

## Commentary 24 September

Today's commentary has been written by Michael Robinson, one of the County's top players. He played in the parallel teams competition using the same boards. Bear in mind that the way BBO works, after importing the boards, the second half (Nine High boards 11-18) become teams boards 1-8 again. So this will often affect the bidding.

Kathy Talbot

Bridge sessions often have themes where similar issues arise several times- for example you might not see a two club opener for months and then get three in the same set. This teams evening there were several pre-emption decisions- whether to bid them, whether to bid over them, whether to raise them. By the way, it is my considered opinion that the players who say "I never worry about the vulnerability" are potty and should be made to play money bridge for high stakes.

Bridge World magazine often quotes itself when discussing the difficulty in deciding what to do over a pre-empt- "That's why people pre-empt".

### Board 1

Dlr: North Vul: None	♠ Q 6 5 ♥ A K ♦ Q 7 6 5 4 ♣ 9 6 2	Optimum NS 4N+1																																					
♠ 8 ♥ 10 8 4 ♦ A J 10 9 8 ♣ 10 8 7 3	<table border="1"> <tr><td colspan="2">NORTH</td></tr> <tr><td>WEST</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">SOUTH</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">EAST</td></tr> </table>	NORTH		WEST	1	SOUTH		EAST		♠ 10 9 7 4 3 2 ♥ Q ♦ 3 2 ♣ A Q 5 4																													
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E	2	-	-	-	-																																		
W	2	-	-	-	-																																		

The pre-emption issues started on board 1. East will usually open a weak two on his 10 high suit and South will overcall on her Jack high suit, reaching 4H. West should lead his singleton spade and after winning the ace of diamonds put his partner in for a spade ruff to hold it to 10 tricks.

### Board 2

Dlr: East Vul: N/S	♠ K 9 5 ♥ 8 5 ♦ A Q 6 5 ♣ A 6 5 3	Optimum EW 5Hx																																					
♠ 8 7 4 ♥ K Q J 9 7 ♦ J ♣ K Q J 2	<table border="1"> <tr><td colspan="2">NORTH</td></tr> <tr><td>WEST</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">SOUTH</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">EAST</td></tr> </table>	NORTH		WEST	2	SOUTH		EAST		♠ J 10 2 ♥ A 10 6 4 3 ♦ 9 7 3 ♣ 8 4																													
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♣♦♥♠ N																																							
N	3	4	-	4	2																																		
S	3	4	-	4	2																																		
E	-	-	2	-	-																																		
W	-	-	2	-	-																																		

West opens 1H after two passes. North might double for take out but this is a little risky with only three spades and a moderate hand. Either way, East would be tempted to pre-empt. As it happens, 4S by NS makes on the 3,3 spade split but would be many off doubled and vulnerable on a 4-2.

### Board 3

Dir: South  
Vul: E/W

Optimum  
NS 2S+1

♠ Q 6  
♥ K 9 8 6 3  
♦ K Q 7  
♣ K 7 3

♠ K 8  
♥ Q 4  
♦ 6 5 3 2  
♣ Q 9 5 4 2

NORTH  
3  
WEST EAST  
SOUTH

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

13  
7 9  
11

♠ A J 10 9 7 5 4  
♥ J 2  
♦ A 10 9  
♣ J

♣	♦	♥	♠	N	
N	-	-	1	3	-
S	-	-	1	3	-
E	2	1	-	-	1
W	2	1	-	-	1

This is a hand where passivity is the order of the day for the defence. If West hits on a diamond lead against 4S and continues the suit when in with the spade King,, declarer has to lead towards both rounded suit kings and both aces are offside. However a heart or club lead enables declarer set up a card in that suit.

### Board 4

Dir: West  
Vul: All

Optimum  
EW  
2D+2,EW  
2C+2

♠ 8 7 6 5  
♥ Q 8 7 3  
♦ Q 8 7  
♣ J 4

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

NORTH  
4  
WEST EAST  
SOUTH

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

5  
12 11  
12

♠ 10 9 4 2  
♥ A K 10 9 6  
♦ J 5  
♣ A 5

♣	♦	♥	♠	N	
N	-	-	1	-	-
S	-	-	1	-	-
E	4	4	-	-	1
W	4	4	-	-	1

If South chips in after 1D on her left and 2C on her right, there is definitely a risk of a chunky vulnerable penalty.

