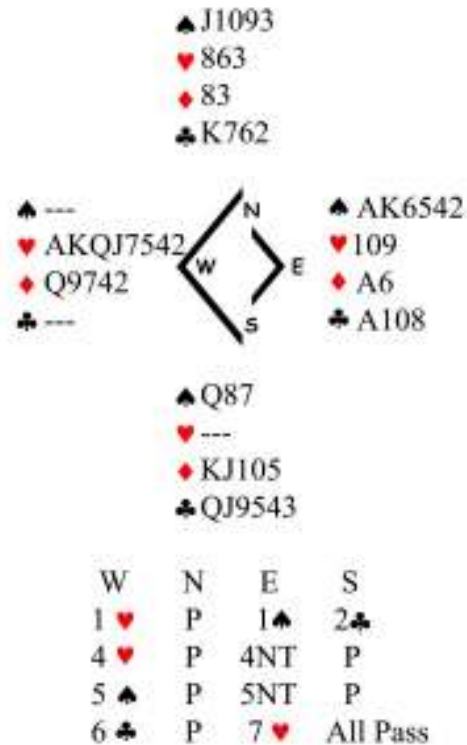


154. A Grand From The Trail summer Sectional

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--Both Vulnerable--

Here is another hand that occurred during the Trail Summer Sectional on Saturday July 6th. The computer dealt this unusual hand. Computer dealt hands are fairly random but have some weighting factors. They are good because the participants can see all the hands after each session.

The bidding:

West cannot open anything but one heart. He certainly would not pre-empt such a valuable hand. With less than 10 points, one would consider preempting. However, one does not preempt with a void, a four-card major or any two-suited hand in first or second seat. In third seat, the conditions are relaxed.

West opens one heart and East replies one spade. South overcalled two clubs. West bids four hearts. If West can go to game on his own when East has only shown a minimum of five or six points, West can certainly make a slam try.

East asks for keycards and West shows two keycards with the queen of hearts. West could have bid five notrump showing two keycards and a useful void, but fortunately choose to show the queen of trump. East does not really need to know about kings, but asks for kings anyways to let West know that the partnership has all the keycards, which are all the aces and the king and queen of trump.

West shows zero kings and East bids seven hearts. East knows that West can likely ruff spades good for several discards.

The Lead:

North has to make an opening lead which is often quite the challenge against a slam. One does not want to give anything away on the opening lead. Here, however, South had made a questionable two-level overcall so North is obligated to lead a club. It takes a good player not to lead an ace in partner's suit because partner may only have queen high. Fortunately for North, he has the king and partner has the queen and jack.

North leads the two of clubs.

The play:

Declarer wins the ace of clubs in dummy and ruffs a small spade. He then plays a small trump to the nine of hearts and ruffs another small spade. He plays another small trump to the ten of hearts and ruffs another spade high. The last trump is drawn and declarer goes to the ace of diamonds to cash the good spades and pitch his losing diamonds.

The contract would go down on a diamond lead because the entry to the good spades is taken away. A diamond lead would never occur when partner has overcalled clubs. On a heart lead, seven hearts will also make. Furthermore, on any lead except a diamond, the contract makes.

Against a grand, a trump lead is fairly reasonable. If South had been quiet, North would have led a trump and the contract would still make.

Result:

Seven Hearts making for +2210.

Notes:

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