

## CHESHIRE CHEESES v AGAMEMNON

Newly promoted to Div 1 of the Manchester league, the great dealer in the sky decided that no-one was going to snooze off in boring part scores:

We start, in the recommended fashion, at the beginning. Board 1:

N	North
♠	KQ52
♥	9653
♦	J
♣	AQ52
S	South
♠	A6
♥	AKJ742
♦	AQ4
♣	86

John and I didn't investigate the grand and got to 6♥ far too quickly. Lose 11 when Kath & Alan bid it properly.  
A few boards later we get

N	North
♠	A2
♥	AK65
♦	Q4
♣	J8752
S	South
♠	K53
♥	7
♦	AK2
♣	AKQ1096

This was a good hand for the Canapé Blue Club style John & I play:

- 1♥ - 2♣
- 3♣ - 4NT
- 5♥ - 5NT

7♣ end

The first 3 calls were canapé. Unable to reverse into clubs John resorted to RKCB. When he bid 5NT, I could have shown the heart king, but I was dead maximum for the sequence (with 15-16 and this shape I open 2♣), and he hadn't asked about the club queen, so I just bid the grand. 11 back.

Time for teammates to earn their keep (next 2 boards rotated):

N	North
♠	J62
♥	
♦	KQ8642
♣	K752
S	South
♠	A10754
♥	AK654
♦	A3
♣	A

Not everyone's idea of a 3♦ opening 2nd at red, but this was certainly the moment to pick. 6♦ proved an excellent contract. After a more normal P - 1♠ - 2♦ - 3♥ - 3♠ there was never any realistic chance of not playing in spades and the opponents sensibly stopped in game. Win 12.

Canapé may have influenced the next but one board:

N	North
♠	A62
♥	KQ765
♦	A7
♣	A106
S	South
♠	K109543
♥	J
♦	6
♣	KQ954

Dealer was 4-6 in the reds, so John opened 1♥ (as east in the diagram) and it proceeded 1♠ - P - 4♠ ALL PASS

In the other room Alan opened a more normal 1♦, South showed a black 2 suited, and Kath raised diamonds. North contented himself with 4♠, and other opener rebid 5♦. At love all South somewhat unilaterally bid 5♠ but happily for us North knew who the 5 level belonged to and awarded a 6th spade. When both black suits behave win another 11.

It's half time. 12 boards played. 2 Grands and 2 Small Slams, all resulting in swings.

Board 13:

N	North
♠	A87
♥	AQ6
♦	AQ42
♣	A76
S	South
♠	5
♥	K73
♦	K65
♣	KQJ1042

After Kath opened 2NT, Alan wielded Gerber and awarded himself a 7th club when no aces were missing. Dummy was perfect and an easy claim. Lose 12.

Then I fell asleep at the wheel: North opened a Strong Club and I responded 1♥ (less than 3 controls)

N	North
♠	A654
♥	AK862
♦	A72
♣	A
S	South
♠	K2
♥	QJ3
♦	Q65
♣	KQJ42

1♣\* - 1♥\*

2♥ - 3♣

3♠ - 4♥ ALL PASS

Normally after the strong club, and the control showing response (6+ HCP, but no AK, KKK or better) responder leaves the level to opener who knows if the controls are missing or not. Clearly with this giant I needed to do more, and should have bid 5♥ at my 3rd turn. In some ways lucky to only lose 13.

N	North
♠	A65
♥	A54
♦	A1054
♣	KJ10
S	South
♠	KQ42
♥	KJ
♦	KQJ32
♣	AQ

1N (13-17, blue club style) - 2♦ (FG)  
 3♦ (15-17, only suit diamonds) 7♦.

I was relieved to see this wasn't off an ace (of trumps!). For some reason I thought we needed to be in diamonds for the extra trick, but there's no bonus for making 14. In fact the spades were 3-3

Lose 2 when in the other room they reached 7NT.

The other double digit swing in the match came from this:

N	North
♠	KQJ2
♥	8
♦	75
♣	AKJ643

Both Vul and it goes 2♥ - P - 3♥ to you. What to do? There are risks whichever action you choose. If you double and partner bids diamonds you might as well leave the room. Of course you can make my choice of bidding 4♣ to buy this dummy:

S	South
♠	98653
♥	QJ10
♦	A6
♣	875

The defence kicked off with ace and another spade (2-2) so I played clubs from the top, to pretty much lock in a plus score (no longer needing to lose a diamond).

Team mates are playing multi, so it starts

2♦ - P - 2♥ and now double is pretty marked (another reason I don't like multi, far too often you lose the good old single raise which can put the opponents under so much pressure). Inevitably the contract wound up in 4♠ from the weak hand. A heart was cashed, then a diamond switch. Draw trumps (the defence cashes it's diamond trick, and exits with trumps giving you nothing), and now it's rather more critical to play the clubs for no loser. Declarer got it right, so we lost another 10 - but what is the right line in the club suit?

A highly enjoyable game against top quality opponents played in a great spirit. 5 grands, and 2 small slams in the space of 24 boards, who says hand dealt boards (properly shuffled and dealt) have to be dull.

*Matt Foster*