

Sometimes more is Less - Norman's Notes No. 45

Some Bad Breaks

Board 18 September 5th

With this holding - ♦ K J 7 6 5 4 2 - you would be a little unlucky if the opponents against your 4♦ contract could score five trump tricks. But that's what happened on Board 18 at Bury Club, September 5th. These were the hands and the bidding at one table.

Dealer East. NS vulnerable

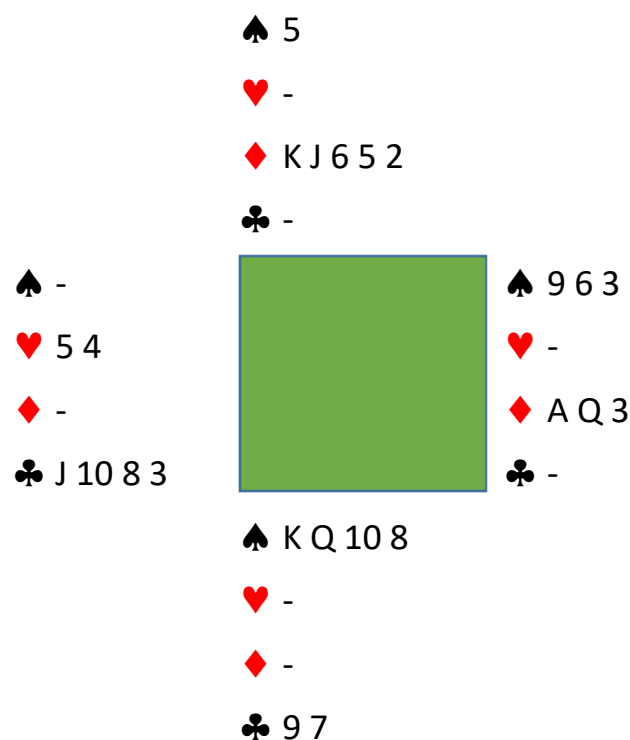
	♠ J 5		
	♥ A Q 6		
	♦ K J 7 6 5 4 2		
	♣ A		
♠ -		♠ A 9 6 3 2	
♥ K 10 5 4 3		♥ 8 2	
♦ 10		♦ A Q 9 8 3	
♣ K Q J 10 8 3 2		♣ 6	
	♠ K Q 10 8 7 4		
	♥ J 9 7		
	♦ -		
	♣ 9 7 5 4		

West	North	East	South
		1♠ ¹	pass
2♥	3♦	pass	pass
4♣	4♦	X ²	End

¹ *Bold (but at 'green' vulnerability).*

² *I think I can beat this contract!*

East did well for the defence by leading ♠A, and when partner discarded, naturally continued the suit for a ruff. Declarer took West's club exit, and was somewhat surprised/mortified when ♦7 was led and West failed to follow. East won ♦8 and led a heart (8 - 9 - 10 - Q). Declarer continued with ♥A and a third heart to West - the defenders' 4th trick. A second club from West was ruffed with ♦4 and over-ruffed with ♦9, leaving this position:



With safe exits in spades, East could not be prevented making two of his remaining trumps: seven tricks in total, and 1100 points to EW.

Three other Norths played in diamonds, but no East-Wests managed to extract the maximum penalties (all led a club):

4♦*-2 (500), 5♦*-3 (800) and 3♦-2 (200).

One South played in 4♠*, one off for -200. But with no trump lead and plenty of cross-ruffing, declarer can lose just one heart and two trump tricks.

Three Wests unwisely overbid in clubs, no doubt ignoring or not trusting their partner's double of diamonds: 5♣*-2, 5♣-2 and 4♣-2.

A confession: The defence did not do quite as well against 4♦ as described above, East ruffing partner's heart trick. So only three off and only 800 to EW.*