

## October 2015

We're back on BBO playing against Swedish experts this time

### Bidding

Dealer North N/S vul

N	E	S	W
1NT(1)	pass	2C	pass
2S	pass	3S	pass
4S	all pass		

(1) N-S are playing a 16-18 point 1NT opening

Your partner leads  $\spadesuit K$  which holds the trick and on seeing dummy switches to  $\spadesuit 6$

### West

$\spadesuit$  AJ9  
 $\heartsuit$  J852  
 $\diamondsuit$  103  
 $\clubsuit$  J873

### South

$\spadesuit$  K872  
 $\heartsuit$  K1093  
 $\diamondsuit$  8  
 $\clubsuit$  10952

Declarer goes into the tank then plays  $\spadesuit K$  from Dummy. Plan your defence.

### Initial Analysis

You win this trick with the Ace and have your finger on the trigger with the  $\spadesuit J$ . Your partner thinks drawing trumps is the best defence, even declarer thinks drawing trumps is a good move. Can they both be right? But you know the rules by now. You owe it to partner and yourself to take a little time thinking about this hand. It looks a daunting task so let's do it together. Like all good detectives, let's follow the clues. We know for certain that declarer started with 4 spades to the queen and partner started with the 10 doubleton. How do we know this? Because if partner has the queen he would never have switched to a low spade and if declarer has the 10 he would have let it run. Declarer is also likely to be holding four diamonds for if he held less then partner started with at least seven to the AK and failed to bid. So it is highly likely he has a 4-2-4-3 or 4-3-4-2

distribution. Where are his points? To accept the invitation to game he should hold 18 points, but given that partner has shown at least seven points in diamonds there are only 20 points missing, so he has everything minus a queen. Why a queen instead of two jacks? I'll let you work that out for yourselves.

Here are the possible scenarios –

a) If he is missing the ♦Q then we know exactly what he started with

♠ Qxxx  
♥ AQ  
♦ Jxxx  
♣ AKQ

b) If he is missing the ♥Q then he holds exactly

♠ Qxxx  
♥ Ax  
♦ QJxx  
♣ AKQ

c) If he is missing the ♣Q then there are two possibilities

♠ Qxxx  
♥ AQ  
♦ QJxx  
♣ AKx            or

♠ Qxxx  
♥ AQx  
♦ QJxx  
♣ AK

There, that wasn't so difficult was it? OK, it was difficult, but quite logical. If you look at the four hands above you will see that if you return a trump declarer will have no problem making this contract. But in two of the above scenarios declarer is counting on discarding a loser from hand on his ♥K. We can stop him doing that. How? Simply by playing a diamond at trick 3 thus removing an entry from dummy prematurely. Now when he cashes his heart honours in hand and tries to gain entry to dummy with a ruff, we overruff and exit with a club or spade.

### Full Deal

N

♠ Q543  
♥ AQ  
♦ J965  
♣ AKQ

W

♠ AJ9  
♥ J852  
♦ 103  
♣ J873

E

♠ 106  
♥ 764  
♦ AKQ752  
♣ 64

S

♠ K872  
♥ K1093  
♦ 8  
♣ 10952

### Conclusion

Declarer made a good play at trick 2 by encouraging you to win the trick and return a trump. Note that if he runs the Spade round to his Queen he will go down. He can cash his heart honours in hand, ruff a diamond and discard a losing diamond on the ♥K. But when he ruffs his final diamond you overruff and give partner a heart ruff.

Sometimes we fail to analyze a hand because it just seems like too much hard work, and certainly there are hands where we are faced with countless possibilities in the early stages of the defence. But trying to visualize declarer's likely holding is a very good habit to develop as often it will point you in the right direction defensively.