

3 March

## Lots of lessons

Rakesh Kumar

Vulnerable against opponents who are not vulnerable, you hold:

♠AQJ7  
♥JT75  
♦AKJ4  
♣4

Your LHO deals and opens 1♥. Partner passes and RHO raises to 2♥. What are you going to do?

It's a difficult hand. With 16 hcp, you really want to get into the auction and would ideally like to find a spade fit with partner, but a takeout double is supposed to be short in the opponents' suit. Four-card overcalls only make sense at the 1-level. Can you double with this hand even though you don't have tolerance for clubs?

Yes, because you have extra values. Usually a double followed by a bid of a suit other than that shown by partner promises some 16+ hcp and a long/strong suit. Similarly a raise of the suit bid by partner promises 16+ hcp, as partner may have been forced to bid on nothing. Partner of course is aware that your double will be major-oriented i.e. looking for a fit in spades unless you bid something else later, so will always prefer to bid spades if he has 4 cards – but if he does bid clubs, with your strong hand you can correct to 2♦ and expect to play there. So you double and are pleased to hear partner respond 2♠.

Unfortunately RHO now backs in with 3♥. Still, you know partner can't have more than a singleton heart, so although he is likely to have very few points, you dare to raise to 3♠ even at this vulnerability. Partner should be able to generate a few tricks by ruffing in his hand.

This was the full deal, from Monday 3 March:

<b>BD: 12</b>	♠T643	<b>Dlr: W</b>
	♥8	<b>Vul: NS</b>
	♦52	
	♣QJ8752	
♠K5		♠982
♥KQ942		♥A63
♦T73		♦Q986
♣KT9		♣A63
	♠AQJ7	
	♥JT75	
	♦AKJ4	
	♣4	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N	T
N	2		2			3
S	2		3		11	10
E		1	2	2		16
W		1	1	2		

With North playing in 3♠, what will you lead as East? If you start with ace and another heart, you have given declarer the chance to make. North can now ruff the second heart, cross to dummy in diamonds finessing ♦J, ruff another heart, cross back to dummy with a diamond and ruff a low diamond.

Now declarer will exit with a club and dummy will lose only two more tricks – ♠K and the last heart. In fact if East-West don't get the defence right North may get another ruff and make 10 tricks. Moreover, even if North avoids taking the diamond finesse, the contract can still come home if East fails to rise with ♣A and play a spade to prevent one last ruff in hand.

The moral of the story is that when the opponents have been pushed to the 3-level or higher on relatively few high card points, it's often a good idea to lead trumps rather than cash your winners. Then your side can lead trumps again when you do come in with those winners, enabling you to reduce the number of tricks available to declarer via ruffs – in this case in the closed hand which has the weak trump holding, achieving something resembling a dummy reversal.

So this little part-score deal is not as dull as it looks – it is full of lessons with respect to bidding, play and defence!



10 March

## Looking for a game swing

Rakesh Kumar

This month, the Autumn Teams competition is being played at SHBC over two Wednesday evenings. Winning at Teams usually revolves around bidding close games and then finding a way to make them. Sometimes the play is largely based on hope – either that the cards lie well or that the defensive position is just too difficult for the opponents to defeat the contract. First, however, you need to have the courage to go looking for game – preferably the right game.

This deal is from 5 March, the first night of the Autumn Teams. With neither side vulnerable, your LHO deals and opens 1♦. Partner and RHO pass. This is your hand:

♠ K42  
 ♥ KQJ2  
 ♦ 6  
 ♣ AK842

What will you do? With a strong hand, shortage in the opponent's suit and tolerance for both majors, I hope you would choose to double. If you do, somewhat to your surprise partner bids 2♣. Now what?

Making 5♣ is not impossible but contracting for 11 tricks is a fairly tall order. However, if partner has a stopper in diamonds and say 7-9 hcp, which is certainly not out of the question, you might be able to run 9 tricks in 3NT.

