MMT BULLETIN 3 • Thursday December 22nd 2022 • editor Christina Lund Madsen • clm@christina-bridge.com

MONTHLY MIXED TEAMS

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Christmas Excitement

Netteale now holds a 7 VP lead with 86.40 VPs, still with Harris on their heels and Bamsa clinging to the top-3 with 70.34 VPs.

Today we play one more round of Swiss, then the last round is a Danish, where no. 1 meets 2, 3 meets 4 etc. The number of VPs in the last Danish round will be added to each team's total, so the tournament is not over till the Christmas bells ring.

Meanwhile Mark Horton is embracing the Christmas spirit, and besides extensive coverage from each round, he is also entertaining us with Christmas Crackers:

What do reindeer hang on their Christmas trees?
- Horn-aments

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?
- Frostbite

What do you call a reindeer who can't see?
No-eye deer

All players should enter BBO 5 minutes before the beginning of a match. TD Denis Dobrin will instruct you where to sit. All players must have their name in their BBO-profile. Private isn't allowed for the sake of opponents and kibitzers.

Today's Schedule

December 22nd

10:00 EST / 16:00 CET – R7 (16 boards)

12:15 EST / 18:15 CET – Danish (16 brds)

Same schedule throughout the week

Results

Ranking after round 6		
rk	team	VPs
1	NETTEALE	86.40
2	HARRIS	78.99
3	BAMSA	70.34
4	BAUERS REINDEERS	66.47
5	ALPERT	65.31
6	TURNIPS	63.36
7	CHRISTMAS STARS	63.28
8	DENMARK MIXED	59.46
9	PARKER	51.90
10	P&P	50.54
11	MEADOW	34.49
12	MESSI ADMIRERS	29.46

Draw Round 7

Tbl	Home Team	Visiting Team
1	NETTEALE	ALPERT
2	HARRIS	CHRISTMAS STARS
3	BAMSA	P&P
4	BAUERS REINDEERS	MEADOW
5	TURNIPS	MESSI ADMIRERS
6	DENMARK MIXED	PARKER

Stocking Fillers

Round 4

By Mark Horton

In my part of the world, it is traditional for the children to put a stocking on the mantelpiece in the hope that Santa Claus will deliver some smaller presents during the night. (We also leave a glass of wine and a mince pie for Santa and a carrot for Rudolph – they are gone by morning.)

In Round 4 the deals were not especially exciting, but I have selected a small number that contained some point of interest.

Board 2. Dealer East. NS Vul.

	♠ K 7 6 5 ♥ 5 4 3 ♦ 9 3 2 ♣ 10 7 4	
♠ Q 9 4 ♥ K Q 10 2 ♦ A J 10 6 ♣ Q 9		♠ A 10 3 2 ♥ — ♦ 8 7 5 ♣ A K J 6 5 3
	♠ J 8 ♥ A J 9 8 7 6 ♦ K Q 4 ♣ 8 2	

Bamsa v Alpert

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pramotton	Peterkin	Versace	Punch
—	—	1♣	1♥
Dble*	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North led the ♥3 and South took the ace and returned the seven. Declarer put in the ten and when it held she cashed six clubs, played a diamond to the ace, took two hearts and played a spade to the ten (South having pitched two spades) for +490.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Brock	Hoyos	Myers	Seamon Molson
—	—	1♣*	1♥
3NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4♥*	Pass
4NT*	Pass	6♣	All Pass

1♣ 2+♣
4♦ Cue
4♥ Cue
4NT RKCB

South led the ♦K for the ace, nine and seven. Having drawn trumps discarding a heart from dummy declarer played a diamond and South took the ace and tried to cash the ♥A which resulted in -920 and the loss of 10 IMPs.

Declarer was known to hold six clubs and three diamonds. If you think the jump to 6♣ is suggestive of a void then you will place East with a 4-0-3-6 and exit with a red card (the Rueful Rabbit would undoubtedly play a low heart!) hoping for a spade trick.

Sally Brock and Barry Myers

It occurred to me that if South doubles 4♥ it will probably result in East redoubling to show a first-round control, removing all doubt.

Elsewhere one South was doubled in 1♥, losing 500 and 2 IMPs, and another over-called 2♥ and went four down doubled to surrender 12 IMPs.

