

ACBL – BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

In good order by Tim Bourke - Jan 16 2012

Dealer South Vul :E-W	NORTH ♠ K J 5 ♥ Q 7 5 ♦ 7 5 2 ♣ A J 6 5	
WEST ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣		EAST ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	SOUTH ♠ A Q 10 8 6 ♥ A J ♦ A K Q ♣ Q 9 2	

North	East	South	West
--	--	2 Club	Pass
2 Diamond	Pass	2 NT	Pass
6 NT	All Pass		

West leads the ♦J. What is your plan to make 12 tricks?

Solution in next page

Suppose the full deal is

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

You have 10 top tricks, so you need two extra tricks from the heart and club suits.

If your first move is to finesse the ♣J on the above layout, East will win and shift to hearts. This will give you the awkward choice between choosing to finesse the ♥J or rising with the ♥A, which relies on the club suit delivering your 12th trick. In both cases, your chance of success will be a bit better than 74% (assuming West has led from ♦J 10).

A better plan is to cross to dummy with the ♠ K at trick two to lead a low club towards your hand. If East holds the king, you will always make the contract. If he plays the king, you will have two extra club tricks. He does no better if he allows the queen to win for then you will play the ♥A and ♥J to guarantee the contract.

The advantage of this line becomes clear when you examine what happens if West takes the ♣Q with the king. He cannot play hearts without giving away the contract, so you will have time to test whether the ♣10 falls in three rounds and, failing that, as a last resort, to fall back on the heart finesse for the 12th trick. Playing this way brings your overall chance of success to slightly better than 9 times in 10.