

ACBL - BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Guarded by Tim Bourke - May 2 2011

Dealer North Vul : E-W	<b>NORTH</b> ♠ 2 ♥ A 10 9 6 5 4 ♦ A K Q J ♣ 10 6	
	<b>SOUTH</b> ♠ A K Q 9 ♥ K Q ♦ 9 8 6 ♣ A K 9 2	

North	East	South	West
1 Heart	Pass	2 Club	Pass
2 Diamond	Pass	2 Heart	Pass
3 Heart	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 Heart	Pass	5 NT	Pass
7 Heart	Pass	7 NT	All Pass

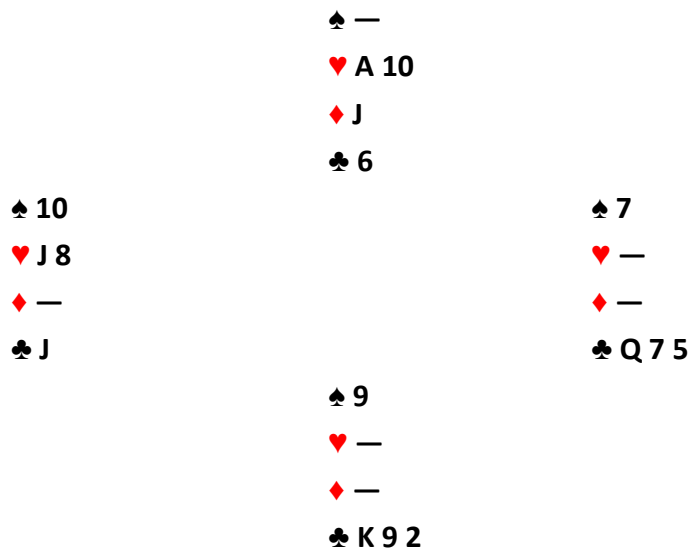
West leads the ♠J. How do you plan to make 13 tricks if the hearts don't run?

**Solution**

Suppose this is the full:

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

You win the ♠A and cash your two high hearts. After East discards on a diamond on the second round of hearts, cash the ♠K and ♠Q, discarding two low hearts from dummy. When the ♠10 fails to appear, cash the ♣K, unblocking dummy's 10. Then cash three rounds of diamonds to reach:



When you play the last diamond, throwing the ♣2 from hand, West cannot throw a heart without giving the contract away. So West will throw either a spade or a club, hoping partner has the 9 of the discarded suit. If he parts with the ♠10, your 9 will be high. If he throws a club, you will finesse the ♠9 after cashing the ♥A. As the cards lie, West has no winning option.

This plan succeeds when West has the ♠J 10 and no more than three spades. It also succeeds when West has the ♠J 10 and the ♣Q or ♣J (or both). Assuming West has the ♠10 to go with the jack, the overall chance of success when West began with four hearts to the jack is about 68%.

When the ♠10 does not fall, the alternative of relying on a successful double finesse in clubs will bring the contract home about 56% of the time.

If West shows out on the second round of hearts, you will need the ♠10 to fall or for East to have the ♣Q J or at least five clubs. If East guards clubs and hearts, he will be unable to keep both suits intact when the last diamond is advanced.