

GNOT Club Qualifier 2026

Rakesh Kumar

On Saturday 25 July SHBC ran its GNOT Club Qualifying event. There were 7 teams entered so the competition was played as a round robin of 8-board matches. Steve Brabyn successfully deployed an American Whist movement, while Jo Goodacre provided yet another amazing lunch!

As usual, there were some instructive deals. Here are 3, of which I will present 2 as problems. Firstly, you hold:

♠ 3
♥ K
♦ A Q 8 7 6 4 2
♣ J 9 8 6

You are vulnerable against opponents who are not vulnerable. Partner is the dealer and opens 1H. Your RHO overcalls 1S, you bid 2D, LHO bids 2S and partner rebids 3H. What are you going to do?

Secondly, this is your hand:

♠ A K J 8 4
♥ 3
♦ A K Q 2
♣ K 8 2

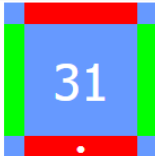
With both sides vulnerable, your LHO is the dealer and passes. To your surprise, partner bids 1H. You respond 1S, partner rebids 2H and you continue with 3D. Partner ponders this and eventually bids 3NT. Your call?

Here is a deal that illustrates how your system/methods can have quite an influence on the outcome of a board:

Optimum: NS 3N+1; +430 LoTT: 16-16 = 0			♠ K Q 8 7 3 ♥ Q 6 4 ♦ K 7 ♣ 10 8 4			Bridge Solver Online: John Goacher Double Dummy Solver Module: Bo Haglund																																
♠ 6 ♥ A J 7 3 ♦ A 10 5 4 3 2 ♣ 7 2			16			♠ 10 9 5 4 2 ♥ 10 ♦ J 6 ♣ K J 9 6 3																																
10 9 5 16			♠ A J ♥ K 9 8 5 2 ♦ Q 9 8 ♣ A Q 5			<table><tr><td></td><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>				♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	1	4	2	4	S	1	1	4	2	4	E	-	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-	-
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																																	
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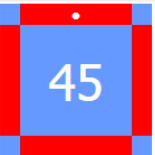
At 4 tables, North-South played in 4H while at one they played in 4S. None of these contracts was successful, even though 4H is makeable double dummy. Life is much simpler if you play that a 1NT opening can include a 5-card major: the auction is then a very straightforward 1NT-2H-2S-3NT-All pass. 3NT is a much easier contract to play, demonstrating yet again that with sufficient high card points, a balanced hand opposite a balanced hand often does better in 3NT, even with a 5-3 major suit fit.

Below is the deal associated with the first of the problems. It turns out that raising partner with your singleton king is the best move, because 4H cannot be beaten despite the 4-1 trump split.

Optimum: EW 5Sx; +300 LoTT: 19-17 = 2	♠ 3 ♥ K ♦ A Q 8 7 6 4 2 ♣ J 9 8 6	Bridge Solver Online: John Goacher Double Dummy Solver Module: Bo Haglund																														
♠ Q 9 7 5 2 ♥ 2 ♦ J 10 9 5 ♣ A K 2		♠ K J 8 6 ♥ 9 7 6 5 ♦ 3 ♣ Q 5 4 3																														
10 10 6 14	♠ A 10 4 ♥ A Q J 10 8 4 3 ♦ K ♣ 10 7	<table><tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr></table>		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	3	4	-	4	S	1	3	4	-	4	E	-	-	-	3	-	W	-	-	-	3	-
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																											
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E	-	-	-	3	-																											
W	-	-	-	3	-																											

Hoping for a diamond fit and trying 5D instead is a terrible idea. I got this one wrong and it cost us 13 IMPs!

This next deal is the one associated with the second problem. Interestingly, the issue turns out not to be the strain in which you play the contract but whether you have the courage/methods to bid a slam, because both 6H and 6NT are unbeatable.

Optimum: EW 7S; -2210 LoTT: 14-14 = 0	♠ 10 9 2 ♥ 7 6 2 ♦ 6 5 4 3 ♣ 7 6 4	Bridge Solver Online: John Goacher Double Dummy Solver Module: Bo Haglund																														
♠ A K J 8 4 ♥ 3 ♦ A K Q 2 ♣ K 8 2		♠ 7 6 ♥ A Q J 10 8 4 ♦ 9 8 ♣ A J 5																														
0 20 12 8	♠ Q 5 3 ♥ K 9 5 ♦ J 10 7 ♣ Q 10 9 3	<table><tr><th></th><th>♣</th><th>♦</th><th>♥</th><th>♠</th><th>NT</th></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>6</td></tr></table>		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	-	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	E	6	6	6	7	6	W	5	6	6	7	6
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT																											
N	-	-	-	-	-																											
S	-	-	-	-	-																											
E	6	6	6	7	6																											
W	5	6	6	7	6																											

Just a reminder that this has been the auction so far: 1H-1S-2H-3D-3NT. Will you simply jump to 6NT? Or will you bid 4NT – and if you do, will partner interpret this as RKCB in hearts or as a quantitative raise? If East believes it's the former, she will bid

5S so you will automatically reach slam – after learning that partner has two keycards and the heart queen, West will of course bid 6NT rather than 6H, on the assumption that partner has ♣Q to go with ♥AKQ. However, if East believes 4NT is quantitative she might pass, which could explain why two East-West pairs stopped in this contract.



Some of the bridge columns published on our club website will now appear on the [bridge page](#) of our regional online newspaper, The Southern Wire. In addition, The Southern Wire will publish columns that will not appear elsewhere.

