



Volume 10, Issue 12
May 16, 2016

“Trials” and Tribulations

UNITED STATES BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Congrats Team Diamond! Great Match Team Fleisher!

TEAM	TOTAL	1-15	16-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76-90	91-105	106-120
Fleisher	238	22	23	12	39	31	29	52	30
Diamond	299	30	45	56	18	33	28	46	43



Greco, Hampson, Bathurst, Diamond, Lall ...
And Platnick



USBF President, Howard Weinstein, Thanks the Volunteers

Another successful USBC!

Thanks to Jan Martel for her great organizational skill and tireless efforts to make these events happen. Without Jan, we would be floundering!

Thanks to the many volunteers (If I leave anyone off, it is an oversight... please forgive me!): Peg Kaplan and her camera; Lisa Berkowitz and Susie Miller and their lox and bagels; Suzi Subeck and her Daily Bulletins; the expert players who stayed up late hours serving on committees; the tournament directors, Sol Weinstein (no relation!) and Chris Patrias; MacKenzie Myers and Marcin Waslowicz for their work behind the scenes and behind the screens; the many VuGraph operators and commentators who did an excellent job projecting our love of the game to the world.

You are all the best on the planet at putting on these Trials.

See you soon at the the Women’s...

Howie



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Board 12 ♠ AQJ6
 Dealer: W ♥ 87
 N/S Vul. ♦ JT7
 ♣ J654

♠ 8 ♠ 7543
 ♥ 2 ♥ AK9543
 ♦ AKQ98532 ♦ 64
 ♣ AQ3 ♣ 2

♠ KT92
 ♥ QJT6
 ♦
 ♣ KT987



West	North	East	South
Platnick	Delmonte	Diamond	Willenken
1C (strong)	Pass	1H (8-11 <5S)	Pass
2D	Pass	2S (hearts?)	Pass
4D	Pass	4NT (H cue)	Pass
5C (cue)	Pass	6D	All Pass
Moss	Hampson	Grue	Greco
1C (strong)	Pass	1S (unbal w/H)	Pass
2D	Pass	2H	Pass
3D	Pass	4D	Pass
4H (KB?)	All Pass		

In the Open room, Platnick/Diamond had a solid strong club auction to reach 6D. East's 1H response showed 8-11HCP with less than 5S. Presumably, the 2S bid showed hearts. After West's 4D rebid, East bid 4NT as a heart cue. It seems that 4H would have either been natural or kickback. Kickback has the advantage of saving space when asking for aces. Unfortunately it adds complexity to cue bidding sequences. As a long time experienced partnership Diamond/Platnick avoided confusion, having discussed all of these nuances.

In the Closed room, a similar sequence ensued. Moss opened a strong club with the West hand and Grue responded an unbalanced (not 5-3-3-2) heart positive. West rebid a natural 2D and East bid a presumably natural 2H. When East raised to 4D, a misunderstanding appears to have occurred. Just as in the Open room, E/W play Kickback. Since 4H had been bid naturally, 4S should be the RKC bid. When Moss bid 4H (presumably intending it as KB), Grue took this as an offer to play 4H. A club was led, Grue won the ace and now things went from bad to worse. To hold this to down two, Grue needed to finesse the club at trick one... hardly a clear play. As it was, 4H was defeated three tricks.

14 IMPs to Diamond

Board 21 ♠ AJ92
 Dealer: N ♥ KJ42
 N/S Vul. ♦ Q62
 ♣ QJ

♠ KT73 ♠ 54
 ♥ Q7 ♥ 96
 ♦ KT7 ♦ 985
 ♣ 8754 ♣ AKT932

♠ Q86
 ♥ AT853
 ♦ AJ43
 ♣ 6



Fleisher	Platnick	Martel	Diamond
	1NT (14-16)	Pass	2D
Pass	2H	Pass	3C
Pass	3H	Pass	4H
All Pass			
Bathurst	Delmonte	Lall	Willenken
	1C (could be 2)	3C	Double
4C	Double	Pass	5C
Pass	5H	Pass	6H
All Pass			

Another slam swing for Diamond. In the Open Room, without interference, Platnick/Diamond reached an easy 4H, making five. Martel led the CK and when that held, he shifted to the S5, 6, T, J. Platnick played the king and ace of trump, exiting dummy with the SQ to the K, A, 4. He took the losing diamond finesse

and claimed 11 tricks.

In the Closed Room, Bathurst/Lall put Delmonte/Willenken under great pressure in the auction. First, Lall preempted 3C over Delmonte's nebulous 1C opener. Then Bathurst injected 4C over Willenken's double. Lall passed and Willenken, thinking he had excellent cards for this auction plus two major suit fits, suggested Delmonte choose his better major. Delmonte chose hearts and Willenken was on a guess for how high to bid. He bid 6H. N/S again collected 11 tricks. Down one! 13 more IMPs to Diamond

Board 30 ♠ KQT9652
 Dealer: E ♥ 6
 None Vul. ♦ Q75
 ♣ K7

♠ A ♠ J8
 ♥ KQT954 ♥ J32
 ♦ K843 ♦ J
 ♣ J2 ♣ AQT9643

♠ 743
 ♥ A87
 ♦ AT962
 ♣ 85



West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Delmonte	Lall	Willenken
		3C	Pass
3H	3S	4D (good H raise)	4S
Pass	Pass	4NT	Double
Pass	Pass	5C	Double
All Pass			

Fleisher	Platnick	Martel	Diamond
		3C	Pass
3H	3S	4H	4S
5H	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			

If the king of clubs was offside, both contracts would fail. As it was, the CK was doubleton in the pocket. Fleisher/Martel landed in 5H doubled and easily made eleven tricks.

