

Eastbourne Bulletin 2

By Michael Byrne

There were a number of interesting hands on day 2 of the Swiss Pairs including one position seen very rarely.

EW were one of the countries top Under 20 Pairs Kripa Panchagnula and Jonathan Clark, while NS were Susanna Gross and David Gold, two international players in their own right, so the standard at the table was very high.

♠ QJ4 Session 2 - Board 28 NS Vul Dir W
♥ A9
♦ KQ963
♣ Q87

♠ A1082	♠ K975
♥ K105	♥ J72
♦ 852	♦ AJ4
♣ J64	♣ K103

♠ 63
♥ Q8643
♦ 107
♣ A952

West dealt and passed and North opened a natural diamond. East doubled for take-out - despite his flat shape this is automatic in the modern game (and you will find all experts taking the chance to get in the auction at a cheap level).

South bid 1♥, West bid 1♠ passed round to South who competed with 2♣. East took the push to 2♠ when this was passed round to him, and EW were left with the task of making 8 tricks.

North started with the ♦K and South gave count, now declarer cashed the King of spades and finessed the ten when David dropped a tricky queen (attempting to induce a finesse). He won the jack of spades and exited a spade, and declarer won and led a diamond up. The queen of diamonds was taken and a diamond got North off lead. Declarer then played a heart to the ten, which lost to the ace, won the heart return and exited a heart to Susanna as South.

This left the following position in clubs:

	Q87	
J64		K103
	A952	

EW both have a trump left, so South is forced to play a club. Cashing the ace would give declarer 2 clubs tricks so South played a low club, and North put in the 7. (North knew of course that West could not have the ace of clubs in addition to the Ace of spades and the King of hearts, he only bid once and passed 2C).

Declarer was now stymied and had to go one down, losing 2 club tricks, to go with a spade, diamond and two hearts.

Since most people went plus as EW this was worth a huge 87 match points out of 118 to NS.

The next hand features some more junior players in action, again playing against two open internationals, Joe and Gillian Fawcett. NS were Alex Roberts and Kyle Lam, two of the U25 squad. Both are used to hard work, Alex is completing his PHD in mathematics at Oxford, while Kyle is one year away from qualifying as a doctor at Cambridge.

They was certainly a lot of it in this auction, in which every available bid seemed to be used.

Dir E Love all, Board 14 Session 3

<p>♠ J6 ♥ KQ87 ♦ 7642 ♣ A104</p>	<p>♠ K872 ♥ 2 ♦ AJ1053 ♣ K96</p>	<p>♠ 10953 ♥ 109653 ♦ K98 ♣ 8</p>
	<p>♠ AQ4 ♥ AJ4 ♦ Q ♣ QJ7532</p>	

South opened 1♣ (which could have been short), North responded 1♥ showing 4+ spades and South had an awkward rebid. He chose a slight underbid of 2♣, following the sound maxim that it never pays to push for thin games at pairs.

North now tried a splinter bid of 3♥*, showing a hand worth game and a singleton heart. Many club players would play this sequence as natural (1♣ – 1♠ - 2♣ - 3♥) but it is not particularly useful given that 2H should be forcing. If you have to leap to 3♥ on every opening hand it is hard for the opening bidder to know if partner is 5-4, 6-4 or 5-5, and choosing a game becomes impossible.

Over 3H South was worth a drive to slam, but rather than simplify matters with blackwood he embarked upon the cue bidding roundabout, resulting in this final auction:

1♣ – 1♥*
2♣ – 3♥*
3♠* – 4♦*
4♥* – 4♠*
4NT* – 5♣*
6♣

6♣ was a very good slam, and on the 2♦ lead declarer was able to ruff two hearts in dummy and then draw trumps. The best lead is ace and another trump (not easy to find since you are worried dummy's spade suit will produce tricks) and this would require declarer to take a good view in diamonds. His possible choices of play would be to take a ruffing finesse in diamonds (which would work) a diamond finesse (which wouldn't) or ruff two diamonds and fall back on the King of diamonds coming down in 3 (which works) spades being 3-3 or some combination of this resulting in a squeeze.

Bidding and making 6♣ was worth 113/118 match points for the young NS pair as only 5 pairs had found it in the top section.