



MIXED TRIALS 2023 20th - 25th March 2023

As we move into the semi-finals we have the Fick team pitched against the Van Vught team and in the other match Alexander versus Holdsworth. With no further ado let's see how they fared

James Grant (SABF PRESIDENT)

SEMI - FINAL SCHEDULE			
Session 1 - 10:00			
Session 2 - 11:45			
Session 3 - 14:30			
Session 4 - 16:15			

Team Information			
Lex Van Vught Craig Gower Joy Rothenberg Rita Gawron Janine Masojada Tim Cope lan Holdsworth Susan Botha Mark Kenyon Merle Bracher Selwyn Gersowsky Gail Gersowsky	seniors	& mixed	Hennie Fick Carol Stanton Zela Stern Jude Apteker Machelle Shapiro Brent Shapiro Michele Alexander Glen Holman Merle Modlin Peter Ward

	Day 3 Results			
SEMI-FINAL				
	IMPs IMPs			
van Vught	109,5 ღ 102	Fick		
Holdsworth	59,1 96	Alexander		

Board 7

With several flat boards in the first set of hands it was the following hand that produced the first major swings in both rooms

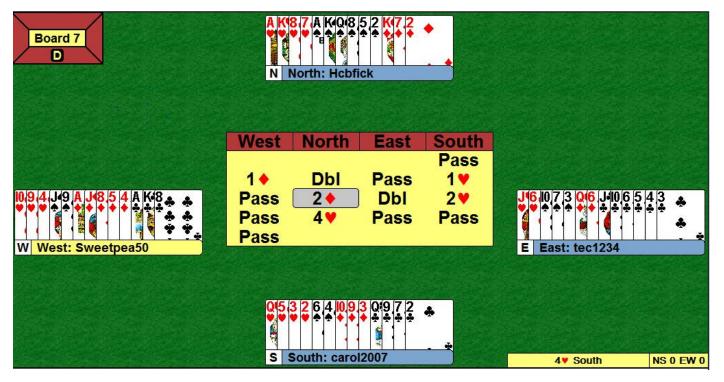
Dealer South All vul	Bidding				
North	W	N	E	S	
♠ AKQ852♥ AK87♦ K72♠ -	1D pass	dbl ?	pass	pass 1H	

You were dealt this monster and no doubt intended to bid spades on your next turn but to your surprise partner has responded 1H, so what do you bid now? Your partner was forced to bid and theoretically could hold a yarborough but the fact that both East and West have passed is encouraging. Game looks certain but slam needs as little as five hearts to the queen in partner's hand. If we believe that a game is the limit, would 4 prove a safer contract with a diamond lead almost guaranteed?

But back to the original question, what do you bid now? Clearly you are going to game but it would be a sin not to explore the possibility of a slam so bid 2. Partner has promised no points for his bid so he knows that with extra values a jump is in order. If he simply rebids his hearts you can quietly sign off in 4. By the way, this is an example of the Pass the Buck bid. If you stop in game and miss a slam that's his fault, equally if you bid the slam and go down that's also his fault. By all accounts a useful convention to have in your armoury.

Only one pair arrived in the correct contract of 4♥, in the other room North stuck to his original plan of bidding 2♠ and to his chagrin his partner passed. The same fate befell North in the other match but luckily in the other room his opponents arrived in an ambitious 6♥ which on a club lead had no chance of making

Here is the full hand



Board 10

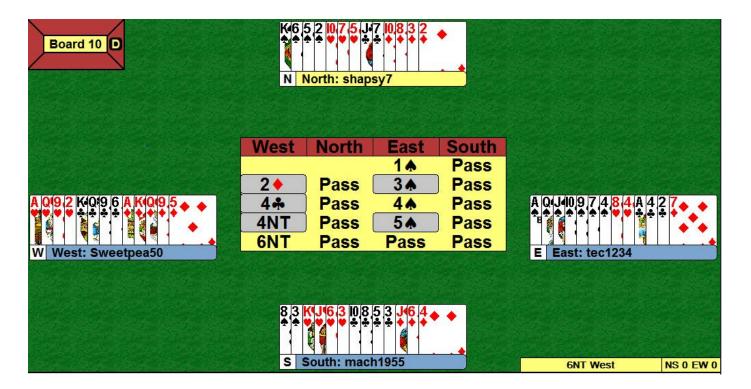
We are now half way through today's matches and Fick is leading Van Vught by 2imps whilst Alexander is leading Holdsworth by 39imps