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

	♠ A K J ♥ A K 8 2 ♦ 8 4 2 ♣ J 3 2	
♠ 10 8 3 2 ♥ J 10 5 ♦ Q 10 9 ♣ 10 8 4		♠ 9 7 5 4 ♥ 9 6 3 ♦ J 6 5 3 ♣ 9 6
	♠ Q 6 ♥ Q 7 4 ♦ A K 7 ♣ A K Q 7 5	

Only 7 pairs bid a grand slam.

The popular opening was 2NT and two players were happy to jump to 6NT with North's cards – one of them lost 11 IMPs.

Adam Grossack also jumped with the North hand, but he raised Chris Parker's 2NT directly to 7NT.
Sam Punch and Stephen Peterkin bid 2NT-5NT-7♣ – and lost 2 IMPs.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

	♠ K 8 7 5 3 ♥ — ♦ A K 7 5 4 3 2 ♣ 8	
♠ A Q 9 ♥ Q J 10 6 5 4 ♦ 10 9 ♣ K Q		♠ J 6 4 ♥ 8 7 3 ♦ Q 6 ♣ A J 10 7 3
	♠ 10 2 ♥ A K 9 2 ♦ J 8 ♣ 9 6 5 4 2	

How best to approach the North hand when West opens 1♥?

There were seven votes for 2♦, three for 2♥ and one each for 3♣ and 1♠.
5♦ was reached six times and with East leading a heart everyone made 12 tricks, winning between 10 and 6 IMPs except in Messi Admirers v Parker where they were both in game.

Thomas Paske and Adele Gogoman and Anne Laure Tartarin were the only EW pairs to bid 4♥- the former seeing their opponents go on to 5♦, the latter going one down doubled.

Adam Grossack
Photo: WBF

No East mentioned clubs, all but one of them supporting hearts. Student's of Meckstroth's Law would then be certain to bid 4♥ – a good save given that Eastis never going to lead a club.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

	♠ 9 3 2 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ 7 6 2 ♣ 10 8 3 2	
♠ 8 6 5 ♥ 10 7 2 ♦ K Q 10 ♣ J 9 7 6		♠ A K Q 10 7 ♥ 4 3 ♦ 9 8 5 3 ♣ A 4
	♠ J 4 ♥ A K Q J 9 ♦ A J 4 ♣ K Q 5	

Seven players opened the South hand 2♣, three went with 2NT, and 1♥ and a Strong 1♣ were the remaining choices.

In the top table clash between Netteale and Harris, Steve Root doubled South's 2NT, which looks an excellent idea.

He may have been hoping partner would lead a spade, but the ♦K was equally effective, declarer taking her tricks for -300 which earned Root and Harris 5 IMPs against the 3♥-2 recorded at the other table.

Board 16. Dealer West. EW Vul.

	♠ K 10 7 4 2 ♥ K 8 3 2 ♦ 10 5 2 ♣ 2	
♠ 5 ♥ Q 10 9 7 ♦ K 9 6 4 ♣ 8 6 5 3		♠ A Q J 8 ♥ A 6 ♦ 8 ♣ A K J 10 9 7
	♠ 9 6 3 ♥ J 5 4 ♦ A Q J 7 3 ♣ Q 4	

With South overcalling in diamonds how good is 6♣?

You might ask the same question if North starts with a bid to show both majors or even a multi 2♦.

In the event, no one got beyond 5♣. Three NS pairs were doubled in spades, one loosing -1700 in 4♠, one -1400 in 3♠ and the other managing to escape for -500 in 4♠.

Christmas Crackers

Round 5

By Mark Horton

The Christmas Cracker is a British tradition that dates to the reign of Queen Victoria. Each one contains a party hat, a joke, and a small gift. They usually come in boxes of six in prices to suit every pocket (the rich get theirs from Harrods – a snip at £600!).

The jokes are corny – in 2021 the Daily Telegraph published what they considered to be the top 50 which included such gems as:

What do angry mice send to each other at Christmas?
- Cross Mouse Cards

What do they sing at a snowman's birthday party?
- Freeze a jolly good fellow

How did Scrooge win the football game?
- The ghost of Christmas passed

Who delivers presents to baby sharks at Christmas?
- Santa Jaws

What do you call a bunch of chess players bragging about their games in a hotel lobby?
- Chess nuts boasting in an open foyer

Why don't you ever see Father Christmas in hospital?
- Because he has private elf care

As I sat down to watch Round 5, I was hoping to be entertained by some cracking deals.

