

Killarney Virtual Congress 2020

Goldenfield Mixed Teams

Qualifying Match 2

Board 3	♠ A Q J 8 6 2	
South Deals	♥ 8	
E-W Vul	♦ K 8 6 3	
	♣ Q 9	
♠ K 10 9 3		♠ 5 4
♥ K J 3 2	W N E	♥ A 7 6 4
♦ 7 5	S	♦ A J 2
♣ 10 4 2		♣ A K J 5
	♠ 7	
	♥ Q 10 9 5	
	♦ Q 10 9 4	
	♣ 8 7 6 3	

Sitting West, let's say that you eventually reached 4♥ following North's 1♠ opening bid and East's double. On the way, North showed at least six spades. This is all you know, and you receive either the ♥8 (a) or the ♣Q lead (b): how do you think you can come to ten tricks?

The spades are almost certainly wrongly placed, so you must count two losers there. What about the other suits? You can avoid losing a diamond if clubs behave nicely, (and they certainly do if you received the ♣Q lead!), providing a parking spot for your second diamond. As for hearts, the lead should change your thinking.

One way or the other, it's now time to abandon thinking in terms of losers, and start wondering how to come to ten winners. If hearts are splitting 3-2, and the queen behaves, you can count on four hearts, a ruff in either hand, the ♦A and three clubs. This adds up to nine tricks: not enough. The ♣Q onside, doubleton or tripleton would see you home, but what if not? In that case, perhaps the way out is to organise two diamond ruffs in hand, would be to reverse the dummy. Is that possible?

Is it right to play club immediately, without playing a second round of trump? Well, if the ♣Q is with South, this certainly leads to defeat: South will win, play a spade through and a trump promotion will inevitably follow. Better playing a second round of trumps then? Well, not quite, unless, as it looks very unlikely after the lead, that the ♥Q is doubleton, because South will win and will have two options for beating the contract: either organise a trump promotion, or simply playing a third round of trumps, leaving you a trick short. Can you survive if the ♥Q is doubleton, and the ♣Q is with South? Well, you play the ♥K (you must keep the little trumps to ruff diamonds), finesse in clubs and South wins, put his partner on lead with a spade, and the trump continuation sinks your contract. No, good.

So, you need the ♣Q to be with North. But this is not the end: do you now also need hearts to split, or not? Well, say you cash the ♥K, then finesse in clubs. If South holds three or four of them you have ten top tricks (four hearts, four clubs, the ♦A and a ruff). If South has only two clubs, and ruffs the third club, North is marked with a 6214. South plays a spade, and North wins cheaply and plays back either a diamond or a club. Does not matter: declarer ruffs the fourth club and cashes the ♦A, regardless of the order, then plays a spade, and North is end-played (Nicole, add please the ending).

Tuesday 12 May Schedule

Teams Knockout Stages

3.00pm Open Individual - 12bds (FREE)

7.15pm 1/4 Final

8.35pm Semi-Final

9.35pm Final Mixed Teams

9.30pm Individual 12 bds (FREE)

9.30pm Mixed IMP Pairs 12 bds (FREE)

All FREE events are open to all

The final stages will be open to silent kibbitzers at the table, or join the ZOOM link for commentary in a vugraph style display (if we can make it work!)

ZOOM LINK* - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7501279632>

Excellent, but what if hearts do not split?

Well, since you can count on three hearts only, you now need four clubs, so South must hold at least three of them. Are three enough? No: if South holds only three clubs, he's going to ruff the fourth in front of you, then play a third round of trumps. Curtains.

We are finally ready to figure out what distribution we need to come home if hearts are 4-1: North must be 6142. If so, we cash the ♥K, then ♣AK dropping the queen (finessing is not necessary if we aim at ten tricks: the ♣ must be singleton or doubleton with North), enter the hand with the ♣10, go back to dummy with the ♦A and pitch a diamond on the ♣J. You then ruff a diamond, and play either intermediate spade to make sure North wins it. The defenders are powerless. Here is the ending :

♠ K 9 3	♠ A Q 8	♠ 5
♥ J 3 2	♥ -	♥ A 7 6
♦ -	♦ K 8	♦ J
♣ -	♣ -	♣ -
	N	
	W E	
	S	
	♠	
	Q 10	
	♥ 9	
	♦ Q 10	
	♣ -	

Another diamond allows you to score a second ruff with the ♥A still to come, while on ♠A and another spade you simply pitch dummy's last diamond.

Bottom line, after the ♥8 lead there are two moves that you must make regardless of how hearts and clubs split: cash the ♥K first, then finesse in clubs.

And what about on the ♣Q lead?

Well, to cut a long story short, you can easily realise that you still need to ruff diamonds in hand, and if so, you need to use the heart honours from hand, thus you cannot afford to cash the ♥A first. You can try it yourself, but in the end, you will come to the conclusion that you need to play along the same lines as before, starting by finessing the ♥J.

*By Maurizio Di Sacco
One of your Lockdown TDs in Virtual Killarney2020*

