



Email: [bulletin@bridge-madeira.com](mailto:bulletin@bridge-madeira.com)

# Madeira International Bridge Open 2025

## 3rd - 9th November 2025

### VidaMar Resort, Funchal

**Saturday 8 November**

**Bulletin 5**

## The Teams

After the opening session of the teams we have team NOR-ICE (Bjertnes – Stabell – Agnarsson – Thorfinnsson) leading the field after three matches with a magnificent 54.95 VPs from a possible 60, and coming up from behind in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place are Garfield (Bjertnes – Stabell – Agnarsson – Thorfinnsson) and SELENA (Bjertnes – Stabell – Agnarsson – Thorfinnsson) on almost equally magnificent scores of 53.96 and 53.92 respectively.

### Players can check the table assignment for the next round:

- on the projections on the walls of the Congress Centre and the Tower 2 lobby near the Welcome Desk
- in the Tournament WhatsApp group
- by using the link [https://www.abridgemadeira.com/ficheiros/eventos/2025/s251109r\\_X.pdf](https://www.abridgemadeira.com/ficheiros/eventos/2025/s251109r_X.pdf) where X is the round number

Results from previous rounds are available through <https://www.abridgemadeira.com/ficheiros/eventos/2025/s251109cl.htm> a couple of minutes after the last score of that round has been entered in the Bridgемate.

### Closing Dinner - last chance to book

Today is the last possibility to book for the Closing Dinner. Book at the Welcome Desk, which is open from 13:30 to 14:30. Tomorrow it will be too late to book.

### IntoBridge Competition

Please submit your entries for the Best or Worst played hand by 14:30 on Sunday at the latest.  
See page 5 for more details.

### Schedule of Play (2 matches on [BBO](#))

#### Saturday

|         |               |
|---------|---------------|
| Round 4 | 11:00 – 12:00 |
| Round 5 | 12:15 – 13:15 |
| Round 6 | 14:30 – 15:30 |
| Round 7 | 15:45 – 16:45 |
| Round 8 | 17:00 – 18:00 |
| Round 9 | 18:15 – 19:15 |

#### Sunday

|          |               |
|----------|---------------|
| Round 10 | 14:30 – 15:30 |
| Round 11 | 15:45 – 16:45 |
| Round 12 | 17:15 – 18:15 |

### Lunch Break

Today after the second session of the Open Teams (about 13:15) a lunch will be served in the Ocean Restaurant.

All those who are members of teams are entitled to it. If you would like the lunch but are not a member of a team, you can buy a ticket from the Welcome Desk.

You must present your barcode badge – no badge, no lunch.

## Find Your Way Around the Venue

### VIDAMAR RESORT MADEIRA: LOCATION OF BRIDGE FACILITIES



#### WELCOME DESK

In VidaMar Tower 2 Level 4.

You will need to collect your bar-coded Identity Badge here. The Welcome Desk is also the best place to ask for other information. You can also purchase excursions and the Traditional and Gala Dinners at the Welcome Desk.

Opening hours are published in this bulletin, on-site and on our website.

#### CONGRESS CENTRE

Opposite the entrance to VidaMar.

The pre-tournament events and Warm-Up Pairs are played here, as well as several sections of the main events.

#### SELVAGENS SUITE

In VidaMar Tower 2 Level 4.

#### DESERTAS SUITE

In VidaMar Tower 1 Level 4 (turn right at Reception).

#### VUGRAPH

In the Congress Centre – through the double doors on the right-hand side of the lobby, just past the bar.





# 28<sup>th</sup> Madeira Bridge Festival

## Programme

**Please arrive 15 minutes before start of play.**

### Main Programme

*(Congress Centre, Desertas, Selvagens 1-2-3)*

Saturday 8th

**Teams Session 2 (2 matches)** 11:00

Lunch break (included for players). 13:15

You must bring your Identity Badge.

**Teams Session 3 (4 matches)** 14:30

Sunday 9th

**Teams Session 4 (3 matches)** 14:30

Final Results 19:00

Closing Dinner 20:30

### Post Tournament *(Selvagens 5)*

Monday 10th

Cool-down Pairs (10€) 20:30

## Social Programme

### Closing Dinner and Prize Giving

Ocean Restaurant

Sunday 9th November 20:30

Any of the Social Programme events may be purchased at the Welcome Desk.

### Deadlines for bookings:

Gala Final Dinner

(subject to availability): Saturday 14:30

### Prices

Saturday Lunch (non-players) €20.00

Closing Dinner €50.00

## Badges

**You must bring your Identity Badge to all events, including social events.**

## Welcome Desk

The Welcome Desk in the lobby of VidaMar Tower 2 will be open at the following times:

Saturday 8th Nov. 13:30 – 14:30

Sunday 9th Nov. 13:00 – 14:30

## Contacts

### Organisation

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## Prizes

*Welcome Desk*

**Prizes for the main events must be collected between the following times.**

**Please bring your Identity Badge and a form of identification, such as a passport.**

Saturday 8th Nov. 10:00 – 11:00 13:30 – 14:30

Sunday 9th Nov. 19:30 – 20:30

## Table Assignments

You will find your starting positions for each session on the TV screen near the Welcome Desk and on the projected screens in the Congress Centre and outside *Selvagens*.

