

# SBC Easter Monday Matchpointed Swiss Pairs

Monday 5th April 2021



## It was nice to play bridge face to face

by Julian Foster

On Easter Monday I played in my first face to face bridge Congress for just over a year. It was nice to be back!

8410 shapes are pretty rare to start with. Having two in one 8 board match is therefore extremely rare. Both having the same 4 and 8 card suits even more so!!

### Exhibit A (Match 6 | board 17)

♠ AKJ9  
♥ T  
♦   
♣ AQJT8532

You deal and no-one is vul. I started with 1♣ and heard 1♥ 1NT P back to me.

Even though partner is very unlikely to have 4 spades I still now bid 2♠ simply to make a forcing noise and see what happened! After all give partner just ♠Q and ♥A and you are basically cold for 6♣.

Partner bid 2NT. My next effort was to torture him still further with 4 ♣. My thinking was to see if he could cue bid 4 ♥. Instead I got an anguished 4♠ from him so I corrected to 5♣ and gave up there. This is not the time to play for matchpoints and play in the major. 8 card suits should almost always be trumps!

LHO led ♥A and about the worst dummy you could hope for appeared:

♠ 752  
♥ J863  
♦ KQJ65  
♣ 4

After ♥A, LHO tried ♦A which I ruffed. You have very little chance but you can try for your first miracle of singleton ♣K. No good. Both follow to the A and on the Q, LHO discards a heart and RHO wins the K. She now leads a low spade. Your go? Have a think about it before reading on.

So who finessed, which is clearly the best chance in the spade suit in isolation? No luck, LHO wins the ♠Q.

But should you finesse? Think further. WHY has RHO played a spade? Everyone can see that dummy has no hope of an entry. RHO almost certainly has another heart and she definitely has another club. Both are safe exits that will stick you in hand and be forced to lead spades yourself.

It's a classic case of "beware of Greeks bearing gifts!" If you reject the finesse you will end up dropping the ♠Q 10 on your left and, albeit ridiculously luckily, will make 5 ♣! The spade lead gives you a losing option that you didn't have before. 8 pairs went off and 4 pairs made - so if the defence was the same then 2/3 of the declarers finessed.

Did I diagnose all this at the table? No! My RHO actually exited a heart and I was forced to play spades from the top and ended up making 5 ♣. But it made me wonder what I would have done on a spade switch ...

### Exhibit B (Match 6 | board 23)

♠ J732  
♥  
♦ A  
♣ AKT98743

You deal again but this time everyone is vulnerable.

You again start with 1♣ and partner bids 1♥. You bid 1♠ (forcing) and partner bids 2♥. This is semi-constructive (about 7-9 with 6+ hearts) because partner could have bid 2♥ directly over 1♣ to show a weaker hand. Now what?

Partner chose 3♣ and that was it. We had perhaps both been a bit conservative as I put this dummy down:

♠ T  
♥ AKQ742  
♦ J9853  
♣ 6

This hand has a difficult bid after 1♠. 2♥ is a bit conservative, 2♦ fourth suit game forcing looks a bit much on a misfit, 3♥ is another option (pity partner's bid over that!)

With absolutely no communication between the hands it looks like being conservative was good. As it happens 3NT does make though because spades are 4-4 and clubs break 2-2. The 3 pairs who bid that did well today!

3♣ should just make the 9 tricks declarer has in his own hand but the defence lost their way at our table and allowed a spade ruff into dummy whereupon the remaining spades could be discarded on the ♥AK leading to 12 tricks.

With all the cards and a lot of luck in the final round we managed 19.43 to just pip Kate McCallum and Axel Johannsson by a mere 0.55 VPs!

Thanks to Wing Roberts as ever for a very pleasant and well catered event. Great to see the Goulburn St rooms back in action with 27 tables in play. Let's hope the bridge world can return to normal this year. It was also good to see that half the field were restricted and novice pairs - the winners in those categories win a mentoring session from a (volunteer) experienced player which is another great initiative. Thanks to those players who have said yes when Wing has asked them! So many have a great deal to offer in the way of little tips and help. Experience is very valuable in this game!



1st Open Pair—Fraser Rew and Julian Foster.



1st Restricted Pair—Ron Szancer and Sarah Edelman.



The festive decoration at the entrance.



2nd Restricted Pair (also the Best Novice) - Agnes Levine & Deejay East (absent). Paul Roach is a director of SBC.



3rd Restricted Pair—John Dobies & Julie Mansfield (absent). Cathy Chaffrey is a NSWBA Councillor.



The Congress attracted 27 full tables.

[...More results can be found HERE](#)