

ACBL - BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Pickings by Tim Bourke - Oct 24 2011

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

North	East	South	West
--	--	1 Spade	Pass
3 Spade	Pass	4 Club	Pass
4 Diamond	Pass	4 Heart	Pass
4 Spade	Pass	5 Heart	Pass
6 Spade	All Pass		

You correctly opened 1♠, as you have more losers than quick tricks. Things turned out well when partner was able to give a limit raise in spades. You cuebid your way to 6♠, and West leads the ♥J. How do you plan to make 12 tricks?

Solution

The idea is to avoid taking the spade finesse if possible. The way to avoid it on the layout below is to endplay West.

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

After winning heart lead, you draw two rounds of trumps, ending in hand, and lead the ♦7 towards dummy. When West holds the ♦A, as in this case, he is caught in a Morton's Fork Coup. If he takes his ♦A, the ♦K will take care of the ♣Q.

Playing low is no better for West, however. After the ♦K wins, you will throw a diamond on the third round of hearts. Next you will exit with the ♦Q to West's ace, leaving him endplayed. A red-suit return will allow you to ruff in dummy and throw the ♣Q from hand, and a club return will be right into the A-Q. Either way, you will have 12 tricks.

Of course, if East produced the ♦A, you would fall back on the club finesse.