

May 23, 2020

Bridge with Richard Ward

Paul Marston has remarked in his free weekly bridge column on the astonishing growth in online bridge. Twenty years ago, the founder of BBO, Fred Gitelman, stated that they had more than 100,000 unique logins every day. The new owner of BBO, Jérôme Rombaut, reported this week that this number has now risen to around 300,000.

NORTH		S/ EW VUL
♠	A 8 4 3	
♥	J 7 5	
♦	10 7 2	
♣	Q 6 2	
WEST		EAST
♠	7 2	♠ 6
♥	10 9 2	♥ 8 6 4 3
♦	K J 5	♦ 9 8 6 4
♣	J 9 7 4 3	♣ K 10 8 5
SOUTH		
♠	K Q J 10 9 5	
♥	A K Q	
♦	A Q 3	
♣	A	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2C
PASS	2D	PASS	2S
PASS	3S	PASS	4NT
PASS	5D	PASS	5NT
PASS	6S	ALL PASS	

2C was game forcing; 2D was waiting; 3S was stronger than 4S; a key-card-ask revealed 1 or 4; then 5NT asked for any outside kings denied by North. West started with the ten of hearts and most declarers saw that the contract depended solely on a winning diamond finesse. But there are actually three (!) winning card holdings available. Can you spot them?

Our expert declarer won the ace of hearts, cashed the ace of clubs then led the king of spades to dummy's ace. Then he ruffed the six of clubs with the spade queen and cashed two more hearts. Next he played the five of spades to dummy's eight which drew all of the trumps and played the queen of clubs. If East did not have the king of clubs the plan was to let it run to West while discarding a diamond who would then be end-played into giving a ruff-and-discard or leading a diamond around to the ace-queen. This plan was thwarted when East played the club king, ruffed by South who was not done yet. He led a low diamond towards dummy and, when West held the jack (which he had to take no matter who held the king) he was finally end-played. So the three distinct chances are: king of diamonds with East or the king of clubs or the jack of diamonds with West. Well played.
