

♠ K 10 9
♥ —
♦ —
♣ 9 8 3

♠ —
♥ 10 8 5
♦ 8 7 6
♣ —

♠ Q
♥ 6 4
♦ —
♣ 10 7 5

♠ 7
♥ K Q 9
♦ K 9
♣ —

and decided to open with two hearts. North passed, my partner raised to three hearts, followed by three spades (South) and four spades (North).

I led the nine of hearts and North's dummy appeared:

♠ K 8 7
♥ 10 8 7
♦ A Q 7
♣ K 10 6 2

Partner won with the ace of hearts as South followed with the six. Partner shifted to the ten of diamonds for me to ruff. What next?

I played a low heart to partner's presumed queen, hoping for another diamond ruff. Time to show the full deal:

♠ K 8 7
♥ 10 8 7
♦ A Q 7
♣ K 10 6 2

♠ Q 9 3
♥ K J 9 4 3
♦ —
♣ Q 9 8 7 5

♠ 10
♥ A 5 2
♦ K J 10 9 6 4 3
♣ J 3

♠ A J 6 5 4 2
♥ Q 6
♦ 8 5 2
♣ A 4

Confidential Confessions of a Self-Kibitzing

Denier

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Recently, it has become fashionable for sometimes well-known self-kibitzers to confess. Our team (which will remain nameless to protect the guilty – in the spirit of full disclosure) had decided to enter the 2020 Canadian Senior Team Championship (CSTC), conducted on the internet. To make certain that we'll not be suspected of illegal activities, we have firmly anchored our team, after eight rounds of play, in first position – should we view the results upside down.

Since we could not muster a single win, the searchlight for cheats somehow eluded us. But we could not escape the attention of the event organizer, who promptly threatened to penalize us for not reporting a match score in time. (Just as an aside: the reporting of the score is the responsibility of the winning captain). When we politely inquired which one of our eight losses we were supposed to report, the penalty was not enforced.

For those who are still interested in the murky details, here are some examples of our outstanding adventures:

In one of our early matches I, as West, the dealer, held:

♠ Q 9 3
♥ K J 9 4 3
♦ —
♣ Q 9 8 7 5

Sadly, the complicated play of cashing my king of hearts and waiting for the setting trick with the king of diamonds from Partner had eluded me. Not lucky.

Another adventure: at both tables West opened one spade (promising at least five). With the opponents remaining silent, East replied with one notrump (forcing), West followed with two hearts and East bid four hearts. North, holding:

♠ K 10 7 4 2
♥ 3 2
♦ Q 8 4
♣ 10 8 5

led a trump, and witnessed the following dummy:

♠ J 8
♥ Q J 7 6
♦ A 10 7 6
♣ K 4 2

Both declarers won with the queen of hearts in the dummy and ran the jack of spades to the king. Both Norths, 'knowing' that their partners had no more spades, immediately switched to another suit. This 'defence' allowed four hearts to make for plus 420. (Four hearts is indeed makeable, but not cold, on any non-spade play by North – Ed.) Just an ordinary push, as we escaped from the jaws of victory once again. Here are the gory details:

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

In the last example, all vulnerable, our player, holding 14 HCP, opened the bidding with one diamond. His partner, holding:

♠ 9 7 5
 ♥ K 5 3
 ♦ A 3
 ♣ K J 7 3 2

bravely stretched to one notrump, which was followed by a double (presumably for the majors) by his left-hand opponent. The next two players passed! Since redouble would have been for takeout, our hero proudly stood his ground and passed. Here was the full deal:

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

Declarer's self-kibitzer abandoned him at this point. South led a heart. Declarer put in the jack and played the ace and nine of clubs, ducking it to the ten! When South continued with hearts, there were only nine tricks available. Putting in the jack of clubs would have resulted in at least ten tricks (eleven if he led spades twice toward the queen).

Achieving only two overtricks resulted in plus 580. At the other table, following a simple one notrump-three notrump auction, declarer scored a painless 630, and we deservedly lost 2 IMPs. The things we do to try to avoid the limelight.

I hope that bridge players will forgive us in time. Should they not, at least they can benefit from our crimes.



Une Friandise Viennoise

As a Tournament Director, you are more or less obliged to check strange results. Some years ago, in the 2016 Austrian Pairs Championship, I found the score of 2600 on a result sheet: ten doubled undertricks. So, I tried to find out what had happened...

Dealer East. Neither Vul.

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

On this deal, East/West can make four hearts; a sacrifice of five diamonds is too expensive (minus 500). How did a good pair land in six clubs doubled?

West	North	East	South
—	—	1♥	3NT ¹
4♥	4NT ²	5♥	Pass
Pass	6♣ ³	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Solid minor
2. Which minor?
3. I want to sacrifice

South thought that six clubs showed North's own suit. A bid of five diamonds might have succeeded as East and West both have the precious singleton diamond.

Eight pairs bid to five hearts and six pairs to seven hearts, certainly a very bad decision on this layout.

Slam for Both Sides

This deal is from one of the last big Austrian tournaments that was played before Corona stopped all activities.