Board 2. Dealer East. NS Vul.

	♠ K J 8 6 ♥ A 5 2 ♦ Q J 7 4 2 ♣ K	
♠ Q 2 ♥ J 10 4 ♦ A K 10 3 ♣ Q 10 7 4		♠ 9 3 ♥ Q 8 3 ♦ 9 6 5 ♣ A 8 6 5 3
	♠ A 10 7 5 4 ♥ K 9 7 6 ♦ 8 ♣ J 9 2	

As you can see, NS can score ten tricks in spades, but how easy is it to bid?

Netteale v Bamsa

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Peterkin	Paske	Punch	Nettleton
—	—	Pass	Pass
1NT*	All Pass		

1NT 12-14

Can we presume that North had no way to show spades and another suit? Even so, it was a little surprising that South did not try 2♣.

North led the ♦4 and declarer won with the ten and played the ♣7 for the king and ace. A club back to the ten allowed declarer to score the first eight tricks, +120.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Seale	Barel	Gold	Katz
—	—	Pass	Pass
1♣*	Dble	2♣*	3♠
4♣	4♠	All Pass	

1♣ 2+♣
2♣ Natural, non-forcing

West led the ♦A and switched to the ♥J, declarer winning with the king and playing a club for the king and ace. Dummy's ♥A took the next trick and declarer continued with a spade to the ace and the ♣J, covered by the queen and ruffed. A diamond ruff was followed by a spade to the king and declarer ruffed a diamond and played a heart which set up a tenth trick, +620 and 12 IMPs.

Catherine Seale

Harris v Bauers Reindeer

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Sloofman	Tiholov	Marshall	Gold
—	—	Pass	2♦*
Dble	2♠	Pass	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	Pass
4♣	All Pass		

2♦ 54 MM weak

I'm not totally convinced by West's rebid, but he wisely retreated from 3NT doubled. North led the ♠8 and South won and switched to the ♦8, declarer taking the ace and playing a club. That meant he was sure of eight tricks, -100.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Gross	Bauer	Root	Valta
—	—	Pass	Pass
1♣*	Dble	3♣*	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

1♣ 2+♣
3♣ Preemptive

West led the ♦A and switched to the ♥4, declarer winning with the king, playing two rounds of spades ending in dummy and the ♦Q pitching a heart and claiming ten tricks, +620 and 11 IMPs.

Three more pairs bid the game – it was flat in P&P v Messi Admirers, while Parker picked up 10 IMPs when the Christmas Stars stopped in 2♠.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

	♠ A Q J 6 ♥ 8 2 ♦ 10 8 6 ♣ K 10 8 2	
♠ 10 7 ♥ K 7 ♦ K 9 7 3 2 ♣ Q 9 5 4		♠ K 9 5 4 ♥ Q J 10 9 ♦ 5 ♣ A J 6 3
	♠ 8 3 2 ♥ A 6 5 4 2 ♦ A Q J 4 ♣ 7	

This does not look exciting – but appearances can be deceptive.

Harris v Bauers Reindeer

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Sloofman	Tiholov	Marshall	Gold
–	–	–	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

East led the ♦5 and West won with the king and returned the nine, East ruffing, cashing the ♣A and then playing the ♥Q. Declarer took dummy's ace and played a spade to the queen, East winning and returning the ♥J. West won and gave his partner another ruff for one down, -100.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Gross	Bauer	Root	Valta
			1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

Dble 'Extra values'

Jill Marshall, Tracey Bauer and Silvana Rojko

How best to describe East's 3♣? While you are pondering that delicate problem what should West bid if East prefers a double?

If West has a singleton spade EW are sure to have a minor suit fit, so 3♣ is not so far short of the mark. If East doubles West does best to bid 2NT, which should offer a choice of minor suits.

South led the ♠2 and North took the ace and returned the queen, declarer winning and playing the ♦5. South took the ace and played a spade, but declarer ruffed in dummy and played a heart to the queen, South winning and returning the ♥4 to dummy's king. Declarer pitched a heart on the ♦K, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond (overruffing North's ♣8) and pitched a diamond on the ♥J. North could ruff, but had to lead into the split tenace, +670 and 11 IMPs.

There are ways to defeat 3♣ – but not after a spade lead. Perhaps the easiest is to lead a club, win the first diamond and then return the suit at every opportunity.