So the best way to go looking for a makeable game is to bid 2♦ i.e. cue the opponent's suit to ask for a stopper. When partner rebids 2NT, promising both a stopper and a hand with some values, you can raise to 3NT. That works, because this was the full deal:

<p><b>24</b> W/-</p> <p>♠ QJ3 ♥ T43 ♦ AKT72 ♣ JT</p> <p>8 11 5 16</p>	<p>♠ 97 ♥ A6 ♦ Q953 ♣ Q9763</p> <p>♠ AT865 ♥ 9875 ♦ J84 ♣ 5</p> <p>♠ K42 ♥ KQJ2 ♦ 6 ♣ AK842</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>N</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NT</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♠</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>♥</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♦</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♣</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Opt res: NS 3NT; 430</p> <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>N</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NT</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>♠</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>♥</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>♦</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>♣</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		N	S	NT	4	4	♠			♥	4	4	♦	1	1	♣	5	5		N	S	NT			♠			♥			♦			♣		
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There's more to this deal, though. Would you have passed as East? It's a bidder's game ... a good agreement after an opening of 1-of-a-minor is to always respond with an ace, or a king-queen in the same suit i.e. one sure trick. That's because partner might have up to 18 or 19 hcp, depending on your methods, and you might play in a better part-score in a major suit, or in 2NT. East can certainly afford to bid 1♠ with a hand that includes a 5-card major suit headed by an ace, 3-card support for partner's diamonds (so there is an escape avenue available if needed) and shortage in a side suit (clubs).

The auction on this board might then have been quite different. South will still double for takeout, now showing the unbid suits, but if you play support doubles and redoubles, West can redouble to show 3 cards in spades. Although North will again bid 3♣, South will no longer feel as enthusiastic about trying for 3NT because partner is unlikely to have a spade stopper and the opponents are sure to lead the suit.

That might explain why several North-South pairs played in a part-score in clubs. In fact 5♣ is also makeable because ♠A is on side, but only one pair reached that contract.



23 March

## Still looking for that game swing ...

Rakesh Kumar

The second night of the Autumn Teams competition, on Wednesday 19 March, featured another interesting demonstration of the need to bid courageously to find your way to the right game.

You are vulnerable and your opponents are not. After two passes, your right-hand opponent opens a weak 2S. What should you do with this hand?

♠ **AQT8**  
♥ **Q54**  
♦ **K**  
♣ **AJ752**

It's awkward, isn't it? You have a lot of high card strength and 2S must surely be going down, but at this vulnerability that will only be worth +50 per undertrick. You ought to be trying for the game bonus, hoping to score +600 or better. Bidding 3C isn't likely to achieve that, plus your suit isn't that good. So should you make a takeout double? You don't really have appropriate shape – and even if you get lucky and partner does respond 3H, would you dare to raise to 4H with only three cards in the suit?

Perhaps you could double and plan to convert partner's more likely 3D response to 3NT. However, when you double, you force partner to bid – she may have very few high card points and you may land in a doomed contract.

If you believe partner must have some length and probably has an honour or two in diamonds, then your singleton ♦K won't necessarily be wasted in notrumps, so the best solution is to overcall 2NT. This tells partner about your high card strength, even if no one could describe your shape as balanced! More importantly, it gives partner the opportunity to co-operate in making a decision about the final contract. As you can see from the complete deal, partner held a very useful hand:

<b>19</b> S/EW	♠ <b>KJ9642</b> ♥ <b>K32</b> ♦ <b>52</b> ♣ <b>Q8</b>	♠ <b>AQT8</b> ♥ <b>Q54</b> ♦ <b>K</b> ♣ <b>AJ752</b>	Opt res: EW 3NT; -660																		
♠ <b>3</b> ♥ <b>AT96</b> ♦ <b>AJT8</b> ♣ <b>T643</b>	♠ <b>75</b> ♥ <b>J87</b> ♦ <b>Q97643</b> ♣ <b>K9</b>																				
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			<table><thead><tr><th></th><th>E</th><th>W</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>NT</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>♠</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>♥</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>♦</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>♣</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr></tbody></table>		E	W	NT	5	5	♠	3	3	♥	5	5	♦	3	3	♣	5	5
	E	W																			
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♥	5	5																			
♦	3	3																			
♣	5	5																			

She is likely to first bid 3C Stayman, looking for a possible 4-4 heart fit, but when you rebid 3D denying 4 hearts, you will arrive in 3NT, which is glacially cold.

