HAND of the WEEK 7 **Board 9** *21st October 2026*

This is a curious board, played 11 times by North and the spade J was the lead on every occasion. It appears that East preferred to double 2Hearts or defend hoping their holding HKxxxx would bring rewards. Bidding the optimum score of 3diamonds (which can't be defeated) may have pushed two pairs to bid 3H - which should be doubled.

The Jack Spades looks like like a good lead, maybe leading to ruffs, increasing your defensive value to a possible 4 tricks __ HK, 2 Heart ruffs and the CK. If West has doubled 1H, it's reasonable to assume they may contribute at least two tricks so East can X for penalties or bid 3 Diamonds, which results in a better score.

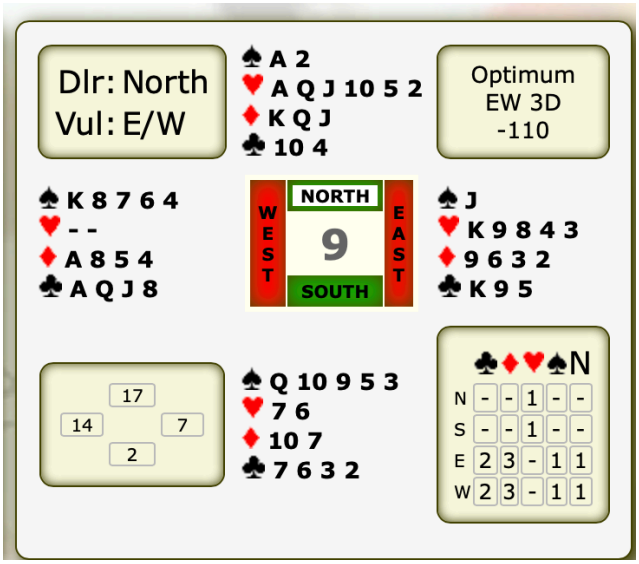
So how do we hold North to 7 tricks?

Good defence is about timing - playing/winning tricks in the correct order.
Once the JS is tabled, North will probably insert the SQ. The danger in covering with the SK is that North might draw all of East's trumps and lead a 2nd Spade to the 10, gaining two more tricks. However, if West suspects that North has a singleton Spade, covering does not cost and leaves the SK available to pressure North.

The defence:
Once East wins the KH, they must find West with entries to provide Spade ruffs. It doesn't help North to ruff high as they will be promoting East's trump tricks.

Small Diamond or Club to west - east will ruff the spade return. Once west plays the DA, east knows they must switch to CK as the other Diamond honours are with declarer.
Small Club to west follows, another spade return which which east ruffs.

The defence have now taken 1 Heart trick, 2 H ruffs, 2 Clubs and 1 Diamond, holding declarer to 7 tricks.



oard No 9 E/W Vul Dealer North

Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
2♥*	N	♠J	=	470		19	1
2♥*	N	♠J	=	470		19	1
3♥	N	♠J	-1		50	7	13
3♥	N	♠J	-1		50	7	13
2♥	N	♠J	=	110		13	7
2♥	N	♠J	-1		50	7	13
3♥	N	♠J	-2		100	2	18
2♥	N	♠J	-1		50	7	13
2♥	N	♠J	=	110		13	7
1♥*	N	♠J	=	160		16	4
4♥*	N	♠J	-3		500	0	20