

Interference

I've been playing bridge for 50+ years and don't recall ever picking up a hand as one suited as the North hand on B5. A solid suit, ten cards long, missing the 6/3/2. Even better partner holds the 6 giving an unexpected entry to dummy, pity that was of little use.

The first decision is the opening bid. You have eleven guaranteed tricks; it wouldn't take a lot to make 12 or 13 tricks. Rest assured opening 1C will invite competition and you may find your next decision what to bid over 4M. That left me with two options 2C – GF or 4NT asking for specific aces. The latter won't help if partner replies 5C denying an ace, the KH may be sufficient to make the small slam, now I have no space to find out.

So, I settled on 2C, in days gone by opponents respected the GF bid and dutifully passed. Not in modern bridge and Catherine overcalled 2D. This caused the wheels to go off. Our system unopposed has the responses of 2D as a waiting bid and 2H as trash – 2Qs or less. When there is interference we play pass as the trash hand and double as the waiting bid. Here there was space, so Cathy bid 2H telling me that she had the trash hand. I thought she was showing a positive in hearts, for us that shows any ace and king in the hand. Now Jack jumped to 4D and I have the same decision to make - how high? In for a penny – 7C, I reasoned that it was likely that the opponents had the top two diamonds, that left partner with the AH and either major king. I could count to thirteen tricks. My brief elation quickly dissipated when Jack doubled. I considered redoubling, but I knew that Jack was not doubling on the DA, so I took my medicine.

E/W can make 5D so 6CX was a good save. 4S also makes for E/W.

As you can imagine there was a wide range of contracts

7Cx	-500
7C	- 200
6Cx	- 200
5Cxx	+ 1000
5Cx	+ 750
5C	+ 600 (twice)
6D	- 50

Over the country there were 30 different score recorded ranging from N/S + 1540 to – 2300, we contributed six!

Just like pre-empts, interference works. It stops the opponents using their system and tests their agreements. Don't be afraid to bid with length over their strong openings, even more so if non vulnerable.