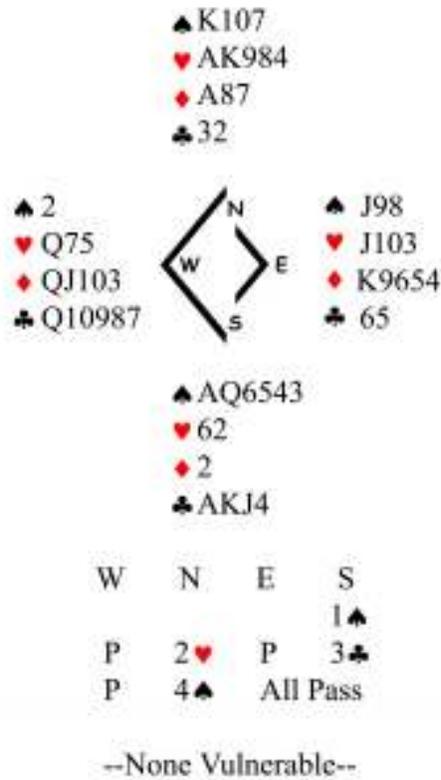


138. Feedback on Column 136

Published on page 4 of the Trail Times, Wednesday, May 8, 2013



I am always happy to answer bridge questions either by email or in person. This question came to me by email.

Email Query:

He was perplexed by my suggested line of play for the column on Wednesday April 24. I have included the hands again for your perusal. He thought I should win the opening lead with the ace of diamonds, cash two rounds of hearts, ruff a heart (making the last two good), draw trump ending in dummy and cash the remaining good hearts thus avoiding the trump over-ruff in clubs.

That is an excellent question, and it allows me to elaborate on a few important points.

As you may remember:

My line of play was to ruff two clubs in dummy.

This fails to do as well as ruffing the hearts good because of how the cards lie. I have constructed the hands not to match the best percentages, but to illustrate a point that even with an over-ruff, it is better in the long run to ruff two clubs instead of expecting an equal heart break. The opponents have more clubs than hearts so it is more likely a heart will be ruffed not a club.

Ruff in the Short-Trump Hand:

The hands were designed on a lesson of ruffs in the short-trump hand. Ruffing with the king, ten or seven gains a trick (assuming there is no over-ruff) while ruffing with any of the spades in the long-trump hand (South) does not gain a trick unless there is a cross-ruff or a dummy reversal.

Do not play results:

The best way to play bridge is to play the cards choosing the high percentage plays. When one does this, one will go down occasionally, but will be successful in the long run. Here are some probabilities from Dorothy Hayden Truscott's book, 'Winning declarer play.' (1969, p 178)

Missing six cards, the suit will break three-three 36% of the time. Missing seven cards, the suit will break five-two or worse 37% of the time. Getting a club-overruff is as unlikely as getting the heart suit falling three-three.

Dummy Reversal:

A dummy reversal reverses the roles of dummy's and declarer's hands. Declarer ruffs with the long trump hand until there are fewer trump than in dummy and then draws trump with the dummy. When a trump is played in dummy with declarer's hand having no more, a loser can be discarded.

Notes:

- I am very happy with the player reading my column in depth and asking a good question.
- All the bridge columns may be viewed at <http://watsongallery.ca>.