

A Big Hand for Due Diligence

♠	AKQJ62
♥	AQ864
♦	J
♣	A

You are sitting East relishing in this 2 to 3 loser monster hand and then South goes and tries to upset your apple cart by opening with a 3C pre-empt. This is passed around to you. What do you bid?

Thoughts on Bidding:

If you had had the chance, you would probably have opened 2C to show a very strong hand but also to see what partner has to offer. You are playing take-out doubles through to 4H so you should double. When partner bids 2H you should aim to get to 6H. You really only need to find out whether partner has the KH and/or the AD to bid a slam. If you are using key card asking, partner will advise they have one key card so making a small slam in hearts should be highly likely. If you are using Gerber or Blackwood you can discover that partner has no Ace and 1 x king. Bidding the small slam with that information is more risky but you know at least that partner has 4x hearts or more to go with your five.

♠ 75		♠ AKQJ62
♥ K973		♥ AQ864
♦ Q764		♦ J
♣ JT9		♣ A

West gets the KC led by North. How does she play the hand?

Thoughts on Play:

You win AC and think to yourself what can go wrong with this contract? If the defenders' hearts are not worse than 3-1 then you might make 13 tricks by discarding all your diamonds on the spades and ruffing the JD in hand but if they are 4-0 you could go down. How do you cater for that rather unlikely eventuality?

South pre-empted 3C so if either of the opponents has 4 x hearts it would likely be North so you play a heart to the KH and find that this is indeed the case. You lead a small heart but North plays the 10H. How can you get back to hand to repeat the finesse? There is only one way. You must ruff a third round of spades and hope North has 3 x spades. Happy Days!

The Board was played on Tuesday June 23.

BOARD 11					
BD: 11		♠ T98		Dir: S	
		♥ JT52		Vul: Nil	
		♦ 9832			
		♣ K4			
♠ 75				♠ AKQJ62	
♥ K973				♥ AQ864	
♦ Q764				♦ J	
♣ JT9				♣ A	
		♠ 43			
		♥			
		♦ AKT5			
		♣ Q876532			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	1			4
S	2	1			6 21
E			6	5	4
W			6	5	4
					9