

## Safety Play or not?

Pivot teams and Individuals bring a different dimension to the game, especially when your system is mandatory. Deprived of your favourite gadgets, it is back to basic bridge. It does bring some adventures along the way but makes for an enjoyable evening.

Board 15 playing with a teammate had a combined 27 points and a 5-4 club fit. Still not everyone bid game. Those that did found a 4-4 diamond suit that needs to be played for one loser to make the contract.

AQ84 opposite 10973, the two vital cards are the K & J diamonds. Fortunately, you have three entries to dummy and have options. The advice from most would be to play for split honours, run the ten, if the jack wins, run the nine. This succeeds 75% of the time. Can you do better? How do you improve the odds? Well, what if your LH opponent holds KJ doubleton? Then the safety play is to start with the AD, dropping a singleton honour makes it easy. On the other hand, if they both follow with small cards and RH opponent plays small on the second trick, you now have a guess. Who holds the key honours? You are down to a 50% chance.

What option do I take? Here you have to listen to any opposition bidding and the play of the cards. Try, if you can, to delay the decision to later in the hand. You may pick up a clue from the discards, if nothing assists, fall back on the double finesse.