

Grand Slams – Spring 4s Bulletin 2 – Brian Senior

Round 4 included a couple of exciting grand slam deals. GILLIS beat PENFOLD in the match as a whole but came out level over the two deals in question.

On this first one, those pairs who were lucky enough to bid poorly and stop in a small slam got very lucky. There was no such good fortune for either pair in our featured match.

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠	Q 10 8 7		♠	A K J 9 5 4 2
	♥	–		♥	A 4 3 2
	♦	Q J 7 6 3 2		♦	A 9
	♣	A 3 2		♣	–
♠	6 3				
♥	K Q 9 7 6				
♦	K 8				
♣	K Q 10 8				
	♠	–			
	♥	J 10 8 5			
	♦	10 5 4			
	♣	J 9 7 6 5 4			

West	North	East	South
Erichsen	Mould	Liggins	Holland
–	–	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♥	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♦	Pass	7♥	All Pass

Glyn Liggins, for GILLIS, opened 1♠ and saw his partner, Espen Erichsen, respond with a game-forcing 2♥. Liggins used Exclusion Key-card, asking for key-cards but not counting the ace of clubs. Over the one-key-card response, he continued with 5♠, asking for the queen of trumps. Six Diamonds said, 'yes, I have the queen, and also the king of diamonds'. Liggins, of course now bid the grand slam. Sitting South, John Holland was concerned that the opposition might be able to run to 7♠ or 7NT if he doubled to ask for a spade lead so passed, trusting Alan Mould to find it on his own. Mould duly did so and the excellent grand slam was down one for –50.

West	North	East	South
Nevena S.	Lindqvist	Brian S.	Brogelund
–	–	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	7♥	Dble
Pass	Pass	7♠	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	Pass
7NT	Dble	All Pass	

Nevena Senior's 2♥ response was Acol, so not game-forcing. Brian should have used Exclusion, just as we saw in the other room, but made a sleepy splinter bid instead. When Nevena cuebid diamonds Brian asked for key cards then bid the grand slam. Here, Boye Brogelund did make the Lightner double. It was clear what that asked for and Brian could see that 7♥ was doomed. However, if partner just had a doubleton spade, he would be able to pick-up the suit without loss, starting with the marked finesse of the nine. So he converted to 7♠, only to see Espen Lindqvist double for a heart lead! Nevena converted to 7NT, hoping that Brian would hold the ♣A, but Lindqvist doubled again, this time for the club lead, and the contract was one down for –100 and 2 IMPs to GILLIS.

I thought the bidding was excellent at both tables on this second deal.

Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.

	♠	J 10 8 5 2		♠	A 4 3
	♥	K J 7 5 3 2		♥	A
	♦	8		♦	K Q 9 7 6 5
	♣	9		♣	8 6 2
♠	7 6				
♥	8				
♦	A 10 2				
♣	A K Q 10 7 5 4				
	♠	K Q 9			
	♥	Q 10 9 6 4			
	♦	J 4 3			
	♣	J 3			

West	North	East	South
Brogelund	Mould	Lindqvist	Holland
–	–	1♦	1♥
2♣	4♥	5♣	Pass
6♣	6♥	Pass	Pass
7♣	All Pass		

Holland's 1♥ overcall allowed Mould to take away all his opponents' bidding space, making them guess. Lindqvist refused to be shut out of the auction and bid 5♣ on the East cards and Brogelund had such a huge hand compared to what he might have had that he raised to 6♣. When Mould took the save in 6♥, which would have cost only –500, Lindqvist looked at his two aces and potential source of tricks and made a forcing pass to invite Brogelund to go on to Seven. Sure enough, he did so and, when there was no 7♥ save, it took no time to win 13 tricks and chalk up an excellent +1440.

West	North	East	South
Nevena S.	Liggins	Brian S.	Erichsen
–	–	1♦	1♥
2♣	4♥	Pass	Pass
6♣	Pass	7♣	Pass
Pass	7♥	Pass	Pass
7NT	All Pass		

The auction began as at the first table but Brian, facing a potentially slightly weaker 2♣ than in the other room, chose to pass over 4♥ and leave any further move to partner. When Nevena jumped to 6♣ – you can't bid less with this hand, I don't think – Brian thought for a bit but, like Lindqvist in the other room, liked his two aces and source of tricks so, willing to take the slight risk of looking very silly, raised to the grand slam. When that came round to Liggins he thought and thought but eventually saved in 7♥. That would have been worth 12 IMPs had it been doubled for –800, but Brian had the perfect hand for another forcing pass. Had he led the ♦J, he would have expected the suit to be running so could have bid 7NT himself. With the actual diamond holding, partner might hold ace-doubleton and need to ruff the suit it to have 13 tricks, so 13 tricks were not assured in no trump. But the forcing pass strongly suggested a good diamond suit and Nevena, with eight tricks in her own hand, could bid 7NT. The diamonds could be safety played by starting with the king to pick up jack-to-four on either side so the contract was quite cold on any lie of the missing cards. Plus 1520 meant 2 IMPs to PENFOLD, balancing the loss on our first deal.