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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

1st Feb 2012

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

| South | West | North | East |
|--------|------|-------|----------|
| -- | -- | -- | 2 Heart |
| 4 Club | Pass | 6 Cub | All Pass |
| | | | |

Opening lead: Seven of ♥

We continue with deals from the ACBL Fall North American Championships held in Seattle. Here, the problem is simple. At a club slam, should South take a finesse for the queen of trumps or not?

South's jump to four clubs by agreement showed a black two-suiter and North had his bidding boots on, so the club slam was reached in short order. West led the seven of hearts. As South, you win the ace of hearts in hand, and cash the ace of clubs, both defenders following. When you continue with a trump, West follows low. Do you apply the rule of eight ever, nine never, and why did you decide what to do?

If you know nothing about the opponents' holdings, the Rule of 8 and 9 is a sound enough precept to adopt. But that is not the case here. East's weak two-heart opening bid marks him with six hearts, so he has only space for seven cards in the other three suits. Since West is marked with a doubleton heart, that means he has four more spaces than East to fill with cards from the other suits.

You have solved the problem! Take the trump finesse and the odds apply, so you chalk up another slam. Well done.

Read more: http://www.stltoday.com/entertainment/bridge-column-for-feb/article_fe841394-3d20-5139-9ff8-38e440a51107.html#ixzz1I7LFVSTp

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