Pushing for a vulnerable game at Teams often pays off, because fortune really does favour the brave. In the Autumn Teams, many settled for defeating 2S. Only two East-West pairs reached game, one playing in the straightforward 3NT and one in the rather more fragile but still unbeatable 4H.



# 6 April

## Third seat pre-empt

Rakesh Kumar

Neither side is vulnerable. Partner passes as dealer, as does your right-hand opponent. You hold:

♠ -  
 ♥ KJ9843  
 ♦ AKT6  
 ♣ A86

What are you going to bid?

There are a few things to think about. Firstly, you have quite a good hand and probably don't need partner to hold very much to be able to make 4♥. Secondly, your left-hand opponent probably has a good hand, maybe even a very good hand. Given that partner didn't start proceedings with a weak two-bid in spades, the opponents almost certainly have a spade fit – you really don't want them to find this at a low level and then have to wonder whether or not you dare to outbid them. Thirdly – and most importantly – partner has already passed, which means that all the standard recommendations about pre-emptive bidding no longer apply.

So the best thing you can do is to bid what you think you might be able to make and what you are sure will cause maximum inconvenience to the opponents i.e. open 4♥! That works out very well, because this was the full deal, from Saturday 29 March:

<b>BD: 11</b>	♠	<b>Dlr: S</b>	
	♥KJ9843	<b>Vul: None</b>	
	♦AKT6		
	♣A86		
♠KQJT		♠A942	
♥T		♥A652	
♦J93		♦72	
♣Q9532		♣KJ7	
	♠87653		
	♥Q7		
	♦Q854		
	♣T4		
	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠	N	
		T	
N	4 4		15
S	4 4	9	12
E	2 2		4
W	3 2		

Even with the 4-1 break in trumps, 4♥ could not be defeated. Had it gone one down that would still have been a better score than allowing the opponents to make a part-score in a black suit. However on the day, although a few pairs were allowed to play in a part-score in hearts, only one pair played in 4♥, North having opened with this bid. A 1♥ opening was usually followed by two passes, after which West typically balanced with a double, 1♠ or 2♣. Or sometimes East made an off-shape takeout double. In any case, the North-South game was then missed.

Yes, it's true that your hand looks nothing at all like a typical pre-empt, but so what? In third seat, rules are made to be broken – light opening bids to help partner with her opening lead are entirely OK, as are unconventional higher-level "pre-emptive" bids that may in fact be bid to make.



19 April

## Slams from the Central West Festival




Rakesh Kumar

The Central West Bridge Festival was held in Orange from 10-13 April. It was a great success and a great credit to all the members of the organising committee – special mention must be made of our very own Rob Ward.

Six players from SHBC made their way to Orange. I was particularly pleased to see four of our stalwarts competing in the Novice Teams. Kirsten Hartley and Simon Elderfield finished fourth out of 24 in the pair rankings in that event – very well done!

Mardi Svensson and I had a good start in the Open Swiss Pairs, but in that type of event one needs a bit of luck to continue to do well – whether one is sitting in the "right" direction when the cards turn up often has a huge impact on the outcome. Sadly, on day two we were in the "wrong" direction more often than not (i.e. the opponents held most of the high cards and had control of the contracts) plus we made a few unforced errors, so our souffle progressively subsided.

Ah well. There were lots of instructive deals over the course of three and a half days of bridge. I've selected two that relate to successful slam bidding, often a source of major swings in IMPs events. Here's the first, from round 8 of the Pairs. How will you reach 6S after West passes and North opens 1NT promising 15-17 hcp? South bids 2C, of course, and North responds 2S. What next?

