

Patton pro-am at WHJI 2015

Many people visiting WHJI in Het Witte Huis asked me: "Why is the pro-am of WHJI poured into the form of a Patton; the formula where a match between teams of four is counted inimps as well as in matchpoints?" For the answer we take a look into the history of junior events in the Netherlands.

From 1993 to 2004 the international junior event was played in Den Bosch ('s-Hertogenbosch). After a week of play and a big afterparty on Saturday evening (night) the festival was closed on Sunday with a Patton team tournament. Even though you did not get much sleep, many juniors, guest parents and sponsors gathered in Uilenburg in the city centre for this special form of bridge. 70-80 teams of four, on Sunday morning at 10.00! In 2005 the event moved to Amsterdam but the 'Uilenburg Patton' remained, every year in January. Insiders still call it the 'Kees games'! This year I took the cards from the willow tree where I hung them some years ago and paired up with 'Gebakje', a person well known in all cafés and restaurants in Den Bosch. In the final round we met the team that had an advance at us of one Patton Point.

S/EW

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
-	-	-	1 \heartsuit
1 \heartsuit	dbl	2 \clubsuit	2 \spadesuit
3 \clubsuit	dbl	pass	??

South: \spadesuit K 8 6 3 \heartsuit 6 2 \diamondsuit A J 9 6 2 \clubsuit A 2

Regarding the formula of the Patton, it is always tempting to go for vulnerable doubled undertricks. I was not sure what North meant with his double so I bid 3 \clubsuit which ended the auction. After the lead of \clubsuit 4 partner put down the dummy, remarking that I was a coward not to have passed his double of 3 \clubsuit .

North

\spadesuit A J 9 2
 \heartsuit A 3
 \diamondsuit K 10 8 7
 \clubsuit 10 8 7

South

\spadesuit K 8 6 3
 \heartsuit 6 2
 \diamondsuit A J 9 6 2
 \clubsuit A 2

Well, as a pure diplomat, I remained silent seeing this incredible dummy and regretted indeed not to have passed 3♣-doubled: down one at least and with diamonds 2-2 even +500. The interesting feature of the Patton is that a board never is lost until the last card has been played. +420 in 4♠ looked easy, so I had to play on the assumption that the other table would declare 4♠.

I took the ♣4-lead and played ♠K, seeing ♠10 in East. With ♠Q in West it is no problem making ten tricks. So I played a spade to ♠A and this was a great success when ♠Q dropped. After ♠J, I knew that West had three clubs and three spades. With a four card ♥-support East would have raised in hearts, so hearts should be 6-3 divided. That left West with only one diamond. ♦K and the ♦Q finesse gave me twelve tricks and +230. That proved to score 2-0 in matchpoints, and +1 imp, since at the other table 3♣-doubled (after almost the same auction) went down one for +200. This board proved to be just enough for the decisive win in the match and the tournament.

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

So now you know why in Amsterdam, the day before the start of the junior internationals, we still play Patton in the Pro-Am. Good luck, and the daily bulletin editors will gladly publish your Patton stories – they may have a lot of horror content for the first bulletin of White House Junior Internationals 2015.

Daily bulletins at www.jeugdbridge.nl.

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