

Brisbane Water Teams

Plenty of interesting boards. Some of these illustrated that, depending on the bidding methods you use, sometimes any form of ace-asking may be unnecessary on the way to bidding a slam.

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 Brisbane Water Teams event had a huge field of 58 Open and 19 Restricted teams (up from 43 + 18 in 2014). This year the event changed from the long-established format of 7 × 8-board matches using the old VP scale, to 6 × 10-board matches using the new decimalised VP scale.

The Open event was won by ASHTON (*Sophie Ashton–Sartaj Hans–Andrew Peake–John Newman*) who grabbed the lead after 4 of the 6 rounds. Earlier in the day DAWSON (*Helena Dawson–Fraser Rew–Tony Ong–Richard Douglas*) had briefly been at the top of the table and they gave it everything in the last round, but even a 20-0 win was not enough to catch the leaders, who had a 19.22-0.78 win to finish 2.5 VPs clear.

There were, of course, plenty of interesting boards. Two of these illustrated that, depending on the bidding methods you use, sometimes any form of ace-asking may be unnecessary on the way to bidding a slam. This was the first example:

Board 8

Dealer W | Vul Nil

<p>♠ 5 ♥ AQJ9843 ♦ 3 ♣ A752</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<p>♠ KJT ♥ T ♦ K65 ♣ QJ8643</p>	<p>♠ A9764 ♥ K2 ♦ AT98 ♣ KT</p>
N	E						
W	S						
<p>♠ Q832 ♥ 765 ♦ QJ742 ♣ 9</p>							

10
11 □ 14
5

W	N	E	S
2D!	P	2H!	P
3H	P	6H	

Multi-2D to show either a weak or an Acol 2 in a major

pass or correct if a weak 2 opening

Do you have a good method to show the West hand? If you play Acol 2s or use a multi-2D opening to show either a weak or an Acol 2 in a major, you can get this 5-loser hand off your chest quickly. At our table, West opened a multi-2D and East responded 2H (*pass or correct if a weak 2 opening*) because EW had agreed that a strong 2NT response promised 15+ hcp (and it seemed like a good idea to protect the ♣K if West had a weak 2-bid in hearts). However, West rebid 3H, showing an Acol 2.

Now East, with top controls and a 6-loser hand, did some simple arithmetic: adding up the losers in the 2 hands and subtracting from 24 suggested that 13 tricks might be available. In any case, slam was surely cold, so he just bid it. The singleton club was led to the king and East played a club back, ruffed. No matter, a third club could now be ruffed with ♥K, yielding 12 tricks. Only 9 of 58 EW pairs reached this slam.

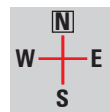
This was another slam hand that didn't involve asking for aces, although on this occasion there weren't too many losers to count:

Board 29

Dealer N | Vul Both

♠ AKQJ52
♥ J74
♦ K
♣ K74

♠ 98643
♥
♦ Q986
♣ 6532



♠ T7
♥ T
♦ T7543
♣ QJT98

♠
♥ AKQ986532
♦ AJ2
♣ A

17
2 3
18

W	N	E	S
	1S	P	2H
P	?		

what's the best bid to show support and a powerful hand?

Surprisingly, this was not even close to being a unanimous 7H by South – in fact only 32 of 58 played in a grand slam and 10 of those were in 7NT. There are many routes to bidding a grand on this hand, the real question being after 1S-2H, what's the best rebid for North to show support and a powerful hand? Our team-mates Kevin Davies–Steven Bock found both a clear answer to the question and a straightforward route to 7H when Kevin splintered with 4D. As this guaranteed diamond shortage and 3+ heart support, Steven said he had the easiest 7H rebid ever!

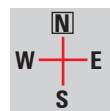
Throughout the rest of the day there was, as usual, a lot of vigorous aggressive bidding all around the room. This often led to some fairly questionable contracts, which then succeeded because of the challenges of defence, generating large swings. Here is a fine example:

Board 13

Dealer N | Vul Both

♠ J
♥ 6
♦ 532
♣ AKQJT854

♠ AKQ74
♥ J42
♦ JT9
♣ 96



♠ 98
♥ AQT9873
♦ 8
♣ 732

♠ T6532
♥ K5
♦ AKQ764
♣

11
11 6
12

W	N	E	S
	3NT!	P	5C
P	?		

A "gambling" 3NT to show a solid 7+ minor suit with no ace outside

Convert completed

At our team-mates' table, North opened a gambling 3NT and South, with no apparent concern about lack of support, bid 5C! Theoretically only 10 tricks are available, but the defence is tricky (especially when played by South – who is going to lead a diamond?) and 22 declarers made this contract, 9 with an overtrick, while 7 went down. Only one of the 3 enthusiastic Norths who bid all the way to 6C managed to make the slam – it was Louis Koolen, the Congress convener!

The super congress was held at the Peninsula Community Centre.



Well, if you bid 'em up, you have to play them skilfully. Or your partner does fortunately I pick my partners well. Some of my so-called friends suggest this is my greatest (*only?*) skill at bridge. In the second-last round, we were struggling to improve our standing in the field in the hope of finishing respectably, so I went slam hunting on this hand:

Board 15

Dealer S | Vul N-S

<p>♠ AK74 ♥ 865 ♦ KQ763 ♣ 3</p>	<p>♠ 653 ♥ Q42 ♦ T5 ♣ KT964</p>	<p>♠ Q92 ♥ AKJ7 ♦ A98 ♣ QJ7</p>	<p>♠ JT8 ♥ T93 ♦ J42 ♣ A852</p>		<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #f0f0f0;"> <th style="padding: 5px;">W</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">N</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">E</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">1D</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">1H</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">1S</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">2C</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">2H</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px; border: 2px solid green;">4D</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px; border: 2px solid green;">5C</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">P</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">6D</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="color: green; font-size: small;">2 keycards and the queen</p> <p style="color: green; font-size: small;">Roman keycard in diamonds</p>	W	N	E	S				P	1D	P	1H	P	1S	P	2C	P	2H	P	4D	P	5C	P	6D	
W	N	E	S																										
			P																										
1D	P	1H	P																										
1S	P	2C	P																										
2H	P	4D	P																										
5C	P	6D																											

The bidding began with 1D-1H-1S (*promising at least 4-4 in an unbalanced hand*)-2C (*fourth suit forcing to game*)-2H. Now it was clear that my partner Julian Abel had a hand with either 4-3-5-1 or 4-3-6-0 shape and there ought to be some slam prospects, but it was likely that my club honours weren't going to be that useful. Anyway, I rebid 4D as Roman keycard in diamonds and when partner responded 5C showing 2 keycards and the queen, there we were – one of only 3 of 58 EW pairs who contracted for 6D.

North led a low club and South captured the ♣Q with the ace. Looking at all 4 hands it's easy, but Julian could see potential losers in both majors. However, he set about maximising his chances. Having drawn trumps, cashed one top heart and ruffed a low club, he played spades and discovered that they were divided 3-3. So he cashed the 13th spade, discarding a low heart from dummy, and led the last trump in the position below. North had to keep the ♣K so pitched a low heart, while the now useless ♣J was discarded from dummy. When Julian then led a heart, North perforce played the queen. This nice example of a show-up squeeze was a pleasure to watch.

<p>♠ ♥ Q4 ♦ ♣ K</p>	<p>♠ ♥ KJ ♦ ♣ J</p>
<p>♠ ♥ 85 ♦ 7 ♣</p>	<p>♠ ♥ ♦ ♣</p>

Immaterial

May all your desperate bids prove just as successful, except against me! 🍀