A Chance in a Million

North

♠ K542
♥ 4
♦ AQJ94
♣ Q105

West

♠QJ109
♥8
♦108652
♣AK2

East

♠83
♥J9765
♦K
♣J9876

South

♠A76
♥AKQ1032
♦73
♣43

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1H	X
XX	2C	2H	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Last weekend saw the Tollemache, the big event of the year for the county. Every county sent a team for a qualifier played online in two groups with the top four teams from each group earning the right to play in next year's final. The team reached a peak of 5th at one time with visions of grandeur but slipped back to finish mid table. In this field still an excellent result and the best the county has done for many years. 15 time gold cup winner and England international Tony Forrester played for his county giving you some idea of the standard.

The above hand demonstrates the tiny difference between success and failure and also demonstrates a useful safety play when making the contract is all that matters.

North's club stop is not ideal but it's one for those 'you just have to bid it' moments. South's hearts make it an easy raise. The defence naturally played clubs, North winning the third round. What next?

North took the excellent view that, after the takeout double, the heart length and jack were likely to be on his right so finessed the ten. Sadly, the 5-1 break meant the diamond suit was still needed so finessed for down one. Could they do better? Well, it's only a chance in a million but if East wins the diamond you are down. However if West does, either they don't have a club to play and you are safe or if they do the clubs are 4-4 and you will just lose three clubs and a diamond. The line therefore of playing the diamond ace can't cost but it will of course gain when the King is singleton offside. A chance in a million...but this was that chance.... 😊 😊

Rob Miller