In the other room, Bathurst and Lall were very unlucky. Some days, both clubs and hearts would succeed and this would hand would produce at best a miniscule swing. Other days, North holds a singleton heart (as here) and South finds the lead of the HA followed by a heart ruff; a diamond to the ace, and another heart ruff. Down 2 in 5CX ... good lead, Diamond!

14 IMPs to Fleisher

Board 24 ♠ KT32
 Dealer: W ♥ 9753
 None Vul. ♦ AKT9
 Segment 8 ♣ 7

♠ Q8765 ♠ A
 ♥ AKQ4 ♥ T82
 ♦ 7 ♦ 864
 ♣ A63 ♣ KQJ854

♠ J94
 ♥ J6
 ♦ QJ532
 ♣ T92



Grue	Lall	Moss	Bathurst
1S	Pass	1NT	Pass
2H	All Pass		

Greco	Fleisher	Hampson	Martel
1S	Pass	1NT (semi-forcing)	Pass
2H	Pass	3C	Pass
5C	Pass	6C	All Pass

In the Closed room, Grue opened 1S; Moss responded 1NT and passed Grue's 2H rebid. With the favorable heart lie, declarer is able to take at least 10 tricks. At the table, Grue actually took 11 tricks for an E/W score of +200.

Meanwhile, in the Open room, the auction started identically, but rather than passing 2H, Hampson bid his club suit. When Greco jumped to 5C over the non-forcing 3C bid, Hampson decided he had extras and bid 6C. At first it appears that a trump lead might beat 6C. However, declarer only needs to trump one diamond to take twelve tricks (7 clubs, 3 hearts and 2 spades). Martel made an exotic lead of the HJ. Of course we can see that all Hampson needs to do is concede a diamond and he will be able to trump two diamonds in dummy. Hampson was apparently convinced that the HJ was a singleton. If that were true, he couldn't afford to concede a diamond before drawing trumps. His best hope seemed to be setting up the spades. If clubs were 2-2, Hampson would make easily. With 3-1 clubs, he needed the SK to fall in three rounds. Hampson won the heart and cashed the SA. Now he played the CK and a led a club to dummy's ace. A spade was ruffed and the last trump was drawn. Now a heart was led to dummy and another spade was ruffed. When the king didn't fall, Hampson conceded down 2 for a loss of 7 IMPs as compared to a gain of 12 IMPs had he made the slam.

Eight More Interesting Facts About Cards...

1. **The Largest Producer of Playing Cards:** The United States Playing Card Company (USPC), located in Cincinnati, Ohio, is the world's largest producer of playing cards. The company was founded in 1867. USPC vends over 100,000,000 decks of playing cards annually. The company produces Aristocrat, Aviator, Bee, Bicycle and Hoyle brand cards. It also produces playing cards for popular brands and names like Coca-Cola, Mickey Mouse, Harry Potter and Mr. Potato Head.

2. **When Were Playing Cards First Used?** Another interesting fact about a deck of playing cards is that the first recorded account of their use was in the Orient, sometime in the 12th century. The Chinese replaced their bone or ivory playing cards (tiles) they used to play the game of Dominos with, with a heavy paper kind of playing cards.

3. **Where Did the Four Suits Originate From?** The four suits in a standard deck of playing cards is thought to have originated in the Middle East. The suits started out as being coins, cups, swords and sticks. These suits evolved into today's playing card suits with the coins now being diamonds; the cups, which stood for "love", turning into hearts; the spades replaced the swords, and the sticks are now clubs.

4. **Why Is the Ace of Spades Different Looking?** Playing cards was a popular form of entertainment in France. The rulers saw a way to make more money by taxing the Ace of Spades, and only that card in the deck. Aces were given the most open space so they could be stamped showing that the tax had been paid. Today, card manufacturers use the space to print their company information in, including trademark information.

5. **They're Not Playing With a Full Deck!** Have you ever heard this phrase, or said it about someone yourself? Nowadays, this phrase is generally used to describe a person who isn't completely in their right mind.

An interesting fact about a deck of playing cards is, it actually generated this phrase. To avoid paying the tax that was tacked onto the Ace of Spades, people wouldn't buy that card when they bought a deck of playing cards. So, they were playing traditional games that required using 52 cards with only 51. It was said they weren't "playing with a full deck" or they were foolish for doing so.

6. **What Do the Patterns on Card Backs Mean?** An interesting fact about a deck of playing cards is that usually playing cards have differentiable patterns on the backs of the cards. Unless the cards have advertising or pictures on the backs, that is. Each card manufacturer has their own unique pattern they place on their cards. The normal colors you'll see these patterns printed in are red and blue.

7. **Building Houses With Playing Cards Is Also a Favorite Pastime:** Besides playing card games, building houses out of playing cards or "Cardstacking" is a favorite pastime for many people. A man named Bryan Berg has turned this pastime into a career. He earned the Guinness World Record for the "world's tallest card tower" in 1992. Since then, Berg has won even more honors for building higher towers. His highest to date measured 25 feet, 3.5 inches. Bryan Berg used 2,400 decks of playing cards to build this huge tower with.

8. **The Ace of Spades Assisted the U.S. Troops in Vietnam Too:** In 1966, when the Vietnam War was raging on, two United States lieutenants contacted the United States Playing Card Company. The two officers wanted decks of playing cards that consisted of nothing more than Aces of Spades. The aces were used as part of a psychological warfare against the Viet Cong. You see, when the French used cards to foretell the future, the Aces of Spades forewarned of death. The Viet Cong were superstitious, and just seeing this card made them fearful. Thousands of Aces of Spades were dispersed throughout the jungles to make the enemy leave in fear.

