

Summertown Bridge Bulletin, 9th May 2022

Congratulations to Sandra and Krysa, the only pair this week who got over 60%. My partner and I had a stinking evening, but our errors, mostly overbidding, were not much to write about. So my hands are all about play and defence.

On board 12, nearly all played in 4♥ by North. Looks like Ace of trumps to lose and two spades. After drawing trumps, one declarer just claimed the ten tricks. Don't do that, there is always a chance. You should play the clubs, eliminate the diamonds and then play Ace and another spade. Someone may have doubleton King and not throw it away and have to give you a ruff and discard. There are other holdings, like doubleton QJ in one hand when again the partnership will either have to give you a ruff and discard or set up the ♠10. In fact the spades are 3-3 so in theory none of this works – however, defensive errors still meant that at two tables, declarer made an overtrick, either from a ruff and discard or making the ♠10.

Dir: West
Vul: N/S

♠ A 7 4 3
♥ K J 6 2
♦ A K 6
♣ A 3

Optimum
NS +500

♠ K 9 8
♥ 5
♦ Q J 5 4
♣ Q 8 7 5 4

W	NORTH	E
S	12	S
T	SOUTH	T

♠ Q J 2
♥ A 9
♦ 9 7 3 2
♣ J 10 9 6

	19	
8		8
	5	

♠ 10 6 5
♥ Q 10 8 7 4 3
♦ 10 8
♣ K 2

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

Dir: East
Vul: None

♠ 10 5 4 2
♥ K Q 10
♦ A 8 3
♣ K 10 4

Optimum
NS +420

♠ A K Q J
♥ J 5 4
♦ K
♣ J 7 6 5 3

W	NORTH	E
S	14	S
T	SOUTH	T

♠ 8 7 6 3
♥ 7 3
♦ J 10 7 4 2
♣ Q 9

	12	
15		3
	10	

♠ 9
♥ A 9 8 6 2
♦ Q 9 6 5
♣ A 8 2

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

Board 14 was also mostly played in hearts, this time by South, making 8 or 9 tricks. Five hearts, two diamonds (after the fortuitous drop of the King), and two clubs make nine. But it says you can make ten. How?

Well, normally you will get Ace and King of spades lead – so you ruff with the ♥2, lead ♥6 to the King, ruff a spade with the ♥8, club to the King, ruff the last spade with the ♥9, play ♥A and lead to the ♦A (dropping the ♦K) to draw the last trump: a ‘reverse dummy’. What a triumph that would have been.

Dlr: West
 Vul: All

♠ A Q 9 7 4
 ♥ 9 5
 ♦ 8 7 6
 ♣ A 7 3

Optimum
NS -120

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

W NORTH E
 S 20 A
 T SOUTH T

♠ J 10 5 3
 ♥ Q 10 7 4
 ♦ A K J
 ♣ K 5

♠ 8 6
 ♥ K 8 3 2
 ♦ Q 9 5 3
 ♣ Q 6 2

10
 9 14
 7

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

In these bulletins I do not like to write about people's mistakes (otherwise they will point out all mine) but what makes it worthwhile in this hand is that three defenders all made exactly the same mistake. East is normally in no-trumps against a heart lead (it looks as if from the ♥K). In these three cases declarer took the heart lead in hand and led ♠K. North holds up the Ace, OK. East now leads ♣5. In all cases South held up the Queen, quite rightly (partner may now have a bare Ace), dummy played the 9 and North held up the Ace again! So later on the Ace and Queen crashed together. At the second hold-up, North knows the only remaining club is the

Queen. It's pretty unlikely that declarer has it but even if this is the case, playing the Ace makes it slightly more difficult for them, as it blocks the suit (which is why you would expect declarer to have played the Queen next, if they had it). And if partner has it – disaster.

I have left Board 2 to the end as it is rather long and you may give up and not read any more. Everyone was in 4♠, South's bidding (with 10 cards in the minors) having indicated a probable shortage in spades. Four pairs made it (in one case with an overtrick) and the other two were one-off.

Those that made it all had a helpful defence, with South either leading, or later playing, Ace and another heart into declarer's K J. But what should you do after, say ♦Q lead? It seems best to try and use the clubs, so people took the lead in dummy, and played

Ace and another club discarding a diamond to force out the King. South should not rush to lead hearts now – knowing partner has no more clubs, and surely four trumps, so declarer cannot discard a load of hearts on the clubs. So South continues diamonds. Now it all gets difficult for declarer. It turns out it would have been best to ignore the clubs. Take the first diamond in hand, spade to the King, finesse ♥J, take the diamond return on table, dump a diamond on ♣A, heart to the King, then ruff a heart to get back on the table to lead a trump through North's Q J 8. If dummy had simply had Axxxxx in clubs everyone would have made the contract, losing a diamond, a heart and a spade.

Dlr: East
 Vul: N/S

♠ Q J 8 5
 ♥ Q 6 5 4 2
 ♦ 10 8
 ♣ 8 3

Optimum
NS -420

♠ K 7 2
 ♥ 7 3
 ♦ A 9
 ♣ A Q J 10 7 6

W NORTH E
 S 2 A
 T SOUTH T

♠ A 10 9 6 4 3
 ♥ K J 10
 ♦ K 5 4 3
 ♣ - -

♠ - -
 ♥ A 9 8
 ♦ Q J 7 6 2
 ♣ K 9 5 4 2

5
 14 11
 10

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