

Central Coast Online Swiss Pairs

All about interference

by RAKESH KUMAR



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

The [Central Coast Bridge Club Online Swiss Pairs](#) was held on the last Saturday in September. This was the first NSW online congress to offer BB\$ prizes to participants, in this instance to the top quarter of the field.

Forty-four pairs entered and the event was played exactly like a traditional face-to-face congress viz. 7 matches of 8 boards, but scored as cross-IMPs because this is what BBO offers. The winners were Jan Clarke - Di Coats, followed by Robyn O'Hara - Margaret Regan and Lavy Libman - Tomer Libman.

Swiss Pairs is often characterised by exuberant bidding. That was certainly the case in the Central Coast event, where disrupting the opponents appeared to be the order of the day. Partner and I were on the receiving end of quite a bit of aggressive interference! Mostly, this was all too successful in preventing us from reaching our ideal contract.

Here's an example of what I mean. On this board, if South doesn't open, or opens 1♣, East-West won't have much difficulty finding their way to 4♠. Although Deep Finesse beats 4♠, those who reached this contract were usually successful – South needs to receive a heart ruff for the setting trick.

Board 22

Dealer E | Vul E-W

♠ KJ632 ♥ QT87 ♦ KQ92 ♣	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W — E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W — E	S	♠ QT5 ♥ KJ43 ♦ 73 ♣ AT98
N					
W — E					
S					
♠ 97 ♥ A ♦ JT54 ♣ KQ7654					

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

Life gets much more difficult if South opens 3♣, as happened at our table. Reaching 4♠ is now unlikely because West will almost certainly double for takeout. East may end up playing in 4♥, which although makeable is a tricky contract, or in 3NT, which is doomed.

Interference even at the 2-level can be successful if the opponents' best contract is in a minor suit. On the deal below, after West opens 1♣, North can make a weak jump overcall of 2♠. Yes, this is bold (a bit crazy?) with such a poor suit when vulnerable against not, but it makes a mess of the East-West auction. East will now bid 3♦, over which West has little choice but to bid 4♣. Of course this assures East of game in that denomination, but what about slam? From East's perspective, there appear to be two spade losers – except that there weren't, so when we stopped in 5♣ it was expensive, because a large proportion of East-West pairs reached the unbeatable 6♣.

Board 28
Dealer W | Vul N-S

♠ KT3 ♥ A85 ♦ ♣ AJ76542	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;"> </td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ A98742 ♥ T62 ♦ Q64 ♣ 9	♠ QJ ♥ KJ7 ♦ AKJT7 ♣ KQ8
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ 65 ♥ Q943 ♦ 98532 ♣ T3											

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	6	4	4	2	6
W	6	4	4	2	6

If the opponents are going to interfere vigorously – which is definitely the flavour of Swiss Pairs – then it's a good idea to have a penalty double handy. This is true even if you have opened to show a strong hand – just because they are preventing you from reaching your best contract doesn't mean you have to gamble on playing in something inferior. That was illustrated on the deal below.

Board 11
Dealer S | Vul None

♠ 9654 ♥ 96542 ♦ J62 ♣ 8	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;"> </td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ AT3 ♥ A3 ♦ K54 ♣ AKQ93	♠ J72 ♥ KJ8 ♦ AQ9873 ♣ 6
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ KQ8 ♥ QT7 ♦ T ♣ JT7542										

W	N	E	S
			P
P	2C	3D	X
5D	?		

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

At our table, North opened her balanced 20 hcp hand with a strong 2♣, presumably because in the partnership's methods, a 2NT opening was reserved for the minor suits. East interfered with a pushy 3♦ bid and South doubled to show values. West, holding a pile of rubbish, decided there had never been a better time to make a complete nuisance of himself, so he raised to 5♦.

This gave North quite a problem. In fact a penalty double would have been very profitable indeed, whereas a bid of 6♣ didn't work out quite so well ... ♠