

# Teams at Wollstonecraft

It was a good day's bridge, which started with an exciting hand on board 1 of the very first round.

by RAKESH KUMAR



*Rakesh Kumar describes himself as an enthusiastic non-expert who makes enough errors to have plenty of material for bridge columns.*

The 2015 Wollstonecraft Teams was convincingly won by the BURKE team (*Anthony Burke – Peter Gill, Mathew Vadas – Tony Nunn*), who were so far ahead after 5 of the 6 rounds that no one had any real prospect of catching them!

## Board 1

Dealer N | Vul Nil

<p>♠ AJT3 ♥ A63 ♦ J7 ♣ QT85</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		<p>♠ K82 ♥ K985 ♦ A54 ♣ K63</p>
	N										
W		E									
	S										
<p>♠ QT42 ♥ KQT8632 ♦ J4 ♣ J4</p>	<p>♠ Q97654 ♥ J7 ♦ 9 ♣ A972</p>										

12  
8  13  
7

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	–	–	3	–
S	3	–	–	3	–
E	–	4	4	–	2
W	–	4	4	–	2

North-South frequently bid to 4S while East-West were active in the red suits. Looking at the whole hand, clearly NS can make 9 tricks, while EW can only make 10, so the par result would be 4S doubled by NS, going one off. However, this didn't happen at all – EW usually pressed on. Remarkably, at 8 of 20 tables, they then made 11 tricks in either diamonds or hearts, sometimes doubled, because North has two different ways to go wrong on unnecessarily active defence: an opening lead of the spade ace, or a switch to a club when in with the heart ace, both solve declarer's problems.

In the middle of the day, there were some instructive hands that emphasised the importance of counting tricks and making a plan. Here's one:

### East – West

<p>♠ T9 ♥ Q97 ♦ AK854 ♣ J32</p>	<p>♠ KJ52 ♥ AKJ965 ♦ JT ♣ J</p>
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West deals and passes, as does North. After East opens 1H, it's more or less automatic to bid to 4H. On a diamond lead, what do you do at trick 2? And what's the rest of your plan?

And here's another (rotated for convenience):

### South – North

<p>♠ AK97 ♥ 75 ♦ AKQ ♣ KJ53</p>	<p>♠ J63 ♥ A93 ♦ 82 ♣ Q8762</p>
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South opens 2H (weak, hearts and a minor) and East arrives in 3NT. A heart is led to North's jack, ducked. Next comes the the ♥Q, also ducked, and a third heart, taken perforce by the ace. On a low club towards dummy, South shows out. Now what?

## The Importance of Making a Plan

OK, back to the first hand. Clearly, if everything is terrible, declarer could lose 3 spades and a heart. The first point to realise is that if 3 spades must be lost, hearts will have to break 2-2 to allow the fourth spade to be ruffed in dummy. So at trick 2, you lead a spade to the jack. This loses to the queen. Let's say another diamond comes back. You lead another spade, North plays low and you play the king. It holds!

### Board 16

Dealer W | Vul E-W

♠ 864	♠ A93
♥ 874	♥ 2
♦ AK7	♦ Q9843
♣ A976	♣ K542

	N		♠ KJ52
W	—	E	♥ AKJ965
	S		♦ JT
			♣ J

♠ QT7	♠ QT7
♥ QT3	♥ QT3
♦ 652	♦ 652
♣ QT83	♣ QT83

9
11 □ 14
6

8 of 20 declarers went down.  
How to make this contract?

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	—	1	—	—	—
S	—	1	—	—	—
E	—	—	4	2	2
W	—	—	4	3	3

Fine, you're not going to lose 3 spades ... or are you? If spades are 3-3 you will only lose one more trick in that suit, but if not, you will still need to ruff the last spade so will still need a 2-2 break in trumps. So you play a third round of spades yourself. Now it's easy. You do have to lose a heart, but you have 10 tricks. However, 8 of 20 declarers went down.

On the second hand (now back in its correct orientation) the 4-0 break in clubs means that 2 club tricks will have to be lost. However, that still adds up to 9 tricks: 3 in clubs, one in hearts, 3 in diamonds and 2 in spades. The key point is that with the heart entry removed, declarer won't be able to enjoy 3 club tricks if s/he takes the third round with the ♣Q. After playing ♣K and ♣J, one round of clubs must be ducked to retain communication. Exactly the same approach applies on a diamond lead and a heart switch when West takes the ♣A.

### Board 21

Dealer N | Vul N-S

♠ T82	♠ J63
♥ QJ4	♥ A93
♦ 743	♦ 82
♣ AT94	♣ Q8762

	N		♠ Q54
W		E	♥ KT862
	S		♦ JT965
			♣

♠ AK97	♠ AK97
♥ 75	♥ 75
♦ AKQ	♦ AKQ
♣ KJ53	♣ KJ53

7
7 □ 6
20

To make the contract, one round of clubs must be ducked to retain communication.

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	4	—	1	4	3
S	4	—	—	4	3
E	—	1	—	—	—
W	—	1	—	—	—

Presumably not everyone got this right, because 4 declarers went down in 3NT. Another 3 found themselves in 5C, which was inevitably defeated on the bad break.

*Players enjoyed their lunches at the outdoor area of the Wollstonecraft Bridge Club.*



## Slam Bidding Challenges

There were some slam bidding challenges. This was one:

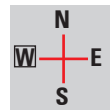
### Board 20

Dealer W | Vul All

18  
5  5  
12

♠ Q72  
♥ Q742  
♦ J63  
♣ 963

♠ AKJ9  
♥ AKJ9  
♦ Q52  
♣ 74



♠ 643  
♥ 8  
♦ A74  
♣ AKJT52

♠ T85  
♥ T653  
♦ KT98  
♣ Q8

W	N	E	S
	1D	-	2C
-	?		?

2 pairs bid to 6NT

Only 5 pairs reached 6C

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	7	5	6	7	7
S	7	5	4	7	7
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

It's not easy getting to slam, so perhaps it's not surprising that around the room, only 5 reached 6C while 2 bid to 6NT. At our table, 1D-2C was followed by lots of jumps and not a whole lot of science, but NS arrived in 6C and duly made all 13 tricks. What would you have done?

Speaking of jumping around, there was also this hand:

### Board 26

Dealer E | Vul All

15  
11  3  
11

♠ KT43  
♥ 63  
♦ Q76  
♣ AQ76

♠ AQJ9752  
♥ AKJ9  
♦ 94  
♣



♠ 86  
♥ Q754  
♦ AKJT52  
♣ J

♠ T82  
♥ 83  
♣ KT985432

W	You	E	S
		3C	3D
4C	5C		

It's worth discussing with your partner just how a 5C bid might be interpreted in this sequence.

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	6	6	6	-
S	-	5	6	6	-
E	3	-	-	-	-
W	3	-	-	-	-

What would you do after a somewhat venturesome vulnerable 3C by East, a 3D overcall by South and a pre-emptive raise to 4C by West? Bidding 5C seems like a possibility. Only 8 of 20 NS pairs reached slam, 3 in 6H and 5 in 6S. It's worth discussing with your partner just how a 5C bid might be interpreted in this sequence. Is it for the majors or could it be something else, such as Exclusion Keycard Blackwood in diamonds? 📌