

**Sligo and Friends - Intermediate Game - Tuesday 21st May 2024**

Board	Contract	By	Lead	Topic of the hand
1	6S	S	HA	When the trumps prove to be 3-0 we are unable to ruff 2 clubs in dummy. So instead we draw 3 trumps. Set up 5th diamond by cashing AK and ruffing a diamond, then up to CK and ruff a fourth diamond. Now a later club ruff will be the entry to the established 5th diamond.
2	7S	E	CJ	Once West hears that East has 4 aces and 4 card spade support, the Grand should be very tempting. In any case we must make 13 tricks even if we are only in 6S. Good technique would be to start with SA in case of 4-0 break with South - you cannot catch North if he has all 4 spades.
3	4H	S	SA	A good hand to have 3C as a trial bid - asking North to bid 4H if she can help out in the club suit. But even if only in partscore we need to be making 10 tricks. Cash one trump with HA and start about ruffing 2 clubs in dummy.
4	3H	E	DK	Declarer should lead his singleton spade towards dummy's KQ before taking club finesse. If South takes his ace you won't need the club finesse and if he doesn't you have no spade loser! So it's a Win-Win situation for declarer.
5	4S+1	N	HQ	Declarer can make an overtrick by discarding his heart loser on 3rd round of clubs before drawing trumps.
6	6H	W	SK	Draw 2 top trumps and then play on clubs. North can take his trump queen whenever he wants.
7	3NT+2	W	H7	South has DK for his opening bid. Run D10 and make 6 diamond tricks, 1 heart and 4 spades for 11 tricks.
8	3NT	S	S10	With 26 points we should be in 3NT. High card short hand - ie DKQ first then a diamond to the 9 when we see West showing out.
9	5C	E	H5	Declarer should make 11 tricks whether he's in 3C or 5C by playing clubs by leading a Club to the Q, then go back to dummy in diamonds to repeat the club finesse.
10	6H	N	SA	When South sees his hand he should immediately be thinking of 6H or 6S - if partner has any ace that South hand will have a good shot at 12 tricks and if partner can support either major then slam is 100%. Ruff one spade to setup the suit.
11	3NT	E	DQ	Declarer makes 4 club tricks by finessing twice in clubs i.e. club to the 10 and later a club to the J. 4 club tricks and 5 outside tricks is 9 tricks.

12	4S	N	C10	East needs to keep 4 hearts otherwise declarer's hearts will be winners but when he does so declarer can throw East in with the 4th heart and force East to lead a diamond into declarer's KJ of diamonds.
13	4S	E	H7	Declarer should recognise South's H7 lead as being a singleton and this means that declarer's normal plan of ruffing his 4th heart in dummy will not work (because his HA will be ruffed by South). Declarer adopts 'Plan B' a 'Dummy Reversal' play. Win the heart lead and play a club to ace and ruff a club. Now a trump to dummy and ruff a second club. play a second trump to dummy and ruff dummy's last club with declarer's last trump (the ace). Now a diamond to dummy and draw the last trump. 4S made. Well played.
14	4H	S	S9	Lead DQ from hand at T2 to set up the DJ as an entry to dummy's CA. If East does not take his DK then he never gets it. Hopefully the defenders won't help declarer by leading diamonds or clubs at any stage!
15	4S-1	W	DA	South drops DQ under North's DA lead showing DQJ. North can lead a small diamond to South at trick 2 and South will have no trouble finding the killing club switch. Well defended - sadly most declarers will not meet this defence.
16	4H	E	CA	North signals his QJ of clubs by dropping the CQ under partner's CA lead but no switch needed this time. South can set up a diamond ruff by switching to his singleton diamond and then when he gets in with the ace of trumps he can put his partner in with the CJ to get his diamond ruff. However declarer should see this coming ..... and he can play SAK and SJ and discard his losing club on the spade jack - a special 'loser on loser' play called the 'Scissors Coup' as it prevents the diamond ruff.
17	4S	N	CK	Strip and Throw in. After drawing trumps and ruffing 2 clubs, declarer exits on a heart. Now the opponents will have to open the diamond suit and we will lose just two diamond tricks - whereas if we open the diamond suit first we will lose 3 diamond tricks.
18	4S	S	HK	Declarer has a 2-way finesse in diamonds. If he is a good guesser he can make 3 diamond tricks by guessing that East has DQ. However declarer does not have to guess if he uses a 'Strip and Throw in' play. Win the heart lead. Cash SA first (in case East has all 3 trumps) and after 3 rounds of trumps we play Ace and another club. Now we do not have to guess the location of the DQ because the opponents will have to solve our guess by opening the diamond suit for us.