## Best Defence

Ceri Pierce

### Matchpoint Pairs Thursday

Mark Thiele popped in to the Bulletin room to tell me about a well-defended hand for the coveted IntoBridge Trophy for the Best Hand Competition (see page 5). He and his partner Renée Verdegaaal defended 3NT on Board 16 in the Matchpoint Pairs a week last Thursday (which does seem like a long time ago now).

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

|        |                                        |         |       |
|--------|----------------------------------------|---------|-------|
|        | ♠ 103                                  |         |       |
|        | ♥ 54                                   |         |       |
|        | ♦ J10543                               |         |       |
|        | ♣ K643                                 |         |       |
| ♠ J975 | <div>♠ N<br/>♥ W<br/>♦ E<br/>♣ S</div> | ♠ A862  |       |
| ♥ K107 |                                        | ♥ 9862  |       |
| ♦ 986  |                                        | ♦ 2     |       |
| ♣ 872  |                                        | ♣ AQ109 |       |
|        | ♠ KQ4                                  |         |       |
|        | ♥ AQJ3                                 |         |       |
|        | ♦ AKQ7                                 |         |       |
|        | ♣ J5                                   |         |       |
| West   | North                                  | East    | South |
| Pass   | Pass                                   | 1♣      | Dble  |
| Pass   | 1♦                                     | Pass    | 1♥    |
| Pass   | 1NT                                    | Pass    | 3NT   |

All Pass

North declared in 3NT and Mark (East) led the ♥2 to the jack and king. His partner returned the ♣7 to the queen. Now what?

If East leads ♣A and another ♣ declarer makes the contract – he can cash five diamonds and East will be squeezed in three suits.

East has to keep his four hearts as well as his clubs, so he returned a heart to dummy and now declarer played a club himself – if East plays a club back he is squeezed in the same way so he played a third heart.

Declarer now has a problem because he has to discard on the third heart. At the table he threw a spade and cashed five diamonds. But East can throw three spades and a winning heart away. Declarer now plays a spade to the dummy, but East wins with the ace, and now plays the ♠10 to the king and declarer has to play a club back to East's ♣9, the defence making a heart, three clubs and a spade. Well defended indeed.

On closer examination we found that it is always possible to make 3NT by North – but it is not easy.

On the third heart, throwing a club instead of a spade does not work. East can keep the ♠A and his fourth heart. If declarer throws a club, East can also throw a club.

If the plays goes heart lead to the king, a club back followed by a second heart, declarer must cash his five diamonds and will make his contract on a stepping stone squeeze because East cannot discard three spades: if he does, declarer can simply exit with a small spade.

If East keeps two spades and also has to keep two hearts, then he has to throw his clubs. So now after the fifth diamond, declarer can play a spade to the king which East must duck, then declarer can play a small spade from dummy to East's bare ace. East must then lead a heart to dummy so that his third spade is a winner. Simples.



-10%

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\*Discount cannot be combined with other promotions or specials offers



30€

BUFFET DINNER

Ocean Restaurant

(drinks included - restricted)

## Bridge Teaching the Bricklayer Way, Part Two

Christine Winckel

Hans Metselaar aka 'Bricklayer' divides his beginners' course into two parts. The first six lessons are solely used for learning the art of trick taking and communication with partner. Only when the beginners feel comfortable with that does he start on bidding.

*'Each card tells a story and asks a question, so visualise partner's lead before you decide what to play. Your sole objective at the bridge table is making sure your partner has a thoroughly good time, and if you manage that, so will you. Put the things you learn here to work in your relationship, and it will improve a lot.'*

Because of his charismatic way of teaching, his jokes, his smiles and his encouragement, he has his pupils on a string and they tend to remember his lessons so much better. It is just so much fun.

The goal of the first course is to enable participants to be able to play eighteen to twenty-four boards during a bridge session and have a good time doing it. After the second course they will be able to play in club competitions and drives.

Another change in the setup is the length of a course. It used to be fifteen lessons but now it is eighteen lessons. People go on holiday more than they used to and social obligations make them miss a few classes so some extra time added helps to keep everybody on board.

Insight evolves as we go along. Maarten van Os, the very capable and dedicated chairman of Bridge Club Leidschenhage came up with a brilliant idea. Starting next year, we will open up the lessons to every bridge club in the region. Each delegation from another club may be accompanied by a volunteer who can support them and help them integrate the lessons smoothly into their own club when they are ready. In this way all clubs will be able to benefit.

Coronavirus has hit the Dutch bridge community hard, and we aim to revive our beloved sport the best way we can. And you know, this new approach just might do the trick. Clubs in all our districts working together under the supervision of the Dutch Bridge Federation, raising the membership back to the levels we had in the first decade of this century!

