

ACBL – BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Well spotted - Dec 13 2010

Sometimes a close look at the spots will help you see your way to success. With that in mind, how would you play slam on the following deal?

Dlr: South Vul: E-W	NORTH ♠A K 8 ♥5 ♦K 9 6 4 ♣A Q J 10 5	
WEST		EAST
	SOUTH ♠J 10 9 7 6 ♥A 8 3 ♦A 10 7 ♣K 6	

North	East	South	West
--	--	1 Spade	Pass
2 Club	Pass	2 Spade	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 Heart	Pass
6 Spade	All Pass		

Solution. The declarer who played this did not do well. He took the opening lead of the ♥K with the ace and ran the ♠J, feeling proud of himself when it held. The picture became cloudy when a spade to dummy's ace brought a discard from East.

Hoping for the best, declarer drew a third round of trumps with dummy's king and played on clubs, getting one heart discard before West ruffed in with the ♠Q and cashed a heart for one down.

It would have done declarer no good to switch to clubs after discovering the bad break. West would ruff and play a high heart, forcing dummy to ruff with an honor and promoting the ♠Q to the setting trick.

The correct line of play, given the great spot cards in spades between the two hands, is for declarer to win the ♥A at trick one and ruff a heart with the ♠A. Declarer then returns to hand in a minor suit to play a third heart, ruffing with the ♠K. Now declarer plays the ♠8 from dummy and overtakes with the jack. It does West no good to hold off. He can win the ♠Q and force declarer with a heart, but South has enough trumps to pick up the outstanding pieces and claim his slam, losing only to the ♠Q.

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