



THE ALL AFRICAN *National Congress*

A last good luck, and thanks for a memorable congress

One more round of bridge to go before the head to head final and the Apteker team looks to be well clear of the field and likely to play the Kaprey team in the final. They play each other in the last match of the round robin.

But this is bridge and the fat lady hasn't sung yet, so anything can happen.

In Congress the Keet team has a healthy lead with both Bernstein and Thomas hoping they may still be in with a shout, while in the Plate the Grant team is a full match clear - so well done there. The Presidents could see any one of three teams taking the crown.

I encourage all to support the players in the head to head final by watching the viewgraph. You can find the link on the SABF website.

This will be the final bulletin and the winners will be announce on the website shortly after play finishes.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the bulletins - Glen Holman, Carol Stanton, Robert Stevens, Tim Cope, Sid Ismail and James Grant who would phone a hand through every lunctime.

I would also like to thank those who completed the player profiles. It was great to get to know you better. I'm only sorry I could not use them longer.

What struck me most is that bridge players are all avid readers, and while we may have a vast array of different tastes, there's a hunt for knowledge, and improvement. That, and the fact that many enjoy "a good walk spoilt".

Play links for Sunday

Find the play links for today on the SABF website. There will be one for the Championship and Congress sections, and one for the Plate and Presidents who are playing a different numbers of boards.

In addition, for results, bulletins, and all important notices, see <https://www.sabf.co.za/all-african-national-congress>

Find the Kibitzers website at <https://kibitz.realbridge.online/>

Drop me a hand either by email at frank.chemaly@inl.co.za or by WhatsApp on 083 230 5629. I'll use it for the bulletins for the pairs.

Championship

| Team | S. 01 | | S. 02 | | S. 03 | | S. 04 | | S. 05 | | Total | | PEN. | R |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|------|---|
| | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | | |
| Apteker | 21 | 15.19 | 22 | 16.26 | 25 | 19.61 | 22 | 20 | 0 | 185 | 71.06 | | 1 | |
| Kaprey | 26 | 17.59 | 22 | 15.38 | -9 | 7.45 | 14 | 13.75 | 0 | 63 | 54.17 | | 2 | |
| Donde | -21 | 4.81 | 25 | 15.92 | 9 | 12.55 | -21 | 4.81 | 0 | -8 | 38.09 | | 3 | |
| Cruise | -36 | 2.41 | -27 | 3.74 | -9 | 7.45 | 21 | 15.19 | 0 | -51 | 28.79 | | 4 | |
| Ward | -3 | 9.09 | -22 | 4.62 | 9 | 12.55 | -22 | 0 | 0 | -98 | 26.26 | | 5 | |
| Der Kinderen | 3 | 10.91 | -23 | 4.08 | -58 | 0.39 | -14 | 6.25 | 0 | -91 | 21.63 | | 6 | |

Plate

| Team | S. 01 | | S. 02 | | S. 03 | | S. 04 | | S. 05 | | S. 06 | | S. 07 | | Total | | PEN. | R |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|------|---|
| | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | | |
| Grant | 12 | 13.71 | 14 | 14.22 | 21 | 17.56 | 21 | 17.66 | 28 | 17.08 | 22 | 17.71 | 0 | 148 | 97.84 | | 1 | |
| Esmail | -12 | 6.29 | 24 | 16.37 | 13 | 13.87 | 4 | 12.01 | 12 | 14.93 | 4 | 11.38 | 0 | 52 | 74.95 | | 2 | |
| Van Vught | 8 | 12.61 | -24 | 3.63 | 5 | 12.01 | -14 | 8.78 | 22 | 15.99 | 22 | 15.99 | 0 | 20 | 66.01 | | 3 | |
| Bryant | 14 | 14.22 | -1 | 9.64 | -6 | 7.99 | 20 | 15.58 | -28 | 2.92 | -1 | 8.62 | 0 | -5 | 58.97 | | 4 | |
| Leigh | 23 | 16.18 | 11 | 13.45 | 10 | 13.18 | -20 | 4.42 | -22 | 4.01 | 22 | 2.29 | 0 | -30 | 53.53 | | 5 | |
| Nick | -6 | 7.39 | -1 | 10.36 | -10 | 6.82 | -11 | 2.44 | -12 | 5.07 | 21 | 15.79 | 0 | -44 | 47.87 | | 6 | |
| Foaden | -23 | 3.82 | -14 | 5.78 | -13 | 6.03 | 14 | 14.22 | -1 | 9.64 | -11 | 4.21 | 0 | -58 | 43.70 | | 7 | |
| Beinart | -14 | 8.78 | -11 | 6.55 | -11 | 2.44 | -6 | 7.99 | 1 | 10.36 | -22 | 4.01 | 0 | -83 | 37.13 | | 8 | |