## IntoBridge Competition

[IntoBridge.com](https://www.into-bridge.com) is once again visiting the Madeira Bridge Festival and bringing special prizes and gifts.

### Special Prizes From IntoBridge

- Best Played Hand - anything brilliant that happened at the table
- Worst Played Hand - we are not just looking for bad hands, we know you have plenty of them. The hands we are looking for involve some good planning and intentions, but due to unfavourable circumstances, failed dramatically.

Bidding, declarer play, and defence all qualify. Please, nominate yourself, your partner, or an opponent by submitting the hand to the Bulletin team (Mark Horton or Ceri Pierce), located at the far end of Tower 1 in the Bulletin Room (turn right at the hotel reception and then left by the

delightful flowery sofa), or email [bulletin@bridge-madeira.com](mailto:bulletin@bridge-madeira.com).

The prizes include special plaquettes and a complimentary one-year subscription to IntoBridge.

Hands from any of the tournaments in this year's festival are eligible. Don't be shy, submit your exciting hands! But please do so before play starts on Sunday.



## Out of The Blocks

Ron Tacchi

In the final session of the Open Pairs I was determined that we would have a good session. In my wildest dreams I did not believe the start we would have: over 70% after twelve boards. I was taking risks and they were paying off. The first board we played was Board 3.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

|         |                    |          |
|---------|--------------------|----------|
|         | ♠ KJ42             |          |
|         | ♥ K1043            |          |
|         | ♦ A7432            |          |
|         | ♣ —                |          |
| ♠ 10963 | <div>W N E S</div> | ♠ Q5     |
| ♥ A86   |                    | ♥ QJ72   |
| ♦ J109  |                    | ♦ 65     |
| ♣ KJ4   |                    | ♣ AQ1032 |
|         | ♠ A87              |          |
|         | ♥ 95               |          |
|         | ♦ KQ8              |          |
|         | ♣ 98765            |          |

| West | North<br><i>Me (Ron)</i> | East | South<br><i>Andrea</i> |
|------|--------------------------|------|------------------------|
| —    | —                        | —    | Pass                   |
| Pass | 1♦                       | Dble | 2♦                     |
| Dble | 3♦                       | 3♥   | All Pass               |

A fairly typical pairs auction where neither side wanted to give in. They won the battle but lost the war as our defence was accurate. Andrea cashed two top diamonds and switched to the ♣9 for me to ruff. A spade went back and I ruffed another club, cashed the king of spades and awaited my trump trick for three off vulnerable in a part-score deal. 92%, an excellent start.

## WhatsApp Group

We now have a WhatsApp group for news, information and results from the Madeira International Bridge Open.



Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

|           |                          |          |                        |
|-----------|--------------------------|----------|------------------------|
|           | ♠ KJ4                    |          |                        |
|           | ♥ 9                      |          |                        |
|           | ♦ KQ92                   |          |                        |
|           | ♣ K7652                  |          |                        |
| ♠ 95      | <div>W N E S</div>       | ♠ Q8763  |                        |
| ♥ KQ10852 |                          | ♥ J743   |                        |
| ♦ 85      |                          | ♦ 763    |                        |
| ♣ AJ3     |                          | ♣ Q      |                        |
|           | ♠ A102                   |          |                        |
|           | ♥ A6                     |          |                        |
|           | ♦ AJ104                  |          |                        |
|           | ♣ 10984                  |          |                        |
| West      | North<br><i>Me (Ron)</i> | East     | South<br><i>Andrea</i> |
| —         | —                        | Pass     | 1♦                     |
| 2♥        | Dble                     | Pass     | 3♣                     |
| Pass      | 5♣                       | All Pass |                        |

In the previous session Andrea had played two consecutive hands in Five Clubs for good scores, and I know when I am onto a good thing. On the lead of the king of hearts the ace was taken and the hearts eliminated. Returning to hand with a diamond, a club to the king held the trick. Now declarer could guarantee her contract by playing on diamonds and if the defence did not ruff she could exit in trumps and then the defence would have to open up the spade suit, ensuring no losers and three quarters of the match-points.

## Polo Shirts

You can order festival Polo Shirts from our website to collect from the Welcome Desk. Simply click or scan the QR Code.



Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

|         |           |         |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| ♠ 83    | ♠ KJ75    | ♠ Q642  |
| ♥ 8742  | ♥ QJ      | ♥ 9     |
| ♦ Q8543 | ♦ AKJ10   | ♦ 762   |
| ♣ K5    | ♣ QJ7     | ♣ A9632 |
|         | ♠ A109    |         |
|         | ♥ AK10653 |         |
|         | ♦ 9       |         |
|         | ♣ 1084    |         |



| West | North<br><i>Me (Ron)</i> | East     | South<br><i>Andrea</i> |
|------|--------------------------|----------|------------------------|
| —    | —                        | —        | 1♥                     |
| Pass | 1♠                       | Pass     | 2♥                     |
| Pass | 3♣                       | Pass     | 3♠                     |
| Pass | 4NT                      | Pass     | 5♣                     |
| Pass | 6NT                      | All Pass |                        |

