

Essex Contract Bridge Association

The Warboys Trophy 2019 Season

Report on Session held 12th June 2019

Each of today's deals concerns looking beyond the obvious both for declarer and defenders.

Board 1

Bd: 1	♠ 107		
Vul: None	♥ K873		
Dlr: North	♦ J98		
	♣ Q984		
♠ KQJ4	N	♠ 953	
♥ A1095	W 1 E	♥ QJ642	
♦ Q52	S	♦ 10	
♣ AJ		♣ K1052	
6	♠ A862	♣♦♥♠ N	
17HCP 6	♥ --	N - 2 - - -	
11	♦ AK7643	S - 2 - - -	
	♣ 763	E 2 - 3 2 1	
		W 2 - 3 2 1	

4H looks a likely destination for EW; the defence is more straightforward when East is declarer. South will have bid Diamonds at some stage; North will lead one and South will win and try a low Spade. North, although unable to win this trick, will give count and as soon as he wins his King of trumps will return a Spade and get a ruff for one down. Same will happen if North leads a Spade at trick one.

The defence to 4H by East is not so clear. South will likely start with the King of Diamonds (common practice is to lead King for count and Ace for attitude). South may not be sure what North's holding in Diamonds is unless North supported the suit at some stage in the auction. South should take account of not only what bids were made but also what bids were not made. On this deal if East did not open a weak 2H he cannot hold six cards in the suit. From South's point of view North needs a natural trump trick (perhaps he holds QJxx or Kxxx) in order to have a chance of beating the contract. When South decides to switch, he should appreciate that East cannot have so few cards in both black suits that he can discard all his losers in Clubs on dummy's Spades. There is therefore a danger in switching to Clubs as this may solve any problem declarer may have in the suit. Also, if North has the King of Clubs, there is no rush to make it. Having come to the above

conclusions it follows there is no danger in switching to a low Spade and the distinctly possible advantage is that it will pave the way to giving a North a ruff. Which is exactly what happens.

Fortunately for South the contract is not certain even if he does switch to Clubs. Declarer can be sure that South has the Ace of Spades so it would seem that there are apparently ten or even eleven tricks; four (or five) trumps, three Spades and three Clubs. If trumps are split no worse than 3-1 East can afford a trump loser and will be able to draw trumps and establish all his potential winners whilst retaining trump control over the Diamond suit. It's the 4-0 break that will still prove to be declarer's downfall if the defence is alert. Let us say after a Club switch North covers the Jack, (it doesn't matter if he doesn't but that isn't likely) East wins and leads a low Heart. Whether declarer ducks this to tempt North's King or plays Ace another Heart, North should consider his options. He should appreciate that winning the King of trumps now and playing another Diamond will force declarer to shorten his trumps and he will not be able to manage the coming and going with dummy in order to draw trumps, ruff a Club and set up his Spade tricks.

It's a frustrating deal for EW, 4H looks to be a very decent game, but provided South does not release the Ace of Spades too early at any stage it doesn't matter what the defence does. Even if South tries to cash the Ace of Diamonds East can ruff, again shortening his trumps, but a third Diamond from North when in with the King of Hearts will set up winners in his partner's hand.

The defence will have to try very hard to let 4H make, as appears to have happened at two of the four tables in the A section where 4H was declared. Although the defence has a lot of leeway on this deal it pays to work through the logic of what they should do. In the B section no EW played in 4H; usually they were successfully defending part-scores in Diamonds.

Board 8

Bd: 8	♠ 8						
Vul: None	♥ 964						
Dir: West	♦ AQJ932						
	♣ 764						
♠ AKJ	N	♠ 10654					
♥ J87	W 8 E	♥ AQ53					
♦ K1064	S	♦ 5					
♣ AKQ		♣ 10852					
7	♠ Q9732	♣♦♥♠ N					
21HCP6	♥ K102	N - - - -					
6	♦ 87	S - - - -					
	♣ J93	E 4 1 4 3 3					
		W 4 1 4 3 3					

An obvious 3Nt by East. An obvious lead of the Queen of Diamonds by North. When South produces the 8 (or 7) it should be obvious to declarer to duck this trick. It is tempting to win the King as East will fear that otherwise he will never make a Diamond trick. He is right, but does it matter? If North is allowed to hold the first trick and continues Diamonds East makes a trick in the suit and the North hand is isolated. If North switches then the K106 of Diamonds still provides East with a guard while he sets about setting up all the tricks he needs in Hearts and Clubs.

At one table it appears, according to the records, that North led the 3 of Diamonds! When South fails to play an honour on this trick East should take stock. It is hard for East to imagine that North has underled AQJ in a six-card suit. Whether East ducks or wins the first trick he will still be defeated if South started with three Diamonds and the King of Hearts.

East's only hope is that North has the King of Hearts or that South has only two Diamonds, so once again ducking the first trick, is the right thing to do.

In the A section 3Nt made three times in four attempts; all other games failed. In the B section 3Nt was the universal choice and failed just twice after the Queen of Diamonds lead.

Board 14

Bd: 14	♠ 9				
Vul: None	♥ KQJ9532				
Dlr: East	♦ 96				
	♣ 765				
♠ AKQ10	N	♠ J8763			
♥ A864	W 14 E	♥ 107			
♦ 542	S	♦ Q87			
♣ Q2		♣ A93			
6	♠ 542	♣♦♥♠N			
15HCP	♥ -	N 2 2 3 - -			
12	♦ AKJ103	S 3 2 3 - -			
	♣ KJ1084	E - - - 2 2			
		W - - - 1 1			

Another case of “ifs and buts”. After a pass from West and 1D from South a take-out double by East would be the normal course of action. (Did any South open a conventional 2Nt?) North may try any number of Hearts at this point depending on system agreements. 4H would not be unreasonable and would certainly be unequivocal whereas 3H may be a splinter agreeing Diamonds. Anything less than 4H will encourage a Spade bid from West and indeed he may try 4S over 4H. 4S is headed for two down without the defence having to work hard, however it is by no means obvious that they should double. The real interest in the hand lies in the defence to 4H, should North be allowed to play there. A small Club lead from East will defeat the contract as either the defence makes two Club tricks or East collects a Club ruff or both these things happen for two-down. This is not so unlikely as it may at first seem as West can anticipate that North is short in Spades. However, West is likely to settle on a routine Spade lead. The spot-light now turns on West. Winning the first Spade he needs to organise two Club tricks or a Club ruff. If he returns the Club 2 West may win and continue the suit without much hope of anything good happening. From North’s point of view, remembering the take-out double, this looks like East is trying to set-up a Club ruff for West. North will play the King of Clubs from dummy, more in hope than expectation, and 4H will come home. What if East returns the Queen of Clubs? Can West resist the temptation to win the trick? He should remember that East made a take-out double. Would East do this with a singleton Club? West will need nerves of steel to duck this and let East win his presumed Heart honour before collecting a Club ruff.

West may try to bluff declarer by switching to Diamonds at trick two and then playing another when he wins the Ace of Hearts, in an attempt to isolate declarer from the suit and give the impression he can stop access to dummy via the Club suit. West will have to co-

operate by smoothly withholding the Ace of Clubs when North eventually leads one and there will tense moments while declarer contemplates whether to finesse against the Queen.

In the B section only one EW pair played in 4S. 4H was undisturbed at three tables and made each time. In the A section three EW pairs reached 4S going two or three down; NS only played 4H once, making an overtrick.

IM 20.6.19