

# NSBC Festival TBIB Teams

## Chickens get plucked

by RAKESH KUMAR



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

This year, the annual North Shore Bridge Club Festival was a victim of the Sydney outbreak of the delta variant of COVID-19. With commendable speed, the organisers switched the face-to-face events to RealBridge. This actually led to an increase in the number of entries, because those still reluctant to play face-to-face were then happy to get involved.

The Festival included matchpoint and IMP Swiss Pairs as well as two Teams events. The TBIB Teams on the Sunday, which had a field of 38 teams, was won by Peter Jeffery - Yumin Li - Bob Sebesfi - Wayne Zhu. This followed on from the win in the Festival Teams on the Friday by a team of very similar composition *viz.* Peter Jeffery - Les Grewcock - Bob Sebesfi - Wayne Zhu.

The TBIB Teams featured many deals with fairly wild distribution and there were challenges in bidding, play and defence. It was clearly not a day to be a chicken. Keeping that in mind, here are a few problems for you.

Firstly, with both sides vulnerable, you hold this hand as dealer:

♠ 8  
♥ JT98765  
♦ Q  
♣ K764

What if anything will you bid?

Secondly, you hold:

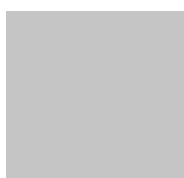
♠ 8  
♥ 8742  
♦ 542  
♣ QJ832

This time you are not vulnerable and the opponents are vulnerable. LHO passes and partner opens 1♥. RHO jumps to 4♠. Will you bid?

And finally, with both sides vulnerable, partner passes and RHO opens 1♥. You make a weak jump overcall of 2♠ but the opponents promptly bid on to 4♥. You lead ♦10 and see the dummy shown below. Partner takes the ace and returns ♦3 for you to ruff. What next?

♠ AJ5  
♥ AQ74  
♦ 942  
♣ K73

♠ K987432  
♥ 982  
♦ T  
♣ A9



Here's the board associated with the first problem. While conventional teaching would suggest that it's most unwise to pre-empt with a topless weak suit when vulnerable, most participants in the TBIB Teams showed their disdain for such teaching. Fifteen of those seated North opened 3♥! Another 10 opened either a weak 2♥ or a multi-2♦, which was perhaps a reasonable compromise.

**Board 13**

Dealer N | Vul Both

♠ 8  
♥ JT98765  
♦ Q  
♣ K764

♠ K  
♥ 4  
♦ T875432  
♣ AT52

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ JT95  
♥ A3  
♦ AK96  
♣ J98

♠ AQ76432  
♥ KQ2  
♦ J  
♣ Q3

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

In any case, opening with a weak bid in hearts usually paid off. Nine of those who did so were raised to 4♥ and allowed to play there, so they made it. At 6 other tables, West played in 5♦ after a takeout double by East, but usually went one down on the lead of ♠8. The remainder went on to 5♥, which went one down, doubled on 2 occasions.

However, at the 4 tables where North did not make a weak bid, East opened 1♦ and, over South's 1♠ overcall, was promptly raised to 5♦. Declared from the other side, this made every time, including once when doubled. Another 3 made 5♦ from the West seat on a heart lead, or when South failed to give North a ruff.

For the second problem, here is the full deal:

**Board 21**

Dealer N | Vul N-S

♠ T43  
♥ 65  
♦ KJ973  
♣ AT5

♠ 8  
♥ 8742  
♦ 542  
♣ QJ832

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ J2  
♥ QJT93  
♦ AQT  
♣ K96

♠ AKQ9765  
♥ AK  
♦ 86  
♣ 74

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

Twenty-five of those sitting South made 4♠, 11 with an overtrick. However, 11 Wests bid on to 5♥ and 9 were allowed to play there, all but 2 of them doubled. This proved to be a cheap sacrifice. Two Norths continued to 5♠ and declarer then went down on both occasions. However, one received a heart lead, after which it is possible to establish the diamond suit for a club discard unless East finds the switch away from ♣K. The sure way to beat 5♠ is for West to lead ♣Q.

The third problem involves interpreting partner's return as suit preference for clubs and then being bold enough to put declarer to a guess. Here is the full deal:

**Board 52**  
 Dealer W | Vul Both

<p>♠ T6          ♥ 6          ♦ A7653          ♣ Q8654</p>		<p>♠ Q          ♥ KJT53          ♦ KQJ8          ♣ JT2</p>	<p>♠ K987432          ♥ 982          ♦ T          ♣ A9</p>
<p>♠ AJ5          ♥ AQ74          ♦ 942          ♣ K73</p>			

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

At 29 tables, 4♥ was made, often with an overtrick. There is only one way to beat this contract – after the ruff, return ♣9! If declarer does not rise with the king, West wins ♣Q and returns another diamond for East to ruff. At 2 tables where this defence was found, 4♥ duly went 2 down. However, to make the contract, declarer has to find the ♣A on side – at another 2 tables declarer therefore did play the king and successfully brought 4♥ home! 🟩