I did not know what our agreements were after the Two Hearts bid: was 3♣ showing a stop or asking for one? I decided it did not matter – I had set my sights on slam, almost certainly in No Trumps, and furthermore Three Clubs might muddy the waters, which indeed it did. When East led a small diamond and West produced the queen I tabled my cards for twelve tricks and a whopping 96%.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

|        |           |         |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| ♠ Q73  | ♠ A98     | ♠ K652  |
| ♥ K53  | ♥ AQJ1097 | ♥ 84    |
| ♦ J94  | ♦ Q3      | ♦ K107  |
| ♣ K632 | ♣ A4      | ♣ Q1087 |
|        | ♠ J104    |         |
|        | ♥ 62      |         |
|        | ♦ A8652   |         |
|        | ♣ J95     |         |



| West | North<br><i>Me (Ron)</i> | East     | South<br><i>Andrea</i> |
|------|--------------------------|----------|------------------------|
| —    | —                        | Pass     | Pass                   |
| Pass | 1♥                       | Pass     | 1NT                    |
| Pass | 4♥                       | All Pass |                        |

There are some who might say 3♥ might be a 'safer' bid but I was on a roll and riding my luck. I was immediately rewarded when East led a small spade as this gave me my contract and also I did not have to be Garozzo to bring home the contract. I played the ♠10 from dummy and captured West's queen with my ace and immediately returned the suit. East won with the king and exited with another spade giving me an entry to dummy. I took a successful trump finesse, and dummy was entered with the ace of diamonds to repeat the finesse. I now ran all of my trumps and on the last one East had to decide whether I held the queen of diamonds, or no diamonds and the ace, king and another club. He guessed incorrectly and so I had an unexpected overtrick and another amazing result of 98%.

We had a little wobble on boards 17 and 18 where I miscounted the club suit and had an Icarus moment in bidding 6NT rather than playing in our 5-5 fit.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| ♠ J8    | ♠ 1093   | ♠ A752   |
| ♥ KQJ10 | ♥ A63    | ♥ 754    |
| ♦ AQ92  | ♦ 654    | ♦ J10873 |
| ♣ J32   | ♣ Q876   | ♣ 5      |
|         | ♠ KQ64   |          |
|         | ♥ 982    |          |
|         | ♦ K      |          |
|         | ♣ AK1094 |          |



| West     | North<br><i>Me (Ron)</i> | East | South<br><i>Andrea</i> |
|----------|--------------------------|------|------------------------|
| —        | —                        | Pass | 1♣                     |
| Dble     | 1NT                      | 2♠   | 3♣                     |
| All Pass |                          |      |                        |

The opponents did not manage to find their 5-4 minor-suit fit and so Andrea continued to demonstrate that playing in a minor can bring good results. When the ace of spades was favourably placed, there were nine tricks for the taking and 80%.

As we started on table two the next board was the last of our session.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

|          |  |            |           |  |
|----------|--|------------|-----------|--|
|          |  | ♠ 3        |           |  |
|          |  | ♥ AK108752 |           |  |
|          |  | ♦ A74      |           |  |
|          |  | ♣ A2       |           |  |
| ♠ Q82    |  |            | ♠ AK10975 |  |
| ♥ 96     |  |            | ♥ 3       |  |
| ♦ KJ5    |  |            | ♦ 103     |  |
| ♣ 108643 |  |            | ♣ J975    |  |
|          |  | ♠ J64      |           |  |
|          |  | ♥ QJ4      |           |  |
|          |  | ♦ Q9862    |           |  |
|          |  | ♣ KQ       |           |  |



| West | North    | East     | South  |
|------|----------|----------|--------|
| —    | Me (Ron) | —        | Andrea |
| 2♥*  | Pass     | 2♦*      | Pass   |
| Pass | 4♥       | All Pass | Pass   |

2♦ Multi  
2♥ pass or correct

I may have taken a very slight risk by passing Two Hearts but I think it is negligible for two reasons, firstly you do not want to be playing in Four Hearts with a 6-0 split and secondly partner may reopen with a double if Two Hearts is passed to her. I ruffed the second round of spades, drew trumps, eliminated spades and cashed my club tricks before playing ace and another diamond. There are many possibilities for an endplay but none of them actually work on this hand. However, when the gods are smiling on you sometimes good things happen and here, when West, after taking his king of diamonds, decided to play a club, an overtrick magically appeared. The second diamond I played was the ♦7; he may have thought that I would never have given up on the chance of winning a beer, there could be no more diamonds in my hand. Almost certainly false but it adds to the story. This netted 81% and we finished with a very creditable 56.48% for the session.

Overall we finished a couple of places outside the top third. I am very pleased with how Andrea and I played together as a scratch pair – thrown together minutes before the start – but most importantly we both enjoyed our bridge, both the high points and the low points. I look forward to meeting Andrea again next year when hopefully her intended partner will be able to play.

