

MIT/DL BC May 3, 2016 -- When You're Hot -- Problem

Board 18
East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 10 9 4 2
♥ 9 5
♦ Q 9 8 6
♣ 8 5 3



♠ A Q 7 5
♥ K 7 6
♦ A K J 3
♣ K J

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	2 NT ¹

All pass
1. 20-21 HCP, balanced
2 NT by South
Lead: ♣ 10

This is a normal contract with a normal lead. East plays the ♣ 4. Plan the play.

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Board 18
East Deals
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♠ J	♠ 10 9 4 2	♠ K 8 6 3			
♥ A J 8 4	♥ 9 5	♥ Q 10 3 2			
♦ 7 4	♦ Q 9 8 6	♦ 10 5 2			
♣ A Q 10 9 7 6	♣ 8 5 3	♣ 4 2			
<table style="border: 1px solid gray; border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>			N	W E	S
N					
W E					
S					
♠ A Q 7 5	♠ A Q 7 5				
♥ K 7 6	♥ K 7 6				
♦ A K J 3	♦ A K J 3				
♣ K J	♣ K J				

S 2N; S 2♠; E 2♥; EW 3♣; NS 2♦; N 1♠; W 1♥; Par -110

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	2 NT ¹

All pass

1. 20-21 HCP, balanced

2 NT by South

Lead: ♣ 10

Before even calling a card from dummy, I made a plan. More mistakes are made at trick one than at any other.

First, count top tricks: with the club lead, I had six. The contract appears likely to fail, and it would be easy to go down two (or more, as it happens). I decided to play for down 1, and hope to come up with one more trick at the end. There was one more factor: I held the ♣K, and West knew I had it. He might not cash out the clubs, if my first finesse lost. I decided to play for *one* more spade trick, hoping not to lose the lead.

When I cashed the ♦A and K, both followed. This allowed me to overtake the ♦J with the Q, preserving a second entry to dummy in the ♦9. If my first spade finesse lost, I wanted the possibility of trying again.

Leading small to the ♠Q produced a huge bonus: West played the ♠J. A diamond to dummy let me finesse again in spades. I cashed out all eight tricks, as many declarers would not do that well. I remained with a losing spade, my three original hearts, and the ♣K, with which I exited. West eventually conceded a trick to my ♥K.

Making 9 tricks on this deal took some skill, but also incredible luck. That's how it goes with a 70% game. See you next time, back in the 40s or 50s!