

Get the Best out of this Hand

Game Tuesday Evening 31/10/23 Hand No. 13

Dlr: North

Vul: Game all.

Bidding

N	E	S	W
P	1NT	4S	6H
P	P	P	

How to Play

The hands were certainly suitable for a Halloween evening, with many big and interesting hands. I have two very different hands here.

The E/W winners on the evening Mike Robinson and Chris Healy bid to six hearts as detailed above. Chris' six heart bid was a bit optimistic as he could not be sure that partner held two aces, but it certainly was a practical choice. The 10♠ was led and south won and returned a small spade hoping to promote a trump trick for partner. Declarer was able to ruff high and draw trumps in two rounds. There are eleven top tricks and the twelfth can either come from the diamond suit or the club finesse. It costs declarer nothing to try the diamond suit first. The suit may be 3-3 or there may be a doubleton or singleton jack or (given the bidding) south may be very short in diamonds and you may be able cash the ace and king and then finesse against north's jack. This was the winning line on the hand with south showing out on the second round of the suit allowing declarer to claim their contract with no need for the club finesse. Chris successfully played the hand this way to make his contract for a very good score. Listening to the bidding certainly helped declarer.

Get the Best out of this Hand

Game Tuesday Evening 31/10/23 Hand No. 1

Dlr: North

Vul: Love all

Bidding

N	E	S	W
1D	1H	2C	2H
2S	3H	P	P
4D	P	P	P

How to Play

This is not a particularly exciting hand, but it does demonstrate how listening to the bidding carefully can help with the defence of the hand.

Against the four diamond contract east led the

A ♥ and the pondered to consider the hand. Partner had supported hearts so must hold three card support, therefore declarer has a singleton. Declarer must also hold at least four spades and six diamonds for the bidding. Therefore declarer's hand shape is likely to be 4162. You have a trump trick to come and partner must have a few points for their bid. Declarer has three club tricks plus whatever tricks they have in the other two suits. With the diamonds breaking 3-2 another heart won't really embarrass declarer so is there anything else you can do? What happens if you switch to a club? Declarer will win in dummy and then when you win the K♦ you can play a second club which declarer will win, but won't be able to cash the third trick as you will be able to ruff that. You have now successfully cut declarer off from dummy. Declarer can take the spade finesse, but will eventually lose two spades plus a diamond and a heart for one off.

So tip of the day – during the play of the hand remember the bidding and try to envisage the shape of the two hands at the table you cannot see. Use that to plan your declarer play or defence.

♠ A Q 4 2
♥ 5
♦ A Q J 9 7 2
♣ 10 3

♠ K J 8 5
♥ 10 9 4
♦ 6 3
♣ J 9 6 4

♠ 9 3
♥ A K Q J 8 7
♦ K 10 5
♣ 5 2

♠ 10 7 6
♥ 6 3 2
♦ 8 4
♣ A K Q 8 7