

Get the Best out of this Hand

Game Tuesday Evening 28/11/23 Hand No. 1

Dlr: North

Vul: Love all

Bidding

N	E	S	W
P	2H	X	2N
P	3S*	P	4H
P	P	P	

How to Play

After a weak two from East and a take out double by South, West was still interested in game so bid a forcing 2NT asking partner to describe their hand. Many of us play Ogust responses where we show whether our hand is minimum or maximum and also if we have a good or bad suit. A more modern method is for the weak two opener in a Major suit to show a singleton if they can. If they bid a suit to show the singleton below their suit they can be either minimum or maximum. If they go past their suit they will be maximum. On this particular hand this would have been very useful if East had a minimum hand with a singleton diamond, as West will know that all of partner's points are working so they can bid game. On the actual hand, holding two Aces, the opener deemed this to be a maximum hand so game was reached.

South led the ♣Q and declarer paused to count their tricks. The double by South has given them some clues about the points and distribution of the hand. It looks like they need to come to hand to lead towards the ♥Q in dummy so that they make five heart tricks, two spades, one diamond and two clubs. It seems obvious to win the opening lead with the ♣A and play a heart, but look what happens. South wins the heart and then plays ♣J giving North the ruff that defeats the contract. So let's go back to trick one. From the take out double South will be the player with length in clubs, so you should win ♣K, cash ♠AK throwing a diamond, then ruff a spade and now lead a heart towards the queen. South will win, but your ♣A is now safe. You have time to draw trumps.

So tip of the day – when dummy goes down, whether you are declarer or defender, take a little time to work out the pitfalls that may occur during the play of the hand and make a plan accordingly.