

## Minority Report

In the Trumps Spring Teams on 10 November, the battle lines were drawn early. Four teams (GILL, BOCK, WYNER and WATTS) were in a tussle for the top 4 places for 5 of the 6 rounds. Our team (Steven Bock-Kevin Davies, Julian Abel-Rakesh Kumar) was kicked out of the top 4 after round 2 by GILL, but we struggled back into contention. There were some eventful boards. Time and again, it turned out that taking a view that might not be that of the majority proved to be (or would have proved to be ...) correct. Here's one of those hands:

	♠K6		
Dlr: E	♥K64		
Vul: E-W	♦QT		
	♣AJT542		
♠2			
	♥J985	♠T75	
	♦AK753	♥AQT3	
	♣863	♦J98642	
	♠AQJ9843	♣	
13	♥72	N: 6♣6♠	
8 7	♦	S: 5♣4♠	
12	♣KQ97	E: 6♦4♥	
		W: 6♦3♥	

At our table, East passed, South opened 1S, I overcalled a rather thin vulnerable 2D and North bid 3C. Partner quite rightly bid 5D! But South now bid 6C and I wasn't prepared to sacrifice at this vulnerability, thinking that would be altogether too much of a minority view. Little did I know that it wouldn't have been a sacrifice!! At most of the 15 tables, the final contract was by NS, 3 in 6C by North, one in 6SX by South which made because a heart was not led (who would have found that?) and 9 in various black suit games. However, at 2 tables, EW played in diamonds, one in game and one in slam, both doubled and both making 12 tricks.

Here's a slightly tricky hand that illustrates the value of thinking about everything that might go wrong. East dealt and opened 1D, West responded 1H and North overcalled 1S. East ended in 3NT and South led ♠J. How do you play this?

Well, you know where the ♠K is so you can safely take the first trick in dummy and get to work on the diamonds. If you can manage 5 diamonds, 3NT will be safe with 2 spades, a club and a heart. What's the best way to tackle the diamonds?

♠A2	♠QT84
♥AJT42	♥53
♦T74	♦AQJ86
♣Q43	♣K7

If you lead the ♦T from table, you will regret it. It turns out that North has a singleton ♦K and 5 tricks have just become 4. And when you give up a diamond, South switches to the ♣T which spells the doom of the contract. Something of this sort

must have happened at all 6 tables where EW played in some number of notrump, making fewer than 9 tricks.

		♠K9653	
Dlr: E		♥976	
Vul: Nil		♦K	
		♣AJ52	
♠A2		♠QT84	
♥AJT42		♥53	
♦T74		♦AQJ86	
♣Q43		♣K7	
11		♠J7	N:
11	12	♥KQ8	S:
6		♦9532	E: 4♦3♥2♠3NT
		♣T986	W: 1♣5♦4♥2♠3NT

Of course our opponents took the minority view and played in 4H, which turns out to be unbeatable.

Now for a bidding question.

♠3	♠AKQ976
♥AKQ2	♥T965
♦T74	♦Q
♣JT972	♣53

You are East and North has opened 1C. What do you call? Most folks bid some number of spades and made 9 tricks because trumps broke 4-2 and there were thus 4 inescapable losers.

But in our match, one of the opponents took a minority view and doubled. 4H was now bid, and it's unbeatable! Only one other pair reached this game.

		♠J842	
Dlr: N		♥J4	
Vul: N-S		♦AJ2	
		♣AK84	
♠3		♠AKQ976	
♥AKQ2		♥T965	
♦T74		♦Q	
♣JT972		♣53	
14		♠T5	N: 3♦
10	11	♥873	S: 3♦
5		♦K98653	E: 4♥3♠
		♣Q6	W: 4♥3♠

So we didn't get any of this right, but nevertheless managed to hang on for a win in the event. It must be those good teammates we play with ...