

ACBL - BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Viking battle - Jan 3 2011

This deal was played between Sweden and Iceland in the European Champions Cup. One declarer was successful, the other was not. See how you would do.

Dir: South Vul: None	NORTH ♠ 7 3 2 ♥ K J 9 4 ♦ A K 6 5 ♣ 7 3	
	SOUTH ♠ J 9 ♥ A 10 8 6 ♦ J 8 2 ♣ A K 9 4	

South	West	North	East
1 Club	Pass	1 Diamond	Pass
2 Heart	Pass	3 Club	Pass
4 Heart	All Pass		

Your 1♣ opener showed clubs or a balanced hand outside the 1NT opening range. North's 1♦ showed hearts, and your 2♥ promised a minimum balanced hand with four-card heart support. North's 3♣ was a game try, which you accepted. West leads the ♠A, ♠K and a third spade, which you ruff. Now what?

Solution At one table, the Icelandic declarer ruffed the third round of spades, then played three rounds of diamonds, ruffing when West played a fourth round of the suit. He then played the ♥A and a heart to the jack. Down one.

The Swedish declarer at the other table did better. After ruffing the third round of spades, he cashed two high clubs from hand and ruffed a club in dummy. Three rounds of diamonds put West on lead in this ending:

	NORTH ♠ -- ♥ KJ9 ♦ 6 ♣ -	
WEST ♠ -- ♥ 752 ♦ 7 ♣		EAST ♠ 10 ♥ Q3 ♦ -- ♣ Q
	SOUTH ♠ -- ♥ A108 ♦ -- ♣ 4	

West exited with the ♦7 - a trump picks up the queen for declarer - and when East discarded his spade, declarer made his contract by simply ruffing a club. At trick 12, he had ♥K J in the dummy and ♥A 10 in his hand. The full deal:

	NORTH ♠ 732 ♥ KJ94 ♦ AK65 ♣ 73	
WEST ♠ AK65 ♥ 752 ♦ Q743 ♣ 86		EAST ♠ Q1084 ♥ Q3 ♦ 109 ♣ QJ1052
	SOUTH ♠ J9 ♥ A1086 ♦ J82 ♣ AK94	

East could have made declarer's task tougher by discarding his ♣Q. Declarer would then have had to decide who to play for the ♥Q. With a complete count, he would tend to play West for the heart honor.

Double-dummy, declarer can still succeed by playing the top two hearts or by ruffing the good ♣4 with the ♥K and playing East for the ♥Q.