

Conventions?

I've been playing bridge for over fifty years, and I can count on one hand when this sequence came up. On Tuesday it occurred on Boards 19 & 22 much to my amazement. It is impossible to achieve this result if you are playing some sort of two suited convention such as Michaels, but not the case with Brian and Barbara. Playing natural overcalls, they were able to show their hands on both of these boards.

We played Board 22 first and Cathy opened 1♥, Barbara with AKQJ92 bid 2♥ and there they played. The club lead removed the entry before Barabara could test trumps so eight tricks. Five of the tables played a heart contract by South, generally making nine tricks. East has 11 points with five hearts and four diamonds. I suspect that some didn't open or opened 1N, that would allow South to open 1♥ or bid their suit over 1N. Liz played in 1N as South, I suspect that she overcalled after a 1♥ opening bid.

Two boards on Board 19 later I, as West, opened 1♦, North with AQ10987 bid 2♦. Cathy doubled, I bid 2♠ and Brian 3♦. Cathy jumped to 4♠ and there we played. It is much easier to compete when West opens a weak 1N. It allowed Marion and Fiona to find the excellent sacrifice in 5♦, just one of the good boards that contributed to their runaway score.

Bridge is an infuriating game; there are so many variables that are outwith your control. Who needs conventions when you are dealt good six card suits and can bid them naturally? It is difficult to describe these hands when conventions get in the way.

Now in one night I'm onto my second hand.

I have been asked to publish a correction to last week's article. Doug does not accept any blame for sitting in the wrong direction. He states that as any man would he did as he was told!