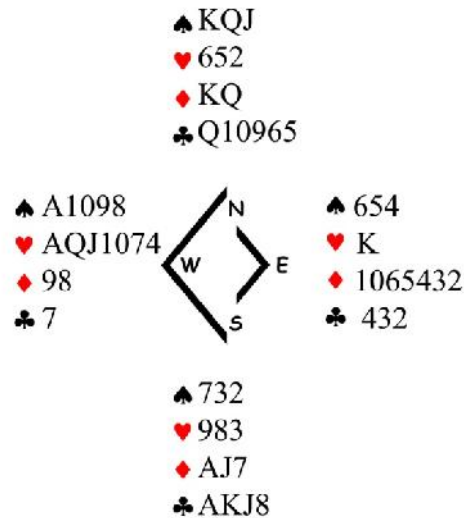


144. Game Forcing Inverted Minor Raise

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W	N	E	S
			1 ♣
P	2 ♣	P	2 ♦
P	2 ♠	P	3 ♣
All Pass			

--North South Vulnerable--

Today, the hands are the same as last week, but the bidding is different. Last week, South was forced to bid 3NT because partner opened and he also had an opener. He did not have a four card suit and did not have a club raise (either simple or limit). He bid 3NT without investigating major-suit stoppers. As a result, he went down three.

That result could be avoided had they used inverted minor raises. This is a system to be used by everyone. A raise to two clubs shows 10 points or more and a raise to three clubs shows less.

The bidding:

South has 13 points and opens his better minor, one club. North does not have a four-card major and has the minimum length in clubs to show club support. He bids two clubs showing 10 or more points. South bids two diamonds to show a diamond stopper and North bids his spade

stopper. South knows that the spades are shorter than four cards because North had already denied a four-card major.

North and South do not have a heart stopper so neither one can bid hearts or notrump. They play in three clubs, the best contract here.

The Lead:

West has the four leads that one never leads against a suit contract.

1. A singleton trump.
2. anything from an ace.
3. The ace without the king.
4. Interior sequence leads are only led against notrump.

A worthless doubleton is not good either because it often sets up the suit for the declarer. West does not have a trump stopper and should never lead a worthless doubleton. West leads the ace of hearts because it is the suit that kept the opponents out of 3NT. Bridge is full of rules and equally full of exceptions.

The play:

West takes the first three hearts. East discards the two and three of diamonds. The two of diamonds tells partner he does not want a diamond switch. West cashes the ace of spades and exits a spade. South draws trump and claims.

Result:

Three clubs making for +110.

Notes:

-Had West not led the ace of hearts, South would draw trump and pitch a heart on the long diamond. He would make three clubs plus one for +130 and a top board.

-All the bridge columns may be viewed at <http://watsongallery.ca>.