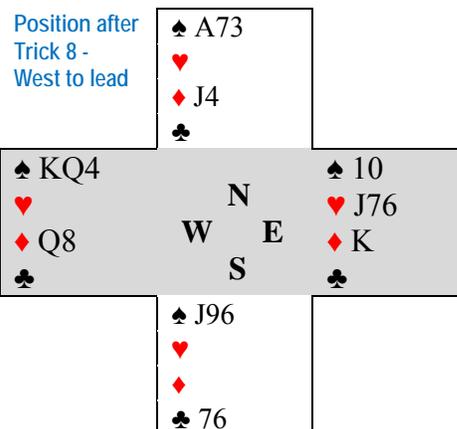


lead a small ♠. A ♠ honor is bad as well leaving the ♠J9 in dummy and using up his partner's only ♠. This means he can return a ♦ and shorten dummy's trumps again.

“Now I try to cash the ♣K. East will have to follow so West must ruff. He cannot ruff low, or I will over ruff with the ♠7. Ruffing high has the same problem. He has to ruff with the ♠8 while I pitch a ♦ and now he is the same length as dummy again.”

“I am ahead 6 tricks to 2.” →

“The same problems with leading a high or low ♠ still exist so West will lead a ♦ and force dummy to ruff again. Now I cannot lead another ♣ since East can ruff and West can pitch his last ♦ and be able to over ruff dummy if I try to ruff a ♦. I must take the trump out of East's hand so I have to lead the ♠J! This smothers east's ♠10. West must cover the ♠J and I win the ♠A. Now I can ruff a ♦ with dummy's ♠9 and I have 9 tricks with 2 cards left.”



“I get to lead from dummy through West's ♠K and 4 towards my ♠7 and 3 and West cannot stop me from scoring my 10th trick *en passant*.”

The Post Mortem's Post Mortem

Savor how a top player finds a solution supported by inferences known at the table, and shares his findings so others learn too. There's a whole chapter on declarer play in this one hand. This tenacity for continual improvement and willingness to share with one's partners is a wonderful insight to top players.

Bruce's focus never leaves the contract at hand. He never blames partner (because no good can come of it, and partner made reasonable decisions based on her experience level). He takes the responsibility for not finding the best line of play at the table and teaches us all how to do it, even after the board was done and the results tallied.

Thanks, Bruce!

Learning Points

1. When in an odd contract, the best you can do is do your best.
2. When bad things happen, stay focused. Don't play the contract you're not in. Focus your attention, energy and skill at the task at hand.
3. Envision the hand you need the key defender to have and check to see if you can score enough tricks.
4. Plan your play making sure to manage entries and timing according to your vision.
5. Pay attention to those spot cards.
6. Never blame partner – instead turn the challenge into a learning opportunity. You just might grow what you know about the game!
7. Turn post mortems into learning opportunities. We can all learn from our mistakes. Share the magic of an elegant solution with friends. We'll learn with you and benefit from your insights.

Keywords: Envisioning, Cue bid limit raise, 1st round control, Minorwood, smother play, *en passant*