



EMBA President Jim Rasmussen and Pam Miller have been together for the past 23 years – as partners at and away from the bridge table. At the recent Summer NABC in Philadelphia, they demonstrated their consistency and proficiency by finishing 2nd overall in the tough 2-day Wernher Open Pairs – and earning 93.75 Platinum Points for their fine performance.

Pam and Jim's bidding understandings allowed them to bid this hand from the 1st Final session to the optimal contract. Pam opened a 15-17 NT, and Jim's 4♥ bid is a "Texas Transfer" that forces a 4♠ bid and sets spades as trumps. Now when Jim bid 4NT this was Roman Keycard Blackwood for spades. (After a 2♥ transfer to 2♠, 4NT would show 5 spades and invite slam in no trump or spades.)

Pam's 5♠ response said she held 2 "key cards" -- aces and the K of trumps -- and the ♠Q (the agreed upon trump suit). Jim's 5NT, by their agreements, asked for Pam's lowest ranking specific King, which Pam showed with her 6♣ bid. Now Jim did some arithmetic. He knew Pam held at least two spades with the Q, so he could count 7 spade tricks, 1 heart, 2 diamonds, and 2 clubs for a total of 12 tricks. His partner had shown the ♠Q, the ♦A, and the ♣AK for a total of 13 HCP. She had to have between 2 and 4 more points. If she had the ♦Q, the ♣Q, or the ♥K, Jim could count 13 winners. She might have "the wrong cards", but even then there might be a finesse or other chances.

Typically, it is safer to play in a suit contract rather than NT because an extra trick might be developed by a ruff. At IMPs, it is most likely that Pam and Jim would have ended up in 7♠ rather than 7NT. But in the finals of a nationally ranked matchpoint event, the 10 point premium for playing in notrump made Jim's final bid of 7NT absolutely the right decision. All of this logic was rewarded as the laydown 7NT was worth 67 out of 76 matchpoints. 7S was only worth 47.

**Wernher Open Pairs--1st Final Session**  
**2012 Summer NABC, Philadelphia, PA**  
**Vul: Both Dealer: North**  
**Contract: 7NT Opening lead: ♣9**

**MILLER**  
 ♠ Q10  
 ♥ Q54  
 ♦ AQ6  
 ♣ AK832

**WEST**  
 ♠ J7  
 ♥ J9873  
 ♦ 10932  
 ♣ 95

**EAST**  
 ♠ 54  
 ♥ K62  
 ♦ J85  
 ♣ Q10764

**RASMUSSEN**  
 ♠ AK98632  
 ♥ A10  
 ♦ K74  
 ♣ J

#### Bidding:

North	East	South	West
1NT	P	4♥*	P
4♠	P	4NT	P
5♠*	P	5NT	P
6♣*	P	7NT!	All Pass

#### Today's Shark's Pointers:

- *There are big differences in the way that team games are scored as compared to matchpoints. Become familiar with these differences and use the scoring to help influence your bidding decisions.*
- *Count your tricks and your partner's promised points. Decide what the chances are that partner will have what you need for an extra trick, and bid aggressively. Bid what you hope you can make!*
- *Develop solid and consistent bridge partnerships and add tools that can help you learn important information about your partner's hand. Texas Transfers, Roman Key Card Blackwood, and Specific King asks are all great tools, but before you start using them, understand the ramifications and meanings attached to different bids that might follow.*
- *The way top partnerships like Pam Miller and Jim Rasmussen bid and play is rewarded with outstanding results, even at the highest levels of competition!*