

June 13, 2020

## Bridge with Richard Ward

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When playing in a pairs event the normal rule is “adopt the line which will produce the most tricks”. At teams the rule becomes “adopt the line most likely to make the contract”. Neither of these rules matter too much if the contract is a slam. Having bid it, making 12 or 13 tricks at pairs will not make much difference to your score and will be irrelevant at teams.

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1S
PASS	2D	PASS	2H
PASS	3C	PASS	3S
PASS	4C	PASS	4D
PASS	4NT	PASS	5C
PASS	5NT	PASS	6S
PASS	PASS	PASS	

Playing Standard, North took the scenic route in the bidding: 3C artificially forced to game; 4C and 4D showed 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round controls; 4NT asked for key cards; 5C showed 0 or 3; 5NT confirmed all 5 key cards and asked for specific kings; 6S denied any other kings. Phew!! However most experienced pairs should reach this slam one way or another.

West leads the king of clubs taken by the ace and declarer has several promising lines of play. Simplest appears to involve ruffing the heart loser with a high trump, discarding a club on a diamond, drawing trumps and claiming 12 tricks losing just one club. On the layout above this will fail when the second heart is ruffed and one or two clubs are cashed. Unlucky? Certainly. But there is a 100% line which makes use of the powerful diamond suit regardless of the whereabouts of the diamond queen.

Draw the trumps in four rounds then play the diamond ace, king (throwing a club) and jack (throwing the last club). West wins the queen but declarer is home, throwing the heart loser on the diamond ten. This is known as a loser-on-a-loser play and can be easily missed.

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