

## Summertown Bridge Bulletin, 11 October 2021

So, it was back to BBO this week, with an excellent turnout of 10 tables. Congratulations to the winners, non-members Jemma and John, and to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> placed Irene and Mike, and Steph and Steven.

It was actually going to be James' turn to do the bulletin this week, but he and Valerie have taken themselves off to a Bernard Magee event instead. However, he has kindly sent in this additional commentary on last week's hand 11, which they played with us on RealBridge:

Dlr: South  
Vul: None

♠Q7632  
♥Q3  
♦K  
♣Q9872

Optimum  
NS -100

♠1098  
♥1087  
♦1062  
♣K1065

North		East	
W	11	E	A
e		a	s
s		t	t
t			
South			

♠AKJ  
♥AJ965  
♦QJ973  
♣--

9		
3		16
	12	

♠54  
♥K42  
♦A854  
♣AJ43

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

Assume the bidding on this hand goes 1NT from South, pass, and 2♥ from North to transfer to spades. What should East do now? I wonder whether many pairs have an agreement for this quite common situation.

For us, 2♠ would show 4 hearts and a willingness to compete to 3♥. Double is lead directing, usually with a good 5-card suit and a willingness to play in 2♥ doubled, perhaps with no more than 8 HCP at green. 3♥ would show a 6-card heart suit. So here, I think East should double the transfer.

South does best to pass, which for us shows a doubleton spade (completing the transfer would show a 3-card suit). North, with 9 HCP would now bid 2♠.

What now for East? Double would be taken out, which isn't right - but letting NS play in 2♠ doesn't seem right either. So East bids 3♦, offering a choice of contracts, and promising 5 cards in diamonds (new suit at the 3 level).

Now West can show (and at the table, did show!) her judgment. The gut reaction with 3/3 is to return partner to the major - but not here. West does not want to declare, and so passes 3♦. The contract makes easily, but on the night, earned a below-par score of 37%. Life was never supposed to be fair!

Now on to last night's hands. There were quite a few interesting ones to choose from 😊

First of all, how about board 4. As you can see, 6♠ is an excellent contract, but it's hard to find and only one pair reached it – well done, Clodagh and Erika!

After West passed, most Norths chose to open 1♠ – now it was more or less impossible for South to carry on beyond game. North actually has an old-fashioned Acol Strong Two opener, showing 8 or (as here) 9 playing tricks, and using this system, Moira and Cliff had a go, but subsided in 5♠. Even our own system (using a 2♦ multi opening to show a single-suited hand with about 4 losers, with a 2NT reply showing an opening hand or better) didn't get us beyond 4♠ when Sandra unfortunately convinced herself that her singleton 10 of trumps wasn't going to be much help.

Dlr: West  
Vul: All

♠KQJ9873  
♥AKQ  
♦--  
♣J104

Optimum  
NS 6S;  
+1430

♠A642  
♥109  
♦Q1087  
♣863

North		East	
W	4	E	A
e		a	s
s		t	t
t			
South			

♠5  
♥J8752  
♦K963  
♣Q97

16		
6		6
	12	

♠10  
♥643  
♦AJ542  
♣AK52

♣♦♥♠N				
N	5	2	2	6
S	5	2	2	6
E	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-

Better answers on a postcard, please!

Dlr: South  
 Vul: None

♠ 10 6  
 ♥ A 10 9 7  
 ♦ A K Q 7 3  
 ♣ K 7

Optimum  
NS 6S: +980

♠ A 8 7 2  
 ♥ 8 5  
 ♦ 10 4  
 ♣ 10 9 6 5 4

W NORTH E  
 S 11 A S  
 T SOUTH T

♠ 4  
 ♥ K Q J 6 4 3 2  
 ♦ J 8 5  
 ♣ Q 8

16  
 4 9  
 11

♠ K Q J 9 5 3  
 ♥ - -  
 ♦ 9 6 2  
 ♣ A J 3 2

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	3	5	1	6	5
S	3	5	1	6	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Hand 11 from this week's set was another slam hand featuring a very similar spade holding. This time three pairs got there – the Sheppards, Sara and Betty, and Irina and Peter – so well done to them too.

The bidding universally started with 1♠ from South and 2♦ from North, followed by a heart overcall from East – either 2♥, 3♥ or even 4♥. Whichever it was, every South then bid their spades again, more or less guaranteeing a 6-card suit. Now we can see a crucial difference from hand 4: North has, not a singleton 10 in partner's suit, but doubleton 10x. This is

enough for a fit, so North can now count their hand as only 5 losers, with the excellent diamonds making it well worth a slam try. Using Roman Key Card Blackwood, you can discover that South has two of the five key cards and the trump queen. Even if the ♠A is missing, West might have it; or maybe South will have the ♣Q... but as the cards lie, 12 tricks are a racing certainty.

Finally, let's have a look at hand 16, with a highly competitive distribution which once more featured an excellent spade holding.

West has a weak two in diamonds but rather surprisingly, Sandra was the only West to open the hand, with a bid showing either that or a very strong hand. North passed, Krys jumped to 4♠, and that was that.

At other tables North opened, usually with 1♣, and East bid anything from 1♠ to 4♠. Even if N/S then competed, East was generally allowed to play the hand in either 3♠ or 4♠ (one lucky pair had the joy of

playing in 4♠ doubled), but the evening's winners Jemma and John found their heart fit and, at favourable vulnerability, competed to 5♥, which they made. Deep Finesse says this should go one down (which would have been a good result in itself), but to achieve this, after taking the ♠A at trick one, East needs to switch immediately to the singleton diamond. Although this doesn't produce the hoped-for ruff, it does set up a diamond trick for West to cash when they come in later with the ♠A – otherwise, the diamond losers in dummy will disappear on declarer's long clubs.

How can you know that you shouldn't try to cash another spade first? Well, this is where you need to be able to ask for count with your lead, e.g. by using the A to ask for attitude and the K for count. If West plays their smallest spade on your K, it shows an odd number – either one, or three. If West has supported spades, it must be three, so declarer must have a singleton. Even if West hasn't bid, the very fact that N/S have competed so aggressively tends to indicate that one of them will have a singleton or void in your lovely suit – and since dummy has two of them, isn't it likely to be declarer?

As they say, defence is difficult!

Dlr: West  
 Vul: E/W

♠ 8  
 ♥ A 10 9 2  
 ♦ A 3 2  
 ♣ K Q 9 8 5

Optimum  
NS 5Hx: -100

♠ 10 6 3  
 ♥ 3  
 ♦ K Q 9 6 5 4  
 ♣ A 10 2

W NORTH E  
 S 16 A S  
 T SOUTH T

♠ A K Q J 7 5 4  
 ♥ 8 7 5  
 ♦ 8  
 ♣ 6 3

13  
 9 10  
 8

♠ 9 2  
 ♥ K Q J 6 4  
 ♦ J 10 7  
 ♣ J 7 4

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	3	-	4	-	-
S	3	-	4	-	-
E	-	2	-	4	1
W	-	2	-	4	1