

Summertown Bridge Bulletin 10 October 2022

Dir: East
Vul: N/S

♠ 10 9 4
♥ Q J 4 3
♦ J 5 4
♣ A K 3

♠ J 8 2
♥ 7
♦ K 8
♣ Q J 8 6 5 4 2

	NORTH	
WEST	2	EAST
	SOUTH	

♠ K Q 7 5 3
♥ A 10 5
♦ Q 10 9 3
♣ 10

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

♠ A 6
♥ K 9 8 6 2
♦ A 7 6 2
♣ 9 7

	11	
7		11
	11	

Board 2 should be a classic hard-fought part score battle. There are many close decisions to be made.

East should open 1♠. With spades, it pays to open here on the rule of 20.

South should pass. The heart suit is anaemic and has only 5 cards. Plan to come in later.

West might have 7 losers if East, playing 4-card majors, has 5 spades. This will be the case about 80% of the time.

If South was foolish enough to bid 2♥, then 3♠ looks a sensible pre-emptive bid. Otherwise 2♠ is enough. In an uncontested auction you don't want to be going off in 3♠ with a 7-card fit when everyone else is declaring a safer 2♠.

North has just attended the Government's 'Safer Bidding' online course and passes.

East now ponders. He knows South is a good player and she will not let him declare 2♠. 3♠ is a pre-emptive bid. It is not invitational. If East wanted to invite game he would bid 3♦, a help suit (long suit game try), asking 'Partner, can you help me in diamonds?'

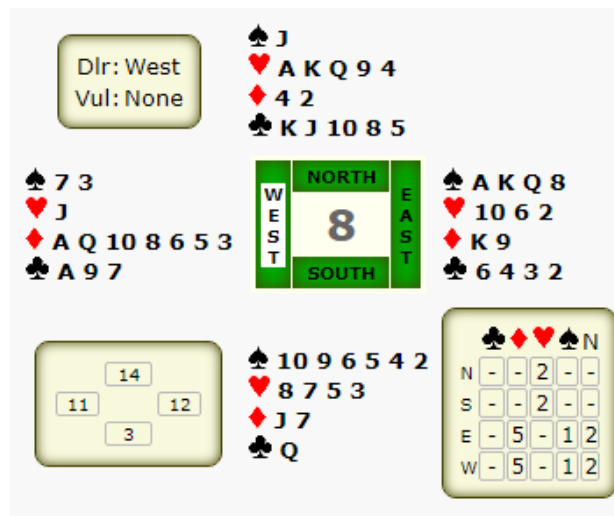
3♠ from East keeps NS out of the auction. But after a pass by East, South will double, promising 4 hearts. West may guess to bid 3♠ and, if so, North must pass, knowing that East will double.

If, of course, East is known to be a complete wimp who has never worked out that the red cards can be used for penalty doubles and not just take out, North must confidently bid 4♥, which he will declare undoubled for one down.

If West passes the double of 2♠, then North will bid 3♥.

What does East do? Well, East is very familiar with the Law of Total Tricks. This valuable law says that the total number of tricks available on a bridge deal in a competitive auction is equal to the total number of trumps. East reckons EW have 8 or 9 spades and NS have 8 or 9 hearts, i.e. there are 16-18 trumps. So that doesn't really help! What should East do?

Luckily, East can see that he is short in clubs and West should be short in hearts, so 3♠ it is.



A straightforward auction on Board 8, one might think, but the Force was not with Summertown bidders last night...

West opens 1♦. Too strong for 3♦; not strong enough for 4♦.

North bids the Unusual 2NT, promising 5/5 in the two lowest unbid suits. The Unusual 2NT is like a light sabre in the hands of an aggressive 3-year-old. Great fun; but it can be a bruising experience.

Some good players use 2NT for either weak or strong hands and not for intermediate hands. We tried that, but having little grandsons has taught me that if you have a toy, you want to play with it and not leave it on the shelf in its box. North has a 'strong' hand anyway.

Yoda, sitting East, is ready for the fight. 'This our hand is. Declare or double them we will.'

Yoda has a well-honed defence to these annoying two-suited overcalls. With diamond support East would cue bid (Unusual over Unusual). A bid of the lower suit is a limit raise, a cue bid of the higher suit is a game force. Here 3♣ would show a good raise to 3♦; 3♥ would be forcing to 3NT or 5♦. 3♦ would show a weak hand with 4 diamonds. 3♠ would show a good 5-card spade suit.

None of these apply, so Yoda doubles 2NT. His double suggests 4 spades and a willingness to double the opponents.

Little Anakin, sitting South, has been well taught at Summertown and dutifully bids 3♥ with the confidence at the table that comes easily to the young. There is no hesitation.

West bids a NV 4♦. He has nice holdings in North's long suits.

North bids a NV 4♥. Yoda contemplates doubling this cheeky bid, but somehow knows that NS will only go two off for -300. He confidently bids 5♦. It helps being able to see through the back of the cards.

'The fear of loss is a path to the dark side.' — Yoda, *Revenge Of The Sith*

James Bentley