

September 2018

One of the things I enjoy about this game is that you do not have to go far afield to see quite sparkling plays. Sometimes they take place right there on your doorstep. On a rare trip to Cape Town I take the opportunity to go and kibitz the players at Keurboom. On the following hand the four players also happen to be Starfish from the Fish Hoek Bridge club down the road.

Bidding

Board 3

Dealer South

E-W vul

North	W	N	E	S
Glenis Wildish				
♠ 107	3S	pass	6S	all pass
♥ QJ5				
♦ 752				
♣ AK953				

The bidding has been short and exciting. You lead the ♣A and the following dummy goes down. Dummy play the ♣6, Partner the ♣4 and Declarer the ♣7

East

♠ A
♥ AK964
♦ AKQ1096
♣ 6

North

♠ 107
♥ QJ5
♦ 752
♣ AK953

You have 10 seconds to find the killing switch.

Analysis

Times up. I gave you 10 seconds to solve this problem as Glenis took about 3 seconds at the table. Many of you will switch to a spade as this is the usual and often the correct play when dummy can ruff your suit. You can then sit back and wait for your club trick, but on this hand you will be waiting a long time. Given that declarer can run off at least 7 spade tricks along with 6 diamond tricks not to mention 2 heart tricks and possibly more should he care to establish that suit, he has enough tricks to keep him going for this hand and possibly the next two hands as well. So a diamond switch got your vote? Who has the ♣2 ? Is it possible that Declarer has hidden it and the ♣4 is a suit signal by partner? But here's what you have to ask yourself – why, if Partner started with a void in this suit, didn't he make a Lightner double asking for an unusual lead? No, the only real chance of taking this contract down is to hope for a trick in spades and if this isn't going to happen naturally then we might be able to help it on its way by playing for a trump promotion. To this end you must continue the ♣K. OK, so I said you had to find the correct switch at trick 2 but I lied.

The full hand

East
Julian Gruft

♠ A
♥ AK964
♦ AKQ1096
♣ 6

North
Glenis Wildish

♠ 107
♥ QJ5
♦ 752
♣ AK953

South
Peggy Diener

♠ J62
♥ 10732
♦ 97
♣ Q1042

West
Paul Mestern

♠ KQ98543
♥ 8
♦ J3
♣ J87

Final Analysis

Reducing Dummy's ability to ruff a side suit in which you hold tricks usually works well as a defensive strategy, but not when it's clear that Declarer is bristling with tricks elsewhere and will probably have little interest in ruffs. This hand needed some thinking outside of the box to come up with the defence most likely to succeed. Well done Glenis!