

Summertown Bridge Bulletin, 10 January 2022

Hello, this is Steven again. I couldn't play last night (Steph is an Aston Villa fan and wanted to watch the match on TV – maybe not a good idea, given the result). However, I've found three interesting hands. They are all about whether you can or can't get to the best contract after opponents open the bidding.

Dlr: South
Vul: E/W

♠ 9
♥ Q 10 9 3
♦ A Q 7 4
♣ A K 3 2

Optimum
S 3N+1:
+430

♠ A K 4 3 2
♥ K 2
♦ K J 9 6
♣ 6 4

NORTH		
W	3	E
S		T
SOUTH		

♠ 10 8 6
♥ 8 7 6 5 4
♦ 8 2
♣ J 8 7

	15	
14		1
	10	

♠ Q J 7 5
♥ A J
♦ 10 5 3
♣ Q 10 9 5

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

To begin with, here's Board 3. At every table West opened 1♠, North doubled and East passed. It all depended on what South did.

Most Souths bid 2NT (I would do the same - you have a good 10 points with probably two spade stoppers, and partner needs to know this), and most Norths went on to 3NT. It's easy to play hands when you know where all the points are, and most people made 10 tricks in no trumps. One North passed 2NT, and one South bid only 1NT. Two Souths decided to bid clubs rather than no trumps – 5♣ got an average score, 3♣ was a bottom.

The bidding on Board 7 was a classic example of what different styles we all have! I thought that nearly everyone would open a weak 2♥ with the North hand, and that at least some Easts would bid 4♦ ('Leaping Michaels' with 5-5 in spades and diamonds - quite a useful bid when it comes up). In fact only three Norths opened a weak 2♥ (admittedly you're vulnerable, and the hearts aren't great, but the hand has shape and it seems worth a bid third in hand). Over a weak 2♥ East generally bid 2♠, and it was then hard to find the making diamond game (or stay out of a hopeless spade game).

Dlr: South
Vul: All

♠ A J 4
♥ Q 9 8 6 5 3
♦ - -
♣ J 10 7 2

Optimum
EW 4S:
-620

♠ K 2
♥ 7
♦ 9 8 6 4 2
♣ A Q 9 5 3

NORTH		
W	7	E
S		T
SOUTH		

♠ Q 9 8 6 3
♥ A 4
♦ A K J 7 3
♣ 4

	8	
9		14
	9	

♠ 10 7 5
♥ K J 10 2
♦ Q 10 5
♣ K 8 6

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

Two Norths passed, one opened 1♥, and one a multi 2♦ (awkward if you're not used to it). The East-West pairs who got to 5♦ scored well, and Trevor & John, who were doubled, scored very well indeed.

Dir: North
Vul: None

♠ 7 4
♥ J 3 2
♦ 6 5 4
♣ Q 10 5 4 2

Optimum
EW 4S:
-420

♠ A K Q 2
♥ Q 10
♦ Q J 9 8 7
♣ 9 7

W

NORTH

17

SOUTH

E

♠ J 9 8 5 3
♥ A 8 7 5
♦ A 10 3
♣ J

3

14
10

13

♠ 10 6
♥ K 9 6 4
♦ K 2
♣ A K 8 6 3

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

Lastly, let's look at Board 17. Here East-West can make game in spades: three pairs bid it, two were only in 3♠, and two pairs in 3♦.

One East opened a very light 1♠ and was soon in 4. One South opened 1NT (not the textbook bid, but reasonable third in hand), after which E/W did well to find their spade fit, but missed the game. At every other table South opened the normal 1♣, giving West a problem: do you bid diamonds (possibly missing a spade fit), or risk doubling (possibly getting too high in hearts)?

In practice, all the Wests bid a diamond, and now it depended on what North did. Where North raised clubs, the opponents rarely found their spade fit; where North passed, East could bid spades at a low level, and generally got to game.

Steven Bliss