

## Summertown Bridge Bulletin 2 May 2022

As we all know, a good score at pairs often depends on declarer's ability to create an extra trick. This week we've picked two hands that illustrate some techniques you can think about using when you have a particularly good trump fit.

Dir: West Vul: All	♠ A K 8 ♥ K Q J 5 ♦ K ♣ 8 7 5 4 2	Optimum EW 6Sx: +1400																																		
♠ 10 9 5 4 2 ♥ 8 3 ♦ A 7 4 ♣ J 10 9	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;">W</td><td style="width: 60px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">NORTH</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;">E</td><td style="width: 60px; height: 20px; text-align: center; background-color: yellow;">4</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;">T</td><td style="width: 60px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">SOUTH</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;">T</td></tr> </table>	W	NORTH	E	E	4	S	T	SOUTH	T	♠ Q 7 6 3 ♥ 7 4 ♦ Q 8 6 2 ♣ K Q 3																									
W	NORTH	E																																		
E	4	S																																		
T	SOUTH	T																																		
<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">16</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">5</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">9</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">10</td></tr> </table>	16	5	9	10	♠ J ♥ A 10 9 6 2 ♦ J 10 9 5 3 ♣ A 6	<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td></td><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>		♣	♦	♥	♠	N	N	4	4	6	-	2	S	4	4	6	-	2	E	-	-	-	1	-	W	-	-	-	1	-
16																																				
5	9																																			
10																																				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	N																															
N	4	4	6	-	2																															
S	4	4	6	-	2																															
E	-	-	-	1	-																															
W	-	-	-	1	-																															

On Board 4, everyone played in 4♥ by South. Five of the seven West players (including Sandra) led a spade, one led a club, and only Peter Sherry found the best lead of a trump.

Against any other lead, it's fairly easy to make 12 tricks, as long as you recognise the technique you need to use, which is a cross-ruff. The clue is that you have two unbalanced hands and, crucially, declarer and dummy hold all the top trumps between them. So don't draw ANY trumps! Take the two top spades throwing a club from hand, lose a diamond, and win the return. If it isn't a trump, you can now play a complete cross-ruff, making nine trump tricks (using all of them for ruffs), two spades, and the ♣A. If West spots what you're up to and returns a trump, you can still make 12 tricks by ruffing out either the clubs or the diamonds.

An initial trump lead makes it much more difficult as, if you don't draw the second round yourself, the defence will do it for you when they come in with the ♦A. Now, as the cards lie, the only way to make the 12<sup>th</sup> trick is to play for the clubs to be 3-3.

Most declarers drew trumps anyway, then gave up the ♦A and when they regained the lead, tried running the ♦J for a ruffing finesse. In principle this has a better probability of success than a 3-3 club split but, as you can see, it wasn't going to work on this occasion. Bridget saw the possibilities of the cross-ruff, and nearly got there, but ended up losing a trump trick after she ruffed the second club high. Only Robert emerged with 12 tricks and a well-earned top.

Dir: North  
 Vul: All

♠ 2  
 ♥ A K 6 3  
 ♦ A Q 8  
 ♣ A 10 8 6 4

Optimum  
 NS 5C:  
 +600

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

NORTH  
 13  
 SOUTH

♠ 10 9 8 3  
 ♥ Q 8 5  
 ♦ K 10 7 2  
 ♣ K 3

17	
5	8
10	

♠ A Q  
 ♥ J 9  
 ♦ 9 4 3  
 ♣ Q J 9 7 5 2

♣♦♥♠N					
N	5	1	1	-	1
S	5	1	1	-	3
E	-	-	-	2	-
W	-	-	-	2	-

On Board 13, only Carol and Keith found their way to a successful 3NT by South. One pair tried 3NT by North, which led to an unfortunate result after a spade lead through South's holding. Everyone else was in 5♣ played by North, and all but one went one off, even though the analysis says you can always make it. So what went wrong?

The lead was still always a spade, but in a club contract this isn't a problem, you can just rise happily with the Ace and ruff the Queen later. There seems no reason to delay drawing the two missing trumps, so you play one from hand and are disappointed to find that since West has none, there's going to be an inevitable trump loser. Should you lose it now or later?

It looks as though the contract is going to depend on a successful finesse of the ♦K .... but is there any way you can improve on this 50-50 chance? Again, there's a relevant technique that depends on having long trumps in both hands: it's called "elimination and end play". The idea is that when you have a finesse position such as this, you ruff out ("eliminate") two of the three side suits, and then – whilst you still have at least one trump left in each hand – you aim to lose a trick to the hand that is sitting over your tenace. They must now either play into the tenace, giving you two tricks, whoever holds the missing King; or else give you a ruff and discard.

Does that give you a clue about when to lose the King of trumps, which you know is sitting in the East hand? Yes! – you must leave it till after you have ruffed your remaining spade, and at least one heart. Now, when East is finally presented with the trump winner, their only choice left is to lead a spade or a diamond, in either case giving you the extra trick you need to make the contract.

Very well played, Minty, the only declarer who found this expert line!