## Security Alert

Ceri Pierce

My earlier article about being searched for plastic explosives en route to Madeira at Bristol Airport prompted another forgotten story to emerge.

The Welsh team for the Camrose (the Great Britain and Ireland Home International) was being played in Belfast in Northern Ireland before the Good Friday Agreement came into force. It is fair to say that Belfast was a troubled place in those days and security was high.

One team member, who shall remain nameless in order to protect the guilty, likes to play games – card games, board games, word games and the like, so had packed several games into his luggage to entertain the team in their quieter moments.

One such game was called 'Pass the Bomb', a game where a toy bomb is wound up and passed from player to player, each of whom must contribute a relevant word before passing the bomb to the next person. At a random interval the bomb 'explodes' and the person holding it at that time gets a penalty card – all good clean fun. It was, however, not seen as such by airport security. He was called to one side and asked to take out the bomb-shaped ... well ... bomb out of his luggage. A 'bomb' complete with fuse. Which was also ticking. Happily the security guards did not haul him off to prison and he was able to continue to his bridge match. Moral of the story – do not carry bomb-shaped items that tick onto an aeroplane.



*Footnote: I have also been stopped for carrying a Christmas pudding in my luggage.*

*Any other tips for travellers are welcome – please send them to [bulletin@bridge-madeira.com](mailto:bulletin@bridge-madeira.com).*

## Playing the Game

Law 40.C of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge states as follows:

*A player may deviate from his side's announced understandings, provided that his partner has no more reason than the opponents to be aware of the deviation. Repeated deviations lead to implicit understandings which then form part of the partnership's methods and must be disclosed in accordance with the regulations governing disclosure of system. If the Director judges there is undisclosed knowledge that has damaged the opponents he shall adjust the score and may assess a procedural penalty.*

Psyching is a legitimate tactic, but it must be a surprise to your partner as well as the opponents.

Where suspicion arises that a psychic bid has been 'fielded' (partner has taken an unusual action that might suggest the psyche was not unexpected) it should be reported immediately. If the Tournament Director considers the case proven he may assign an adjusted score and can also impose a procedural penalty. Such incidents will also be taken into consideration by the credentials committee which has the power to reject an application to play in the tournament without explanation.

As an illustration, suppose you make a psychic overcall of 1NT, intending to run to a long suit if doubled. If you start doing that repeatedly, partner will be suspicious the next time you overcall 1NT. You must have a system card which highlights the fact that you frequently make this type of psychic overcall.

This hand occurred in the first session of the Open Pairs, and you have North's cards:

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ J 8 3  
♥ 3  
♦ Q J 10 7 5 4 3  
♣ K 6

| West       | North | East | South |
|------------|-------|------|-------|
| —          | 3♦    | Pass | 3♥*   |
| Pass       | ?     |      |       |
| 3♥ Forcing |       |      |       |

What do you bid now?

With stronger diamonds you might try 3NT, and bidding 4♣ runs the risk that partner might take it as a control bid in support of hearts. In a poll of more than 40 expert players the possible bids suggested were 3♠, 3NT, 4♦ and 4♣.

This was the full deal:

|             |                  |                |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| ♠ A 10      | ♠ J 8 3          |                |
| ♥ J 9 5 4   | ♥ 3              |                |
| ♦ A K       | ♦ Q J 10 7 5 4 3 |                |
| ♣ A Q J 9 4 | ♣ K 6            |                |
|             |                  | ♠ Q 6 5        |
|             |                  | ♥ A K 10 7 6 2 |
|             |                  | ♦ 6            |
|             |                  | ♣ 5 3 2        |
|             |                  | ♠ K 9 7 4 2    |
|             |                  | ♥ Q 8          |
|             |                  | ♦ 9 8 2        |
|             |                  | ♣ 10 8 7       |

At the table North raised 3♥ to 4♥, ending an auction where you could argue that both players had psyched on the same deal.

A successful psyche will detract from opponents' enjoyment of the game. It would be in keeping with the spirit of this tournament to refrain from psyching against inexperienced players, or during the later stages of an event where you are not in contention.



*The Directing team celebrate the end of another successful Open Pairs tournament*

*[Not pictured: Diarmuid Reddan, who took the photo, Pedro Ribeiro, who had gone to bed, and Zennica Hammar, whose leg and hand appear on the left]*

## Warp Factor 2

David Burn

Yesterday I promised that if ever I scored a complete top I would tell you how it was done. Sadly a couple of pairs dropped out before the final session of the Open Pairs tournament, so every score in that session was factored and it was no longer possible to score the full 370 matchpoints. This was a pity, because

Session 3, Board 24. Dealer West. None Vul.

|           |          |          |
|-----------|----------|----------|
| ♠ 3       | ♠ J9652  | ♠ KQ107  |
| ♥ 864     | ♥ KQ3    | ♥ 95     |
| ♦ K10     | ♦ 96     | ♦ AQ8753 |
| ♣ AJ97654 | ♣ Q103   | ♣ 8      |
|           | ♠ A84    |          |
|           | ♥ AJ1072 |          |
|           | ♦ J42    |          |
|           | ♣ K2     |          |