Congress

| Team | S. 01 | | S. 02 | | S. 03 | | S. 04 | | S. 05 | | Total | | PEN. | R |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|------|---|
| | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | | |
| Keet | 11 | 13.04 | 14 | 13.75 | 15 | 13.97 | 8 | 11.76 | 0 | 46 | 52.52 | | 1 | |
| Bernstein | 12 | 13.28 | 43 | 18.44 | -15 | 6.03 | -11 | 6.96 | 0 | 29 | 44.71 | | 2 | |
| Thomas | 21 | 15.19 | 1 | 10.31 | -15 | 6.03 | 11 | 13.04 | 0 | 18 | 44.57 | | 3 | |
| Pincus | -12 | 6.72 | -14 | 6.25 | 15 | 13.97 | 8 | 12.29 | 0 | -3 | 39.23 | | 4 | |
| Narunsky | -21 | 4.81 | -43 | 1.56 | 57 | 19.77 | -6 | 8.24 | 0 | -13 | 34.38 | | 5 | |
| Grunder | -11 | 6.96 | -1 | 9.69 | -57 | 0.23 | -8 | 7.71 | 0 | -77 | 24.59 | | 6 | |

Presidents

| Team | S. 01 | | S. 02 | | S. 03 | | S. 04 | | S. 05 | | S. 06 | | S. 07 | | Total | | PEN. | R |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|------|---|
| | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | IMP | V/P | | |
| Bradley | 42 | 19.54 | -11 | 6.55 | 28 | 17.08 | -20 | 4.42 | 23 | 16.18 | -3 | 8.95 | 0 | 64 | 72.72 | | 1 | |
| Shepard | 35 | 18.14 | 11 | 13.45 | 2 | 10.71 | 1 | 10.36 | -6 | 7.99 | 3 | 11.05 | 0 | 46 | 71.70 | | 2 | |
| Francis | 18 | 14.7 | 5 | 11.7 | 8 | 12.01 | 20 | 17.24 | -23 | 3.82 | 6 | 11.38 | 0 | 37 | 70.85 | | 3 | |
| Collinge | -10 | 6.3 | 1 | 10.36 | -2 | 9.29 | 20 | 15.58 | 12 | 13.71 | -1 | 7.69 | 0 | 8 | 61.93 | | 4 | |
| Balderson | 21 | 15.79 | -6 | 8.3 | -4 | 7.1 | -1 | 9.64 | 12 | 6.29 | 3 | 11.05 | 0 | -3 | 58.17 | | 5 | |
| Hingle | -25 | 1.86 | -1 | 9.64 | 12 | 17.08 | -1 | 7.99 | -4 | 8.62 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -10 | 57.79 | | 6 | |
| Solovei | -42 | 0.46 | -6 | 8.62 | -6 | 7.99 | -20 | 2.92 | 6 | 12.01 | 2 | 12.31 | 0 | -72 | 44.31 | | 7 | |
| Teerman | -21 | 4.21 | 11 | 11.38 | -28 | 2.92 | -2 | 2.76 | 2 | 12.31 | -1 | 8.95 | 0 | -70 | 42.53 | | 8 | |

Once there's a fit, this is enormous

By Glen Holman

There were two hands from Saturday's play that I found interesting.

The first is a valuation issue from both hands from Board 37. Here is the whole deal.



| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| N David Beinart Bd 37, Dir N 5♣+1 W W j rothenberg ♠ A10952 ♥ 3 ♦ 5 ♣ AK9765 | | N David Beinart Other table 4♥X-1 E Lex van Vught E ♠ 7 ♥ AJ7542 ♦ A7 ♣ J1043 | |
| ♠ KQ43 ♥ K8 ♦ KQ10943 ♣ 8 | | W Nicola Bateman ♠ Q109 ♥ 972 ♦ 10974 ♣ J63 | |
| ♠ J86 ♥ Q1096 ♦ J862 ♣ Q2 | | W N E S 1♦ 1♥ P 1♠ 2♦ 2♥ P 3♣ P 4♣ P 5♣ P P P | |

Everyone will have opened the north hand with a diamond. The first choice is by East. Should that hand bid 1 or 2 hearts. I am a big believer in the first. The merits of the second is that it is preemptive and gets the hcp total right. This would be fine, except if you find a fit in either hearts or clubs, your hand goes was up in value, in fact too strong for a weak 2 hearts.

