

Learning Points – Touchy 7 Hearts that Makes

October 1, 2008

by Steve Moese; edited by Mike Purcell

S Deals
EW Vul

♠ K1074
♥ J9
♦ J1054
♣ J52

Steve

Mike

♠ AQJ65	N	♠ -
♥ AQ42	W 19 E	♥ K10763
♦ 98	S	♦ AK63
♣ 87		♣ AK109

♠ 9832
♥ 85
♦ Q72
♣ Q643

Deep Finesse:
EW 5♣, 5♦,
5♠, 5N, 7♥

South	West	North	East
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	4N	Pass	5♣
Pass	5N	Pass	6♥
Pass	7♥	Passed Out	

South leads ♠9

Saturday Morning September 27, 2008. Jim Pelletier Charity Pairs at the Fort Wayne IN Regional.

The Bidding

While Mike and I play Precision, this sequence is one many 2/1 and Standard American Players would match: 2♥ game force showing hearts, 3♥ agreement to strain, then 4♣ and 4♠ cue bids leading to RKC Blackwood. *Note: East cue bid the ♠ void. No need to repeat this message responding to RKC. Since West opened in spades, the void is not useful by definition (likely opposite high cards that could work harder if elsewhere in West's hand).* Also once West agreed hearts, any spade bid by East is a cue bid, not an attempt to play in spades. 5♣ shows 0 or 3 keycards. East's 6♥ call was to play. West knew all controls were in place. Do you see why??

The Play

South led ♠9 and the dummy played ♠J. North played the ♠K and the hand was over for the defense. Partner ruffed and was able to pitch 2 losing minors on the top spades and ruff 2 minor losers in dummy. 13 tricks made simply. Making 7 was worth 10.5 of 11 Match Points.

Post Mortem

Perhaps East-West overbid? Mike felt his 4♠ cue bid could have discouraged me from bidding on to 7♥ since we had duplicate values in ♠. *On the contrary, when my partner cue bids my suit showing a void, I must assume they have everything else I need in the other 2 suits.* There really is no need to cue bid my suit otherwise! This is an important cue bidding discipline that will clarify lots of situations.

Yes, South's ♠ lead gave declarer a tempo and a clear path to 13 tricks. Would leading a minor suit improve chances of defeat? Let's see...

East starts with 10 tricks off the top. Where will the 3 tricks come from? Tricks 11 and 12 can come from ruffing one Club and one Diamond in Dummy. There are several chances for the 13th trick: 1) the ♠K falls to a ruffing finesse; 2) The ♣ honors are split and a ruffing finesse will work against South (only if South leads clubs); 3) East can cross ruff the hand and the ♥J is in North's hand. A minor suit squeeze would require the 4 missing QJ's to be in North's hand – an unlikely but possible event.

Note the risk of ruffing either minor twice – you might get overruffed by North!! Here watching the cards fall from the opponents can guide your play: Ruff the ♠ lead with a small trump. Don't draw trumps yet. Instead, play 4 top minor cards then ruff one in dummy. If an honor falls on the 3rd round credit them with only 3 cards in that suit. Lead the ♠Q from the table prepared to pitch the minor card in the suit where North is short. If North covers with the ♠K, lead trump to the table, draw trump and pitch 2 minor suit losers on spades to finish the hand.