hand is



Often with distributional hands you will be missing lots of high card points, here with have bid game with 17 points. Andrew led the Ace of clubs, David encouraging, and then a second club. Declarer can count 5 definite spade tricks, and the Ace diamonds, so needs to make 4 more tricks. Diamonds looks the most likely place, and as East opened you can place the majority of the missing point's there- so it looks like the finesse might hold. Ruff the second club, cross to hand with the Ace spades then take the diamond finesse. When this holds cash the ace of diamonds, and ruff a diamond. Unfortunately diamonds do not break 3-3, but the fourth round will establish another diamond trick for you. Note that east did not ruff the third diamond, so the Q♠ must be with east.

So far we can count 5 definite spades, 3 diamonds and the ruff. Declarer cannot establish anything in hearts or clubs so the only option now is to hope for a 6th spade trick in hand. Cross to dummy with another club ruff, and when the King of spades is played the queen drops and declarer is home.

Have a talk to partner about how you want to bid the 5-5 distribution and you might find yourself playing a few more hands!