West opened 3♣ which was passed round to South, who selected double, with 3NT, 3♥ and pass viable if not palatable alternatives. North jumped to 4♠ and I doubled with the East cards. I led a club to partner's ♣A and she switched brightly to king and another diamond, seriously threatening

declarer's trump control. He could have salvaged seven tricks from the wreckage, but that would not have been much use, and he elected to play flat out by ruffing the third diamond and continuing with ace and another trump. Not only did this enable me to claim a beer with ♦7 as the eighth and last trick for the defence, the ensuing plus 1100 scored us... 369.99 matchpoints. Ah well – there's always next year.

Tops are rare, but rarer still is a deal on which all the positive scores are in one direction. Somehow, at least one pair (and usually more) contrives to conjure up a minus score out of thin air – often this is due to a phenomenon known as 'matchpoint greed'.

Session 3, Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

|            |          |          |
|------------|----------|----------|
| ♠ 97       | ♠ K84    | ♠ AJ1053 |
| ♥ 4        | ♥ AJ762  | ♥ 53     |
| ♦ QJ108764 | ♦ AK2    | ♦ 93     |
| ♣ 1053     | ♣ A9     | ♣ QJ86   |
|            | ♠ Q62    |          |
|            | ♥ KQ1098 |          |
|            | ♦ 5      |          |
|            | ♣ K742   |          |

North-South can make 6♥ without difficulty, but this contract was not universally reached. No doubt some Souths opened the bidding, making their side's life easy, but where West was allowed to open 3♦ in third seat many Norths contented themselves with a 3NT overcall, where they played. One pair stayed conservatively in 3♥, where they made eleven tricks – I like to think that this was a considerate play by a declarer whose partner had passed a forcing bid, to give the reassurance that at least they hadn't missed a slam. Still, they got a plus score – so where were the saboteurs of the Great Dealer's plan to provide at least one board with an empty East-West plus column?

In 6NT, that's where. Don't ask me how or why, but five pairs tried for the extra 10 aggregate points that can make all the difference at this form of scoring. Mind you, getting 1630 fewer



aggregate points than you might have done can also have an effect. If you look at the cheat sheet you will see that North can make eleven tricks in no trumps and South only ten – this is because on (say) a diamond lead from East declarer can wrangle a black-suit squeeze without the count, but on a spade lead from West no such resource is available. Down one was the fate of two avaricious pairs, down two the fate of three – and in an idle moment I wondered whether in fact down three might reasonably have been achieved.

Is there any play at all for 6NT? On the actual layout the answer is obviously 'no', but you can't play on the assumption that you can't make 6NT if you happen to arrive in it. What layouts would give you a chance?

The good news is that West's 3♦ opening means there is a strong possibility that East cannot guard diamonds. If that defender also cannot guard clubs, West can be squeezed in the minors – but only if declarer can take two spade tricks. Now do you see?

|                  |              |              |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| ♠ A 7            | ♠ K 8 4      | ♠ J 10 9 5 3 |
| ♥ —              | ♥ A J 7 6 2  | ♥ 5 4 3      |
| ♦ Q J 10 8 7 6 4 | ♦ A K 2      | ♦ 9 3        |
| ♣ Q J 10 8       | ♣ A 9        | ♣ 6 5 3      |
|                  | ♠ Q 6 2      |              |
|                  | ♥ K Q 10 9 8 |              |
|                  | ♦ 5          |              |
|                  | ♣ K 7 4 2    |              |

If this is the deal 6NT is cold – diamond lead won, heart to South, spade to the king, spade ducked to West, diamond won, majors run ending in North and squeezing West. So I dreamed that declarer set out to play like that – the only legitimate chance – and a genius East on the actual layout, seeing what was happening, would duck when declarer played a spade to the king at trick three. Then, if declarer ducked the next round of spades in accordance with the master plan, East would be able to cash four spade tricks for three down.

Of course, on the actual layout West would follow to a heart so could not have the hand of the fantasy layout above. Still, if you can't score complete tops yourself the next best thing may be to imagine how someone else could.

There was in fact one and only one deal on which there were no scores in one direction. Incredibly, the high-card points were divided 22-18.

