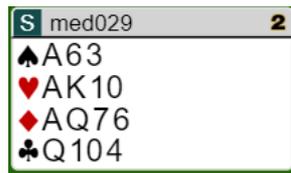


18/05/2020 Hand of the Week 14: Playing in a 4-2 trump fit

The club has just started running pairs events on BBO. I played in my first one with Stephen on Sunday 10th May, and picked up this hand:



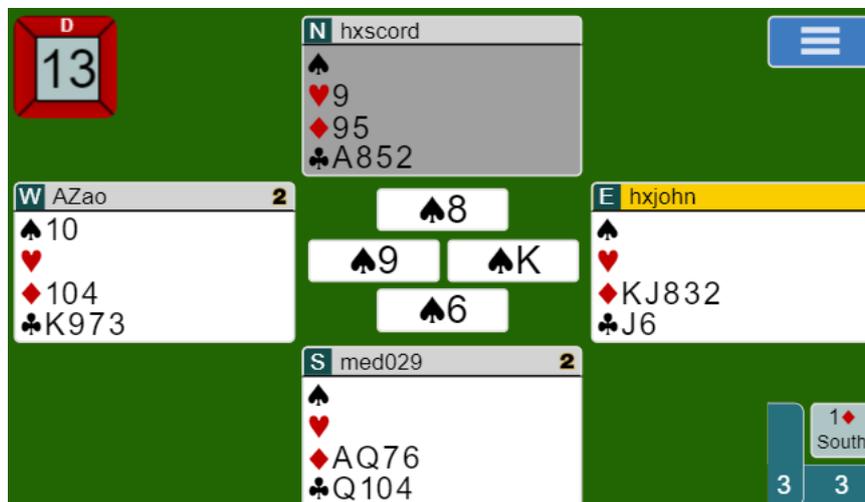
Preparing to raise my partners response to 3NT, I was dismayed when my 1♦ open was passed out, and even more dismayed when I saw dummy!



You don't get to play in a 4-2 trump fit very often. Even with a balance of the points, is there any chance I can make the contract?

I can make 3 tricks in the majors and will need to make 4 in the minors. From the bidding the 17 missing points are likely evenly split and it is unlikely either of the opponents has a 5 card suit or they would probably have overcalled.

There are a couple of options for making 2 diamond tricks, but I cannot make 2 tricks in clubs if I lead them myself unless one of the honours drops doubleton, so would rather the opponents lead them for me. I started by cashing the top 2 hearts and leading out the third round which was won by East, the suit splitting 3-3. Next EW take their 2 spade tricks, with the defence finishing in West. It is 3 tricks each so far and with West on lead this is the position:



The defence is now stuck, even though they can take 3 diamond tricks at some point East will be end-played in clubs and I will get my 7 tricks- 1 spade, 2 hearts, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs. So 1♦ makes in a 4-2 split with the trumps breaking 5-2! The full hand:

D 13		N hxscord ♠842 ♥9654 ♦95 ♣A852		
W AZao 2 ♠QJ109 ♥Q73 ♦104 ♣K973	W N E S Pass Pass 1♦ Pass Pass Pass	E hxjohn ♠K75 ♥J82 ♦KJ832 ♣J6		
		S med029 2 ♠A63 ♥AK10 ♦AQ76 ♣Q104	1♦ South 0 0	

The key here is recognising that the only way declarer can make 2 club tricks is if they are lead by the defence. In fact as the cards lie, if the defence leads clubs declarer is guaranteed 2 tricks in the suit. ‘Frozen’ suits are best lead by your opponents!

We will be playing club pairs events on Tuesday, Thursdays and Sundays going forward at 1pm, keep an eye on the club website for more details.