

June 11, 2022

Bridge with Richard Ward

Bridge players never seem to lose their fascination with this game and the multitude of possibilities on offer every time they pick up a new hand. Bridge articles usually focus on card play, but fifty percent of the action happens in the bidding. Use your imagination on this one which first appeared in the February 1985 issue of Australian Bridge's Bidding Forum and then was resurrected for the May 2022 edition.

You hold as South: **S:** 4 2 **H:** 10 9 8 6 3 2 **D:** Q 5 **C:** J 9 6 and hear partner open the bidding with a pre-emptive 3H, overcalled by East with 4S. Whilst you know that a heart contract will be a very cheap sacrifice for North-South, the likelihood of a slam bonus for East-West is a concern. It is your turn and there are several numerous and devious choices: PASS; 4NT, 5D or 6C (muddying the waters - very droll); 5H; 6H; or even 7H!

Here is a contrived but typical layout where hearts make nine tricks but spades make thirteen. How does your choice fare?

NORTH		N/ ALL VUL MATCHPOINT PAIRS
♠	5	
♥	A K J 7 5 4	
♦	10 7 6 4 3	
♣	2	
WEST	EAST	
♠	♠ A Q 10 9 8 7 3	
♥	♥ -	
♦	♦ A K	
♣	♣ K 10 8 5	
SOUTH		
♠	4 2	
♥	10 9 8 6 3 2	
♦	Q 5	
♣	J 9 6	

A bid that may not occur to you is to double four spades for penalties! - known as a 'stripe-tailed ape double'. If they have 13 tricks they will score 'only' +1390 - a better score than bidding and making six spades for +1460. If they redouble, you will scurry off like a stripe-tailed ape to the relative safety of 5H, probably doubled and only -500.

ARANA CONGRESS: [Director – Julie Jeffries] **PAIRS** 1 Kuldip Bedi / Gary Malinas; 2 Barbara Mackay / Barry Koster; **B** 1 Margie Knox / Carmel Wikman; 2 Melissa Weber / Herold Rienstra; **C** 1 Linda & Peter Neil; 2 Raelene Clarke / Joyanne Gissing; **TEAMS** 1 Neville Francis / Maha Hoenig / Charlie Lu / Watson Zhou; 2 Richard Fox / Andrew Woollons / Nikolas Moore / Rachel Langdon; **B** 1 Joan Mills / Margaret McNee / Deidre & Jim Taylor; 2 Eugene Pereira / Martin Wu / Wendy Cuthbert / Lilly Jia
