

Solution to the Hand on Page 1

(CAUTION! Do not read this until you have studied the hand on P1!!)

Matchpoints. South plays 6♥. East leads ♠Q.

- |         |  |         |
|---------|--|---------|
| ♠ A75   |  | ♠ K6432 |
| ♥ KJ97  |  | ♥ 5432  |
| ♦ QJ4   |  | ♦ 87    |
| ♣ J92   |  | ♣ 65    |
| ♠ QJ109 |  |         |
| ♥ 10    |  |         |
| ♦ K1062 |  |         |
| ♣ Q1043 |  |         |
| ♠ 8     |  |         |
| ♥ AQ86  |  |         |
| ♦ A953  |  |         |
| ♣ AK87  |  |         |

This hand illustrates the very important principle that -- when developing tricks in a suit -- it is almost always better to lead TOWARD honors than to lead an honor and run it for a finesse. Many players never stop to consider that a combination like the diamonds and the clubs can be best played leading away from the high cards!

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Therefore, the best way to start this hand is to plan to take spade ace and a total of two spade ruffs, dummy's four trumps, and a total of five tricks from the minor suits in some form or another, depending on how the opponents defend.

Here's my favorite of the (several) lines that succeed:

**Trick 1:** Spade ace.

**Trick 2:** Spade ruff.

**Trick 3:** Low diamond toward the queen. If West wins this, the hand is over, since now it is easy to get three diamond tricks to go with the ace-king of clubs. So West must duck.

**Trick 4:** Trump to hand: When the ♥10 appears, the warning signs of the bad trump break are there, so now it's unlikely that diamonds or clubs will divide in a superfriendly manner. But since West is the one with trump shortness, he should have length in the minors. So now ...

**Trick 5:** Low club away from the ace-king towards the jack, planning to win three club tricks to go with the two diamonds. (Since West has both the queen and the 10, it's not even possible to misguess if he ducks!)

Neat hand, isn't it? Of course, there are ways to make the slam even if you start by running the ♦Q, since West can be squeezed, but it's easy to guess wrong in the order in which to cash your tricks. To succeed you must keep the entries fluid, and set up a Vienna Coup, or else finesse against West's ♦9.

When the hand was actually played, a promising member of Unit 539 -- who is not yet a Life Master -- started the hand correctly by leading toward the diamonds in the dummy. The bad news was that she had mistimed the hand earlier in the play, and could have been defeated. But the good news for her was that the West defender (who shall forever remain nameless, since I'm not supposed to make errors like that!) also mistimed the defense, and the hand made anyway!

Editor: Joel Hoersch

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My Trick, Don't Trump

By Liz Garber, President

Thank you, the members of Unit 539, for all of your support in making this past year a successful year for our unit. All of our events were well attended and everyone had fun!! It is really hard to believe that it has been almost a year since this Board was elected.

Under the terms of our By-Laws, each member of the Board will hold office for a period of two years, and each year one-half of the Board members will be elected to serve for a two-year term. Those Board members whose terms of office expire this June are John Boackle, Jr., Vicki Creamer, Sue Kane, Liz Garber, and Bert Waxler. All have done a tremendous job serving on our Board and deserve special thanks for a job well done. Those members not running for re-election are Liz Garber and Bert Waxler.

You will have each receive your ballots with this newsletter, and I urge each of you to vote for the candidates of your choice. The Nominating Committee, headed by Phyllis Pankow, has done an outstanding job in presenting us with a great slate to choose from. This Board would be honored and pleased to

work with any one of them in the coming year.

The ballots will be counted before the General Meeting to be held Sunday, June 3, 2007 before our unit game. A luncheon will be served. The General Meeting will start at 12:30 a.m. Please mark your calendars to attend. Also, please remember that your Board of Directors represents you, the membership. If you have any items to be placed on the Agenda for this meeting, please call me at (619) 507-0026 or e-mail DragonLiz@aol.com.