Otherwise it is up to East West to stop at a safe level in clubs.

### Board 5

Dir: North  
Vul: N/S

Optimum  
NS 4Sx

♠ 9 5 3  
♥ 10 9 8 6 4 3  
♦ 7 6 3  
♣ K

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

NORTH  
5  
WEST EAST  
SOUTH

♠ Q 8 2  
♥ - -  
♦ K 9 8 5 4  
♣ 9 6 5 4 2

3  
19 5  
13

♠ K J 10 7 6 4  
♥ Q  
♦ A Q 2  
♣ J 10 7

♣	♦	♥	♠	N	
N	-	-	-	3	-
S	-	-	-	3	-
E	4	2	1	-	3
W	4	2	1	-	3

Some fireworks on this hand. South opens a spade and West is too strong to overcall 2 hearts, so doubles. North would bid two spades non vulnerable but at Red does not want to excite partner, so in my view should pass. However, bidding might well mean that West will have to bid hearts at the three level. Will East pass this out or compete further? My timidity allowed opponents to play in 4C and “unfortunate” defence meant they made it.

## Board 6

Dir: East  
Vul: E/W

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

Optimum  
NS 2H+1

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

NORTH  
WEST 6 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ A 10 6 5 4  
♥ Q 6  
♦ 10 8 3  
♣ 8 5 3

10  
11 6  
13

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

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	2	4	3	-	2
S	2	4	3	-	2
E	-	-	-	1	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

North will probably play in hearts, often at the four level and needs to be able to throw away all three spades before the ace is cashed. An unfortunate club lead is needed, though I survived on a small diamond lead and diamond return to the jack.

## Board 7

Dir: South  
Vul: All

♠ A 9 8 7 2  
♥ A 10 6  
♦ J 5  
♣ J 9 6

Optimum  
NS 4S

♠ J 4  
♥ K J 9 8  
♦ A 6 4  
♣ K 5 4 2

NORTH  
WEST 7 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ 10 3  
♥ 7 5 4 2  
♦ K Q 3  
♣ 10 8 7 3

10  
12 5  
13

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

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	3	-	4	2
S	-	3	-	4	2
E	1	-	1	-	-
W	1	-	1	-	-

4S always makes if declarer plays for diamonds to be 3,3. Declarer can set up a club for a heart discard. If East leads hearts, declarer can set up a heart for a club discard. This is a tight contract which would probably flounder on a 3-1 trump split – one to avoid at pairs but at teams the odds are different.

## Board 8

Dir: West  
Vul: None

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

Optimum  
EW 4S+1

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

NORTH  
WEST 8 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ K Q J 9 8  
♥ 10 9 7 2  
♦ Q J 8 2  
♣ ..

14  
14 9  
3

♠ 10 3  
♥ 6 5 4  
♦ K 9 6 3  
♣ 9 8 6 4

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	2	-	-	-	-
S	2	-	-	-	-
E	-	4	3	5	-
W	-	4	4	5	1

If West can open 1NT, they should easily reach 4 spades. If west opens 1D, North will overcall 2 clubs- at my table East doubled this for take out. I have a rule that if there is a simple bid which is not mis-descriptive, make it. In this case 2S is safe with good diamond support in reserve. Our opponents played in 2NT, which went off.

## Board 9

Dir: North  
Vul: E/W

♠ Q 10 6 5 3 2  
♥ J 5 4  
♦ 4 3  
♣ Q 2

Optimum  
E 3N+1

♠ A 9  
♥ A 10 9  
♦ K 6 5 2  
♣ K 8 5 3

NORTH  
9  
SOUTH

♠ K J 8  
♥ K 7 2  
♦ J 9 8  
♣ A 9 7 4

♠ 7 4  
♥ Q 8 6 3  
♦ A Q 10 7  
♣ J 10 6

	5	
14		12
	9	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	-	-	
S	-	-	-	-	
E	4	3	3	2	4
W	4	3	3	2	3

This is a routine 3NT, though tricky to reach if N opens 2S, passed around to West. It is probably too dangerous NOT to double for take out here. An immediate 2NT overcall from E would show about 16-18 points (by agreement).

