

## Thinking ahead

When it comes to sporting contests, Canada's most prized victim is their big brash neighbour, the USA, much like New Zealand and Australia. So, it was an especially sweet victory for Canada when they won the hockey gold medal at the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City in 2002, beating the US in the final.

At the same time, Canada was winning the gold medal in the IOC Grand Prix bridge event, also in Salt Lake City. They got off to a flying start with a big win against you know who - the USA. This deal was worth a cool 20 imps.

South deals, neither side vulnerable

	♠ A Q J	
	♥ 8 6	
	♦ 9 3	
	♣ A K J 10 4 2	
♠ 10 7 5 3 2		♠ K 6 4
♥ J 5 4 3		♥ 10 2
♦ 10 4 2		♦ J 8 7
♣ 8		♣ 9 7 6 5 3
	♠ 9 8	
	♥ A K Q 9 7	
	♦ A K Q 6 5	
	♣ Q	

When Canada sat North-South:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			2♣
pass	3♣	pass	3♥
pass	4♣	pass	4♦
pass	4♠	pass	5NT
pass	7NT	all pass	

Fred Gitelman was South for Canada. When North rebid clubs, it set clubs as the expected trump suit. Thus, four diamonds and four spades were control bids. Then five notrumps said bid the grand slam with at least two of the three top honours in clubs. Nice bid Fred. West leads ]3.

To play the hand in Bridge Solver, click [here](#).

### Bridge Solver settings

To play the hand without any hints, go to "Options" and under "N/S Playable Card Display", select "No Subscripts or Colours."

To receive best defence, under "E/W Playable Card Display," select "Subscripts and Colours."

In 7NT, Gitelman won the spade lead with the ace. He could count 11 top tricks. The extra two would come from clubs provided they divided no worse than 4-2. Failing that, a 3-3 break in either red suit would see him home.

Time to make a plan.

If you try the clubs right away, you will soon discover that they are breaking badly. On the second club you can throw a spade from hand but, on the third and fourth club, you will have to guess which red suit to give up. If you give up the diamonds, you will be down because the hearts do not break.

Gitelman avoided this by testing the red suits before playing on clubs. When the diamonds divided 3-3, he had all 13 tricks – no guessing involved.

When USA sat North-South:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			2♣
pass	3♣	pass	3♥
pass	4♣	pass	4♦
pass	4♠	pass	6♣
pass	7♣	all pass	

Dick Freeman sat South. Forget about his precipitous leap to six clubs, his pass of seven clubs was a poor decision. If seven clubs would make, so too would seven notrumps. West also led a spade. Freeman went up with the ace and considered his line. If he played a low club to the queen, he would have no safe way back to hand. So, he cashed the ace of clubs at trick two, pinning his hopes on clubs dividing 4-2 or 3-3. But this left him with a trump loser when they divided 5-1.

He could have succeeded with the unlikely line of playing a club to the queen then ruffing the third round of diamonds.

The Canucks won the match 23-7, putting a golden spring in their stride.