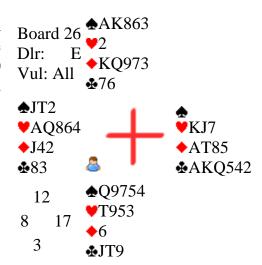


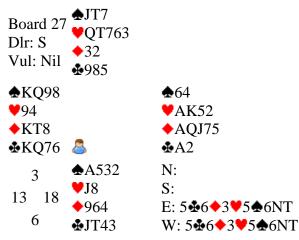
Forever fearless ...

It's a bidder's game, they tell me. Here are some examples of no-fear bidding from recent congresses. Not all of them yielded good results!

This first hand is from the **Trumps Autumn Teams in May**, where our team of Julian Foster – Jenna Gibbons, Steven Bock – Rakesh Kumar was successful. Jenna Gibbons was once a member of the NZ Junior Team, and subsequently a member of the Womens Team on a number of occasions. Proving that she is as youthful as ever, she generated a swing in the last round with a bid that might even scare one of the current crop of under-25s. On the hand below, at our table Steven Bock opened a multi-2◆, which could include an 8-9 playing trick hand in a minor, and with oppenents silent, the bidding went 2♥-3♣-3♥-4♥. In contrast, at Jenna's table, East opened 1C and Jenna, as South, vulnerable against not, overcalled 1♠!!

After this, it was no surprise that Julian bid competitively to $4\triangle$, which no one felt like doubling. Thus whereas we made the +680 forecast by Deep Finesse, the opponents collected only +100 against $4\triangle$ going one down.





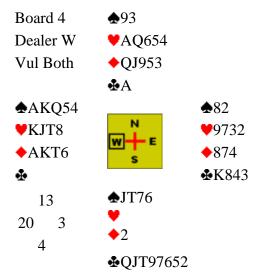
I've become quite a fan of the notion of trying for slam with hands where the estimated combined point count is in the 29-31 range and there's some suggestion of a good fit or a running suit. On this hand from the **Wollstonecraft Congress** in June, only 2 out of 20 Easts found the fearless 6NT on 31 high card points. In fact all it needs is an on-side ace of spades. The slightly more cautious ought to find their way to the glacially cold 6♠, which can cater even for a 4-1 trump

break and an off-side ace of spades, but no one bid this. How would you deal with this hand? Much depends on your methods e.g. do you play a weak or a strong no-trump, and if the latter, do you play "checkback" when the bidding starts 1\ddots-1\ldots-1NT?

Fearlessness probably should have its limits, however ... the wildly distributional hand below, from the **Brisbane Water Super Congress in July**, was guaranteed to yield a few stories. In fact scores at the 49 tables ranged from +710 to -1400 for NS! As West, I opened 1 and North bid 2 (Michaels i.e. hearts and an unspecified minor). South bid 2 , which was alerted as correctable (!) and, in no-fear mode, I bid 4S, believing that the opponents must have clubs and that I ought to be able to make something of the hearts. When the club ace was led and dummy came down, I figured that although South was obviously void in hearts, I might get out cheaply if North was 1-5-2-5, because after ruffing the club, I could play AK of diamonds, give up a diamond, and hopefully ruff my last diamond. Not quite. South ruffed my diamond king and NS began a cross ruff, so I finished 3 down, mercifully undoubled.

The story was quite different at other table, because North's 34 overcall was "Ghestem", showing diamonds and hearts. West knew not to try to ruff a diamond and simply drew 3 rounds of trumps, finishing only one off.

Oh well, a mere 5 IMPs out. That's not going to stop me bidding next time!!!



By Rakesh Kumar