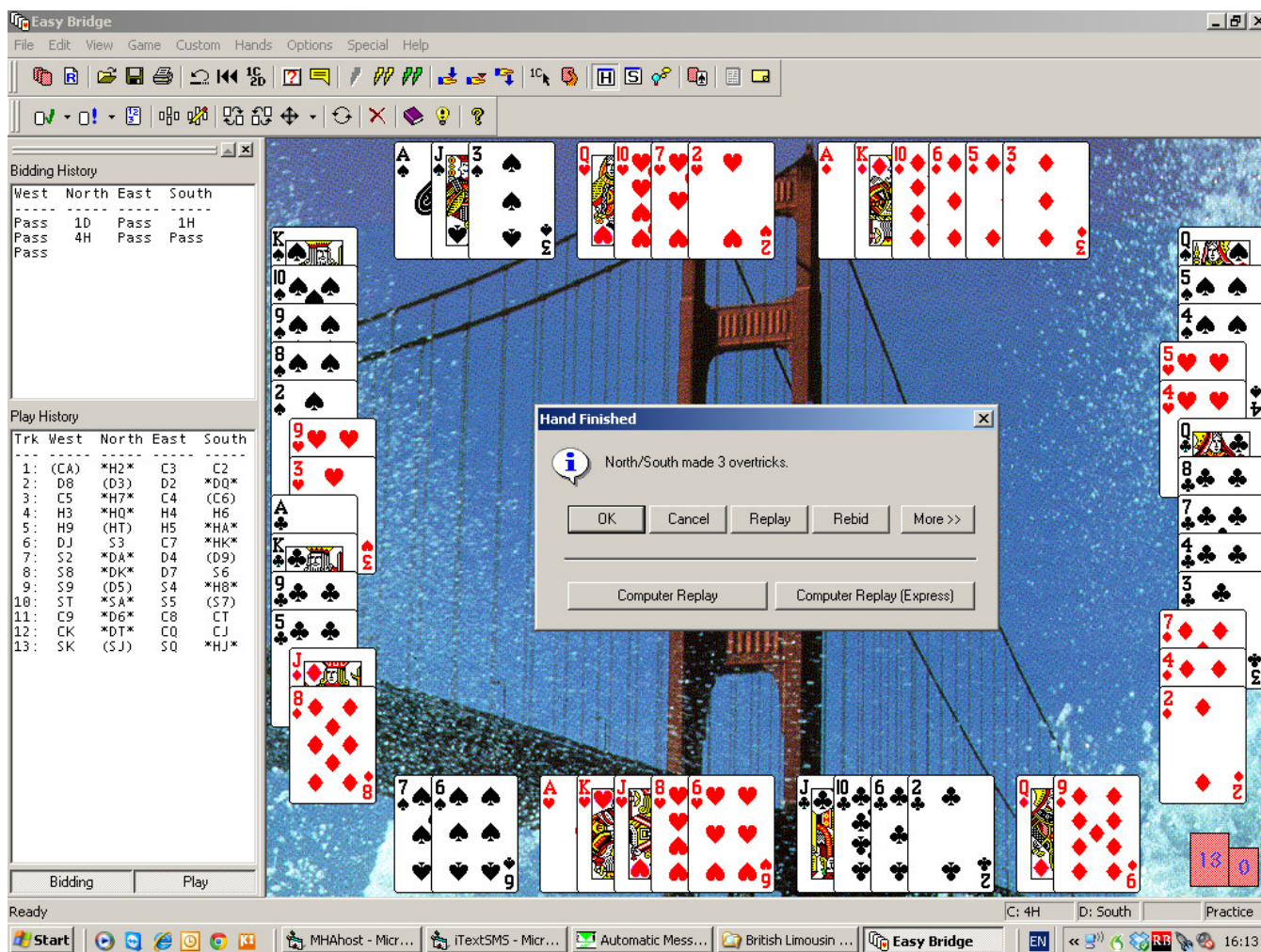


The most interesting feature of this from a Bidding perspective is “Who is in Charge?”. First is South’s response: 1 Heart is a bit weak, but he needs to find out about North’s holding, so I prefer that bid over 2NT. I feel 2H would be too strong – for now. Then, the Computer gets it hopelessly wrong. 4 Hearts is a shut out, and the auction correctly ends there. However, 4H is decidedly weak, and completely ignores the 6-card Diamond suit and the Void. There is a Splinter bid to indicate the shape of North’s hand, but in the absence of such a tool, I would throw in a 3Spade bid – **which South cannot pass**. He can either say 4H – confirming 5 – or 3NT, showing a Club cover. I personally would prefer 4H, because the suit is strong enough (and 5-card), and the Diamond Q is now of extra value. And while that Club holding is rarely not cover, it’s not worth the risk when there is an alternative. Now, knowing that he is opposite a 5-card Heart suit, North can go Slamming to his hearts (Boom! Boom!) content! Roman Key Card Blackwood will show no losers in Hearts, and would give evidence to North that South has strength outside of Hearts (he holds the Queen). Six is perfect, and seven is a worthy push. (I would, Vie probably wouldn’t – so neither should you!!)

In the play, after drawing Trumps, hopefully in a maximum of three rounds (you’d be very unlucky to find them 4-0 although Claire **regularly** does!) and leaving a high trump on the table, test the Diamonds. If they don’t behave (or the J hasn’t shown), you can ruff the fourth round, and you have the high trump as an entry to enjoy the rest. Very bad breaks are all that prevent the Grand from making.



Note: in Play History panel the (brackets) is the lead, and the asterisk* is the winning card.

The Club has write-ups on Splinter Bids and RKCB if you want them.

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Rineanna Bridge Club.