Once again one board produced the biggest swings in this session

Dealer East All vul		Bidding		
East	W	N	E	S
AQJ10974♥ 84↑ 7A42	2D	pass	1S ?	pass

One of things that makes this tournament fun is that many of the partnerships are newly formed and so bidding agreements have been kept to the minimum. Here is a hand where a more extensive discussion would have proved fruitful. Many established partnerships will bid 3\(\text{\ullet}\) here which tells partner that even with a void in spades we will play in this suit. It describes a long spade suit with no more than one loser opposite a void. If you don't have this agreement it proves very difficult to arrive in the only makeable slam of 6\(\text{\ullet}\). Only one pair reached this contract

Here is the full hand



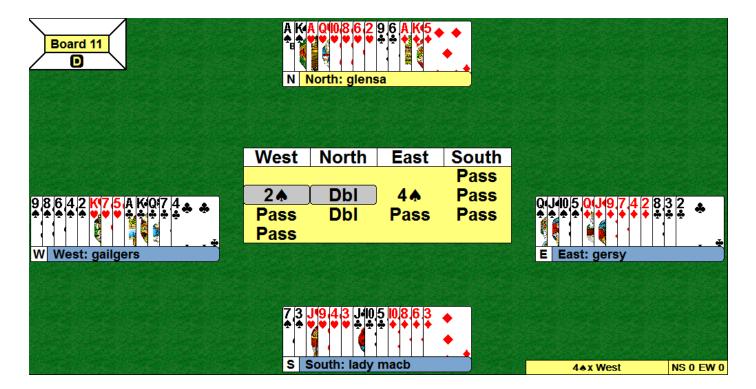
Board 11

With only one session left the Alexander team have increased their lead to 46 imps virtually assuring themselves a place in the finals whilst in the other match Van Vught has kept a clean sheet and amassed 38 imps so are now leading the Fick team by 36imps. Is it all over bar the shouting?

Dealer South All vul	Bidding			
East	W	N	E	S
• QJ105 ▼ - • QJ9742 • 832	1S	dbl	?	

So what do you bid? Anything could be right (or wrong) but Selwyn had no hesitation in bidding 44 which hit the jackpot when this was passed around to North who doubled for penalties – well can you blame him (see hand below)? Glen, endplayed at trick one, cashed his top spades then switched to a low heart hoping his partner held the king. This allowed Gail to make her contract with an overtrick. In the other room where North chose to bid 4 vover the spade opening Peter also found the excellent bid of 4 but this effort was thwarted when Susan found the brave bid of 5 v, doubled and 2 off proving an excellent sacrifice against the spade game

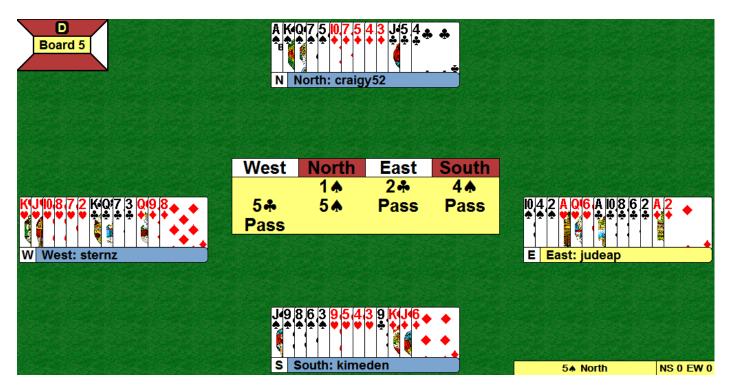
Here is the full hand



Board 5

The Holdsworth team won the 4th session but that only made a slight dent in the Alexander's lead. In the other room the Fick team battled bravely to claw back 26 imps but this was not enough to overtake the Van Vught team who will now play Alexander in the final

Thanks to strong pre-emptive bidding by NS all EWs missed the opportunity to score big on this hand



As you can see both 6♥ and 7♣ are cold and if anyone has any thoughts about how to get there over the 4♠ bid please let me know