Session 1, Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

|              |            |           |
|--------------|------------|-----------|
| ♠ A 10 7 6 3 | ♠ Q 4      | ♠ K J 8 5 |
| ♥ 8          | ♥ A J 9 3  | ♥ 7 6 4 2 |
| ♦ 10 5 3     | ♦ Q 9 2    | ♦ A K 8 6 |
| ♣ K 9 7 3    | ♣ J 10 5 2 | ♣ A       |
|              | ♠ 9 2      |           |
|              | ♥ K Q 10 5 |           |
|              | ♦ J 7 4    |           |
|              | ♣ Q 8 6 4  |           |

East-West can of course make five spades, and although no one was in that the field was split roughly 70-30 between pairs in game and pairs in part score. One poor West missed partner's opening bid of 1♦ and inadvertently passed it out, receiving a complete bottom for plus 110, easily the highest aggregate score on a deal to obtain no matchpoints at all. And one final record for you from this record-breaking pairs event:

Session 2, Board 23. Dealer South. All Vul.

|                  |                |             |
|------------------|----------------|-------------|
| ♠ 8 4            | ♠ Q 10 9       | ♠ A 7 6 3 2 |
| ♥ 6 5 3          | ♥ A Q J 10 9 4 | ♥ K 7       |
| ♦ A J 10 9 8 6 2 | ♦ —            | ♦ K Q       |
| ♣ 4              | ♣ 8 7 5 3      | ♣ Q J 10 2  |
|                  | ♠ K J 5        |             |
|                  | ♥ 8 2          |             |
|                  | ♦ 7 5 4 3      |             |
|                  | ♣ A K 9 6      |             |

This board saw scores of 1400 in both directions – one North-South collected that penalty from three spades doubled down five, while one East-West did it the hard way by making 3NT redoubled with an overtrick. The record-breaker, though, was that they did this after South had opened the bidding with 1♦. I have never seen a deal on which the declaring side has seven stoppers in the enemy suit before. Have you?

## Open Teams after Round 3

| VPs      | Team                     |
|----------|--------------------------|
| 1 54.95  | NOR-ICE                  |
| 2 53.96  | Garfield                 |
| 3 53.92  | SELENA                   |
| 4 52.10  | IQ84                     |
| 5 51.63  | Jolly                    |
| 6 51.58  | Topbridge BC             |
| 7 51.42  | Davidoff                 |
| 8 50.10  | overtrick-weakness       |
| 9 49.14  | Vindaloo United          |
| 10 48.97 | VENTIN                   |
| 11 48.18 | MADS                     |
| 12 47.45 | BALDURSSON               |
| 13 46.16 | The Castle of Flavor     |
| 14 45.71 | Adventurers              |
| 15 45.63 | Lekta                    |
| 16 45.25 | JOÃO FERREIRA            |
| 17 45.03 | Indian Palace            |
| 18 44.82 | Porto Dragons            |
| 19 44.74 | Don Julio                |
| 20 44.13 | Stonecutters             |
| 21 44.10 | Honeymoon                |
| 22 43.75 | STAR                     |
| 23 43.05 | Now We're Barely Talking |
| 24 43.02 | The X-Presidents         |
| 25 43.01 | NUNO MATOS               |
| 26 42.89 | Haustak                  |
| 27 42.81 | plan b bridgeklub        |
| 28 42.65 | Vytas                    |
| 29 42.61 | Baleal                   |
| 30 42.43 | Kirsten Steen Møller     |
| 31 41.93 | de Botton                |
| 32 41.89 | Astro                    |
| 33 41.67 | Majbach                  |
| 34 41.15 | Team Ireland             |
| 35 40.82 | Xtrouble                 |
| 36 40.76 | EMI                      |
| 37 40.56 | Siglo                    |
| 38 39.88 | lisboaparis              |
| 39 39.54 | Pitangas                 |
| 39 39.54 | Good Old Gammel Nok      |
| 41 39.24 | Erichsen                 |
| 41 39.24 | Fryslân Boppe            |
| 43 39.23 | Norway-Aarmot            |
| 44 38.95 | A Quincy                 |
| 45 38.28 | MR. JARDEX               |
| 46 38.22 | Myllan                   |

| VPs      | Team                |
|----------|---------------------|
| 47 37.90 | Slow response       |
| 48 37.70 | Repeat Bet          |
| 49 37.58 | Hauge               |
| 50 37.36 | Ingunns angels      |
| 51 37.18 | SALONEN             |
| 52 37.17 | Hanabi              |
| 53 36.98 | Stevenson's Rockets |
| 54 36.90 | Lombard 3           |
| 55 36.72 | ARFFMAN             |
| 56 36.22 | Just Made           |
| 57 36.05 | Fárbauti            |
| 57 36.05 | Queen of Hearts     |
| 59 35.95 | Poland WGS          |
| 60 35.30 | Fawlty Towers       |
| 61 35.25 | Alexia              |
| 62 35.19 | Inez                |
| 63 35.16 | Katja               |
| 64 34.91 | TEAM UK             |
| 65 34.79 | WHAT NAME           |
| 66 34.68 | Ice-Dan Vikings     |
| 67 34.61 | Nordic Fours        |
| 68 34.27 | Gabriel             |
| 69 34.10 | Carpathians         |
| 70 34.06 | Gladiator           |
| 71 33.99 | Hach Poni           |
| 72 33.94 | IMP Magazine        |
| 72 33.94 | Inverno             |
| 74 33.86 | Canis lupus         |
| 75 33.82 | Porto Norto         |
| 76 33.63 | SLOROHO             |
| 77 33.23 | The Stock Team      |
| 78 32.99 | HEMI                |
| 78 32.99 | Knoeijs             |
| 80 32.90 | TECC                |
| 81 32.74 | Baglady             |
| 82 32.41 | ECF Holding         |
| 83 32.25 | Lindfors            |
| 84 32.17 | Bricas seniors      |
| 85 32.13 | Tolle               |
| 86 31.63 | Sushi               |
| 87 30.78 | BELGIUM             |
| 88 30.69 | GRAND               |
| 88 30.69 | SUPER DUDES         |
| 90 30.68 | Floralat            |
| 91 30.56 | MJEK                |
| 92 30.42 | Danice              |

