

2015 Silver Plate Final – The Power of the Pass!

The Silver Plate final was closely fought this year and two boards that had an influence on the result demonstrated that the bid of “Pass” can be a powerful weapon.

The first was Board 36, where the layout was: -

	♠ KQT73	Dealer West
	♥ KQ3	Game All
	♦ J4	
	♣ Q32	
♠ J84		♠ 652
♥ A9542		♥ 6
♦ 32		♦ AKQ876
♣ K87		♣ T94
	♠ A9	
	♥ JT87	
	♦ T95	
	♣ AJ65	

TABLE 1

W	N	E	S
P	1♠	2♦	X
P	2♠	P	P
P			

TABLE 2

W	N	E	S
P	1NT	P	2♣
P	2♠	P	2NT
P	3NT		

The weak notrump was being played at both tables. Despite this, at Table 1 North elected to open 1♠. South would normally have responded 1NT, but the 2♦ intervention led him to make a negative double instead. North repeated his ♠s and there the matter rested for 140 to the Poole team.

At Table 2, North did, indeed, open 1NT. East was content with this and passed (2♦ would have been Multi Landy anyway) and East/West duly collected 300 when North/South tried an ambitious 3NT.

East cashed his 6 ♦ tricks and switched to clubs. Declarer won and took his spade tricks but the ♥A was the defence's 7th trick. We gained 10 IMPs on the board.

The second hand of interest was Board 44, which was the final board played at Table 1.

	♠ 9762	Dealer West
	♥ AKJ652	North-South Vul
	♦ 2	
	♣ 82	
♠ AJ8		♠ Q
♥ Q94		♥ T8
♦ T54		♦ QJ986
♣ QT75		♣ AJ964
	♠ KT543	
	♥ 73	
	♦ AK73	
	♣ K3	

TABLE 1

W	N	E	S
P	P	2NT*	P
3♣	3♥	P	3♠
P	4♠	P	P
5♣	x	P	P
P			

2NT = minors

TABLE 2

W	N	E	S
P	2♥	P	P
P			

At Table 1, the Poole team were playing old-fashioned Acol strong twos and so North passed initially. East was able to open 2NT, showing a weak hand with two minor suits. South passed and West retreated to 3♣ – in view of his later action, he might have done better to bid 5♣ immediately. Realising that his ♥ suit was well-placed and that his partner was marked with some values, North was now able to enter the auction with 3♥, eventually reaching 4♠. Two ♥s, a ♣, two ♦s and a ruff led to 800 to the Poole team.

This didn't appear too serious, since 4♠ was making for 620. However, a slightly off-centre weak two in the other room led to game being missed and a score of 140 to NS and so an overall 660 to the Poole team and another 12 IMPs.

On both of these two hands, the green card turned out to be the most powerful one in the bidding box.....