

Summertown Bridge Bulletin, 22nd August 2022

There were four tables at Maison Française last night and we played a Howell movement, which meant each board got played four times. Let's start this week's Bulletin with board 4:

Dlr: West
 Vul: All

♠ Q 9 4
 ♥ J 10 9 8 6 3
 ♦ K 9
 ♣ 10 3

♠ A J 8 6
 ♥ A
 ♦ 10 8 6 3
 ♣ Q J 8 5

W NORTH E
 E 4 A S
 S T SOUTH T

♠ 5 3
 ♥ 7 5 4 2
 ♦ A Q
 ♣ A K 9 6 4

6
 12 13
 9

♠ K 10 7 2
 ♥ K Q
 ♦ J 7 5 4 2
 ♣ 7 2

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | N |
| N | - | - | - | - | - |
| S | - | - | - | - | - |
| E | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| W | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 |

One pair managed to play this hand in 3NT by East, which makes 9 tricks very easily after a diamond lead. But the computer says you can make 10 tricks on any lead – how? Well, if you take the diamond finesse and then play another diamond, you'll see the King fall, either on the first or the second round. The Jack is still out, of course, but did you notice that the nine has also gone? This means you can cross to dummy with a club, force out the ♦J, and your ♦8 will give you the tenth trick.

Even if North has cheekily bid hearts, encouraging South to lead one, the suit turns out to be blocked and the same play in diamonds will still reel in an overtrick. It's not an easy play to find at the table, though!

The other three pairs played in clubs, all making 11 or 12 tricks. Sadly for Liza and Sandra, their opponents on this board (Holly and Peter) were the only ones to bid game, via this excellent sequence:

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------|-------|
| 1♦ | 2♥ (weak) | 3♣ | Pass |
| 3♥ (asking for a stop for NT) | Pass | 4♦ | Pass |
| 5♣ | All pass | | |

With the diamond finesse working, declarer found it easy to make the contract by drawing trumps and ruffing two losing hearts. To make 12 tricks, as the analysis says you can, you have to delay drawing trumps in order to ruff all three of your heart losers, taking the diamond finesse on the way and then returning to hand to take the final heart ruff by ruffing the third round of diamonds (high, if North ruffs in with the 10).

Board 17 was a good hand for competitive bidding:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|-------|---|---|----|---|---|----|---|--|-------|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dir: North Vul: None | ♠ K Q 10 5 2 ♥ A K 7 6 3 2 ♦ - - ♣ J 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ 7 ♥ Q 4 ♦ Q 10 9 6 ♣ Q 10 9 8 5 2 | <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">NORTH</td><td style="width: 20px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">E</td><td style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">17</td><td style="width: 20px;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">S</td><td style="text-align: center;">17</td><td style="width: 20px;">T</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px;">T</td><td style="text-align: center;">SOUTH</td><td style="width: 20px;">T</td></tr> </table> | W | NORTH | E | E | 17 | S | S | 17 | T | T | SOUTH | T | ♠ A 9 4 3 ♥ 9 8 ♦ A K 7 4 3 2 ♣ A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | NORTH | E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | 17 | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | 17 | T | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| T | SOUTH | T | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%; height: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td style="width: 30px;">13</td><td style="width: 30px;"></td><td style="width: 30px;">15</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 30px;">6</td><td style="width: 30px;"></td><td style="width: 30px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 30px;"></td><td style="width: 30px;">6</td><td style="width: 30px;"></td></tr> </table> | 13 | | 15 | 6 | | | | 6 | | ♠ J 8 6 ♥ J 10 5 ♦ J 8 5 ♣ K 7 6 4 | <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%; height: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px;">♣</td><td style="width: 20px;">♦</td><td style="width: 20px;">♥</td><td style="width: 20px;">♠</td><td style="width: 20px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr> </table> | | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | N | N | - | - | 2 | 3 | - | S | - | - | 2 | 3 | - | E | 3 | 5 | - | - | 1 | W | 3 | 5 | - | - | 1 |
| 13 | | 15 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ♣ | ♦ | ♥ | ♠ | N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | - | - | 2 | 3 | - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | - | - | 2 | 3 | - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | 3 | 5 | - | - | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | 3 | 5 | - | - | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

At Liza and Sandra's table, North opened 1♥ (as you would) and Sandra, sitting East, decided to double. This had the advantage that it should uncover a spade fit with partner if there happened to be one, but, if not, she could bid diamonds at the next opportunity to show a strong hand. Liza bid her clubs (as you would), North came back in with her spades, Sandra duly bid 3♦ and N/S went on to game in hearts. When Sandra doubled this for penalties, Liza, not unreasonably, decided that she was unlikely to be able to contribute anything to the defence, and so Sandra ended up playing in 5♦.

Although the computer says this can make, Bridge Solver will tell you that it requires a lot of rather unlikely manoeuvring (including finessing against the ♦J!), and at the table it went one down. This seemed as though it was going to be a bad result - until it turned out that two N/S pairs had actually made 4♥.

Double dummy, it's easy to see how this should go down ...East leads ♣A, followed by ♠A, followed by a defensive cross-ruff in the black suits: but it's much more likely that East will try to cash a diamond trick before leading the spade, in which case declarer will gratefully ruff in hand and draw trumps.

Sandra says she's relieved that she wasn't put to the test, as she's not at all sure she would have found the right defence. Well done to Clodagh and Albert, who doubled 5♥ and got it two down, achieving the only E/W plus score on this hand.

Sandra Nicholson & Krys Kazmierczak