Parker v Christmas Stars

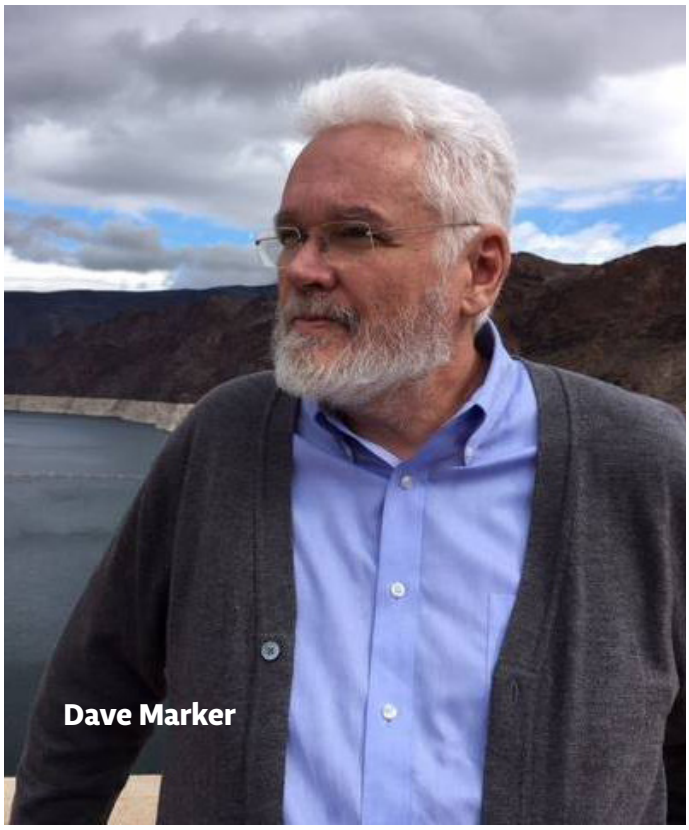
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Marker	A Grossack	Botta	Parker
—	—	—	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♥*	All Pass	

2NT Inquiry
3♣ 3♠, short somewhere, minimum
3♥ Offer to play

West led the ♣5 and East won with the jack and switched to the ♦5, West winning with the king and continuing with the ♣Q for the king, ace and a ruff.
When declarer played a spade to dummy's jack it held the trick (!) and declarer ducked a heart to East's ten. He ruffed the club return and repeated the spade finesse. East won and gave her partner a spade ruff which meant three down, -300.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Robinson	Lund Madsen	Grossack	McNay
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♠*	2NT*	Dble
3♦	Pass	3♥	Dble
4♣	Dble	All Pass	

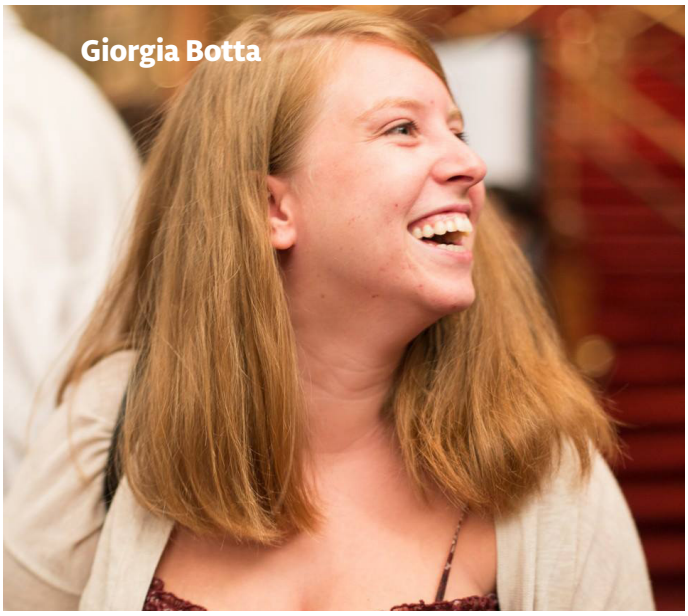
2♣ Drury
2♠ Minimum
2NT 2 suits


Dave Marker

North led the ♥8 and declarer unblocked the king as South won with the ace. The heart return went to dummy's nine and South took the ♦5 with the ace and switched to the ♠8 (a heart is best) North winning with the ace and returning the ♠6. Declarer took dummy's king, ruffed a spade and cashed the ♦K pitching dummy's remaining spade (a heart saves a trick). A club to the jack held, but when South discarded on the ace declarer had to go two down, -500 costing 13 IMPs.

