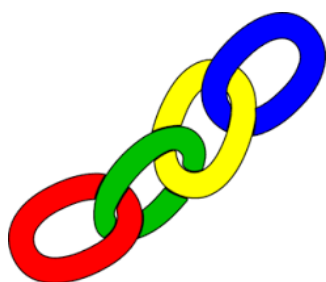


Have you ever doubled a slam with a 4333 Yarborough?

Have you ever wanted to? Declarer thus misplaces the defence's cards! Read on.

A different kind of question for you this week. We are going to give you two hands, the bidding and the final contract...and your job is to find the link between the play of the two boards. There is no trip to Wohan for this year's World Championships if you work it out but there is something to be learnt from the link.



One semi-obtuse clue is that the link is not specifically shown in one of the two hands below. So, over to you...

Board 5

North Deals

N-S Vul

♠ K 3		♠ A Q J 8 7
♥ A K Q J 4		♥ 3 2
♦ J 7 4		♦ K Q 5
♣ Q J 8		♣ 10 9 3

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 NT	Pass
6 NT	Dbl	All pass	

Board 14

East Deals

None Vul

♠ 10 8 7 3 2		♠ A K 9 6
♥ A J 2		♥ K Q 8
♦ K 2		♦ Q 8 4
♣ 9 6 4		♣ A 8 2

West	North	East	South
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♥	Dbl	3 ♠	4 ♣
4 ♠	All pass		

1♥ shows 4+ spades with the rest of the auction natural.

OK, I suppose you want a clue. The opening lead on Board 5 was the ♦A and on Board 14 was ♣K. No correct answers received, yet, though.

Let's look at the play.

Board 5. There was a little problem with the bidding here. East's 2NT showed 12-14 while West assumed it was 15-17. This may explain why West jumped so many levels.

Yet, the play's the thing. South led ♦A and saw rather a lot of high cards in dummy. He held 4 points (the ace) and, believing dummy, counted a minimum 32 high cards between the two opposing hands. Even if North had an ace, it would hardly be enough to double on the basis of that one card alone.

Something was a'foot but a diamond continuation did not help the defence:

Board 5		♠ 9 6 2										
North Deals		♥ 9 5										
N-S Vul		♦ 10 3 2										
		♣ A K 7 6 2										
♠ K 3		<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ A Q J 8 7
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♥ A K Q J 4			♥ 3 2									
♦ J 7 4			♦ K Q 5									
♣ Q J 8			♣ 10 9 3									
		♠ 10 5 4										
		♥ 10 8 7 6										
		♦ A 9 8 6										
		♣ 5 4										
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>									
	Pass	1♠	Pass									
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass									
6NT	Dbl	All pass										

10 major tricks and 2 diamonds later and crime had indeed paid!

On then to 4♠ and that ♣K lead. The hero this time was North who, remember, had made a take-out double. East could see no reason to win the ♣K as North's double indicated all other high cards except ♣KQ were surely in the North hand. Ducking can sometimes be a great idea...but not this time! (Note for those of you who do not count high cards. Total of high cards in the North hand outside those 2 club honours is 9. A take-out double? Once again, something was a 'foot!) Have a look..

Board 14 ♠ J 5

East Deals ♥ 10 6 5 3
None Vul ♦ J 9 7 6 5 3
 ♣ 5

♠ 10 8 7 3 2 ♥ A J 2 ♦ K 2 ♣ 9 6 4	<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A K 9 6 ♥ K Q 8 ♦ Q 8 4 ♣ A 8 2
---	---	--

♠ Q 4
♥ 9 7 4
♦ A 10
♣ K Q J 10 7 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♥	Dbl	3 ♠	4 ♣
4 ♠	All pass		

After the ♣K scored, North ruffed the club continuation, played a diamond to South's ace with a second club ruff beating the contract. Winning the ♣A and drawing trumps was a remarkably good idea this time.

So, what's the link?

Neither ♣A won a trick. Each time, the holder of that card would have been much better off had the ace scored.

In Board 5, North had more high cards than South could expect. That double might have been Lightner style asking for a heart lead. Although that was not the case here, an initial heart lead should have beaten the contract. If declarer guesses to play a diamond at trick 2, there is only one logical place to look for tricks barring North holding ♠AQ... and that was clubs.

So, no psychic double of 6NT... a good old "I have got 2 tricks, partner. Let me in, please!"

Board 14 saw East a little confused by North's psychic double. However, in reality, East would make his contract if spades broke 2-2, or maybe 3-1 with a singleton honour in the South hand. While it did not appear the duck at trick 1 would lose much (how wrong could you be!), it is hard to see what it could gain.

So, there was a psyche but not in the board we indicated. Aces are meant for beating kings and winning tricks. Not this night, it seems!

Richard Solomon