

An Impossible Club Slam

The Hand

Board #22, Friday 9 Feb 2018

BD: 22	♠K84	Dir: E				
	♥KJT92	Vul: E-W				
	♦T632					
	♣9					
♠T76532		♠				
♥A		♥Q765				
♦74		♦AKQJ				
♣AQ62		♣87543				
	♠AQJ9					
	♥843					
	♦985					
	♣KJT					
	♣					
	♦					
	♥					
	♠					
	NT					
N	-	-	-	-	-	7
S	-	-	-	-	-	10 12
E	6	2	1	1	1	11
W	6	2	1	1	1	

The Bidding

Barbara Chew was staggered to discover that this miserable EW holding, where most pairs played in 2 or 3 spades, going down, actually makes 6C. She wants to know how to bid it, and then how to make it.

Bidding it is impossible. East opens 1C and South may or may not X. Either way West bids 1S. If South has doubled, North will now bid 2H, East 2NT, and West may repeat spades showing 6 spades and 10-12pts, at which point East should Pass because continuing is only going to get them into more trouble!

If South doesn't double, West bids spades, East bids 1NT and now West confidently rebids his 6 card spade suit. Clubs doesn't get another mention and there is no way even an expert pair would reach a club slam.

The Play

Assuming EW reach 6 Clubs through some very enthusiastic bidding, how can East possibly make 12 tricks on this layout? You can count 4 Clubs, 4 Diamonds, 1 Heart, so you need to ruff 3 hearts in dummy but as you don't have enough trumps left in dummy to do that after drawing 2 rounds, you need another approach.

You have to do a cross ruff, ruffing 4 spades in the long hand and 2 hearts in dummy and set up a spade winner. So if South leads a heart (and it doesn't matter what they lead), play the Ace then ruff a little spade. Small club to the Q (the finesse MUST work!!), ruff a spade back to Declarer's hand. Ruff a heart, ruff a spade. Ruff another heart in dummy, ruff the 4th spade back to hand. That's 8 tricks, now play your winning diamonds. South is down to the KC & JC when you play the 4th diamond and he's stuffed. If he ruffs, you over-ruff with the AC and then play your winning 10S which south wins with the KC, but you make 12 tricks.

Please Note: The number of tricks that can be made in the hands dealt by our dealing machine is determined by a software program called Deep Finesse and is based on BEST Declarer play and BEST Defence. While Deep Finesse tells you how many tricks can be made when the complete layout is known to declarer, it is not saying that it is possible to bid to that level as this hand clearly shows.