On Board 11 North held ♠J9 ♥AKQJ863 ♦K3 ♣J2 and saw partner pass and West open 1♠. Your move?

Facing a passed partner do you a) try 3♠ asking for a stopper, b) jump to 4♥, or c) make a simple overcall or 2♥.
There were two votes for 3♠, four for 4♥ and five for 2♥.



At the remaining table South tried a multi 2♦ and North bid a Pass or correct 2♥, finished in 4♥ doubled and was allowed to make it, despite having four top losers. 4♥ was made at three other tables.

This was the layout:

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

	♠ J 9 ♥ A K Q J 8 6 3 ♦ K 3 ♣ J 2	
♠ A K 8 7 4 ♥ 4 ♦ Q 8 4 2 ♣ K 9 3		♠ 2 ♥ 10 2 ♦ J 9 7 6 ♣ A Q 8 7 5 4
	♠ Q 10 6 5 3 ♥ 9 7 5 ♦ A 10 5 ♣ 10 6	

One way to let 4♥ make is for the defenders not to cash out with East at some point switching to the ♦6. If West puts up the queen (hello rule of 11) declarer has three diamond tricks and a vital discard.

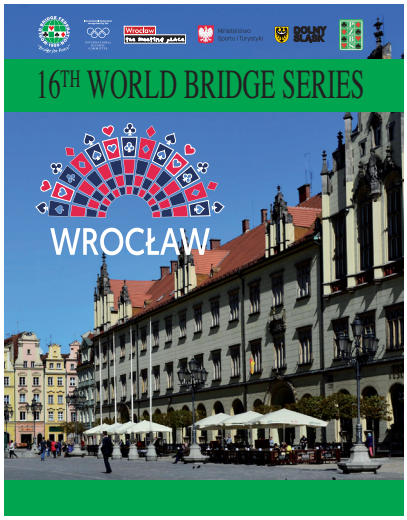
I considered writing something about Board 16, but the family are clamoring for drinks and nibbles.

World Championship Book Wroclaw 2022

The official book of the World Bridge Series in Wroclaw will be released in 2023. The principal contributors will be *Brian Senior, Barry Rigal, Mark Horton, Ron Tacchi, David Bird & Maurizio di Sacco*.

The book is in full colour and includes many photographs from the championships, a full list of results and extensive coverage of the major championship events.

The book will be available from bridge suppliers around the world at the official retail price of £30, US$35 and €35. It will also be available as an ebook from the Master Point Press web site at US$30.



The Sound of Christmas

Round 6

By Mark Horton

As Christmas day draws ever closer, the number of pop songs and ballads aired on the radio to celebrate the event increase exponentially. Everyone has their own favourites and if you look at the various lists that have been compiled over the years there is no consensus as to what the best of all time might be. Personally, I like Dean Martin's 'It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.'
Hopefully that will set you thinking about your own favorites and distract you from this somewhat attenuated report on the sixth round.

Board 5. Dealer North. NS Vul.

	♠ K J 10 8 4 3 2 ♥ 5 ♦ Q 8 6 ♣ Q 2	
♠ 9 6 5 ♥ J 9 7 4 ♦ J 10 ♣ J 10 4 3		♠ A Q ♥ A 8 3 ♦ 9 7 5 4 3 2 ♣ A K
	♠ 7 ♥ K Q 10 6 2 ♦ A K ♣ 9 8 7 6 5	

If North opens 3♠ East bids 3NT – that happened on ten occasions. When North started with a 'constructive' 2♠ East's 2NT overcall ended the auction, and the same thing happened when North started with a multi 2♦.

This was the most interesting pair of results:

Alpert v Messi Admirers

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Camerini	Hoyos	Schroeder	Seamon Molson
—	3♠	3NT	Dble
Pass	Pass	4♦	All Pass

South led the ♥K and the defenders had no trouble scoring four tricks for -50.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pramotton	Hotamisligil	Versace	Aquino
—	3♠	3NT	Dble
All Pass			

South led the ♥K and declarer won with the ace and played a diamond, south winning with the king and exiting with the ♣9. Declarer won and played another diamond, South winning, cashing the ♥Q and following it with the two. Declarer won with dummy's nine, played a spade to the queen and exited with a diamond, claiming nine tricks, +550 and 12 IMPs.

