

## CAUTIOUS BIDDER [112]

East Wales played their first Western League match of the season - against Somerset - last weekend. The B and C match was played with teams of eight players, and East Wales triumphed in both. Well done! The A match was played between teams of four and it would perhaps have been better if our foursome had failed to turn up. Somerset fielded a strong line-up, but not so strong as to strike terror into opposition hearts (that's the job of teammates, I find). We leaked IMPs in every conceivable fashion and altogether performed with such indiscipline and lack of judgement that we were bound to be punished severely by strong opponents.

It is a fact that in Teams play most IMPs are won (and lost) in the bidding. You have to be able to bid, and the key to good bidding is not system, as some would have you believe, but judgement. I am currently watching the World Bridge Games on BBO, following the fortunes of the English Open team in particular. To say that it is instructive would be a huge understatement. The card play is mesmerising at times, and the bidding is almost invariably well judged. It can be hard to follow because the players employ so many transfer sequences, but the key remains good judgement. For example this was one Hinden/Osborne sequence (they had 30 high card 'points' between them, but must have forgotten to count them): 1C – 1S – 2NT – 4D – 4S – 7D. Four Diamonds set the suit and also (I'm guessing here) asked a question to which Four Spades provided the answer. It made of course, for a flat board.

The following was one of many boards in our match against Somerset on which the opposition displayed nothing more than routine competence but nonetheless gained a large number of IMPs.

**Dealer North; Both non-vul**

	♠8543	
	♥97	
	♦J642	
	♣Q86	
♠A		♠KQJ106
♥Q52		♥A43
♦K10753		♦A
♣KJ54		♣A1092
	♠972	
	♥KJ1086	
	♦Q98	
	♣73	

At our table the bidding was as follows:

W	N	E	S
		1S	P
2D	P	3C	P
4C	P	4D	P
4S	P	4N	P
5H	P	6C	all pass

Pretty simple stuff. Four clubs set the suit and there followed a couple of cue bids prior to a

Roman Key card enquiry. Both players (Colin Juneman and Roger Sweet) valued their hands correctly.

There might have been a point of interest in the play. At our table Sue led a club from the South hand, picking up my Queen, and that was thirteen tricks. But imagine for a moment that the hand was played by West, on a heart lead from North. Does that present a difficulty? Well, it shouldn't. Declarer should rise with the Ace, cash his two top trumps, and revert to spades. If trumps break no worse than 3-2 the contract is cold. It would of course be a gross error to finesse at trick one and then find yourself having to locate the Queen of trumps.

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