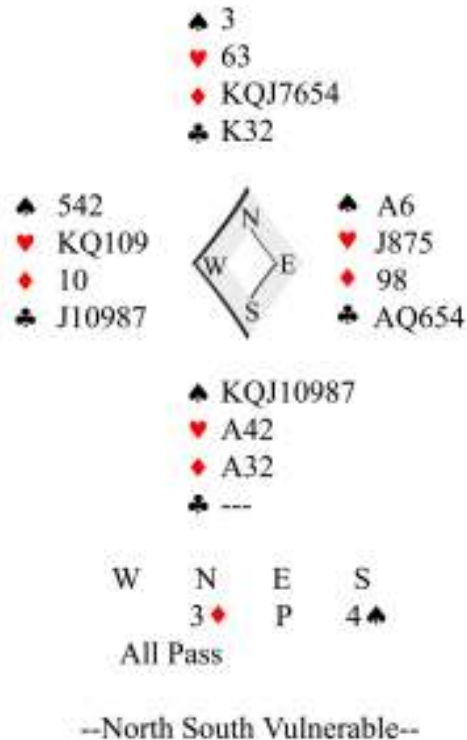


112. Higher Pre-empts With a Side Fit

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The bidding:

North has seven diamonds and less than ten points, but close to it. A stronger pre-empt is acceptable since North is vulnerable and has very weak majors. He opens the bidding with three diamonds. East and West have nothing to say but South does. With three card support of diamonds, he can venture a spade bid. He bids four spades telling partner he has adequate trump without him.

Because of the diamond fit, the hand will be a success for declarer.

The contract: Four spades by South

The opening lead: The king of hearts

Top of touching honours is a good lead, only second to ace from ace and king.

The play:

Declarer ducks the opening lead. If West switches to a trump to remove the trump from the board, declarer will have the ace remaining as a stopper so he can draw trump and run his diamonds. If West continues a heart, declarer will win his ace and ruff his third heart and then draw trump. Declarer will lose a heart and the ace of trump.

The result: Four spades by South plus one for +650

Note:

-Do you have a question or a hand of note that occurred at your bridge table? If yes, send it to me at warren.t.watson@gmail.com and I will answer it.

-To see the columns published in the Times, go to <http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/column.htm>.