

Summertown Bridge Bulletin, 3 May 2021

by James Bentley

Dlr: North
Vul: None

♠ K 6
♥ J 5 4 3
♦ K J 10 6 3
♣ A 10

Optimum
NS 6S:
+980

♠ 10 9 4
♥ A 8 7
♦ 4 2
♣ J 7 6 4 2

WEST NORTH EAST
1
SOUTH

♠ 7 5 3
♥ K Q 10 9 2
♦ 7 5
♣ Q 9 3

12
5 7
16

♠ A Q J 8 2
♥ 6
♦ A Q 9 8
♣ K 8 5

♣♦♥♠N
N 2 6 2 6 2
S 2 6 2 6 2
E - - - -
W - - - -

At six tables East was on lead against 3NT. Only one pair (and the robots) found the schoolbook defence. Lead of ♥K is correct from KQ10x(x). Some will encourage with 8♥ (highest card out apart from AJ). East then leads 9♥ for West to overtake and return 7♥. We play that lead of a King asks partner to give count or unblock. West cannot afford to overtake K♥ at trick one, so has to play 8♥ (which could be from any 4-card suit) and hope partner will continue.

Bridge can throw up many complex bidding hands. Initially, this isn't one of them. Playing weak NT North will open 1♥. So far so good. South must pass. After South has miscounted his 4 HCP/10 losers and bid 2♥ (oops!), North must pass at pairs and not bid 3♥ (oops!).

If South passes on round 1, E/W will start bidding diamonds straight away. South can then compete at the second turn, but even at this vulnerability, North will know not to risk going beyond 2♥ opposite a very weak hand.

If South supports hearts immediately and North passes, East can either make a balancing double, or (better) bid 2NT: this is not now an Unusual NT, but simply suggests competing in one of the minors. Either way, West will bid diamonds and North will almost certainly now go on to the doomed 3♥.

Dlr: South
Vul: E/W

♠ K J 8 5
♥ A Q 7 4
♦ 6 3
♣ A Q 6

Optimum
EW 2D+2:
-130

♠ 10 7
♥ 9 5 2
♦ A K Q J 2
♣ 9 5 2

WEST NORTH EAST
3
SOUTH

♠ A Q 9
♥ 8 3
♦ 9 8 7 5
♣ K J 10 8

16
10 10
4

♠ 6 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 6
♦ 10 4
♣ 7 4 3

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

Dlr: East
 Vul: E/W

Optimum
 EW 2S+1:
 -140

♠ K 5 4
 ♥ J 10 9 7 6
 ♦ K 6 2
 ♣ A 9

♠ A J 10 9 6
 ♥ K Q 3
 ♦ J
 ♣ K 8 3 2

NORTH
 6
 SOUTH

♠ Q 3
 ♥ A 8
 ♦ Q 9 8 7 3
 ♣ J 10 7 5

11
 14 9
 6

♠ 8 7 2
 ♥ 5 4 2
 ♦ A 10 5 4
 ♣ Q 6 4

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

Unlike Board 3, this hand asks for judgment on round one. After West has opened 1♠, does North overcall 2♥? I would NV, several didn't. After 1♠-2♥-, how do you play double? We play it as showing both minors, so this is an easy bid. After 1♠-2♥-dbl-, what should South do with 3-card support (no honour, so not wanting a heart lead in defence); 3343 shape? NV, I would be tempted.

Dlr: North
 Vul: E/W

Optimum
 EW 3N:
 -600

♠ Q 10 3 2
 ♥ K 5 4 3
 ♦ 9 4
 ♣ K 10 7

♠ K 9 4
 ♥ 6
 ♦ K J 8 5 3
 ♣ A J 9 8

NORTH
 9
 SOUTH

♠ A J 8
 ♥ Q 9 8 2
 ♦ A Q
 ♣ 5 4 3 2

8
 12 13
 7

♠ 7 6 5
 ♥ A J 10 7
 ♦ 10 7 6 2
 ♣ Q 6

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

We are listening to Bernard Magee's bridge seminars (bernardmageebridge.com) twice a week and he has been talking about hand evaluation. We had quite a complicated system to adjust both HCPs (for NTs) and HCPs (for suit contracts), but we have managed to improve it.

After a weak NT from East, West has (in our system) 13 points and should bid 3NT, not 2NT.

I notice that two experienced pairs had what I assume was some variant of a non-promissory Stayman auction: 1NT-2♣-2♥-3NT. The danger must be that East would bid 4♠ holding 4 spades.

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