

Grand Slam

by Brian Senior

The winners of the Swiss Pairs Championship for the Harold Poster Cup were Andrew Robson and Alexander Allfrey. Handily placed overnight, they came through with a very strong performance in Sunday's session to win by what proved to be a comfortable margin in the end.

This bidding problem from Round 12 proved to be too difficult for most of the field, but Robson and Allfrey had the methods to make short work of it.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Allfrey		Robson	
–	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♣	Pass
7♥	All Pass		

1♦ and 1♠ were natural, then 1NT showed any 16+ hand and 3♥ was game-forcing with at least five-five in the majors. Robson loved his controls so asked about key cards and the response showed two plus a void. Six Clubs asked about the queen of hearts and Allfrey bid the grand slam. All very easy and worth a lot of matchpoints.

The key to having such a smooth an easy auction was that the methods permitted Allfrey to jump in hearts, promising five cards. More natural methods see East rebid either 3♦ or 3NT over the 1♠ response and West can never really describe his hand adequately. At least over 3♦ he can bid 3♥ and will then have another go over East's next bid, but over a jump to 3NT there is no intelligent option available. Probably the practical thing is to jump to 6♥ over 3NT and maybe, just maybe, East will look at all those wonderful key cards – two aces and both major-suit kings, and raise to 7♥. Well done to those few who bid to 7♥ using natural methods.