

Summertown Bridge Bulletin 28th November 2022

Hello, this is Steven again. I'm afraid I missed bridge last night (World Cup!), but nine pairs played face to face and they had some very challenging hands. Congratulations to Erica & Peter Russell who won, and Rod & Jeremy who came second.

With face to face bridge you can't tell how the bidding and play went, but I've chosen three hands with some useful learning points.

Dlr: South
Vul: E/W

♠ 9 5
♥ 10 8 4 2
♦ K J 9 8 2
♣ 7 6

♠ A K 10 6 2
♥ K
♦ A 7 3
♣ J 10 9 2

W

NORTH

E

3

S

SOUTH

T

♠ Q J 8 3
♥ Q 7 3
♦ 5
♣ K Q 8 4 3

4

15
10

11

♠ 7 4
♥ A J 9 6 5
♦ Q 10 6 4
♣ A 5

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

Board 3 is interesting in two ways. First, only one EW pair (Peter Sherry & Peter Finbow) got to 4♠.

Let's assume that South passes and West opens 1♠. Using the losing trick count, East has no more than 7 losers and wants to be in game: I would make a splinter bid of 4♦, and West would sign off in 4♠.

However, many people will open 1♥ with the South hand (it's minimum, but there's a convenient rebid in diamonds, and you're not vulnerable). West bids 1♠, North probably stretches to 2♥, and East has to decide what to bid.

Michael Byrne did a good seminar on this at OBC. His system is that, in this sort of sequence, bidding 3 of partner's suit shows 4 trumps and some 'shape', but less than 10 points; a cue bid of the opponent's suit shows 3 trumps with 10+ points; and 2NT shows 4 trumps with 10+ points. (If you're wondering, with 5 trumps you jump to game!). This is a useful gadget, and it helps you know what to do if opponents bid on. Here, if East shows the 2NT sort of hand, West should bid the game.

The second interesting point is that every declarer made 12 tricks, despite missing two Aces – presumably South didn't realise that West might be able to discard the only heart loser so, even when there was a heart lead, they must have decided to keep their Ace sitting over the Queen and allowed declarer to win the trick. It's always easier when you can see all four hands!

Dlr: North
Vul: N/S

♠ 3
♥ 9 5 3
♦ 7 4 2
♣ K 9 7 5 3 2

♠ Q J 7
♥ A J 7 4
♦ J 8 3
♣ Q 10 6

W NORTH E
S 5 S T SOUTH T

♠ A 10 5 4
♥ K 10 6
♦ 10 9 6 5
♣ A 8

♠ K 9 8 6 2
♥ Q 8 2
♦ A K Q
♣ J 4

3
11 11
15

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

Board 5 is a classic example of the need to compete in the bidding at pairs. East almost has a weak NT opener. Some people would open it 1NT, non-vulnerable as here, since the three 10s look useful – but if you do this more than occasionally, you must inform the opponents.

Anyway, let's assume that East passes and South opens 1♠ (which clearly happened at least twice). This is passed round to East, who can now bid a protective 1NT, showing 11-14 points. The two pairs who simply passed got poor scores: 1♠ went off, but making 8 or 9 tricks in NT scored better.

On Board 14, there was a variety of EW contracts: 3♠, 4♠, 5♠ (not sure why), and 3NT (just made).

4♠ looks like an easy game when dummy goes down, after a club lead at all tables, but if you start to draw trumps you discover the 5-0 trump break. Don't panic! The hand will fall apart if you draw four rounds of trumps. Instead you should aim to make as many trump tricks as you can by ruffing in both hands. You should make one or two heart tricks, two minor suit Aces, one top trump and six

more trumps by cross ruffing. In fact, even without knowing about the bad break, if you count your tricks you'll realise you can't make game in spades without at least two ruffs, so you won't be able to afford to draw all the trumps: and if you think about it a bit more, it looks best for EW to play on a cross-ruff immediately without touching trumps (as West played the contract, North was unable to start off with a trump lead – and, fortunately for declarer, had the same problem when on lead after winning the ♥A).

Dlr: East
Vul: None

♠ - -
♥ A 6 5
♦ K J 8 4
♣ K Q 6 5 4 3

♠ K J 9 4
♥ 7
♦ 10 9 7 6 3 2
♣ J 8

W NORTH E
S 14 S T SOUTH T

♠ A Q 6 5
♥ K Q 10 9 4
♦ A
♣ A 10 9

♠ 10 8 7 3 2
♥ J 8 3 2
♦ Q 5
♣ 7 2

13
5 19
3

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