|     |       |                                         |
|-----|-------|-----------------------------------------|
| 93  | 30.39 | Swiss seniors                           |
| 94  | 30.22 | Edelweiss                               |
| 95  | 30.21 | Waldi                                   |
| 96  | 29.87 | Thor                                    |
| 97  | 29.70 | SHARKNADO                               |
| 98  | 29.34 | WarCas                                  |
| 99  | 29.12 | Kobolde Hamburg                         |
| 100 | 29.10 | Krododastor                             |
| 101 | 28.70 | Bricklayer                              |
| 102 | 28.66 | DOURO                                   |
| 103 | 28.51 | Cornelis Vreeswijk                      |
| 104 | 28.22 | VICUNA                                  |
| 105 | 27.50 | Huijben                                 |
| 106 | 26.99 | Bunio                                   |
| 107 | 26.08 | Rieneck4ever                            |
| 108 | 25.65 | CANAM                                   |
| 109 | 25.00 | Adamant                                 |
| 110 | 24.86 | EG-NL                                   |
| 111 | 24.51 | Egil                                    |
| 112 | 24.30 | Allsherjar                              |
| 113 | 23.98 | BAMBI                                   |
| 114 | 23.83 | North by Northwest                      |
| 115 | 23.81 | C-jam                                   |
| 116 | 23.71 | Splish Splash, your convention is trash |
| 117 | 23.69 | PHANIC                                  |
| 118 | 23.50 | Potje Clash                             |
| 119 | 23.46 | Woodberry Wanderers                     |
| 120 | 23.38 | On Vacation                             |
| 121 | 23.34 | Polish friends                          |
| 122 | 23.24 | IceJaks                                 |
| 123 | 23.05 | Treser                                  |
| 124 | 22.93 | De la Maza                              |
| 125 | 22.84 | PAPEL                                   |
| 126 | 22.82 | Rivlier                                 |
| 127 | 22.61 | 4Queens                                 |
| 128 | 22.29 | FINLAND TEAM                            |
| 129 | 21.78 | Panda                                   |
| 130 | 21.73 | Suzie Q                                 |
| 131 | 21.65 | Fobija                                  |
| 132 | 21.47 | Kregam                                  |
| 133 | 21.26 | LIMA                                    |
| 134 | 21.06 | Dutch Juniors                           |
| 135 | 20.53 | FRONTLINE                               |
| 136 | 19.49 | Annata                                  |
| 137 | 19.25 | MacJ                                    |
| 138 | 18.75 | Dutch Mountains                         |
| 139 | 18.60 | Blómarósín                              |
| 140 | 18.56 | São Vicente                             |
| 141 | 18.14 | Bid happens                             |

|     |       |                      |
|-----|-------|----------------------|
| 142 | 18.13 | Seven Diamonds       |
| 143 | 17.94 | @                    |
| 144 | 17.41 | Speelman             |
| 145 | 17.40 | Embla                |
| 146 | 17.39 | The Danish Ladies    |
| 147 | 16.91 | varbergs kattigaste  |
| 148 | 16.79 | The Danish Girls     |
| 149 | 16.11 | Maya                 |
| 150 | 16.06 | NUTKA                |
| 151 | 15.35 | IVV                  |
| 152 | 15.31 | Klaki                |
| 153 | 14.16 | Boruta               |
| 154 | 13.68 | Fora do Baralho      |
| 155 | 13.65 | PANDORA              |
| 156 | 13.11 | The Malinowskis      |
| 157 | 12.68 | Hali                 |
| 158 | 12.12 | 4 Bruxas             |
| 159 | 11.81 | Boldt                |
| 160 | 11.76 | Pimms No. 1          |
| 161 | 11.23 | Team Eden            |
| 162 | 11.11 | Taxi and Frù         |
| 163 | 10.48 | ICE QUEENS           |
| 164 | 9.73  | Wiskey Brothers      |
| 165 | 9.66  | Bridge on the Island |
| 166 | 9.65  | Young Gansters       |
| 167 | 9.09  | ATLAS                |
| 168 | 9.06  | VASE                 |
| 169 | 8.22  | PORTUGALÊS           |
| 170 | 8.08  | Fjöðrum fengin       |
| 171 | 7.95  | Fantasticas          |
| 172 | 6.89  | Eyjafjallajökull     |
| 173 | 4.53  | Chimera              |
| 174 | 4.26  | Transatlantic        |





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