Board 16	♠KJ73	
Dealer W	♥K65	
Vul E-W	♦K6	
	♣AK43	
♠T9		♠852
♥943		♥JT8
♦QT87543		♦A92
♣5		♣JT92
	♠AQ64	
	♥AQ72	
	♦J	
	♣Q876	
	Makeable contracts	
	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
17	N 5 - 6 6 6	
2 6	S 5 - 5 6 -	
15	E - 1 - - -	
	W - 1 - - -	

In an auction such as this, on the one hand you need to be able to invite a slam in notrump if you have, say, 15-16 hcp and no fit for spades; while on the other hand, if you do have a fit and a good hand, you need to be able to set partner's suit as trumps and then look for slam. A direct bid of 4NT is usually treated as the former – it is referred to as a quantitative bid. So how can you set suit and thus convert the meaning of 4NT to Roman Keycard Blackwood in partner's suit? The answer is to bid 3 of the other major suit – in this case 3H – because this has no use whatsoever as a natural bid. So on this deal, the auction should be 1NT-2C-2S-3H (sets spades, shows slam interest)-4C (control bid, shows ace or king of clubs)-4NT (RKCB)-5H (two keycards, no queen)-6S. In the Open Pairs, 16 of 32 reached slam, but unsurprisingly the proportion was much lower in the Intermediate, Restricted and Novice sections.

The second deal, from round 6 of the Teams, is not only about bidding methods but also about attitude. This time South opens 1S and West, holding a 6-card suit, is likely to overcall 2H even with just 8 hcp. North can now make a cue raise by bidding 3H, which promises at least a game-invitational hand with spade support. What should South do at this point?

Board 27	♠AQ6				
Dealer S	♥AT7				
Vul None	♦QT8				
	♣AQ54				
♠87	<div style="background-color: #008000; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>	♠432			
♥KJ9532	<div style="background-color: #008000; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; color: yellow; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">27</div>	♥Q864			
♦KJ3	<div style="background-color: #008000; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; color: white; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">D</div>	♦762			
♣76		♣JT2			
	♠KJT95				
	♥-				
	♦A954				
	♣K983				
	Makeable contracts				
	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT				
18	N 7 6 1 6 5				
8 3	S 7 6 1 6 5				
11	E - - - - -				
	W - - - - -				

There are two ways you might look at the South hand. One is to say that it has only 11 hcp and is therefore minimum. The other is to say that it has only 6 losers *and* you have good intermediate cards *and* you are void in the opponent's suit. That makes it anything but minimum. Therefore you should jump to 4S to show this – and now North will certainly look for slam. In both the Open and Intermediate divisions, more than half the field did bid to 6S, but the deal was more of a challenge for the Restricted and Novice divisions.



26 April

## Playing safely at IMPs

Rakesh Kumar

When playing for IMPs, at Teams or at IMP Pairs, your priorities are different to matchpoint pairs and your tactics need to change accordingly. In summary, at IMPs you need to (1) bid to every game contract with any reasonable chance of making (2) play to ensure the safety of your contract, without worrying about making overtricks (3) defend aggressively to try to take the opponents' contract down, without worrying about conceding overtricks.

The second round of the Country Teams Qualifying – played as IMP Pairs on 26 April – featured a deal that was instructive. With the opponents silent, you arrive in 4♥ after partner opens 1♣ and raises your 1♥ response. The opening lead is ♠Q. You win in dummy and cash ♦AK discarding two spades from hand. What now?

♠K98  
♥Q652  
♦AKT  
♣QT2

♠AT74  
♥AJ87  
♦  
♣J9643

At matchpoint pairs, you play a small heart to the jack, hoping that if the finesse succeeds you might be able to drop ♥K and make 11 tricks. At IMPs, however, this is most unwise. If the finesse fails and your left-hand opponent switches to clubs from a doubleton, with right-hand opponent holding ♣AK, the ensuing ruff will mean that you will go down, because this was the full deal, now in its correct orientation:

**BD: 2** ♠QJ65    **Dir: E**  
♥K4    **Vul: NS**  
♦QJ975  
♣87

♠AT74    ♠K98  
♥AJ87    ♥Q652  
♦    ♦AKT  
♣J9643    ♣QT2

♠32  
♥T93  
♦86432  
♣AK5

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N	T
N	1				9	
S	1				10	14
E	4	4	2	4	7	
W	4	4	2	4		

What you need to do at trick 4 is play a heart to the ace, followed by a low heart. Provided the missing trumps break 3-2 you will lose only three tricks (♥K and ♣AK) which will be worth quite a few IMPs if the safety play is not found at the other table (at Teams) or across the field (at IMP Pairs).

