

WORDS OF WISDOM

... by Bill Wisdom

Some weeks ago, my partner and I ended up in the somewhat inelegant contract of 6♥ on the following:

| | | |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| | North | |
| | ♠ 10 x | |
| | ♥ A K J x | |
| | ♦ Q x | |
| | ♣ Q 10 x x x | |
| West | South | East |
| | ♠ A K x x | |
| | ♥ Q 10 x x x x | |
| | ♦ A x | |
| | ♣ J | |

Having escaped a possible killing diamond lead, how would you proceed?

The opening lead was a spade. After winning and drawing a couple rounds of trumps, you should arrange to be in the dummy. Now you lead a low club. It goes low Jack, Ace. You can now lead the Queen from the dummy and pitch a diamond if they don't cover.

The importance of leading the first club from the dummy cannot be overstated. East had the King and West the Ace. Once West wins the Ace, you can almost be sure he doesn't hold the King. Who wouldn't lead from the Ace, King against a slam? The K♦ was with West, so a diamond lead won't hurt.

If you lead the J♣ from your hand, West can let East win the King and you no longer have a finessing position. If an expert East plays the K♣ when you lead low from dummy, you are probably doomed!!

There were 35 tables in play in this game and the slam was played only four times; two made six and two went down.