

# Having fun with bridge on line #4

## Missing the IMPs game ...

by RAKESH KUMAR



*Rakesh Kumar describes himself as an enthusiast who makes enough errors to have plenty of material for bridge columns.*

Although there are plenty of matchpoint pairs competitions available on line, those of us who love playing the IMPs game have probably been feeling somewhat deprived of late ... I know I have. There are a few IMPs pairs games available, but if what you want is to play teams bridge, until very recently your only choice has been to set up a game with friends on BBO.

That's what I have been doing each Thursday evening since bridge clubs closed in March ... by the time this column appears it will be round 22 of those matches!

At IMPs, the goals are to get to any game contract with reasonable chances, to ensure making your contract without worrying too much about prospects of collecting overtricks, and to try to beat their contract without worrying about donating overtricks. Here are 3 boards from some recent IMPs games which posed interesting problems.

Firstly, vulnerable against not, you hear RHO open 1♣ as dealer. What will you bid?

♠ AKT4  
♥ J  
♦ J875  
♣ AKQ6

Secondly, again vulnerable against not, your LHO deals and opens 2♥, alerted as weak, showing 5 hearts and a 4+ minor suit. Partner makes a takeout double, you bid 2♠ and partner raises you to game. The opening lead is ♥J which RHO takes with the ace to return the nine, ruffed on table with ♠2. How will you play the hand? Trumps divide 3-2.

♠ AKQ2  
♥ 8  
♦ KJ876  
♣ AQ3



♠ T653  
♥ Q732  
♦ T  
♣ KJ85

And thirdly, both vulnerable, after 2 passes RHO opens 1♣, LHO bids 1♦, RHO rebids 2NT showing 18-19 hcp and LHO promptly bids 3NT. What will you lead?

- ♠ 9532
- ♥ JT3
- ♦ AK5
- ♣ 532

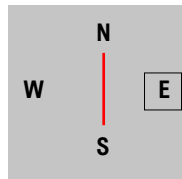
On the first hand, doubling makes no sense – do you really want to rebid 3NT if partner makes a weak-ish jump response in hearts? By far the best idea is a 4-card overcall.

**Board 2**

Dealer E | Vul N-S

- ♠ AKT4
- ♥ J
- ♦ J875
- ♣ AKQ6

- ♠ 85
- ♥ AK5
- ♦ KQ9
- ♣ JT953



- ♠ 92
- ♥ Q876432
- ♦ T432
- ♣

- ♠ QJ763
- ♥ T9
- ♦ A6
- ♣ 8742

W	N	E	S
		P	P
1C	1S	2H	3S
4H	4S	//	

Now regardless of what East does (at our table he bid a somewhat questionable 2♥!) game will be reached. This deal turned up in a session of the Queensland-wide IMPs Swiss Pairs run by Charles Page. Many North-South pairs didn't get to 4♠, while sometimes East-West played in 4♥ and made it! The 4-card overcall proved to be worth 6 IMPs against the datum.

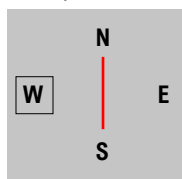
The second deal, from a Thursday night teams game, is a good demonstration of the importance of counting your tricks. If you draw trumps, you have 9 obvious tricks (5 trumps including a heart ruff, plus 4 clubs) but what about the tenth?

**Board 12**

Dealer W | Vul N-S

- ♠ T653
- ♥ Q732
- ♦ T
- ♣ KJ85

- ♠ J74
- ♥ A96
- ♦ Q54
- ♣ 9762



- ♠ 98
- ♥ KJT54
- ♦ A932
- ♣ T4

- ♠ AKQ2
- ♥ 8
- ♦ KJ876
- ♣ AQ3

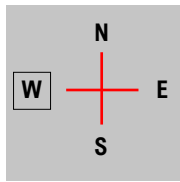
A much better idea is to leave the last trump out and play for 6 trump tricks, plus either 4 clubs or 3 clubs and a diamond trick. So ... after two rounds of trumps, play the small club to the jack and lead a diamond up, assuming LHO holds the ♦ A. Because this is indeed the case, there are always 6 trump tricks, one diamond trick and 3 club tricks available – and as it turns out, 4 club tricks can be cashed.

The final deal, also from a Thursday night game, is really once again about counting tricks – in this case, hypothetical tricks. You are not going to beat 3NT based on what's in your hand, so finding partner's suit is the key to the defence.

**Board 20**  
 Dealer W | Vul All

♠ AJ6  
 ♥ Q9754  
 ♦ 94  
 ♣ 987

♠ 874  
 ♥ 6  
 ♦ QJ732  
 ♣ KJT4



♠ KQT  
 ♥ AK82  
 ♦ T86  
 ♣ AQ6

♠ 9532  
 ♥ JT3  
 ♦ AK5  
 ♣ 532

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

On the lead of ♥J, the contract will go down – leading any other suit allows declarer to come home. ♠