

ACBL – BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Take care - May 23 2011

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

North	East	South	West
		1 Spade	2 Heart
3 Spade	Pass	4 Spade	All Pass

West leads the top three hearts, East discarding a diamond on the third round. You ruff the third round of hearts. What now?

Solution

At most tables, South cashed the top two spades – following the “eight ever, nine never” mantra – and could no longer make the contract.

One declarer gave the deal more thought. He could see that he had an almost certain loser in clubs in addition to the two heart tricks already lost, so at trick three he embarked on a plan to learn more about the deal.

After ruffing the heart, he played a spade to the king, then a diamond to the ace. He cashed the ♦K and ruffed a diamond in dummy. He then played a club to his ace and a second club from hand. When West followed, declarer knew that West had begun with one of three distributions: 1=6=3=3, 1=6=4=2 or 2=6=3=2.

Declarer took the ♠K in dummy and paused to reflect. There were only four cards left to be played and West had three hearts left plus another, unknown, card. Declarer led a trump from dummy and put in the jack. If West had either of the first two distributions, the ♠J would win. Declarer also knew, however, that if the jack lost to the doubleton queen, West would have only hearts left at that point and would have to surrender a ruff-sluff, allowing declarer to ruff in dummy and discard his club loser. Either way, the game was making.

♠ K 9 6 3
♥ 10 6 5
♦ 7
♣ K 10 7 4 2

♠ 10
♥ A K Q 9 8 2
♦ Q 8 3 2
♣ 9 3

♠ Q 8 4
♥ J 4
♦ J 10 9 6 5
♣ Q J 5

♠ A J 7 5 2
♥ 7 3
♦ A K 4
♣ A 8 6