The other defenders tried a spade or a club, but that did not help, declarer playing on diamonds. Eventually South would be forced to give dummy a trick to get declarer up to nine.
However, there is a way to defeat 3NT. If South subscribes to the Barry Crane theory 'God deals you AK of a suit so you don't have a lead problem' South can start with the ♦A.

Alfredo Versace with two of his apprentices

Seeing dummy it might then be possible to find the winning defence of cashing the ♦K and exiting with a club. When North get in with the ♦Q a heart switch will put the defenders on course for five tricks.

As an aside, some partnerships play that the lead of the king asks partner to unblock any honour, while the queen requests an attitude signal. The other four players who led a heart against 3NT started with the queen.

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

	♠ 10 5 2 ♥ J 9 2 ♦ J 8 3 2 ♣ J 10 6	
♠ A J 8 ♥ K 7 4 ♦ Q 10 9 7 ♣ 8 4 3		♠ 9 6 4 3 ♥ A Q 10 6 3 ♦ — ♣ K Q 7 5
	♠ K Q 7 ♥ 8 5 ♦ A K 6 5 4 ♣ A 9 2	

If East opens 1♥ South must choose between 2♦ (a sixth diamond would ne nice) or a double (when you would prefer to have another spade). The field was split, six-six.

All things considered you might imagine EW play in a partscore, but two pairs bid 4♥ – and as the cards lie that cannot be defeated. Both picked up 11 IMPs, but that was not the biggest swing, as Steve Root was doubled in 3♥ and +930 was worth 13 IMPs.

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

	♠ K Q 9 6 5 ♥ 7 3 ♦ Q 6 3 ♣ 9 8 5	
♠ J 10 7 ♥ A J 6 4 ♦ K 7 5 ♣ K 10 2		♠ A 4 3 ♥ K 9 8 2 ♦ A J 2 ♣ A Q J
	♠ 8 2 ♥ Q 10 5 ♦ 10 9 8 4 ♣ 7 6 4 3	

There were a number of deals in this set where borderline slams were a possibility (see Boards 2 and 7). Here you can make 6♥ or 6NT – as long as West is declarer. Otherwise a spade lead from South will prevent declarer from taking advantage of the spade position.

Two pairs bid 6♥, the bidding starting 1♣-1♥-4♥ (one North overcalled 1♠) and West then advanced with 5♣. North speeded up the play by leading the ♠K. One pair bid 6NT – but East was the declarer and South had no problem leading a spade – her partner had bid the suit.

Janice Seamon Molson

Board 15. Dealer South. NS Vul.

	♠ 6 2 ♥ K J 10 8 6 2 ♦ J 6 ♣ K 10 4	
♠ K Q 7 4 ♥ A 4 ♦ 10 9 2 ♣ 9 6 5 3		♠ 8 5 ♥ Q 5 3 ♦ K Q 7 4 3 ♣ J 7 2
	♠ A J 10 9 3 ♥ 9 7 ♦ A 8 5 ♣ A Q 8	

When South opened 1NT North frequently committed to game, jumping to 4♣/4♦, depending on system.

A diamond lead would give declarer no chance, and it was found by Tatyana Trendafilova and Marie Henriksen – it was easy enough as North's 4♦ had been doubled by their partner. Alas, a signalling accident saw the contract make at one of these tables, declarer scoring a trick with the ♦8.

When North was the declarer Gonzalo Herrera led the ♦K to scupper the contract, as did Giorgia Botta.

Otherwise West led a top spade. Declarer won and ran the ♥7, East winning with the ♥Q and returning a spade. Now a diamond switch was a killer.

Janice Seamon Molson made 4♥ after a spade lead, as after winning the ♥Q and returning a spade West took the ♥A before playing a diamond.

I was about to call it a day when it occurred to me that if declarer puts up dummy's ♥K at trick two and plays a spade the defenders are helpless. West can win and switch to a diamond, but declarer wins and pitches a diamond on a spade. East ruffs, but the remaining trumps fall together. To avoid this possibility West must rise with the ♥A and switch to a diamond.

Time to get a coffee and think of two more Christmas themed introductions!

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