

Bridge for brains *by Derrick Browne*

Following research showing that bridge was good for the brain, the Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute inaugurated an annual Bridge for Brain Research fundraising event in 2004. Held in clubs around the country in early May, it has age-related prizes as well as hand records and analysis organised by Ron Klinger, Val Cummings and Matthew McManus. This week's column features a couple of deals from the event.

Board 4: Dealer West, both vul.

	NORTH	
	S QT97	
	H 5	
	D KQ973	
	C KQ7	
WEST		EAST
S K		S AJ43
H AKQJ962		H 874
D AJ4		D 862
C T3		C 865
	SOUTH	
	S 9652	
	H T3	
	D T5	
	C AJ942	

The expert commentary states: "The West hand, with five losers, is not a force to game and it is far too good for a 4H opening." Better is to open 1H, although pairs using Benjamin Twos have a 2C bid available to show at least an 8-trick hand (such as this) with a long suit (which is disclosed on the next round). If North then passes, East would respond 2D artificial and negative, and West would then bid 2H. East might then muster up a raise to 4H.

As the commentary explains, "To make this contract declarer must remember to cash the SK before crossing to dummy on the third round of trumps to use the SA to ditch one of the minor losers." Dummy's third heart becomes the entry to the East hand to get to that extra spade trick.

Board 30: Dealer East, nil vul.

	NORTH	
	S QJ652	
	H K4	
	D J75	
	C Q72	
WEST		EAST
S K983		S T74
H QJ982		H T653
D —		D 83
C A653		C JT84
	SOUTH	
	S A	
	H A7	
	D AKQT9642	
	C K9	

Even before seeing partner's cards, South figures diamonds will run for eight tricks, so the two outside aces make for ten top tricks, with the CK a possibility for one more; this is "a game force in anybody's language", states the commentary. North makes a positive response of 2S, showing 8+ points in popular methods, and now slam should be reached – but which slam?

Our commentators point out that 6D is unbeatable, but that 6NT is "the right spot at matchpoints... a heart lead will allow declarer time to knock out the CA to establish a 12th trick. The lead of a spade would establish the king of that suit for the defence and defeat 6NT but that is very tough on the likely bidding."