

Trumps Summer Teams 2020

Sometimes you're the bug...

by RAKESH KUMAR



Rakesh Kumar describes himself as an enthusiast who makes enough errors to have plenty of material for bridge columns.

The field for the Trumps Summer Teams was very strong indeed. After 6 rounds, the winners were DIBLEY (Chris Dibley – Chris Stead, Peter Jeffery – Yumin Li) from BEAUCHAMP (David Beauchamp – Anita Curtis, Davis Hudson – David Fryda) and TOBIN (Ruth Tobin – Liz Sylvester, Les Grewcock – Peter Gill).

The day was full of interesting hands, including this exciting board from match 3, which featured three 8-card suits!

Board 25

Dealer N | Vul E-W

<p>♠ J ♥ AQ ♦ 92 ♣ AT876432</p>		<p>♠ 2 ♥ KJ8 ♦ AKQT7654 ♣ Q</p> <p>♠ K86 ♥ T97642 ♦ ♣ KJ95</p>
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	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	6	-	5	-
S	-	6	-	4	-
E	5	-	3	-	-
W	5	-	3	-	-

Across the 18 tables there were 6 North-South pairs in 6♦, 6 who stopped in 5♦, 5 who played in game in spades and one who over-reached to 7♦.

Before I show you some more boards, here are 3 play problems for you. Firstly, after your LHO opens 1♦ and partner overcalls 2♣, you jump to 3NT. The opening lead (the opponents' card shows they lead fourth highest) is ♥3. You play low from dummy and take RHO's ♥8 with the ten. Now when you play ♣J it goes 9, 2 and 4. What next?

<p>♠ KQT ♥ KT72 ♦ AKT94 ♣ J</p>		<p>♠ ♥ Q954 ♦ 63 ♣ AKT7632</p>
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Secondly, you're in 3NT again, after partner opens 2♠ (5 spades and a 4+ minor suit, weak) and LHO leads ♣K. You duck two rounds and take the third performe. How will you continue?

<p>♠ QT764 ♥ T53 ♦ KJ32 ♣ 7</p>		<p>♠ A9 ♥ AQ4 ♦ AQT76 ♣ A52</p>
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And for one more, you push yourself into a contract of 4♠ after P (by RHO)-1♠-x-2♠ (weak, 3-card support)-3♥. LHO leads a heart and RHO, having taken the ace, switches to ♠8. What now?

♠ AQ963 ♥ 8 ♦ AJT753 ♣ 5		♠ 542 ♥ J543 ♦ K ♣ QT874
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The first board above comes from match 4. Here are all 4 hands – the declarer is actually South.

Board 4

Dealer W | Vul All

♠ A732 ♥ AJ63 ♦ QJ87 ♣ 9		♠ J98654 ♥ 8 ♦ 52 ♣ Q854
♠ KQT ♥ KT72 ♦ AKT94 ♣ J		

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

It seems clear that West has led from a 4-card heart suit so if you could persuade him/her to take the ♥K with the ace, you would have 2 entries to dummy to reach the clubs even if they break 4-1, which seems likely given West's suspicious play of ♣9. However, why worry about the clubs? Continue with the heart king and await developments. Whether West ducks or opens up the spades, you are safe. Evidently not everyone could see their way clear to counting up to 9 (or 10) tricks. Thus although 8 declarers made their contract, 6 went down, while 4 were in contracts other than 3NT anyway.

In David Caprera's book entitled *Sleeping on the Couch* he points out that with respect to bridge tournaments, sometimes you're the windshield and sometimes you're the bug. Our team, which had been playing reasonably for the first 4 matches, went splat on the opponents' windshield in both matches 5 and 6.

First there was this board from round 5. After taking the third club, declarer has 8 tricks, with the heart finesse as the obvious chance for a ninth without giving up the lead. However, that doesn't work ...

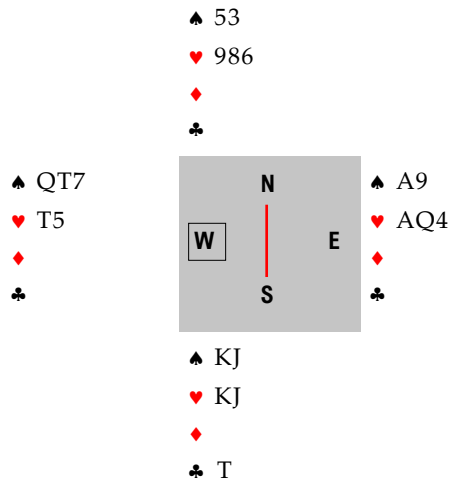
Board 12

Dealer W | Vul N-S

♠ QT764 ♥ T53 ♦ KJ32 ♣ 7		♠ A9 ♥ AQ4 ♦ AQT76 ♣ A52
♠ KJ82 ♥ KJ7 ♦ ♣ KQJT94		

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	-	-	-	-
S	1	-	-	-	-
E	-	5	2	4	3
W	-	5	2	4	3

What does work is to play off all 5 diamond winners, forcing South to make a whole lot of discards. This is then the position with East to lead:



The play of ♠A and a low spade now ruins South. S/he has only one club left to cash and is end-played to concede 2 heart tricks.

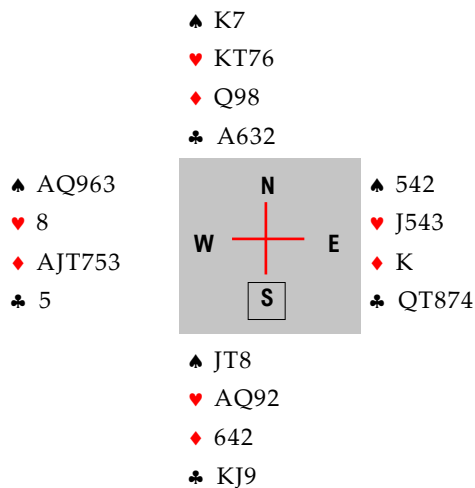
Across the field, there were 13 East-West pairs in 3NT, but only 2 made it. Of course, our East-West opponents were one of those! IMPs away in double figures ...

Then came this 4♠ contract in match 6. It's rather an overbid, but not without chances. As a starting point, you have to find diamonds 3-3. However, with two obvious losers in the round suits, you need to hold spade losers to just one. How are you going to do that?

I didn't work that out, but then I wasn't in game anyway. Our opponents made their contract without even breathing hard ... what one has to do is play for a doubleton ♠K. So either duck the first spade or play ♠A and later, a low spade. Then with one diamond ruff on table, 4♠ comes home.

Board 23

Dealer S | Vul All



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

There were 8 East-West pairs in 4♠, of whom 4 made their contract, including 2 who were doubled. The rest of the field wasn't in game, which had appeared perfectly reasonable to me. However, yet again our East-West opponents were one of the few pairs who made the game – as we went splat, with IMPs away in double figures once more! 🟩