

The quiet man departs

By Tom Townsend

Dealer West

Vulnerability North-South

♠ K Q J 8 6 3

♥ none

♦ Q 8 7

♣ 9 7 6 2

♠ 5 4

♥ J 10 9 8 7 6

♦ 9 4

♣ A Q 8



♠ 10 9 7 2

♥ 4

♦ A J 10 6 5 2

♣ K 10

♠ A

♥ A K Q 5 3 2

♦ K 3

♣ J 5 4 3

West	North	East	South
2♥(1)	2♠	pass	3NT
pass	pass	pass	

Contract 3NT by South
Opening Lead ♥J

(1) Weak two-bid

JEFFREY Allerton died last Sunday, aged 54. He had been unwell for some time. The last time he played bridge was at the 2022 Spring Fours. His team won that event, pounding Orca (2023 and 2024 winners) in the final.

Thirty years ago, Allerton was my junior international partner. Captained by Raymond Brock, our Great Britain team won the 1994 European and 1995 World Championships.

Partnering Chris Jagger, Peter Lee, and his wife Frances Hinden in future years, Jeffrey's wins included two Gold Cups, two Spring Fours, four Hubert Phillips Bowls, one Premier League, one National Pairs, two Brighton teams and a Brighton pairs. He played in six Camrose weekends, and won two European Mixed bronze medals.

In 2018, Jeff and Chris entered the EBU Open Pair Trials. Private bets are sometimes laid on such events. Underrated as always, the two accountants were initially offered at a ludicrous 33/1. This was taken on my advice, as was the remaining 20/1.

They were the only pair in the field playing weak no-trump. Allerton didn't like this method at all, but played it to suit Jagger. It made them a high-volatility pair at the top level, something which swung both ways.

They won these trials, and qualified for the 2019 Bermuda Bowl in Wuhan. Overnight in their quarter-final match, England led USA (Nickell) by 63 IMPs. With greater confidence and team harmony, this would have seen them through. As it went, Nickell came back and won by 27.

Jeffrey stammered and was a man of few words. His views, when he gave them, were forthrightly expressed and realistic. Unfailingly modest and kind, you couldn't ask for a better teammate or partner. Away from bridge and work, he enjoyed classical music, skiing, and watching Lancashire play cricket.

Allerton was West here, partnering Hinden in the 2003 Gold Cup final. Gunnar Hallberg won the ♥J lead, unblocked ♠A, and gave up a club. Frances took the ♣10 and switched to the ♦J. Gunnar rose with the ♦K, and banked a top heart. Jeffrey soared with the ♣A (Crocodile Coup) on the next club, swallowing the ♣K, cashed the ♣Q and returned his diamond. This meant four down instead of making. Condolences to Frances and the Allerton family.

Final Result 3NT minus four, N/S -400

Par Result same