

2022 closed with bang, the last Tuesday afternoon session had 3 grand slams available in 18 boards! Let's see the hands:

Board 2

Dlr: East
Vul: N/S

♠ Q 10 7 2
♥ 10 9 8 3
♦ Q 10 3
♣ J 2

Optimum
EW 7N
-1520

♠ K 9 8 4
♥ K
♦ K J 9 4 2
♣ 5 4 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST
2		
WEST	SOUTH	EAST

♠ A 5
♥ A Q J 7 6 5 4
♦ A
♣ A K 7

	5	
10		22
	3	

♠ J 6 3
♥ 2
♦ 8 7 6 5
♣ Q 10 9 8 6

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	3	1	0	2	0
S	3	1	0	2	0
E	10	12	13	11	13
W	10	12	13	11	13

East picks up 22 points including 4 Aces and a 7 card heart suit. After a 2♣ open West will either do a 2♦ relay or a positive 3♦ response depending on your system. East doesn't need to hear much more for slam interest but should show their heart suit first. With 10 points opposite 20+ West might decide to go to Blackwood now but more likely 3♠. East then bids 4NT, finds West with no Aces, and after 5NT finds 3 kings. You can now count 13 tricks and go to 7♥ or more likely 7NT as there should not be any entry problems.

Board 13

Dlr: North
Vul: All

♠ A 10 9
♥ A K Q J 3
♦ Q 9 2
♣ K J

Optimum
NS 7N
+1520

♠ 8 7 3
♥ 9 7 6 2
♦ 7 3
♣ 9 7 4 3

WEST	NORTH	EAST
13		
WEST	SOUTH	EAST

♠ 4 2
♥ 8 5 4
♦ K 10 8 6 4
♣ 8 6 2

	20	
0		3
	17	

♠ K Q J 6 5
♥ 10
♦ A J 5
♣ A Q 10 5

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	13	11	13	13	13
S	13	11	13	13	13
E	0	2	0	0	0
W	0	2	0	0	0

Next one for North-South. With 20 points and a balanced hand North should open 2NT even with a 5 card major. Some partnerships would use '5 card stayman' in order to find a 5-3 major fit- after 3♣, opener bids their 5 card

major, or uses 3♦ to say they have a 4 card major- responder can then bid their 4 card major, and opener will either support or bid 3NT. A direct bid to 3NT shows no 4 card major.

South should now be thinking about a slam as there is known to be 37 points between the hands. They could transfer to Spades first, and then bid 4C (Gerber), or go straight to Gerber. Gerber is preferred after a NT opening when no suit has been agreed- it allows the partnership to use 4NT as a quantitative response in this situation showing slam interest, around 10-12 points. Opener would pass with a minimum hand or bid suits up the line- allowing the partnership to find a fit if they have one before settling on NT.

South will find partner shows 2 Aces, and then asks for Kings with 5♣, with partner showing 2. This confirms you are missing only 1 King- but can you bid the grand slam? There is some difficulty here as you don't know partners shape and there may be some overlapping values in diamonds if you are missing K♥- possible AJ5 opposite KQx. However, even if this is the case with no other honours missing you should still make 5 spades, 1 heart, 3 diamonds and 4 clubs, so the grand slam is secure.

Board 18

Dir: East
Vul: N/S

♠ 6 3 2
♥ J 8 7 2
♦ 9 7 6
♣ 10 9 4

Optimum
EW 7N
-1520

♠ K J 9 4
♥ A K Q
♦ K J 3 2
♣ A J

W	NORTH	E
E	18	S
S	SOUTH	W

♠ A Q 10 5
♥ 6
♦ A Q 8
♣ K Q 8 6 2

1	
22	17
0	

♠ 8 7
♥ 10 9 5 4 3
♦ 10 5 4
♣ 7 5 3

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	0	0	2	0	0
S	0	0	2	0	0
E	13	13	11	13	13
W	13	13	11	13	13

Sitting West partner opens 1♣ and you have 22 points! No need to rush things- bid 1♦. Remarkably partner will rebid 2♠ showing a strong hand and now you can go to Blackwood to check for Aces & Kings. Once you have filled in the gaps you can count 16 tricks off the top! Poor old North-South finish the year with only 1 point between them, at least they can look back fondly on board 13!

Happy New Year to everyone at Halifax Bridge Club!