For some reason many souths raised. Maybe this was strategic, but the hand is really bad. You may not even have a trick for partner outside of trumps. Now the valuation turns to West. Let's take the auction I saw at one table. 1D 2H 3D.

It certainly looks like the opponents have at least a 9-card fit, maybe even 10. But if they have a 9-card fit then we must have an 8-card fit.

We know it is not in hearts, so it must be in a black suit. With that information, the West hand becomes enormous. Let's assume that partner has 5 cards in the black suits. Then either 4 spades or 5 clubs must be a good contract.

I would start with 4 clubs, because I will have room to continue to 4 spades if necessary. On this hand your 4 club bid catches magic. Partner should cuebid 4 diamonds with the ace and 4 card support. No one got to the 6 club contract, but even being in 5 was a decent gain in most matches.

The next hand is a play problem and is Board 6. After an auction that took 7 rounds of bidding and only three misunderstandings, you arrive at 6 clubs by South. The opponents have been silent and west leads the 10 of diamonds.

You ask and they are playing coded 9s and 10s. So, looking

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| N David Beinart Bd 6, Dir E 6♣-1 S W Nicola Bateman ♠ Q109 ♥ 972 ♦ 10974 ♣ J63 | | N David Beinart Other table 6NT-1 S tas nestoridis E ♠ 542 ♥ QJ105 ♦ Q853 ♣ 109 | |
| ♠ 8763 ♥ 86 ♦ AK6 ♣ K542 | | W N E S (Empty table) | |
| ♠ AKJ ♥ AK43 ♦ J2 ♣ AQ87 | | Glen Holman S | |

at the jack in your hand, you know the queen is on the right. You go up with the king and rightly encourages.

Firstly, let's count our winners and losers. I have to get rid of 2 hearts and I need to do something with the jack of spades. If trumps are 4-1, then you need the spade finesse. And one possible line is to finesse the spade and play for spades 3-3 or depending on where the 4 trumps are, you might be able to ruff 2 hearts in dummy.

It looks like we need to find out how clubs are splitting. You play the ace and low to the king. They split 3-2. Now you play AK and ruff a heart. Lefty signals 3 and righty signals 4. After you ruff a heart, you are now at decision time.

You can take the spade finesse. If it loses and a trump comes back you will be forced to rely upon spades being 3-3.

The other line is to ruff a heart, return to a high spade and then play your last heart. If the hand with the 4th heart holds the 3rd trump, you are home. If it does not, you can fall back on the spade finesse. This is the unsuccessful line I took. Maybe I read too much into the 10 of diamonds being from a short suit.

In hindsight, I think that after winning the club king, I should have immediately taken the spade finesse. This has two advantages. I might be able to read the opponents count cards to decide how to play further, and that it works.

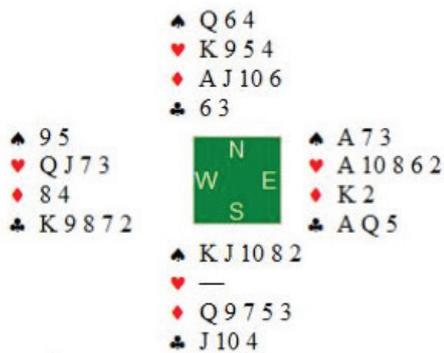
I hope you and your partner are not the types to always give count when defending against the opponents' slams.

An addendum from James Grant, whose team was playing Glen's on this board. He and his partner ended up in 6nt on the board "which was hopeless".

But 6c was more interesting. He notes that the clubs have to be 3/2 to have any realistic hope. He commended Glen's play as it didn't rely on a 3/3 spade break. He did spot one slight extra chance. Knowing the fourth heart is with East because both have given count, if he plays K of diamonds and ruffs a diamond before playing his fourth heart, West is in trouble. If West ruffs the fourth heart, she either has to lead a spade into the AKJ, or a diamond and give a ruff and sluff.

Cover an honour with an honour, unless it's wrong!

