

ACBL – BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Order by Tim Bourke - Dec 12 2011

Dealer South Vul :None	NORTH ♠A K ♥K 7 6 4 ♦A 5 ♣A J 10 5 3	
WEST ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣		EAST ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	SOUTH ♠8 7 4 ♥Q 5 ♦K Q 7 4 3 ♣K Q 6	

North	East	South	West
--	--	1 NT	3 Heart
6 NT	All Pass		

West leads the ♠J. How do you plan to make 12 tricks?

Solution

The first thing to notes is that you have 10 top tricks, and that you will have 12 certain tricks if the diamonds prove to be 3-3. As there is little hope if the diamonds are 5-1, the answer must be to try and cover the cases where the diamonds are 4-2. Suppose the full deal is as follows:

Dealer Vul :	NORTH ♠A K ♥K 7 6 4 ♦A 5 ♣A J 10 5 3	
WEST ♠J 10 3 ♥A J 10 9 8 3 2 ♦10 6 ♣7		EAST ♠Q 9 6 5 2 ♥— ♦J 9 8 2 ♣9 8 4 2
	SOUTH ♠8 7 4 ♥Q 5 ♦K Q 7 4 3 ♣K Q 6	

After taking the opening lead with dummy's ♠K, cross to your hand with the ♣K and lead the ♥5. What can West do? Playing the ♥A is simply surrendering. You will make two heart tricks and the contract.

It does West no good to play the ♥8, however. You will take the trick with the ♥K and turn your attention to the diamond suit. After three top diamonds, you simply concede a diamond to East. He has no heart to return, so you will make two spades, one heart, four diamonds and five clubs.

Notice that it was essential to play on hearts first. Playing four rounds of diamonds first allow the defense to make a heart and a diamond.

What happens if it is West who has four diamonds? While "Deep Finesse" would still make the contract, you would not because it requires placing West with four diamonds at the start of the play, which is significantly against the odds.