## Board 10

Dir: East  
Vul: All

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

Optimum  
EW 2S

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

NORTH  
10  
SOUTH

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

♠ A 9 3  
♥ 9 8 6 3 2  
♦ K 6 5  
♣ 6 3

	8	
12		13
	7	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	2	-	
S	-	-	2	-	
E	2	1	-	2	1
W	2	1	-	2	1

East West will probably stretch to a poor game. The duplication in hearts is hard to diagnose in the bidding

## Board 11

Dir: South  
Vul: None

♠ J 5 4  
♥ A J  
♦ 9 5 4  
♣ 9 8 7 5 2

Optimum  
EW 5H

♠ Q 2  
♥ 7 2  
♦ A J 3  
♣ A K Q 6 4 3

NORTH  
11  
SOUTH

♠ K 9  
♥ K Q 10 9 8 6 5 4 3  
♦ 8 2  
♣ - -

♠ A 10 8 7 6 3  
♥ - -  
♦ K Q 10 7 6  
♣ J 10

	6	
16		8
	10	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	2	-	2	-
S	-	2	-	2	-
E	2	-	5	-	1
W	1	-	5	-	-

My top tip for playing on BBO- after counting your long suit, count the other suits and deduct from 13 to check. 9 card suits are hard to count on the screen.

## Board 12

Dir: West  
Vul: N/S

Optimum NS 6N

♠ 10 8 4  
♥ 8 5  
♦ K Q J 8 6  
♣ A Q J

♠ 9 7 5 3  
♥ J 9 7  
♦ 10 7 2  
♣ 10 7 2

NORTH 12 EAST

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

13 7 19

♠ A K 2  
♥ A K Q 6 3 2  
♦ 3  
♣ K 5 4

♣	♦	♥	♠	N	
N	5	5	6	4	6
S	5	5	6	4	6
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

In the old days (when the sun always shone, politicians were trustworthy and I had a full head of hair), we would have opened the South hand with a strong two hearts. Nowadays it is a 1H opener, partner bids 2 diamonds and now South has a problem. 4H is too little- perhaps invent a 3C bid? I prefer to open 2C on the South hand and when my partner bids 2H (0-3 points in our system), pass. Otherwise bid hearts to game at least; partner will get the message.

## Board 13

Dir: North  
Vul: All

Optimum EW 7N

♠ K J 3  
♥ K  
♦ Q J 10 9 5 2  
♣ J 9 4

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

NORTH 13 EAST

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

11 11 5

♠ Q 9 8 7 6 5 2  
♥ 8 3  
♦ K 8 7  
♣ 2

♣	♦	♥	♠	N	
N	-	2	-	3	-
S	-	2	-	3	-
E	7	-	7	-	7
W	7	-	7	-	7

In the teams, NS were non-vulnerable so South will open 3S (my team mate, who plays the cards better than I do, opened 4S and played there. NOT recommended but +16 imps for us). Does West double 3S or just bid 4C? If you double, partner will bid 4H if he has 4 of them and his honours (if he has any) will be well-placed. If partner bids 4D you have to bid 5C, while if he bids 5D you might have to pass.

Playing in the teams, EW were vulnerable and NS non-vulnerable. So bear in mind that, at green, North will bid 4S on any hand with three of them. Now you start to regret your double if partner bids 5D. *This is why people pre-empt.* Perhaps 4C is a better bid. My partner, always looking for the big prize, did double so I could bid 6H for +1460. Vulnerable, South might well choose to open a weak 2S rather than 3S, given the poor quality of the suits.

