

ACBL – BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Preparation by Tim Bourke - Jan 23 2012

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

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

West leads the ♠Q against your slam, East following suit. How do you plan to make 12 tricks?

Solution

If you take losing club finesse at the contract will fail whenever you have a diamond loser. Suppose the full deal is:

♠ 6 3 2
♥ J 9 5 4
♦ 10 7 5 4
♣ 8 4

♠ Q J 10 8
♥ 8 7 2
♦ 3
♣ K 10 9 7 2

♠ K 9 7 5 4
♥ —
♦ J 9 8 6
♣ J 6 5 3

♠ A
♥ A K Q 10 6 3
♦ A K Q 2
♣ A Q

A little preparation is all that is required to overcome this layout. After winning the ♠A, cross to dummy with the ♥9 and ruff a spade high. Then draw trumps ending in dummy and ruff dummy's last spade. The point of this is that by eliminating spades you prevent a defender from exiting safely in that suit when you throw him on lead. After this careful start you cash the ♦A and ♦K. If the suit had broken 3-2, you could have finished the diamonds, ending on the table, and taken the club finesse for an overtrick.

Thanks to your careful groundwork, the 4-1 break is no cause for concern. You will continue with the ♣A and ♣Q. In the actual layout, West takes the ♣Q with the king but has no diamond to play. On the forced black-suit return, you will discard a diamond from dummy and ruff in your hand. You will make a spade, six trumps, three diamonds, a diamond ruff in dummy and a club for a total of 12 tricks.

You should note that if East had won the club exit, he would have had to lead a diamond from the jack or give you the same ruff and discard.

Another point is that if it was West who began with four diamonds to the jack then this approach would also guarantee 12 tricks for similar reasons.