

FROBOZZ

Issue #64

March 11, 1989

Bridge Corner

♠ A Q 10
♥ K 6 2
♦ Q J 3
♣ A 8 7 6

♠ K J 9 4
♥ A 7 5 4 3
♦
♣ 10 5 4 3

You are the declarer at a contract of four hearts. West leads the two of clubs. Decide how you would play the hand before reading on.

You will have no trouble making this contract if both hearts and clubs break 3-2. In that case, you will lose only one trick in hearts and two in clubs. Unfortunately, the two of clubs lead is likely to be a singleton. Can the bad club split be overcome?

If hearts also break badly, probably not. But as long as hearts are 3-2, the contract can be made. Declarer's plan should be to ruff dummy's diamonds in hand, thus scoring four spade tricks, the ace-king of hearts, three diamond ruffs, and the club ace, for a total of ten tricks.

The main problem for South is that he must prevent the opponents from taking four tricks before he can take his ten. This could happen if South carelessly wins the club lead with dummy's ace. East's king, queen, and jack of clubs would then be established. If East also holds three hearts, he would probably be able to gain the lead by ruffing in time to cash three club tricks.

The correct play at the first trick, despite the threat of an opposing club ruff, is a low club from dummy. East wins his jack but has no effective continuation. If he returns a club for his partner to ruff, dummy simply follows with a low club that was eventually going to lose a trick anyway. The ace of clubs remains in dummy, preventing East from cashing a third club trick when he later gains the lead in trumps. West cannot help his cause by refusing to ruff the club. He would succeed in driving out the club ace, but South's ten of clubs would become a fourth-round winner (because East has to lead an honor to force out the ace).

Since a club continuation by East is ineffective, let's say he switches to a spade at trick two (which is what happened in actual play). South wins in dummy, draws two rounds of trump, ruffs a diamond, re-enters dummy with a spade, ruffs another diamond, cashes the remaining spade winners, plays a club to dummy's ace, and ruffs the last diamond. That's ten tricks. It doesn't help East to ruff one of the spades. Dummy still has the ace of clubs to stop East from running tricks in that suit. And while it is true that South would be reduced to three spade tricks as the result of a spade ruff, it is also true that dummy's six of hearts would be promoted to a compensatory winner.

Note that declarer must time the play carefully. Dummy's ace of clubs must be saved till the spades have been run to prevent East from sinking the contract with club tricks. And declarer must have ruffed at most two diamonds at the point that he leads the third round of spades. If he has ruffed all three diamonds, East ruffs the third spade and forces dummy to ruff a diamond. South has no more entries to his hand, so he never gets to cash his last spade.

♠ A Q 10
♥ K 6 2
♦ Q J 3
♣ A 8 7 6

♠ 8 6 5 3 2
♥ Q 9
♦ A 10 8 5 4
♣ 2

♠ 7
♥ J 10 8
♦ K 9 7 6 2
♣ K Q J 9

♠ K J 9 4
♥ A 7 5 4 3
♦
♣ 10 5 4 3

1987HF

Benwick

Winter, 1908

The G-T draw is approved. Congratulations, Russ and Marc. Deadline for endgame statements is 9PM EST Friday, April 7, 1989.

Next issue will be the last for *Frobozz*. I'm a little sad to be leaving, but I feel I can no longer do justice to the zine. I thank all of you who have supported my efforts to bring you a place to play postal Diplomacy.

See you next issue (one for the road...)

Russ Rusnak (S71)
1551 High Ridge Parkway
Westchester, IL 60153