

MORE WILD HANDS by Maritha Pottenger

Hands are from Redwood, March 7, 2020.

Hand #4

Board 4	♠ 7 4 3				
West Deals	♥ 6				
Both Vul	♦ A 3				
	♣ A K Q 10 8 7 2				
♠ —	<table style="border: 1px solid green; background-color: #006400; color: white; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ A K Q J 9 8 5
N					
W E					
S					
♥ K 10 5		♥ J 9 8 2			
♦ K Q J 9 8 6 4		♦ 2			
♣ J 5 4		♣ 3			
	♠ 10 6 2				
	♥ A Q 7 4 3				
	♦ 10 7 5				
	♣ 9 6				

This was an amusing hand. West opened 3D and **I had to decide (as North) between a “normal” 4C call versus a Godzilla 3NT call with both major suits wide open.** I chose 4C. East elected to pass as did South. The huge **irony on the hand is that 4NT makes from the SOUTH side**—only because West has no spade to lead. From the North side, East can take 7 spade tricks off the top. **Ouch!** The reason South makes 4NT and not just 3NT is that West will lead a top diamond. Double Dummy, Declarer can run 7 clubs—divining from West's discards: one heart and then 3 diamonds—that West started with ZERO spades, 3 clubs and 3 hearts to the King. South gives up a diamond to West who has only two more diamonds to cash and then is forced to lead from the Kx of hearts into Declarer's AQ. A very cute **strip squeeze**. Hugh Kelsey would have loved it!

Against 4C, East led a top spade and West discarded an encouraging diamond. Two more top spades followed. **Another spade would set the contract, since West has the Jack of clubs to overruff Dummy, but East followed West's request and shifted to a diamond which I knew was the singleton 2!** I topped West's 9 of diamonds [He could have put in the 6 over Dummy's 5 if he had wanted!] with the Ace.


As long as the clubs are NOT 4-0, I have 7 club tricks and the two red Aces. *It appears that the contract depends on East holding the King of hearts, but that is an illusion.* There is ALSO the chance of a squeeze if WEST owns the King of hearts. Thanks to the auction, I do NOT need any diamonds in Dummy. My 3 of diamonds will be a perfectly find threat card [**menace**] in the diamond suit as East is known to have no more diamonds.

So, I cash all 7 rounds of clubs, keeping the AQ of hearts in Dummy and the 3 of diamonds and singleton 6 of hearts in my hand. **The only thing I have to do is COUNT the number of diamonds**

West discards. He discarded 3 diamonds on the spades, and has followed to one round of diamonds. On my 4th round of clubs, West lets go of a heart. On the 5th round of clubs, he discards a 5th diamond. On the 6th round of clubs, he discards a 6th diamond. [How symmetrical of him!] It is becoming VERY evident that West is holding on to the Kx of hearts. On the 7th round of clubs, West discards his 7th diamond.

I calmly cash the 3 of diamonds, discarding the Queen of hearts from Dummy, and lead to the Ace of hearts.

Hand #15

<p>Board 15 South Deals N-S Vul</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 2 ♥ A J 6 ♦ K Q J 10 9 5 ♣ J</p>	<p>♠ 8 ♥ K Q 10 9 7 3 ♦ 7 3 ♣ A 7 6 2</p>		<p>♠ J 7 6 ♥ 8 5 ♦ 6 4 2 ♣ 10 8 5 4 3</p>
	<p>♠ A K 9 5 4 3 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A 8 ♣ K Q 9</p>			

Partner opens 1S and West bids 2H. I bid 3D (show those “source of tricks” suits!). A new suit at the 3 level means we are in a game force. Partner rebids spades (3S) which does NOT guarantee six; he might have no other reasonable bid. I cue bid 4H. This HAS to be a cue-bid, agreeing to spades. Partner bids 5C (showing a control in clubs). I sign off in 5S. Partner bids 6D, showing me that Ace of diamonds, and I correct to 6S.

Perhaps one of us should have considered 6NT, but just getting to slam was a reasonable board. At our

table, they cashed the Ace of clubs on the go. If they do NOT cash it, all South's club and heart losers go away on my diamonds.

Hand #9

Board 9		
North Deals	♠ 10 2	
E-W Vul	♥ K Q	
	♦ K Q 10 7 6 5 3 2	
	♣ Q	
♠ Q 9 4	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 5 3
♥ A 9 7 6 4 2		♥ J 8 5 3
♦ —		♦ A 9 8
♣ J 10 9 6		♣ A K 4 2
		♠ A K J 8 7 6
		♥ 10
		♦ J 4
		♣ 8 7 5 3

The old adage: “**What do you call an 8-card suit? Answer: Trump.**” held true on this hand. I opened 1 diamond in the North (too good for in immediate preempt) and East passed Partner bid 2S which I alerted. Ken Monzingo plays Intermediate jump shifts, so his 2S call is like a good Weak Two bid in spades. I thought about leaving him there since we are known an 8-card fit and he might have zero diamonds, but I felt my Aceless hand might be of little use to him in spades, so went back to diamonds.

It turns out we make 4 diamonds—losing only 3 aces, and 2S in the South goes down one with perfect defense.