Margaret River Bridge #6 071205

Today's hand is a simple example of bidding with a strong hand, but there can always be problems when bidding minor suit contracts.

Dlr - South
Vul - Both

	♠J10 3 ♥K10 9 6 4 ♦Q 9 ♣9 6 5	
♠8 6 ♥Q J 5 ♦A 5 3 ♣KJ10 8 4	N W E S	♠A K Q 7 ♥A ♦K10 7 4 ♣AQ 3 2
	♠9 5 4 2 ♥8 7 3 2 ♦J 8 6 2 ♣7	

Bidding

N	E	S	W
		P	P
P	2C	P	3C
P	4C	P	4H
P	5C	P	5H
P	6C	P	P

The opening 2C bid indicates a strong hand (20+ points). Any response, other than 2D, is a positive response from West. 3C implies a 5 card suit and most probably denies a 4 card major. East could respond with 3S, but decides that the fit in clubs is the best choice. The 4C bid is Gerber (a convention asking partner how many aces they have). 4H tells partner you have one Ace, 5C is asking how many kings and again the response means one King. East decides to stop in a safe 6C contract.

It is possible to make either 7C or 6NT, can you see how to make these? Would you and your partner have called either of these contracts? In pairs the 6NT would have given you a better score, but in teams the 6C is safer.

Gerber presents a problem with Ace asking when clubs is your suit in that you have no way of stopping from bidding slam, except 5NT, which doesn't look that good with a singleton heart. East should only have bid 4C if they had already decided that 6C was the contract and wanted to find out if 7C was possible.

Several partnerships are now using a sliding Gerber. Using a sliding Gerber, East would have bid 4S when asking for kings since Spades is the first unbid suit after the 4H bid. If East didn't like the response then they could have stopped in 5C. Using a sliding Gerber convention allows you more flexibility and hence enables you to stop in a lower contract if you are not getting the responses that you want.

©Bruce Darby, Margaret River Bridge Club, 2007