

## Summertown Bridge Bulletin 6 December 2021

Hello, this is Steven again, with three boards from last night's 'party' session (it was nice to see people's fancy hats and pullovers). 3NT is said to be the most popular contract in bridge generally, and it was a possible one for all three of the hands I've chosen.

Dir: North  
Vul: N/S

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

Optimum  
NS -120

♠ 6 4 2  
♥ A 6 2  
♦ A J  
♣ A K J 9 7

W	NORTH	E
S	5	T
T	SOUTH	T

♠ 10 9 7  
♥ K 8 4 3  
♦ K Q 7  
♣ 5 4 3

	6	
17		8
	9	

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

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

In traditional Acrol, if you open a suit and rebid 1NT you show 15-16 points, with a 2NT rebid showing 17-18 and 3NT showing 19 or more. In the version which many people now play, the 1NT rebid shows 15-17, 2NT 18-19 and 3NT a strong hand with a long minor.

Hence many people last night rebid 1NT with the West hand (or opened a strong no trump), and East with a flat shape and poor intermediate cards often passed. Four pairs tried for game in no trumps, but only one of them made it.

When a spade was led, the defence could take four quick

tricks and wait for a club. On a passive diamond lead (which could be right when opponents are in a thin game) it was crucial to switch to a spade when in with the Queen of clubs.

There are few things more annoying at bridge than picking up a really good hand and making a mess of it, which is what I did last night. East has a very strong hand, but hands with long minor suits aren't so easy to bid: this hand doesn't quite guarantee game but isn't far off. Every East opened with some sort of conventional strong bid, every West made a conventional negative response, and East now showed the diamond suit. Twice West passed this, thinking that no game could be on after a Benji 2 club opening. Most Wests went on to game in diamonds (one to a hopeless slam), and even

where West bid hearts East generally went on to 5♦ rather than 3NT. Sue & Humaira, playing a strong club system, were the only pair to settle in 3NT, making 11 tricks for a deserved top score.

Dir: West  
Vul: None

♠ J 9 6 5 3  
♥ Q 9 8  
♦ J  
♣ J 9 5 2

Optimum  
NS -430

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

W	NORTH	E
S	8	T
T	SOUTH	T

♠ A K  
♥ 7 4  
♦ A K Q 10 9 7 4  
♣ K Q

	5	
5		21
	9	

♠ Q 10 2  
♥ K 10 6 5  
♦ 5 2  
♣ A 7 6 3

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	2	-	-	2	-
S	2	-	-	2	-
E	-	5	1	-	4
W	-	5	1	-	4

Dlr: West Vul: N/S	♠ 7 5 4 ♥ Q J 8 7 ♦ A K ♣ Q 9 8 4	Optimum NS -130																																										
♠ K J 8 6 2 ♥ A 9 4 ♦ 6 5 3 ♣ K J	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">W</td><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">NORTH</td><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">E</td><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0; text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">12</td><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">S</td><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">SOUTH</td><td style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">T</td></tr> </table>	W	NORTH	E	E	12	S	S	SOUTH	T	♠ Q ♥ K 10 6 ♦ Q J 10 9 8 ♣ A 6 5 3																																	
W	NORTH	E																																										
E	12	S																																										
S	SOUTH	T																																										
<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">12</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">12</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">12</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> </table>		12			12			12			4		♠ A 10 9 3 ♥ 5 3 2 ♦ 7 4 2 ♣ 10 7 2	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">♣</td><td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">♦</td><td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">♥</td><td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">♠</td><td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td><td style="text-align: center;">-</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">E</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td></tr> </table>		♣	♦	♥	♠	N	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	2	4	2	2	2	W	2	4	2	2	2
	12																																											
12			12																																									
		4																																										
	♣	♦	♥	♠	N																																							
N	-	-	-	-	-																																							
S	-	-	-	-	-																																							
E	2	4	2	2	2																																							
W	2	4	2	2	2																																							

Finally, on Board 12, everyone played in no trumps: three EW pairs in 3NT (they all made it), five in 2NT, and one unfortunate South in 1NT doubled, going four off, when North had made a risky take out double of 1♠. Where West had opened 1NT, North generally led a small heart, which gave declarer an extra trick and time to set up the diamonds. Where East was playing the contract, most Souths led a club, and this usually held it to 8 tricks. The computer thinks, rightly, that you can't make 3NT against best defence, and the par contract is in diamonds making 10 tricks – but, as Victor Mollo's Hideous Hog used to say, the whole fun of bridge is making the contracts that shouldn't really make!

*Steven Bliss*