

December 19, 2020

### Bridge with Richard Ward

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Your trump suit is A10532 opposite K764. You play the king-eight-two-queen (or jack). Next comes – 4-9 and you have a choice. The probability theory of “Restricted Choice” says that, in the absence of any other information, you should finesse. Don’t play for the drop. Two times out of three, the honour that dropped on your right will be a singleton. A bridge columnist recently wrote, in a rather patronising fashion: “Some players do not believe in Restricted Choice. Don’t waste your time trying to explain it to them – they will never change their minds. Just be happy that, unlike you, they will have odds of 2-to-1 against them throughout their bridge careers.”

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1S
PASS	2NT	PASS	4C
PASS	4D	PASS	4H
PASS	4NT	PASS	5NT
PASS	7S	ALL PASS	

2NT was a game-forcing spade raise; 4C was a natural 5-card suit; 4D and 4H were 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round controls; 4NT asked for key cards; 5NT showed two key cards and a void somewhere and 7S optimistically hoped that the void was in diamonds, not hearts.

The heart lead was won with the king followed by the ace and king of spades and the singleton diamond ruffed. Then a low club to the king, keeping the ace-ten tenace intact, was rewarded when the jack of clubs appeared from West. Following Restricted Choice, playing for a singleton jack of clubs, the ten was finessed and the grand slam was home.

For another interesting, non-bridge explanation of the theory of Restricted Choice, search for the “Monty Hall” problem.

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