

Get the Best out of this Hand

Game Tuesday Evening 22/08/23 Hand No. 9

Dlr: North

Vul: E/W vul

Bidding

N	E	S	W
1D	P	1S	P
3C	P	5C	P
P	P		

How to Play

This was the most difficult hand of the evening. North/South have a combined 25 points so should normally reach game, but only three pairs did and they all played in the wrong game! Those three pairs played in 3NT which required a 4/4 Heart break (when opponents cash their Heart tricks) and also a 3/3 diamond break. If you are one for mathematics a 4/4 break is 32.8% and a 3/3 break is 35.5% so your overall chance of success is about 12%. The contract of five clubs is much better (I won't do the calculations) with a chance of more than 50%.

North starts the bidding with one diamond and South has a choice of which four card Major to bid. Bidding Hearts first is normal as it gives your side a chance to find a fit in either Major, but do you really want to show Hearts with this suit? Some days partner may even support you with only three cards. I prefer one spade and then partner leaps to three clubs which is Game Forcing so you must bid on. This bid has improved your hand, but you are still quite minimum. A raise to four clubs will show a good hand as you may have a slam available. It gives your side a chance to cue bid and partner may even bid Blackwood. So a leap to five clubs is best. This is known as the principle of fast arrival. If you jump to game and take out all of your side's bidding spaces it strongly suggests that you think that is the correct place to play. This applies in many situations for example 2♣-2♦-2♠-4♣. It is normal that two clubs followed by two spades is game forcing. So the leap to four spades shows some spade support, but few points. If you have anything of value with spade support then simply raise to three spades as partner must bid on.

Against five clubs opponents are likely to try to cash AK♥ but you can ruff and play Ace and another club. You can then organise to draw the last trump and ruff a diamond along the way (in case they break 4-2) to make your contract.

So tip of the day – use the principle of fast arrival when you can.

	♠ K 7	
	♥ Q	
	♦ AKQ754	
	♣ A 6 4 2	
♠ 10 6 5	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> N E </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> W S </div>	♠ Q J 8 2
♥ 10 9 7 6		♥ A K J 8
♦ J 6 3		♦ 10 9 2
♣ K 9 7		♣ 10 5
	♠ A 9 4 3	
	♥ 5 4 3 2	
	♦ 8	
	♣ Q J 8 3	