By Robert Stevens



5 ♥ by East

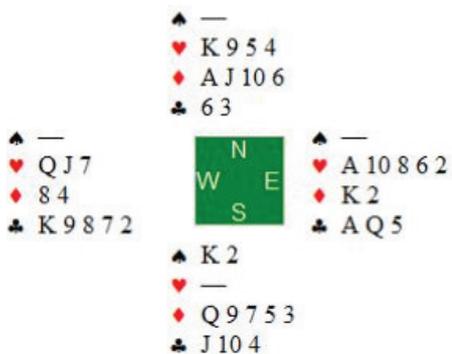
I was browsing the board results and came across this hand (board 24). A variety of different contracts were declared, including 2S, 3S, and 4H. A couple contracts caught my attention though: 5Hx-1, and 5Hx+1.

Upon reviewing the play, there was a critical play which one room got right, which the other didn't...

East was pushed to 5H after a competitive auction, and South lead a high spade in both cases.

Declarer essentially ducked in both rooms, and ruffed the third spade in dummy.

This was now the position:



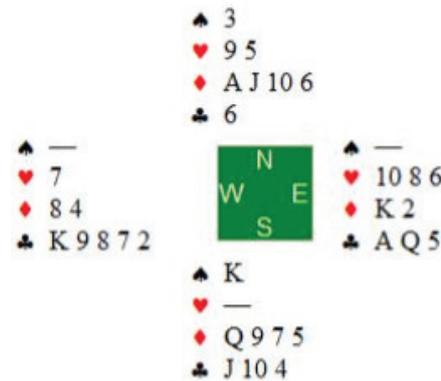
Declarer played the HQ, and North was faced with the critical moment in the hand.

In the one room, North covered and declarer made the remainder of the

tricks. In the other room, North ducked, and declarer had to lose 2 more tricks. So what went wrong?

By covering the first honour, declarer was able to use the HJ as the vital entry, to finesse North's H9. After which enjoying the club suit was just a formality.

In the match where North didn't cover the HQ, declarer had no response. He tried the HJ next, but this time North rightly covered.



With only the CK left as an entry to dummy, declarer had to choose his fate. The best he could do at this stage was to give up a trump, and hope the DA is onside, for -1.

Instead he played 3 rounds of clubs, which North ruffed. With dummy now dead, North could've exited with his last trump, to endplay declarer to lead away from his DKx, but decided to play it safe and cashed the DA.

The main point here would be not to blindly cover all honours with honours, as often taught simply by teachers.

While each situation is unique, an easy principle is to only cover touching honours the second time around (there are also some exceptions).

It might not always matter, but this was a great example of how it ruined declarer's communication with dummy, and ultimately made a difference of 2 tricks.

Player Profile



Sharon Iserel

How did you start playing? My mom played bridge for many years and that got me interested.

What do you enjoy most about the game? Bridge is so stimulating and exciting. There is always something more to learn. Every hand is like a puzzle which you have to solve and it's so very rewarding when you do.

How long have you been playing? For about 20 years. I started having lessons with my husband, two other couples and a great teacher. Throw in a few drinks and snacks and it was the best way to spend a Sunday evening.

Result you are most proud of? I won the interclub in 2021 with my partner Diana Balkin and Roz Bernstein and Sharon Lang.

Biggest bridge disaster? When I was new to the game I opened 1 Spade and my partner bid 4 Hearts and I passed. I never forgot a splinter bid after that!

Any tips? Try not to get too angry with yourself and never berate your partner. Everyone makes mistakes. Go over all mistakes afterwards and ask an expert.

Which bridge book really inspired you? I really learnt a lot from all the Marty Bergen books. I enjoyed modern constructive bidding by Marshall Miles.

Other interests when not at bridge table? Pilates and Reading

Your favourite colour? black

Your favourite food/ drink? Love all food but favourite is chocolate and carrot cake. Love gin and tonic

Your favourite book and movie? Books are Open by Andre Agassi, The Kite Runner and Eat Pray Love. Movies The Pianist, The Green Book and Top Gun

Besides bridge your favourite sport? Tennis - I used to play, but now only watch it on TV.

Anything you would like to add? Bridge has become an addiction for me but a great one. You will never be bored! It's the best life retirement policy you can ever take out. It's also a great way to make new friends.

