

ACBL – DEAL OF THE WEEK
Contrary by Tim Bourke – NOV 07 2011

Dir: South ♠ 9 8 7 5 3
 Vul: E-W ♥ Q
 ♦ A 8 7
 ♣ A 8 7 4

♠ A K Q
 ♥ A 8 6 2
 ♦ K 6 5
 ♣ 6 3 2

West	North	East	South
			1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	4♣
All Pass			

West leads the ♣K. How do you plan to make 10 tricks?

Solution

Even assuming that there is a 3-2 trump break, you have only nine winners. One idea is to hope that clubs are 3-3, which is a much reduced chance on the lead. In fact, it would lead to a quick defeat if the full deal was:

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

A better approach is to try for three ruff hearts in dummy, which will always bring in 10 tricks if your minor-suit winners stand up and the hearts are 4-4 or if the defender with five hearts also has the longer defensive trumps. It can also succeed when West began with three hearts and three trumps, provided you are careful.

The plan should be to take the first trick with the ♣A, followed by a trump to the ace.. Then you cash the ♥A and ruff a heart. After a trump to the king, you ruff a second heart. Next is the key move, cashing the ♦A. After you re-enter your hand with the ♦K, these cards remain:

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

Now you lead your last heart. If West discards, you will ruff the heart with dummy's ♠9 for your ninth trick with the master trump still to come for your tenth. If West ruffs in with the ♠J, you will throw a diamond from table and make your remaining trumps separately. Again you will have 10 tricks.

Notice that if you had left the ♦A in dummy and if hearts turned out to be 4-4, you would still have to cash it to make 10 tricks. On the given layout it is crucial to cash the top diamonds before leading a fourth round of hearts because West would then be able to discard a diamond on the last heart, and you would no longer be able to make 10 tricks.

Overall, the recommended line succeeds between a little more than six times in 10 – far better than relying on the clubs being 3-3.