

A CLEVER WAY TO GET TO SLAM

This is a hand I played recently on iBridgePlus. I was sitting in the South with this hand:

S	South
♠	AQ32
♥	A9
♦	Q95
♣	A842

West pass and my partner opened 1♦. The juices started running. I had 16 HCP so we were in slam zone. I had to find out if my partner had extras that would get our point count up to 33 or more. I started with a forcing 1♠ bid and he raised me to 2♠. I hit on a clever way to find out if he had extras. I rebid 2NT. This, in our system, is a general game invitational bid. It asks if partner has enough to get to game if I only have 10+ to 12 points. His rebid of 4♠ told me he had more than the minimum count for his opening bid.

Knowing this, and having 1st or 2nd round control of all the suits, I bid 4NT. He answered 4♥. We were playing key card Blackwood where the king of trump is considered the 5th key card, in addition to the 4 aces. He showed me two key cards by bidding 5♥. Now I knew he held the ♦A and the ♠K since I had the 3 other key cards. I bid the small slam - 6♠. West led a low spade, and this is the full deal:

D 8	N North	W West	E East	S South
	♠ K1096 ♥ J632 ♦ AK10 ♣ K10	♠ 874 ♥ K754 ♦ J3 ♣ J965	♠ J5 ♥ Q108 ♦ 87642 ♣ Q73	♠ AQ32 ♥ A9 ♦ Q95 ♣ A842
				♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0

How would you plan the play if you were me?

You have no spade losers if they divide 3-2. You have one heart loser that you can't do anything about and you have two club losers that you can ruff in the dummy. You must be wary of using three of dummy's spades to pull all the trump. You can afford to pull only one more round of trump.

You also have to be careful that you don't play all three diamonds until after you ruff the two clubs and get back in your hand to pull the last trump. West, who has the outstanding trump also is short in diamonds.

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/hfkpqhj> or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own

© David Germaine 2016