

Summertown Bridge Bulletin, 7 March 2022

Board 1

Dlr: North
 Vul: None

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

Optimum
 EW 6Dx:
 +300

♠ 2
 ♥ J 2
 ♦ K J 9 7 3 2
 ♣ K 9 8 2

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
 1

♠ K Q J 9 8 5 3
 ♥ Q
 ♦ Q 10 5 4
 ♣ A

♠ 4
 ♥ 9 7 6 4
 ♦ 8
 ♣ Q 10 7 6 5 4 3

	16		
8		14	
	2		

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

Just the one board today, but full of different ways you could kick off your Summertown evening with a poor result!

Today's story, children, is about how well do you know your partner. Once upon a time, both players in a partnership agreed to play the same way. Yes, seriously, boys and girls and others, they did. They also knew their opponents' style of bidding and play. They lived happily ever after.

This board throws up a myriad of bidding possibilities which are all about style and understanding.

After North opens 1♥, how does your partnership bid the East hand? There is no point bidding 1♠ if you are planning to bid 3♠ over 3♥, or 4♠ over 4♥. Bid 4♠ on the first round, then shut up. As they say: **'One bite of the cherry.'**

When 4♠ is passed round to North, North must double.

Playing strong jump overcalls, you would bid 1♥-2♠- but only a few of us have that agreement.

Now to South. With a shapely 2 HCP, you must speak. Forget those early lessons telling you that you need 6 HCP. You're a grown up Club Player now. But might you encourage your partner, North, to go overboard? Not with partnership understanding.

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NORTH
WEST 1 EAST
SOUTH

♠ K Q J 9 8 5 3
♥ Q
♦ Q 10 5 4
♣ A

16
8 14
2

♠ 4
♥ 9 7 6 4
♦ 8
♣ Q 10 7 6 5 4 3

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	4	-	5	-	2
S	4	-	5	-	2
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W	-	4	-	2	-

1♥-1♠-4♥ says, 'Partner, I am weak with 7 or 7½ losers'. How does North know? Because with a good raise to 3/4♥, you can cue bid the opponent's suit: 1♥-1♠-2♠-. You are obviously not strong enough for a splinter bid (you usually need 11 HCP). If playing fit jumps, you would love to show off how sophisticated your conventions are, but here you're not strong enough (1♥-1♠-3♣- says, 'I have 5 clubs, partner, with two top honours, 4-card support, and around 9 HCP, i.e. I have a good raise to 3♥ with a source of tricks in clubs').

Here, North might still get excited after South bids 4♥, but South will quickly kick 4NT into touch.

The power of South's immediate raise to 4♥ is that North can safely compete to 5♥ over 4♠. The vulnerability suggests that 4♠ doubled would have to go 3 off to score better than a making game.

So how do Summertown play?

Two Easts bid 4♠ on the first round. One stole the hand undoubled.

Many Easts nibbled at the cherry twice or even three times and got doubled. Two or more bites instructs the opponents: 'Please double me'. It is so prevalent that I am thinking of asking the EBU to insist that if a player overcalls a suit then bids again, his partner must announce, 'My partner has fetishistic cherry-biting disorder. Please double us.'

Defending against 4♠

As with the bidding, partnership understanding is essential in the play. A common agreement is that if South doesn't lead her partner's suit, she has a singleton. Here, then, South would lead ♦8 for an immediate ruff. No Summertown pair found this play.

Defending against 5♥

Again, a common agreement is that if East doesn't lead his own suit, he has a singleton and many chose to lead ♣A, then switched to a top spade. But which spade? The standard lead is ♠K, and a common agreement is that this asks for count not attitude. Here it doesn't matter.

Declaring 5♥

There are a couple of ways to go wrong. Ruffing three spades in dummy is oh so tempting, but is unwise, as West is marked with short spades and may be able to over-ruff. As is so often the case, establishing a long suit in dummy is the better play that we often miss. Here, you have a guaranteed club winner after knocking out ♣A and K, but only if you play high cards from the South hand (intending to discard a loser if West doesn't cover). We often ruff out by playing inconsequential pips, but here it scuppers your play.