

Cover An Honour?.....Not Yet!

North			
♠ AJ3			
♥ AQ10			
♦ A875			
♣ AK2			
West		East	
♠ 42		♠ K97	
♥ 9875		♥ 6432	
♦ K43		♦ 1096	
♣ 10873		♣ Q94	
South			
♠ Q10865			
♥ KJ			
♦ QJ2			
♣ J65			

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

2NT Pass 3H Pass
3S Pass 4NT Pass
5C Pass 6NT All Pass
3H Transfer
4NT Invite

5C Presumably 1 or 4
6NT strange choice!

Lead 10 Diamonds

The Tollemache is an inter county teams event played each year on RealBridge. We had a team of twelve with only eight playing at once so it took a lot of organising to get the right players in the right virtual seats. This was done perfectly by Trevor Thrower. He won't want it, but is so good he can keep the job forever. 😊 The event is unique in that you have to score with both your team mates in the opposite direction rather than the usual one. Imagine having to explain to two team mates why you played five hearts instead of doubling four spades and went for -500 instead of -100 by mis playing it! 😞 But I'm not doing an article on that hand!

The above hand was a more interesting one technically. Both Northants pairs took a conservative approach and stopped in four spades. Slam is quite good but a flat 20-22 opposite a flat 10 and only eight trumps between the two hands is not over appealing. 2N-3H-3S-4NT if played as quantitative is best. With 22 and good controls partner will now bid slam. Strangely however, both opponents bid the inferior 6NT which, with the spade king offside and a certain minor loser should go one down. Could the team take advantage? East led the diamond ten, unfortunate but understandable. The queen is played from dummy and....cover or not? We are taught as beginners to cover and honour but when there are two touching as here it is correct to cover the second, can you see why?

If the queen is allowed to hold and you cover the jack, declarer is certain to lose a diamond trick and go one down. However if you cover the queen (king ace) declarer now has eight and seven left in hand and can finesse partners nine...ouch! Both Northants defenders got this wrong and lost a whopping 44imps on one trick for their pains! Expensive. Amazingly for players at this level it happened three more times in other matches too. Even the supposed experts get it wrong. Hope for us all.

Rob M