

## Summertown Bridge Bulletin, 2nd August 2022

Dir: West  
Vul: N/S

Optimum  
EW 5Dx:  
+500

♠ 10 6 5 4  
♥ K J 2  
♦ 10 8 7 6  
♣ J 3

♠ Q 9 7 2  
♥ 9 8  
♦ 9 5 3  
♣ K 5 4 2

NORTH  
WEST 12 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ K J  
♥ 7 5 4  
♦ A K Q J 4 2  
♣ 7 6

5  
5 14  
16

♠ A 8 3  
♥ A Q 10 6 3  
♦ - -  
♣ A Q 10 9 8

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

After East opens 1♦, what should South bid? The Unusual 2NT promises 5/5 in the two lowest unbid suits. Some play that the bid is only used for weak or strong hands, not for intermediate, but this is too clever by half. If you've got a lovely toy, you should be able to play with it. In any event, South has a strong hand and the bidding will go 1♦-2NT-P-3♥-?

Should East bid 4♦? It all depends on partnership understanding. Does 4♦ say 'Try to bid on to 5♦ if they bid 4♥'? If that's not the way you play, East might keep quiet and hope North-South don't bid game. If they do, East might now bid 5♦ and get doubled. Only a good sacrifice if everyone is in 4♥.

So, why doesn't East bid 5♦ on the second round? 1♦-2NT-P-3♥-5♦- and leave the last guess to South? 5♦-3 undoubled beats 3♥+1, but you just know every South is going to bid 5♥ anyway.

Dir: North  
Vul: All

Optimum  
EW 5D:  
-600

♠ A K J 9 5 3  
♥ K 5 2  
♦ 10 5  
♣ K 5

♠ 10 8 6  
♥ J  
♦ A K Q J 6 4  
♣ 9 6 4

NORTH  
WEST 13 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ Q  
♥ A 9 8 7 6 3  
♦ 9 7 3 2  
♣ A 7

14  
11 10  
5

♠ 7 4 2  
♥ Q 10 4  
♦ 8  
♣ Q J 10 8 3 2

♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	-	2	-
S	1	-	2	-
E	-	5	2	-
W	-	5	2	-

Let's look at the play in 5♦ with a top spade lead and ♣K continuation (best).

We tend to look to ruff losers in the short hand; here hoping to ruff two spades and a club.

So often, the better route can be to establish dummy's long suit.

Win ♣A, play ♥A, ruff a ♥ low, ruff a ♠, ruff a heart high, ruff a ♠, ... Here the hearts have cooperated, but if they are 4/2 you can hope to ruff out the 4th round leaving two winners to dispose of the losing clubs. Game made.

Dir: North  
Vul: None

Optimum  
EW 7N:  
-1520

♠ 8 6 3 2  
♥ Q 6  
♦ Q 10 8 7 6 4  
♣ 9

♠ A K J 9 7  
♥ A 9 5  
♦ 9  
♣ A K J 6

NORTH  
WEST 17 EAST  
SOUTH

♠ 10 4  
♥ K 10 7 4  
♦ A K 2  
♣ 10 7 5 3

4  
20 10  
6

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

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	7	3	6	7	7
W	7	3	6	7	7

Playing Acol with 4-card majors, the auction should be starting 1♠-2♣-?

Quite a number of Wests chose 2N which seems very off-centre. But after 1♠-2♣-, what should West do? 6♣ has a lot going for it. Is West too strong for a splinter? Possibly, and a splinter is of no use if you only play ace-showing cue bids. If you play Italian cue bids (showing kings and singletons as well as aces/voids), then East can cooperate in the slam venture, with the bidding going:

1♠-2♣-4♦-4♥-4NT-5♣/♦ (one keycard)-5♦/♥ (trump queen ask grand slam try)-6♣.

Dir: West  
Vul: All

Optimum  
EW 7H:  
-2210

♠ J 9 8 7  
♥ K  
♦ K 9 8 7 4 3 2  
♣ 3

♠ A K 5 2  
♥ A Q 7 5 4  
♦ - -  
♣ K Q J 6

NORTH  
WEST 20 EAST  
SOUTH

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

7  
19 11  
3

♠ Q 10  
♥ 10 3 2  
♦ J 10  
♣ 10 9 8 5 4 2

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	1	-	-	-
S	-	1	-	-	-
E	5	-	7	5	6
W	5	-	7	5	6

After 1♥-P-3♥-P- West cannot use any normal version of Blackwood with a void, so a normal cue-bidding sequence might go 1♥-3♥-3♠-4♣-4♦-4♥-6♥. It's a bit of a punt when East's ♦A/K isn't pulling its weight.

But this hand is a rare opportunity to use Exclusion Blackwood, sometimes known as Voidwood, to find a possible 7♥. A jump to the 5 level in a new suit is your chosen version of RKCB excluding the ace in the void suit bid.

Here the bidding starts 1♥-3♥-5♦-?. East must ignore the ♦A and bid 5♥ (one step) playing RKCB 1430 or 5♠ (2 steps) playing RKCB 0314. Knowing one keycard is missing, West should be happy to bid 6♥.

But there is a problem with rare exotic conventions: they are easy to get wrong.