Player Profile



Anton Der Kinderen

How did you start? My Grandmother (who learned the game at age 65) taught me to play. At university there was a 24/7 bridge game. We made up our own systems, smoked and drank a lot.

What do you enjoy most about the game? Winning. I play to win. I am not a technician as I prefer street fighting at the table.

Result you're most proud of? Winning teams in Nationals and that year winning all major teams tournaments in SA. (all with different partners and teammates).

Happiest bridge accident? At congress we hadn't discussed what we play over precision. So the opps opened a precision Club. I bid 2 clubs for the majors. All passed and we made zero tricks. After partner and I nearly killed each, the results came out. 100% for us, as all were in 5, 6 or 7 clubs making.

Funny moments at the table? At club championship in Knysna me and some friends (Warthog, Perigrine and Samjee rip - I called them) got drunk the Saturday night and then the three of them ended in Jail or next to Jail. Great party. Funny as hell.

Which bridge book really inspired you? I like Zia's Bridge My Way because it shows the personality of the man and is funny.

Anything you'd like to change in the game? I detest cheating, especially when people give a vague explanation of a bid or deliberately mislead.

Other interests when not at the bridge table? A proud 9 handicap as I effectively took golf up two years ago.

Your favourite colour? Red hair.

Your favourite food/drink? Beer – the only alcohol I ever drank until 2020.

Your favourite book/movie? I like writers - so David Gemmel, Orson Scott Card and Terry Pratchett, and I read a lot. Movie is The Notebook.

Besides bridge, your favourite sport? Soccer. I played all my life until 2020 when a knee operation ended my "career". Hence the golf.

Director's cut

By Sid Ismail

The killing switch

Here is a fascinating hand from Saturday morning in the A/B sections.

Contract = 4S by West after a Bergen raise.

There are two different scenarios to consider:

1 CK led and ducked, what switch beats the contract now?

2 CK taken with ace. SA-SK then a diamond. South wins, and?

Solutions

1 Switch to the H6 and South wins the HA and returns a heart! Declarer has to lose a club, 2 hearts and the DA.

2 Only hope is a small heart away from the ace and declarer must misguess. In the event, declarer ducked the CA at trick 1 and North did find the H6 switch.

Hand details:
 North: ♠ J4, ♥ Q86, ♦ 1032, ♣ KQ1094
 South: ♠ AK962, ♥ K74, ♦ 97, ♣ AJ3
 West: ♠ Q5, ♥ A952, ♦ A654, ♣ 762
 East: ♠ 10873, ♥ J103, ♦ KQJ8, ♣ 85
 Contract: 4♠ = W
 Trick count: 10
 Players: Susan Botha (W), Jeff Sapire (N), Jill Rabie (E), Brian Pincus (S)

Hand: ♠ AQ105, ♥ J95, ♦ J106, ♣ A53
 Bidding table:

| W | N | E | S |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| | P | 1♣ | P |
| 1♥ | P | 1NT | P |
| 5NT | P | ? | |

Once-a-year convention

What does 5NT mean?

This convention is hardly used these days. Why not? It is so rare that when partner forgets, it costs a lot. As happened today.

Meaning of the bid? "Partner, I am inviting 7NT if you are maximum (14 in a 12-14 range), but please bid 6NT otherwise. Partner didn't know and passed. And lost 11 IMPs when the opponents got to 6NT and made, for +990.

Tip: Don't use conventions that come up once a year. Like Namyats.

How many hearts is enough? Or too many?

Hand details:
 North: ♠ 963, ♥ 1094, ♦ KQ10, ♣ 10532
 South: ♠ AKQJ7, ♥ K765, ♦ -, ♣ A976
 Contract: 6♥ = W
 Trick count: 6
 Players: Frank Chemaly (W), Roz Bernstein (N), Mark Oliff (E)

Grid of bidding tables:
 Table 1: W 2♠ P, N P, E 3♥ P, S P
 Table 2: W 1♠ P, N P, E 2♥ X, S 4♥ P
 Table 3: W 3NT P, N P, E 1♥ P, S P
 Table 4: W 4NT P, N P, E 4♥ P, S P
 Table 5: W 5♦ P, N P, E 6♥ P, S P
 Table 6: W 7♥ P, N P, E P, S X
 Table 7: W 1♠ P, N P, E 1NT P, S P
 Table 8: W 3♠ P, N P, E 3NT P, S P
 Table 9: W 4♦ P, N P, E 4♥ P, S P
 Table 10: W 5♦ P, N P, E 6♥ P, S P
 Table 11: W 7♥ P, N P, E P, S X
 Table 12: W 1♠ P, N P, E 2♥ P, S P

1C = strong, 1S = 8+ with 5xH (min 2 of top 4)
 5D = EXCLUSION blackwood, 5S = none.

