

Summertown Bridge Bulletin, 15th August 2022

Ignoring the robots who were first, there was very little separating the next four pairs: the Blisses, Holly & Vicky, Robert & Robot, and the Sheppards. So congratulations to all of them.

Dir: North
Vul: All

♠ A J 10 6 2
♥ 6 4 2
♦ 8 5 3
♣ 9 3

Optimum
NS 4D:
+130

♠ 9 8 5 3
♥ 9 8 5
♦ - -
♣ K J 8 7 5 4

| | | |
|---|-------|---|
| W | NORTH | E |
| E | 13 | S |
| S | SOUTH | T |

♠ K Q 4
♥ K Q J 10 3
♦ A 2
♣ Q 10 6

| | | |
|---|----|----|
| 5 | | 17 |
| 4 | | |
| | 14 | |

♠ 7
♥ A 7
♦ K Q J 10 9 7 6 4
♣ A 2

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

I put Hand 13 first as it is the one Moira and I had some discussion about. Generally South was in 4♦ or 5♦ making 10 tricks, but at our table the opponents, Linda and Dave, made 12 tricks, giving us a near bottom. So what happened? Playing 5-card majors, East had opened 1♥, Linda doubled, I (West) raised to 2♥, Linda ended up in 5♦ and I led ♥8 round to 10 and Ace. On the ♦K I played ♣5 (we are playing Italian discards, so this is encouraging the suit). And now Moira, in with the ♦A, had to decide what to lead. As far as she was concerned, I could well have 4 hearts for my raise, leaving

South now void, so reasonably enough she led a club responding to my signal. Linda took ♣A, led a spade to the Ace, ruffed a spade, used ♦8 as an entry to ruff another spade and (having carefully preserved her lowest trump) still had ♦5 as another entry for the rest of the spades. Excellent play. But what should we have done? Should Moira have led a club or a heart?

The answer is neither. A diamond lead will remove an entry in dummy and the spades cannot be set up. Would you have thought of that? I wish I could be sure I would have done.

On Board 1, five pairs played in 3NT by either North or South. Only one went down and two made an overtrick. Whatever is led, declarer is going to try and set up the diamonds, but East can make it very difficult for declarer by holding off the ♦K until the third round; there is then no obvious entry to the North hand. I am not sure the best way to persuade East not to do this. Played by South, some led ♦A and then the Jack, but I think that makes it clear to East to hold up. If you simply play the Jack first, East does not really know what is happening. One East did hold up, but a later defensive error gave away the contract anyway. According to the analysis, North can always make 3NT, although I am not sure how (*see Footnote! – Ed.*)

Dir: North
Vul: None

♠ K 4 2
♥ 8 6
♦ Q 9 8 7 2
♣ Q 10 3

Optimum
N 3N:
+400

♠ 10 8 6 5
♥ A 10 4 2
♦ 3
♣ 8 7 5 4

| | | |
|---|-------|---|
| W | NORTH | E |
| S | 1 | A |
| T | SOUTH | T |

♠ A J 9
♥ J 7
♦ K 6 5 4
♣ J 9 6 2

| | | |
|---|----|----|
| 7 | | 10 |
| 4 | | |
| | 19 | |

♠ Q 7 3
♥ K Q 9 5 3
♦ A J 10
♣ A K

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

Dir: West
 Vul: All

♠ K J 3 2
 ♥ 7 4
 ♦ K 9 6 4 3
 ♣ 9 7

Optimum
 S 4H: +620

♠ A 9 8 7 5
 ♥ 8
 ♦ Q J 7 2
 ♣ 8 5 4

NORTH
 WEST 4 EAST
 SOUTH

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

| | |
|----|---|
| 7 | |
| 7 | 9 |
| 17 | |

♠ Q 6
 ♥ A Q J 10 3 2
 ♦ A 10 8
 ♣ A 6

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

On Board 4, everyone is in either 3♥ or 4♥ by South, making 8, 9 or 10 tricks. It looks as if the contract should make 10 tricks easily, with either a club or diamond loser going on the long spade so you lose ♥K, ♠A, and either a diamond or a club. But two Souths, perhaps thrown off their stride by the bad trump break, did not draw the fourth trump. So when they tried to throw the losing diamond on a spade, East ruffed; they could over-ruff, but still had to lose a diamond.

Initially (until Sandra read this) I had thought that the lead of ♦Q would beat the contract, as when East gets in with the ♥K (best to hold up the ♥K until the third round of trumps to allow West to give a signal), she can put West in with a spade to get a diamond ruff. But this is to no avail, effectively this is a ruff of what would be a losing diamond anyway, and South still makes ten tricks. However, if by any chance North ends up playing the contract, East can hold declarer to nine tricks with an initial diamond lead from their side of the table.

Cliff Pavelin

Editor's Footnote: If you want to see how North can always make nine tricks in NT on Board 1 – or indeed, to look deeper into the effect of different leads or different lines of play on any hand – then you need to use Bridge Solver. This amazing tool is part of the way BridgeWebs presents results. On the Summertown web site, go to the results page, choose "Ranking", and click on your pair. Now pick a hand from the right hand side. Your result will be highlighted on the traveller shown. Click where it says "Play" to the right of that line. A window opens with a view of the hand. If it isn't showing the Bridge Solver view, click Switch Viewer at the bottom of that window, and choose BSOL. Now click the actual contract, which will be the one highlighted in the makeable contracts box (bottom right), and you can then either click through the cards as they were played (the asterisked ones), or choose a different play and see what happens - the number of tricks makeable by each side being shown by the little number next to each card. (Of course, if the results are from a face-to-face session, you won't see which cards were actually played, but the rest of the analysis is still available.)

You can also use Bridge Solver to see an interesting view of your partnership results. Instead of clicking on "Play" in the traveller, click on "Play it again", which appears in between the hand and the traveller. Then, in the new window that pops up, click on "Results Analysis" (left-hand side, near the bottom).