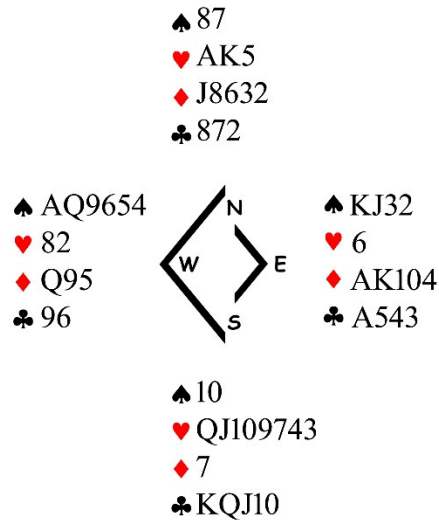


199. Fixed by an Unfavourable Sacrifice

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N	E	S	W
	1♦	3♥	3♠
4♥	4♠	5♥	Dbl
All Pass			

--North South Vulnerable--

The bidding:

This is a hand that occurred at the South Okanagan Spring Sectional tournament in Osoyoos. Fixed is a term, I hope you do not know because you are on the receiving end of it. It means that the opponents made a bid that normally gets a bad score, but they gambled, and the bid turned out well for them.

In the final round of the pair event, I came up against a pair having a bad round who had nothing to lose with a gamble. When they made a five-level vulnerable sacrifice, my partner and I let them play doubled in anticipation of down two and a top board.

East opened one diamond with the intention of rebidding two clubs over partner's anticipated one heart bid. However, South had the hearts and made a three-heart pre-empt. West bid three spades, and North bid four hearts. East bid four spades, perhaps too eagerly, and South raised her own pre-empt to five hearts.

West doubled because he had two quick heart losers, and because he thought he stretched a little to bid three spades. The most East and West could get is 450 playing spades and 500 if hearts go down two doubled. Therefore, East let them play doubled.

An unwritten rule with pre-empts is that one should pre-empt as high as one can the first chance and not raise one's own pre-empt later. The opponents broke this rule and unfortunately were rewarded with a top board. That is bridge.

The Lead: Five of Diamonds

The play:

Declarer gained the lead after losing a diamond and a spade and drew trump, lost the ace of clubs and claimed.

Result:

Declarer lost one spade, one diamond and one club for down one and -200.

Sacrifices, at unfavourable vulnerability, are rare and reaped a very good result for the gambling pair.