Things might have been a great deal more awkward on this deal if the opening lead had been ♣8. After North ruffed, you would have had to play a heart to the ace to drop the king! Fortunately, partner's 1♣ opening bid meant that on the day, no one led a club: without fail, the opening lead was either ♠Q or ♦Q. However, 4♥ was made at only half the tables.



## 5 May

### How much worse?

Rakesh Kumar

With neither side vulnerable, you find yourself looking at this rather sad collection:

♠J6  
♥42  
♦8743  
♣KT853

Your RHO is the dealer and opens 1D. You pass, of course, and so does your LHO. Partner doubles and RHO rebids 2H, now showing a good (say 16+ hcp) hand with 5+ diamonds and 4 hearts. You pass again, so does LHO, and partner backs in with 2S. When this goes around to LHO he bids 3H, but partner is still there and bids 3S. RHO bids 4H. Will you do anything at this point?

By doubling and then bidding – and bidding again – partner has shown a really strong hand with 6+ spades. The opponents have bid hearts and diamonds. You have 4 cards in diamonds, so partner almost certainly has shortage there, plus some high cards in clubs to go with your king. As you have a doubleton heart and a doubleton spade honour, your hand might provide a heart ruff as well. So even on your miserable 4 hcp, you should raise to 4S.

Steve Brabyn did and was doubled, but the contract proved to be impregnable, because this was the deal, from Monday 5 May:

<b>BD: 11</b> ♠753 ♥T753 ♦KT6 ♣976  ♠J6 ♥42 ♦8743 ♣KT853  ♠98 ♥KQ86 ♦AQJ95 ♣A2  ♣♦♥♠ N T	<b>Dlr: S</b> <b>Vul: None</b>  ♠AKQT42 ♥AJ9 ♦2 ♣QJ4  ♠AKQT42 ♥AJ9 ♦2 ♣QJ4  ♠AKQT42 ♥AJ9 ♦2 ♣QJ4  ♠AKQT42 ♥AJ9 ♦2 ♣QJ4
---	---

N	2	2		3	
S	2	2	4	17	
E	4		4	1	16
W	4		4	1	

That earned us a big fat zero, because absolutely no one else bid game!

The West hand is a very good illustration of the idea that when you have very few high card points, you shouldn't simply look at how bad is your hand, but should also ask "how much worse could I be?" If you do that, you might sometimes surprise yourself – and the opponents – with the answer.



13 May

## Impossible auctions

Rakesh Kumar

Monday 12 May was a session full of bidding headaches and implausible auctions. Most of these were the result of horrible misfitting hands, which led to some gruesome contracts, typically going 3 down on proper defence. And then there was the ultimate fit, cold for slam on the lie of the cards, on which most of the North-South field, including my partner and me, failed to reach game! This was the deal:

North <span style="float: right;">V</span>	
♠ 8 6 4 3	
♥ 9 2	
♦ A K Q 7 5 3	
♣ 2	
West <span style="float: right;">D V</span>	East <span style="float: right;">V</span>
♠ J 10 9 7 5 2	♠ K
♥ Q 6 3	♥ 10 8 7 4
♦	♦ J 4
♣ K 10 7 5	♣ A J 9 8 4 3
South <span style="float: right;">V</span>	
♠ A Q	
♥ A K J 5	
♦ 10 9 8 6 2	
♣ Q 6	
HCPs	
9	
6 9	
16	

Whether North-South succeed in bidding to game really depends on what East-West do. As dealer, if West chooses to open 2S vulnerable with that fairly poor suit, things actually become relatively easy for South – after two passes, she can make a takeout double, which promises hearts but does not have to guarantee support for clubs. When North responds 3D, this should lead to a contract of 5D.

However, if West passes, what should North do? If your system includes a weak 2D opening you would not have a problem. If not, a mischievous 3D opening on a strong 6-card suit, ignoring the non-suit in spades, might be worth considering. Still, vulnerable in second seat that might prove to be a terrible idea if partner has spades, so pass is probably best. Now what should East do? Pass is the normal action, after which South has no issues – she opens 1D. Of course North will respond 1S, then when South reverses into 2H showing shape and strength, North can leap to 5D without hesitation.

