

Brisbane Water Teams 2016

In bridge, as in life, timing is everything

by RAKESH KUMAR



Rakesh Kumar describes himself as an enthusiastic non-expert who makes enough errors to have plenty of material for bridge columns.

The Brisbane Water Open Teams was won by Ken Wilks - Rosalie Broughton - Michael Johnson - Michael Simes, with Ed Vaughan - Robin Vaughan - Eva Berger - Tony Berger fairly close behind and Kevin Davies - Rakesh Kumar - Kerrie Johnman - Peter Johnman somewhat further back.

In bridge, as in life, timing is everything. This was an interesting board from the morning session, which demonstrated the importance of timing the play to keep the danger hand off lead:

Board 10

Dealer E | Vul All

♠ Q86
♥ A542
♦ 63
♣ KQ95

♠ AKT
♥ T87
♦ K
♣ AJ8432



♠ 543
♥ KQ
♦ AQT9754
♣ 6

♠ J972
♥ J963
♦ J82
♣ T7

15
11 □ 11
3

W	N	E	S
		1D	P
1H	2C	2D	P
3NT			

3NT was played at 16 tables out of 31, 12 went down

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	-	2	-	-	2
W	1	3	-	1	3

East opened 1♦, West bid 1♥ and North overcalled 2♣. Having opened with relatively few high card points, one could argue that East ought to pass, but with such an attractive long suit, I think it's reasonable to bid again. Over my 2♦, Kevin Davies took his usual optimistic view and promptly jumped to 3NT. Then he justified his optimism by playing it very well. The opening lead was taken in hand with the ♣Q and a small diamond was led – and ducked when North produced the ♦K, which looked suspiciously like a singleton. Now, holding ♠AK, North was helpless. He exited with a small heart, but Kevin had 9 tricks via 6 diamonds, 2 hearts and a club. Of the 31 tables, 3NT was played at 16, but went off at 12 of these.

This next board was mainly about visualisation, but also about timing:

North – South

♠ Q54
♥ KQ95
♦ A43
♣ K84

♠ AKT
♥ AJT42
♦ 72
♣ T73

W	N	E	S
	1C	P	1H
P	2H	P	4H

North-South bid 1♣-1♥-2♥-4♥ and West led ♦6. Trumps broke 2-2. What's the best line of play?

There is potentially a diamond loser as well as 3 club losers, but there's also potential for an end-play. If declarer ducks the first diamond, then subsequently draws trumps, plays off the spades and ruffs the third diamond, he can lead a club, covering whatever East plays. As the cards lie, he can also play off the spades, then lead the third diamond from table and discard a club, for the same result. In practice, 19 declarers made their major-suit game, but 11 went off. And then there was the pair in 3NT, which happened to be bullet-proof ...

Board 12

Dealer W | Vul N-S

<p>♠ 832 ♥ 73 ♦ J9865 ♣ J52</p>		<p>♠ Q54 ♥ KQ95 ♦ A43 ♣ K84</p>	<p>♠ J976 ♥ 86 ♦ KQT ♣ AQ96</p>
<p>14 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 12</p>		<p>♠ AKT ♥ AJT42 ♦ 72 ♣ T73</p>	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	–	4	2	3
S	1	–	3	2	3
E	–	1	–	–	–
W	–	1	–	–	–

In the afternoon there were other challenges, including this difficult-to-bid slam:

Board 12

Dealer W | Vul N-S

<p>♠ T ♥ 54 ♦ QJ98764 ♣ T43</p>		<p>♠ A83 ♥ KQ963 ♦ 5 ♣ KQJ2</p>	<p>♠ KQ9752 ♥ T7 ♦ K ♣ 9875</p>
<p>15 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 14</p>		<p>♠ J64 ♥ AJ82 ♦ AT32 ♣ A6</p>	

W	N	E	S
3D	3H	P	4D
P	4S	P	4NT
P	5S	P	6H

west's pre-empt actually made it easier for NS to find their slam

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	6	2	7	3	6
S	5	2	7	3	5
E	–	–	–	–	–
W	–	–	–	–	–

Only 7 pairs reached the glacially cold 6♥. If West starts proceedings with 3♦, this actually makes it easier – North overcalls 3♥ and South can bid 4♦ to show a hand with slam interest. Without the pre-empt, North will open 1♥ and if playing 2/1 game-forcing it should be easy for North, with a 5-loser hand, to get to 6♥. Otherwise whatever is the partnership agreement for a balanced game-forcing raise should also work – all it needs is a bit of courage.

I'm not quite sure if courage or insanity is the correct description for our auction on this board from the last round of the day:

Board 25

Dealer N | Vul E-W

<p>♠ 62 ♥ 93 ♦ A9732 ♣ J653</p>		<p>♠ 953 ♥ AK86 ♦ KQT64 ♣ 4</p>	<p>♠ AKJ8 ♥ J52 ♦ J ♣ AKQT9</p>
<p>12 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 19 4</p>		<p>♠ QT74 ♥ QT74 ♦ 85 ♣ 872</p>	

W	N	Me	S
	1D	X	1S
P	2D	3C	P
P	3S	X	P
5C			

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	–	–	1	–	–
S	–	–	1	–	–
E	4	1	–	1	2
W	4	1	–	1	2

North opened 1♦ and I doubled for takeout. South decided to muddy the waters with 1♠, partner passed and North rebid 2♦. I bid 3♣, showing a 16+ hand with a good club suit, South and West passed, and North backed in with 3♠. I doubled this, intended for penalties but interpreted by partner as a demand to bid something. So he did – 5♣!!

Once again, it's all in the timing – the contract will go down if South leads a trump and is allowed to win at least one heart trick to lead another trump. However, on a normal ♦8 lead, declarer wins on table and when a heart is led, North is very likely to rise and attempt to play a spade through. Now it's possible to ruff 2 spades (with the ♣J on the fourth round) and a heart, making 11 tricks. This result was achieved 6 times, twice in a partscore and four times in game. 🍀