

## Eastbourne Bulletin 8

By Michael Byrne

The Friday saw a return to the big weekend events, with the Swiss teams starting with 3 matches in the evening.

Anyone expecting a gentle start with a few easy non-vulnerable part-scores to warm them up were sadly disappointed as once more the player were faced with a barrage of tough decisions from the word go.

This was board 3:

	♠ 5	Dir S
	♥ KJ109763	EW Vul
	♦ Q543	
	♣ 10	
♠ 9432		♠ KQ10876
♥ Q84		♥ 5
♦ -		♦ AK982
♣ Q97652		♣ 4
	♠ AJ	
	♥ A2	
	♦ J1076	
	♣ AKJ83	

A common start to the auction was 1♣ P 4♥ – do you bid as East? I hope the answer was yes as there was no defence to 4♥ even after the promising start of partner showing out on the A♠. Several Easts did pass and many suffered a double game swing as a consequence.

Who would you blame for this disaster?

N	E	S	W
		1♣	P
1♥	1♠	2♦	3♠
4♥	4♠	X	P
5♦	X	all pass	

On a spade lead declarer ruffed and played a trump and made 6 tricks for 1100. My sympathy lies with North, who was surely right to take out the double. South should be converting back to 5♥, since he knows partner has an independent heart suit and only 4 cards in diamonds (South could easily have been 2-0-5-6 for the bidding to date).

Meanwhile the England Under 20 squad were showing that bad judgement is better than no judgement at all:

N	E	S	W
		1♣	P
4♥	4♠	4NT	P
5♣	P	6♥	all pass

4NT seems slightly ambitious, since a likely spade lead will knock out the late entry to the clubs, so even if partner has something like this

♠ x  
 ♥ KQJxxxx  
 ♦ Kxx  
 ♣ xx

then you are still likely to go down. There is no reason partner needs any side values at all, you might have been (and were) off the first two diamond tricks.

The lead of the Ace of diamond soon dispelled any hope declarer had of making his contract but since his team-mates were racking up the regulation 790 next door that was worth 12 imps to the good guys.

The best EW score as we have seen was 1100, while the best NS score was achieved by Ireland's Tom Hanlon/Hugh McGann who made 5H+1 on the lead of the ♦K, East apparently missing some subtleties of the defence.

Match three saw a lot of exciting hands and a top of the table clash between two of England's premier league teams. What would you do with this hand?

	♠ QJ8	Hand 24
	♥ KQ754	Dir W
	♦ 842	Love all
	♣ 43	
♠ AK96		♠ 42
♥ A98		♥ J102
♦ AK76		♦ J9
♣ KQ		♣ AJ10652
	♠ 10753	
	♥ 63	
	♦ Q1053	
	♣ 987	

If West opens 2♣ then 6♣ is biddable and immediately right sided, even with the double heart finesse wrong you might get a heart lead, otherwise the play is quite cute. After running a few trumps you can play A, K and a spade ruff (to check for QJ10 tripleton) and then A, K and a diamond ruff (to check for Q108 tripleton). When all that fails you run the jack of hearts round to North to find that he is end-played.

A heart lead will break this up, although deep finesse still claim it is cold (solution below for those of you that like a challenge) so well done to Michael Newman/Alec Smalley who were the only pair to lead a heart from South and break up the endplay. Everyone else made it, although one other declarer did go down on a club lead. Elsewhere nearly everyone defended 6♣ led the ♥K and declarer was not hard pressed to make it now!

Would you believe me if I told you that in the match between the leaders *Hinden* and *Black* both tables went off in 3NT?

Well you should – just as the next table was passing the board they declared loudly “a marginal slam” and made the board unplayable for both tables, an important lesson for competitors not to shout when passing boards (or at any time).

As for the way to make 6♣ on a heart lead why you simply run the jack of diamonds (covered by the queen), run the nine of diamonds (covered by the ten) and then ruff a diamond. The 8 falls tripleton and hey presto your 7 is good for a heart discard. Not that anyone would ever take such a bizarre line at the table, but if you did I hope you would be there with the comment “Of course I wouldn’t have bid it without my trusty 7 of diamonds”.

After 3 matches team Black (Andrew Black, Gunnar Hallberg, Phil King, Willie Whittaker) are on 53 Vps, with Wolfarth and McIntosh on 50 apiece.