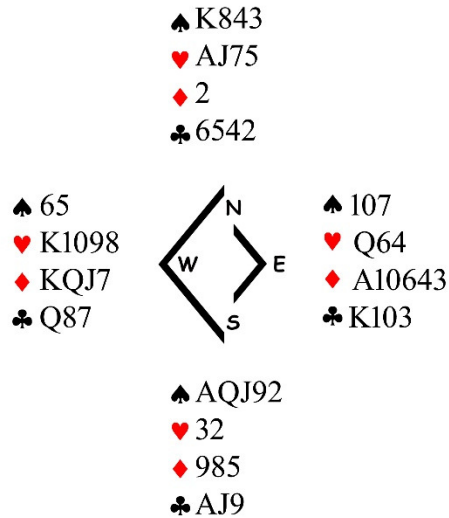


203. Minisplinters

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S	W	N	E
1 ♠	P	3 ♦	P
4 ♠	All Pass		

--East West Vulnerable--

A minisplinter is a jump shift showing four-card support and a singleton or void in the suit bid with eight to ten high card points. This bid is more useful than a reverse Bergen raise because partner can discount a King, Queen or Jack opposite the shortness. Minisplinters are game tries while full splinters, a double jump shift, tend to be slam tries.

The bidding:

South, with 12 high card points and a five-card spade suit, opens one spade. North jumps to three diamonds, a minisplinter. South has no wasted values in diamonds so he bids game.

The Lead:

A small trump is the best passive lead.

The Ten of Hearts is the best active lead but because declarer likely has no diamond honours, a heart lead may go into declarer's strength. The King of Diamonds is the safest lead but because it is dummy's singleton, it will not develop a trick. Normally, one is reluctant to lead a suit in which declarer or dummy is known to have a singleton because it has no future for defensive tricks and it may set up a discard for the declarer.

The top of an interior sequence is usually a No Trump opening lead or a lead later on in the play, but the declarer may think the Ten is a singleton or the highest card and not take an opening round finesse.

The play:

Declarer wins the Ace of Hearts and draws trump. He finesses clubs first to the Nine then to the Jack making two club tricks. If the heart was not the opening lead, declarer would pitch a heart on the 13th club.

Results:

Declarer loses a heart, a diamond and a club making his contract for +420. With a trump opening lead, declarer makes +450.

Note:

-The Kootenay Jewel Bridge Club starts September 8th every Monday at 11:30am at the newly renovated Warfield Hall.