The biggest problem arises if East makes a light third seat opening of 1C, intending this to be lead-directing. This opening gives South an awful headache. Her longest suit is really not suitable for a 1D overcall; she can't double without at least 3-card support for spades; and she can't bid 1NT on the basis of ♣Q6. Perhaps a 4-card overcall of 1H? That gets 1S from West and maybe, just maybe, a stretched 2D from North ...

At our table, East did open 1C in third seat. My partner tried a 1D overcall anyway, which was deeply perplexing given what I held, so I didn't jump in response and we subsided in a part-score ... would you have found your way to at least 5D?



26 May

## More missed slams ...

Rakesh Kumar

On a quite a number of previous occasions, I've pointed out that bidding and making slams is always winning bridge, so one should be on the lookout for possible slam contracts. I've also bemoaned, more than once, the fact that our club members are really reluctant to bid slams. Perhaps that's in part because of fear of going down in a 5-level contract, or because of uncertainty about when it's right to try for a slam.

The 4 ingredients that make a slam likely to succeed are (i) enough high card points, although the so-called magic number of 33 hcp is really only relevant to notrump small slams without a long side suit as a source of tricks (ii) a good fit in a suit, in which case a slam with that suit as trumps might be best (iii) top controls i.e. aces and kings (iv) a shortage in opener's/responder's hand – or even better, shortages in both – because singletons and voids make it possible to generate tricks in a suit slam with fewer high card points.

Of course it helps if your bidding methods are sound. What will you open as dealer with this hand?

♠K754  
♥AQ532  
♦AK  
♣A3

It has 20 high card points, lots of top controls and both major suits. If you believe in the losing trick count then it's a 4-loser hand (two losers in spades, one in hearts, one in clubs). In any case, this is a forcing 2C opening by any criteria, not just a 1H opening intending to make a jump rebid in spades.

If partner opens 2C, a sound approach is to always respond 2D as a waiting bid, rather than muddying the waters by trying to show your hand. A 2C opener may be strong and balanced or may have a good or even a self-sufficient suit – give partner the opportunity to clarify.

If the auction starts 2C-2D, with the above hand opener first rebids 2H, intending to later rebid spades if no heart fit is found. If you are responder, what will you then do with this hand?

♠A  
♥KJ86  
♦QJ985  
♣K74

I would have thought the first thing you should/would do is get excited! Partner has some sort of 4-loser or better hand with 5+ hearts and depending on your

agreements, some 16+, 18+ or 19+ hcp. You have 14 hcp with a singleton spade ace, a great fit with hearts, a potential source of tricks in diamonds and an outside king of clubs. If you want to try applying loser count arithmetic, you have 6 losers (two in each suit other than spades) so opposite an opening hand with no more than 4 losers you should have the potential for  $24 - (6 + 4) = 14$  tricks!

Anyway, you really can't do less than bid 4NT Roman Keycard Blackwood. When partner shows 3 keycards – with a 5D response if you play 14/30 – you know you have them all so can inquire for the heart queen by bidding 5S, which is an artificial bid of the next step up the line that isn't the trump suit. Opener will rebid 6D, affirming that she has ♥Q and also promising ♦K.

You can now count at least 13 tricks – 5 hearts, at least 4 diamonds, two clubs, the ace of spades and a spade ruff in your hand. So what should you be bidding? 7H of course!

This was the complete deal, from Monday 26 May:

<b>BD: 18</b>	♠A	<b>Dlr: E</b>
	♥KJ86	<b>Vul: NS</b>
	♦QJ985	
	♣K74	
♠QJT932		♠86
♥9		♥T74
♦762		♦T43
♣J52		♣QT986
	♠K754	
	♥AQ532	
	♦AK	
	♣A3	
	♣♦♥♠	N
		T
N	4 7 7 3 7	14
S	4 7 7 3 7 4 2	
E		20
W		

Sadly, at our club the usual reluctance to bid to slam was on display. Only 3 of 7 North-South pairs bid a slam at all and only one of those bid the grand slam.

Bid 'em up!!