A tale of two grands

By Tim Cope

The question is have you agreed your responses to keycard when your opposition are interfering.

So the classic board from today was hand no8, where in the one room in our match it went 1nt opening bid by the hand with the 14 points, 2c by Tim, Alon playing with Craig, bid 3c showing a transfer to diamonds. 3D from Craig completed the transfer, 3S by myself and 4H from Alon. Now 4S from Andrew 5D by Craig, 5S by me and Alon bid 5nt. This was actually keycard and when Andrew bid 6s over 5nt, Craig would be able to double with an even number and pass with an odd number. As it happened, they just doubled 6s.

In the other room, they had it easier perhaps when the auction started 1D, 2C, 2H and this now went pass, 4H, 4S. Now if you bid 4nt and the next hand now bids 5S, you need an agreement as to how to respond over interference.

My recommendation is you still try to keep your keycard steps. Pass is the first step and double is the second step and then there on after steps upwards. And if you use that, partner will show you the requisite number of keycards. And you will be able to bid the grand.

If the opposition elects to sacrifice in 7S, we can still take 7NT because we have 6 diamond tricks, 5 heart tricks, one spade and one club for 13 tricks. And it wouldn't be a good idea to play in 7H because that goes down on an initial diamond lead which gets ruffed.

So make sure you've agreed with your partner how you play over interference.

And when you are the opposition, I think it's a good idea they were to bid 4NT keycard, since you are always going to sacrifice in 6S, to take that space away from them and bid 6S straight away. You're not going to get away with playing in 5S, so bid an obvious six at this vulnerability.

Board 8, Dlr W
6♠ X-3 E

W Andrew Cruise
♠ J9872
♥ 82
♦ 104
♣ 10854

N Craig Gower
♠ 105
♥ K1043
♦ AQJ92
♣ A7

Other table
6♠ X-3 E

Tim Cope E
♠ KQ643
♥ 95
♦ —
♣ KQJ962

Alon Apteker S
♠ A
♥ AQJ76
♦ K87653
♣ 3

| W | N | E | S |
|----|-----|-----|------|
| P | 1NT | 2♣* | 3♣* |
| P | 3♦ | 3♠ | 4♥ |
| 4♠ | 5♦ | 5♠ | 5NT* |
| 6♠ | P | P | X |
| P | P | P | |

Board 12 is another grand slam board. Both rooms saw light third-in-hand openers, getting in the way of bidding it.

In the other room, they opened 2S (spades and a minor) and Paul Reynolds overcalled 3S and now there was a 4S bid and unfortunately team mates took a shot at bidding 6H, and because of the bad heart break, that was going down when 7nt was cold.

In our room, I opened 2D, Alon doubled, my partner bid 3D and Craig bid 3H. Alon at this point took a shot at 6C, not knowing how to raise.

So what it shows is that third-in-hand with the right vulnerability, get into the auction, especially when you have shape and nothing opposite a passed partner.

And if you're allowed a free auction

Board 12, Dlr W
6♣ +1 S

W Andrew Cruise
♠ KJ93
♥ J10986
♦ 874
♣ 7

N Craig Gower
♠ A76
♥ Q5432
♦ K62
♣ J4

Other table
6♥ -4 N

Tim Cope E
♠ Q10842
♥ 7
♦ QJ953
♣ 62

Alon Apteker S
♠ 5
♥ AK
♦ A10
♣ AKQ109853

| W | N | E | S |
|----|----|----|----|
| P | P | 2♦ | X |
| 3♦ | 3♥ | P | 6♣ |
| P | P | P | |

it really should not be too difficult. Open 2C, the response would be 2D, waiting, 3C showing a club suit, 3H natural, 4K showing more of a club suit, and if you're playing it, that would be minorwood. Partner would bid 4D to show you one ace, and you can bid 4s asking for kings. Partner would bid 5D to show the king of diamonds and at this point you can easily bid 7C.

Player Profile



Miggie Leigh

I first started playing bridge, like so many of us I think, in first year university in 1964, sitting at Pops cafe opposite Wits, probably bunking physics which I didn't enjoy.

