

Grand Opening

We did not have to wait long for the best bid hand, and as Seven is the theme of this article, it is appropriate that the only pair to bid and make 7NT should get the award. Especially as Martin Garvey and I, the judges, would have given it to Zia and David Gold for their earlier auction to an unsuccessful 6C, had it not been for the following hand:

The opening bid was the key to success here:

E/W vul. Dealer East.

♠ Q	
♥ 10643	
♦ 654	
♣ QJ943	
♠ K97654	♠ A1082
♥ AQ9	♥ K7
♦ A72	♦ K83
♣ K	♣ A1085
	♠ J3
	♥ J852
	♦ QJ109
	♣ 762

West	North	East	South
<i>Zia</i>	<i>Justin</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Jason</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♥*	Pass	3♠*	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♥	Pass
7NT	All Pass		

There is a bit of a myth that Zia is a law unto himself in the auction, but he showed that he could bid constructively on this hand. However, it was Gold's judgement that made it all possible. 1NT was 15-17 – both the excellent Richard Pavlicek hand evaluator (at <http://www.rpbridge.net/xhe1.htm>) and the K&R hand evaluator (at <http://www.jeff-goldsmith.org/cgi-bin/knr.cgi>) rate East's hand as over 15 points, the former rating it 16.

Zia transferred to spades and David Gold re-evaluated again, breaking with 3S. He did have a super-break of 3C available, showing a superb hand for spades, so he was limited by failing to do that. After two cues, West bid RKCB for spades, then asked for specific kings that had not been previously cued. East showed the king of hearts, and Zia thought he could count six spades, three hearts, two diamonds and two clubs, and indeed was able to claim when spades broke 2-1. It would have been a travesty if he had suffered another 3-0 break in a ten-card fit.