Also, please mark your calendars for our next sectional in August. This will be a 3-day event starting August 3, 2007 and running through August 5, 2007. Ralph Baty, our Tournament Chair for the past year, has done an excellent job. Special thanks, as always, go to Mary Huffaker, our Hospitality Chair. Volunteers will be most welcome to assist in making this the sectional to attend!

San Diego Unit 539 is proud to announce that Jon Wright, one of our own, is now serving as President of District 22 of the ACBL. Jon has served the bridge community in San Diego for many years and is an outstanding example of a great bridge player. His ethics and friendliness at the table always make him a welcome opponent! Many thanks, again, go to Jon for his work on our web site at www.acbl-

istrict22.com/539. If you haven't had a chance before, please look it over. Our schedule of events for 2007 are posted there, as well as our financial reports, game results, standings in the Mini-McKenney and Ace of Clubs contests, links to myACBL, and more.

Many of you may not be aware that almost 65% of Unit 539's membership is made up of those players holding ranks below Life Master. This is certainly an exciting challenge, and I would like to thank all of you who are serving as mentors, and teachers, for this group of players. They are our future! Joan Maden, our Non-Life Master Tournament Chair, has done a great job in getting these players involved in our unit and in our special tournaments. Thank you, Joan.

Again, thank you all for your continuing support. I could not close my years on this Board without a special thanks to Joel Hoersch. Joel works tirelessly, and mostly behind the scenes, in helping the unit. Joel, what would we do without you? Thank you for always being there.

My hopes for this year was that this Board would make great strides in meeting the goals as outlined in our Unit By-Laws and adopted by you, the membership. Remember to have fun at the tables. ---LIZ

How's Your Slam Play?

By Joel Hoersch

This hand cropped up in a club game several months ago, and I thought unit members might find it a good lesson, because it stresses counting, timing and finessing techniques.

South plays 6♥. East leads ♠Q.

- |        |
|--------|
| ♠ A75  |
| ♥ KJ97 |
| ♦ QJ4  |
| ♣ J92  |
| ♠ 8    |
| ♥ AQ86 |
| ♦ A953 |
| ♣ AK87 |

I recommend that you approach the problem in three steps; first decide on a plan to come to 12 tricks looking at just your hand and dummy, as you would at the table. Then, study the three hints at the end of this column, found AFTER the 2007 Unit Schedule of Events to

see if this affects your plan. Then turn to page 4 to study the full hand and analysis.

2007 Event Schedule

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>May 6</b>       | Qtr Club Championship                    |
| <b>May 20</b>      | Open Pairs Trophy - Unit Championship    |
| <b>June 3</b>      | Membership Meeting & Election Party Game |
| <b>June 17</b>     | Father's Day -- Unit Championship        |
| <b>July 1</b>      | Unit Championship                        |
| <b>July 15</b>     | Unit Championship                        |
| <b>July 29</b>     | Masters Pairs Trophy - Unit Championship |
| <b>August 3-5</b>  | San Diego Summer Sectional               |
| <b>August 19</b>   | Barometer Game - Audrey Erhardt Trophy   |
| <b>September 2</b> | Unit Championship                        |

**September 16**  
S.D. Team Championship - Rothblatt Trophy  
Club Championship Pairs Game

**October 7**  
Unit Appreciation Game

**October 21**  
Charity Game - Local Charity

**November 4**  
NAP Unit Level Qualifier (A, B, C Flights)

**November 18**  
Unit Championship

**December 2**  
Unit 539 Holiday Party -- Handlery Hotel

**December 16**  
Qtr Club Championship

**December 30**  
New Years Eve Party & Unit Game

**Hint #1:** Trumps break 4-1, but it is the 10-spot that is singleton.

**Hint #2:** Both minor suits break 4-2, but in neither is the honor card part of the doubleton.

**Hint #3:** The spade suit breaks as evenly as possible.