When I got married, John and I played quite often and very socially, with dinner and lots of wine with friends. When we moved to Durban in 1978, I started playing at Westville Country Club on Wednesday evenings with Eileen Kidner, and thought I was a reasonable player until I met Arthur Hughes and realised I knew so very little.

He desperately tried to improve my bridge, a bit like educating Rita, but sadly I have a shocking memory problem and I could just never think like he wanted me to think. (not that that many people think like him probably anyway).

However, bridge is the most amazing game. I think the biggest attraction for me is that I find it so very cathartic - you forget all your everyday problems and just try and cope with the problems you have in hand.

First success was winning SAWBA interprovincials with Mary, Beth and Yvonne many years ago.

I think the biggest tip I got was from Arthur - make sure you have a rebid when you open.

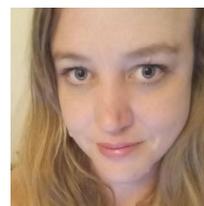
Sadly, whilst my biggest love other than bridge is reading which I do voraciously and can read till all hours of the morning, the minute I start reading a bridge book I fall asleep. I loved Melinda Gates and Michelle Obama's books. Especially the latter - such insight into the life.

My favourite pastime is meeting friends for lunch, and a glass of wine at Olive 'n Oil at Westville Country Club. Best prawns in Durban are at Julio's in Glenwood.

Really miss our four children who are in England, Melbourne and Los Angeles respectively.

P.S love playing doing Wordle and I play a lot of scrabble online.

Don't panic... trust partner's slam tries



By Carol Stanton

You are first in hand, do you open with the hand below?



There is a rule in South Africa whereby you cannot open a hand in first or second position without the rule of 20 and there is always a leeway by one card.

What is the rule of 20? You add the number of cards in your two longest suits, in this case you have 5 cards in ♥ and five cards in ♦ (5+5=10) and you add the high card points in your hand, here you have 9, 10+9=19. So technically this equals the rule of 20 with a leeway of 1. The question is however, should you open it?

My answer is no. If that Q of ♣ was in the diamond suit I would be in it to win it. I would open that hand. However, with the Q in my singleton I would not. Those points are worthless at this stage and I am hopeful that I will be able to show this distribution to my partner at a later stage.

I passed and so did my LHO. My partner opened 1♠ and now I bid 2♥. My partner already knows I am a passed hand and my partner knows I normally open 1♥ with an 11 count so she places me with 9 or 10 HCP. My LHO now doubles. This obviously indicates both minors as both majors have been bid.

I glance up and notice my partner has now bid 4♦. What can this be? I have 5 cards in ♦ and my LHO has shown a diamond holding and now my partner bids 4♦. This must be a shortage in ♦ with a slam try.

How can my partner make a slam try opposite a 9/10 count? That is the question I did not ask myself. I bailed very quickly into 4♥. I was petrified I didn't understand her bid and was scared

I had oversold my hand, but had I?

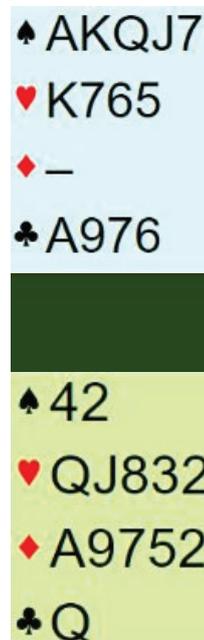
I had not. My partner knew what I had and she was telling me she had a great hand with a diamond shortage. I should acknowledge that. Tim Cope was the best example of listening to his partner. The auction went similarly and when he heard 4♦ from his partner he asked for keycards.

He knew the club was protected and he knew that partner must have a good heart holding and he knew the Ace of diamonds was a good card opposite partner's shortage. When his partner responded 3 keycards, Tim bid 6♥ and made it easily.

Did I? No I did not. I panicked that simply bid 4♥ to make +2.

Should I have bid it? Yes, I should have listened to partner, understood that she was willing to make a slam try opposite my 9 or 10 count and should have helped her out.

The full hand:



For those who would open my hand with 1♥ you may have found yourself in the same pickle that many of my fellow decarers found themselves in, West immediately starts to search for slam and when asks for aces assumed that the all the missing keycard was not in the heart suit and bid 7♥ to promptly go down missing the A of trumps.