

Cooking up a storm *by Derrick Browne*

What should you do with this hand as South after the given auction:

S AKQT72  
H 985  
D J3  
C 93

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			<i>You</i>
	1C	1H	1S
Pass	1NT	Pass	?

Answer later.

Today's deals come from the recent Trumps Spring Teams. Alex Cook and John Newman helped their team to an eventual win in the event with a massive 18 IMP swing on just one board:

Dealer West, both vul.

NORTH  
S K543  
H A96  
D J8762  
C K

WEST	EAST
S —	S 872
H QJ72	H KT543
D A4	D 5
C AJT7642	C Q983

SOUTH  
S AQJT96  
H 8  
D KQT93  
C 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	<i>Newman</i>		<i>Cook</i>
1C	Pass	1H	1S
2H	3H*	4H	4S
5H	Pass	Pass	5S
Dble	All pass		

Newman's 3H cue showed a good raise of partner's overcall. Against 5S doubled, West led the DA and Cook false-carded with the DK, hoping this might deter a diamond continuation and ruff. Sure enough, West switched to the CA then to a heart, and the contract made. This was the auction at the other table:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1C	1D	1H	1S
3S*	Pass	4H	4S
Pass	Pass	5H	Pass
Pass	Dble	All pass	

West's 3S was a splinter, showing a heart fit, a singleton or void in spades, and values for game, allowing East – with a double fit in hearts and clubs, and no values in spades – to bid on to 5H. This was doubled and made with an overtrick, for +1050 on top of the +850 at the other table.

Back to the problem at the start of the column. This was the full deal:

Dealer West, both vul.

NORTH  
S 94  
H KT6  
D A62  
C AQ875

WEST  
S 83  
H 72  
D Q954  
C KT642

EAST  
S J65  
H AQJ43  
D KT97  
C J

SOUTH  
S AKQT72  
H 985  
D J3  
C 93

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			<i>You</i>
	1C	1H	1S
Pass	1NT	Pass	?

Bids of 2S, 3S and 4S were found at different tables. However South, with three small hearts, must envisage the danger of declaring this hand – West will lead partner’s suit, potentially trapping whatever heart honours North has.

The winning action is for South instead to bid 3NT, a contract reached by Theo Antoff and Al Simpson, whose team came second in the event. South can count six spade tricks (assuming the suit breaks evenly) so needs partner to provide only three more. What’s more, by bidding 3NT the contract is “right-sided” – the opening lead comes up around to North, who may have holdings in hearts or elsewhere which benefit from this.

As the cards lie, a heart lead from East provides North with an immediate ninth trick. On a non-heart lead, a successful club finesse provides declarer with the contract.