

Summertown Bridge Club Bulletin 8 November 2021

Dir: East
Vul: N/S

♠ K 6 3 2
♥ Q J 9 7 6 5 3
♦ - -
♣ J 10

Optimum
W 3Sx:
+100

♠ A Q 10 5
♥ A 10 8
♦ 8 7 4
♣ 8 3 2

NORTH
WEST
2
EAST
SOUTH

♠ J 9 7 4
♥ K 4
♦ A K J 2
♣ Q 7 5

	7	
10		14
	9	

♠ 8
♥ 2
♦ Q 10 9 6 5 3
♣ A K 9 6 4

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

Board 2

We all struggle with misfits. Here, South wants to 'come alive' and North knows that 'blessed are the hearts'.

Over East's weak NT, South can deploy 2NT showing 5+/5+ in the minors (as a part of Multi-Landy and some other systems). Should North be teacher's pet and bid 3♣? Or should North bid 3♥? I like 3♥, reasoning that North's major suit cards are worthless if dummy.

With no 2NT overcall available, South can bid a natural 2♦ over 1NT. West doesn't have the strength or length to activate Lebensohl (if that's what you play), but it's EW's hand, so West must say something. Is a double here for penalties or take-out in your partnership? A real challenge if you've never agreed or are playing with a new partner. We keep it simple. All our doubles of suit bids below the 4-level are for take out. Many play an equally popular system that if there has been a NT bid, a double is for penalties. After West's take-out double of 2♦, East is hovering the mouse pointer over the pass button, but North will step in with 2♥, ruining the fun. Would 2♠ from East then end the auction? North now knows that South has at most one spade, so would try 3♥, hoping to tempt EW to go to 3♠.

A robot decided to open 1♦ in the East seat. I guess not all robots (playing strong NT/5-card majors) have been taught to count. Should South now venture a skinny 2♣, or duck below the parapet and await developments? Many like a 6-card minor to overcall vulnerable in 2nd seat. I would pass.

Dir: West
Vul: All

♠ A K Q 10 5 2

♥ --

♦ A 7 6

♣ 8 6 4 3

Optimum
NS 1H+2:
+140

♠ 8 7

♥ 10 5 4 3 2

♦ Q 9 4

♣ 10 9 2

	NORTH	
WEST	4	EAST
	SOUTH	

♠ J 9 6 4 3

♥ A

♦ K J 10 3

♣ A J 5

	13	
2		14
	11	

♠ --

♥ K Q J 9 8 7 6

♦ 8 5 2

♣ K Q 7

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

Board 4

Another, though more extreme, misfit. Here the Official Summertown Bidding Strategy (OSBS) is to keep on bidding your major until your partner gives up. With this strategy, 4♥ or 4♠ will be the final contract, depending on who clicks loudest.

East and West know what's going on too, and East should double 4♠, which is easily beaten.

But can EW defeat 4♥?

It all depends on the opening lead. A spade lead is unwise, with South marked with a void or perhaps singleton. A club is a reasonable passive lead. A trump risks giving declarer a finesse that would not otherwise be possible if North is void in trumps. On the layout only a trump or a diamond (?) lead defeat the game. The diamond lead knocks out the ♦A entry needed to repeat the club finesse.

On a club lead, declarer will win the club return, cross to ♦A and discard two diamonds on two top spades. Then what? Discard ♣Q on ♠Q (avoiding a club ruff if the defenders' clubs are 4/2)? Or play a third round of clubs? A third round of spades works if spades split 4/3 (62%) rather than 5/2 (30%), and a third round of clubs works if clubs are 3/3 (35%). The equivalent a priori odds for a 4/2 split are 49%. A third round of spades, playing the odds, would be my choice, but here that line dooms the contract.

A spade lead gives the game away, as declarer can now play two rounds of spades immediately then lead a club towards the KQ, later crossing to ♦A to repeat the finesse.

Dir: West
 Vul: None

♠ 10 9 6
 ♥ A 5 2
 ♦ 8 7 3
 ♣ 8 5 4 2

Optimum
 NS 2S, NS
 2H: +110

♠ 8 5 2
 ♥ K 9 7
 ♦ A 9 6 4
 ♣ Q 9 6

NORTH		EAST
WEST	8	EAST
WEST		EAST
SOUTH		EAST

♠ J 4 3
 ♥ 10 4 3
 ♦ K Q 5 2
 ♣ K J 7

	4	
9		10
	17	

♠ A K Q 7
 ♥ Q J 8 6
 ♦ J 10
 ♣ A 10 3

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

Board 8

What are standard leads? If you ask 'Are you playing standard leads?' the response is usually 'yes', though 50% of the time, this is not accurate and can be misleading. Standard leads used to be shown on the back of the score card and many play '4th and 2nd' i.e. 4th from an honour and second top from rubbish (MUD).

So assuming that South is declarer, and that West does not want to play away from the ♥K (see below), West's 'standard leads' are ♠5, ♦4 (against 1NT), or ♣6.

Last night, there were leads of ♠8, ♠5, ♠2 and ♣9. Some players feel that leading ♠5 will be seen as low from an honour. In no trumps, that is a real risk, but not against a suit contract. We should seldom lead low from honours against a suit contract and 'NEVER' from a King.

Of course, agreeing to lead 'top of rubbish' is fine. As is false-carding to dissuade partner from returning the suit. It is also within the laws to have no agreement. The response to 'Are you playing standard leads?', should then be 'We have no agreement', or 'I don't know – what are they?'

Declaring 1♥ is not straightforward, as you could lose trump control if hearts split 4/2. Best is to lead small to ♥A and back to ♥Q. If you lead ♥Q then you are in trouble and will struggle to make the overtrick that Deep Finesse says you are entitled to.

Against 1NT by South, EW take their diamonds and attack clubs. Declarer then plays four rounds of spades and EW have to keep the right cards. West will discard a heart and East must discard a club. East should be keeping the same length as dummy. As a general rule, if your partner discards one suit and you've no idea what's going on, just discard a different suit.