

The Oxford Club Challenge

Bridge writers tend to be rather lengthy in their description and analysis of a hand; typically a couple of columns or so in a newspaper, or maybe even two or three pages, if the hand appears as part of a book. No doubt their mission is to entertain as well as instruct the reader. But they are certainly guilty on occasions of much unnecessary waffle.

It must be possible fully to analyse a bridge deal with maximum economy. An example is given below, and the challenge is to interpret and explain it. It may help to be told that the expression contains no encryption as such – merely representative characters; but that all operators, connectives and disjunctions need to be understood.

Honorary Life Membership, together with a spare pack of playing cards (hardly used), will be awarded by the management for the first correct solution submitted.

♠ AQJ9
♥ 6
♦ 732
♣ 109854

♠ 73
♥ J543
♦ K1054
♣ A76

♠ K6
♥ AQ87
♦ AJ96
♣ QJ3

♠ 108542
♥ K1092
♦ Q8
♣ K2

Contract 4 Hearts by East. Lead ♠4,3,A,6. ♣10 returned, JKA.

“NEWSKKCQDA79J3810RD1H10WE%2HSCDH41VP1298”

Best of luck!

The Oxford Club Challenge – Solution

NEWS	North East West South. All four hands visible. Double Dummy analysis
K	Play either King
K	Play the other King
CQ	Play the ♣Q
DA	Play the ♦A
79J	Play ♥7 (the only seven) covered by ♥9 and ♥J
3810	Play ♥3 (the only three) to the ♥8 and ♥10
RD	South must concede Ruff/Discard
1H	<u>Or</u> make only 1 Heart trick
10	<u>Therefore</u> Declarer comes to ten tricks
WE	West East hands only visible. Single Dummy analysis
%2H	%age play in Heart suit loses two Heart tricks
S	A Spade must be lost
C	A Club must be lost
D	A Diamond will be lost
H41	<u>Because</u> , when trumps are revealed 4/1
VP129	<u>Then</u> Vacant Places gives odds of 12 to 9 for ♦Q with North. It isn't.
8	<u>Therefore</u> Declarer comes to 8 tricks