## Board 14

Dir: East  
Vul: None

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

Optimum  
EW 6D

♠ 9 7 6 3  
♥ --  
♦ A 9 8 7 5 3  
♣ K 5 2

NORTH  
WEST EAST  
14  
SOUTH

♠ A Q 8  
♥ K J 4  
♦ K J 2  
♣ A J 10 3

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

7 7 19 7

♣♦♥♠	N					
	N	-	-	-	-	
	S	-	-	-	-	
	E	5	6	1	5	3
	W	4	6	-	5	3

East opens 1C after two passes. Should South pre-empt with 3H or just bid a weak 2H? Personally I don't like the three small clubs and vulnerable would settle for 2H. Playing in the teams, both sides are vulnerable. At both the tables in my match South bid 3H and at my table, North had three of them so bid 4. - 800 against +1100. The defence has to stop declarer reaching dummy to take a heart finesse. Accurate defence at both tables achieved this. A spade game for EW is very lucky.

## Board 15

Dir: South  
Vul: N/S

♠ Q 7 6 5 2  
♥ Q 10 8 5 3  
♦ Q  
♣ Q J

Optimum  
EW 7N

♠ J  
♥ 9  
♦ K J 10 6 4  
♣ A K 10 9 5 4

NORTH  
WEST EAST  
15  
SOUTH

♠ A 8  
♥ A J 6 4 2  
♦ A 9 8 5 2  
♣ 2

♠ K 10 9 4 3  
♥ K 7  
♦ 7 3  
♣ 8 7 6 3

9 12 13 6

♣♦♥♠	N					
	N	-	-	-	-	
	S	-	-	-	-	
	E	7	7	3	-	7
	W	7	7	3	-	7

Given a free run, EW should reach 6D. 7D is a good contract but hard to get to. At my table N found a vulnerable 1S opener; the only good thing to say about this is that it worked, so we missed the slam. Bad luck to be playing against the robots who had no trouble bidding it.

## Board 16

Dir: West  
Vul: E/W

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

Optimum  
NS 6N

♠ 10 9 7 5 4  
♥ A 10 9 4  
♦ 8  
♣ 10 7 5

NORTH  
WEST EAST  
16  
SOUTH

♠ 8 6 3 2  
♥ 6  
♦ Q 10 7  
♣ 8 6 4 3 2

♠ A Q  
♥ K J 8 5  
♦ K J 9 4 3  
♣ K J

16 4 2 18

♣♦♥♠	N					
	N	2	5	5	1	6
	S	2	5	5	1	6
	E	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-

Awful duplication in the black suits. 6H goes off on the 4-1 trump break. 6D goes off on the heart ruff or not finessing the diamond. 6NT gives you time to find out that West started with 4 hearts and thus play him to be short in diamonds - well done, team-mate.

## Board 17

Dir: North  
Vul: None

♠ J 9 8 6  
♥ Q 6  
♦ K 10 6  
♣ K J 8 4

Optimum  
NS  
3D+1, NS  
3C+1

♠ K 10 7 3  
♥ 10 9 8  
♦ A 8 7  
♣ Q 9 5

NORTH  
17  
SOUTH

♠ Q 5 4 2  
♥ K 7 5 4 2  
♦ Q 5  
♣ A 2

♠ A  
♥ A J 3  
♦ J 9 4 3 2  
♣ 10 7 6 3

	10		
9		11	
	10		

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	4	4	-	-	1
S	4	4	-	-	1
E	-	-	1	1	-
W	-	-	1	1	-

NS can make 10 tricks in a minor but probably won't get into the bidding. Should East pass in 4<sup>th</sup> seat? It is a pretty rubbish hand though the Rule of Fifteen tells you to open it.

## Board 18

Dir: East  
Vul: N/S

♠ 7 4 3  
♥ 10 8 4  
♦ J 8 4  
♣ A Q 7 4

Optimum  
EW 1N, EW  
2D, EW 2C

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

NORTH  
18  
SOUTH

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

♠ J 10 9 6 5  
♥ K Q 9 3  
♦ K 2  
♣ K 5

	7		
7		14	
	12		

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	1	1	-
S	-	-	1	1	-
E	2	2	-	-	1
W	2	2	-	-	1

East will often play in 1NT. On a spade lead declarer should win in hand and play ace then Q of diamonds. This way there are two entries to set up the diamonds and enjoy them.