

Pushing and pulling

Bridge is not always { ever ?} the gentlemans game that it is portrayed as. It is a game in which the opposing pairs will sometimes "bid one more" *not* in the expectation of making a contract but expressly to push their opponents too high.

Here is an example of E/W pushing N/S (about)

N	E	S	W
1S	2C	2S	3C
3S	P	P	4C
			x
			QJ109
			Kxxx
			Kxxx

West bids 4C { a contract that West knows is unlikely to make } with two things in mind :-

- i) that 4C may be a profitable sacrifice only going 1 down
- ii) that N/S will be pushed into bidding 4Sp , a contract that they are likely to go down in.

An overcall (NB a good overcall) is one starting place to start pushing the opponents higher that they might want to be.

We are going to look at two other ways that the non-opening side can find a way to push their opponents.

A) the opponents open 1NT--

Imagine you are East and North opens 1NT

e.g	N	E	S	W
	1NT	?		
		Q9765		
		KJ32		
		A3		
		43		

Well it would be just too rich to risk overcalling 2Sp { poor quality suit , nowhere near enough playing tricks } and so E has to pass.

Now the bidding may develop as follows :

e.g	N	E	S	W
	1NT	P	2D	P
	P	?		

Now East should bid 2Sp. YES it wasnt good enough for an initial overcall, but after the opponents have bid a weak take out it paradoxically becomes much safer to bid. Partly the reason for this is mathematical { partner is likely to have more spades when N/S are known to have 7+ diamonds } but the simple point is that South is known to be weak and so we can rely on our partner being strongish.

