

Get the Best out of this Hand

Game Tuesday Evening 15/08/23 Hand No. 19

Dlr: South

Vul: E/W vul

Bidding

N	E	S	W
		4S	P
P	X	P	4N
P	5D	P	P
P			

How to Play

The liveliest hand of the night was definitely board nineteen. First in hand at favourable vulnerability South has a licence to pre-empt to try to make things difficult for everyone else at the table. One third of the time partner will have a good hand and will have to work out

what to do, but two thirds of the time it will be the opponents you create a problem for so the odds are in your favour. Occasionally you will go for a large penalty, but at least it is against the vulnerable game that opponents are likely to be able to make. A three spade opener is a slightly conservative choice with the eight card suit, so I would recommend opening four spades and then keep your fingers crossed as to what happens next.

On the actual hand both of your opponents now have marginal hands as to whether they should bid or not and on the night three tables managed to play in 4 spades three off. With both minors West may chance 4NT showing both minors which will easily lead their side to 5 diamonds. If West does pass then East really should double for take-out and a 4NT bid by West now shows two places to play, so again their side should reach the 5 diamond contract. The play should be straight forward as the pre-empt may have made your life difficult in the bidding, but it helps you play the hand. South is very unlikely to hold length in diamonds, so the double diamond finesse is the best option. You should start by leading Q♦ as some days South may have a singleton J♦ so you will have no loser in the suit.

So tip of the day – when you are the dealer at favourable vulnerability don't be shy about pre-empting.