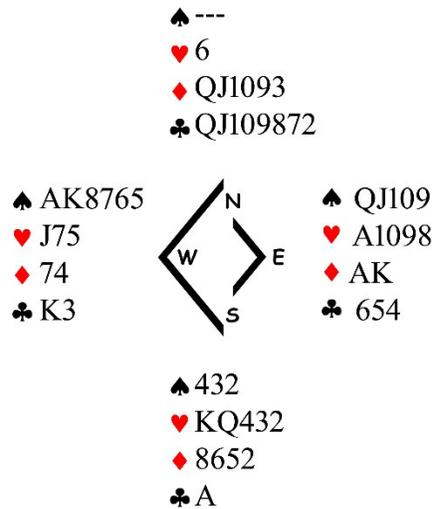


275. Now Clubs are Longer

Published on Page 8 of the Trail Times, Thursday February 18, 2016



N	E	S	W
3 ♣	P	P	3 ♠
P	4 ♠	P	P
4NT	Dbl	5 ♦	P
P	Dbl	All Pass	

--East West Vulnerable--

In last week's column, the pre-empter bid again because he was two-suited in the minors with Diamonds longer than Clubs. What if Clubs are longer than Diamonds? If he pre-empts in Clubs and later bids Diamonds, partner must choose Clubs one level higher. The solution is that the player pre-empts in Clubs then bids unusual No Trump asking partner to choose between the two, knowing that Clubs are longer.

The Bidding

North, afraid the opponents have a major game, pre-empts Three Clubs. If he is so afraid of the majors then why does he not bid higher? Three Clubs is sufficiently high in case his partner has points and chooses Three No Trump.

East has a hand he would open One Club in first seat, but he has the wrong shape to do something over a three-level pre-empt in Clubs. East passes and so does South. West is now in the balancing seat and needs good shape and an Ace less than what is required in direct seat to balance. He bids Three Spades and East happily raises to Four.

North now bids 4NT asking South to pick a minor with the knowledge that Clubs are longer. South picks Diamonds. Sacrifices should always be doubled and East obliges.

Opening Lead:

It is clear, North and South are likely relying on ruffs to cut down their losses so West leads a trump. Diamond Seven to the Ace and King of Diamonds then the Spade Queen.

The Play:

Declarer ruffs the Spade and cashes the Club Ace. He goes back to dummy by ruffing a Spade with his second last trump. He loses the Club Queen and ruffs the return of a Spade and cashes his clubs. He cannot afford to ruff out the Club King because if it is twice guarded (Kxx), he will not have enough trump in dummy to enjoy the Clubs.

Declarer will lose no Spades, one Heart, two Diamonds and one Club for -300 instead of -620.