

FRIDAY EVENING PAIRS

5/7/2024

Board 19

South Deals

E-W Vul

♠ 7
♥ Q J 9 4 2
♦ A Q 6 3
♣ J 9 7

♠ Q 10 8 6 5 3

♥ 8

♦ J 10 8 7 2

♣ 10



♠ J 9 4

♥ A K 7 5 3

♦ 9 4

♣ A 6 2

♠ A K 2

♥ 10 6

♦ K 5

♣ K Q 8 5 4 3



My thanks to Andrew Suter for this hand. Played at the club last year, it must have been praying on your mind Andrew! The question posed was how do EW get to 3NT after South opens 1♥? On the day, one pair managed to bid 3NT (but I don't know how the auction went), another played in 3♣, and at the other tables, NS were allowed to play in 2♠.

First of all, hands up how many of you would open 1♥? For those of you who attended Andrew Robson's seminar, or read his books, you'll know that he advocates for opening the South hand 1NT. After 1NT, if West is brave enough at the vulnerability to overcall 2♥, natural or Multi-Landy perhaps, even if North bids 2♠, East can bid 3NT with ease. If West passes, North will bid 2♥, a transfer to spades, and East has a difficult choice with perhaps 3♣ being the best. West can now bid 3♥ unless South bids 3♠ ...

Anyway, back to the question. After 1♥, West has to pass, and unless NS are playing weak jump shifts, North should also pass. East overcalls 2♣. Assuming South passes what can West do? If you are not already playing them, you should take a look at unassuming cue bids (UCB) and include them in your system. Here, a bid of 2♥ says nothing about hearts, but is a constructive raise in clubs. Being near maximum for the overcall, East can bid 2♠ showing something in spades, or 3♥ asking for a heart stop. Either way, both East and West should be able to work out that they have the values for game and stoppers in all suits.

Mind, NS might not be finished. Look what happened when robot North waded in with 2♠. Oh dear! One off.

In fact, if EW find the NT game, at this vulnerability NS can afford to go 3 off in 5♠X for a better score.

As you can see, there are 10 easy tricks for EW in NT or clubs against any lead. Of more interest in the play, is

that NS can make 2♠ against any defence so long as declarer shows good technique. After a club lead (best), declarer can count 3 top tricks and the spades are good for 4 more. The 8th trick will come from diamonds or a diamond ruff. If declarer attempts to draw trumps first, the contract is in danger if East continues with a trump force by playing clubs when in with the ♠A and ♠K. The solution is to play a diamond immediately. East can play 3 rounds of spades to remove the chance of a diamond ruff in the South hand, but the timing is now right to be able to force out the remaining diamond honours and cash a diamond for the contract.

I guess the real lesson of this hand is that aggressive bidding often pays.

	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
				1 ♥
	Pass	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
	2 ♥!	2 ♠	3 ♣	Pass
	Pass	3 ♠	Dbl	Pass
	4 ♣	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
	Pass	Pass		