

WORDS OF WISDOM

... by Bill Wisdom

This is Board 19 from the September 18 virtual bridge game (Cindy's Corner):

West

♠ 7 6
♥ Q 5
♦ A Q 10 9
♣ A J 9 5 2

East

♠ Q 9 8 3
♥ A K 7 2
♦ K 7 4 3 2
♣ ---

You, as West, are the declarer in 5♦. North leads the 6♥. What is your plan?

You should win the Q♥ in your hand. Immediately, you need to ruff a club on the board. Do NOT cash a high diamond first. Now, return to your hand with a diamond to the Queen. Your LHO shows out. Next, ruff another club with a small diamond, and lead a diamond to the 9. Now, cash your A♣ and ruff a club with the K♦. To complete drawing trumps, lead dummy's last diamond to the 10 and cash the A♦.

You have amassed nine tricks: the Q♥, A♣, three ruffs on the board and four diamonds in your hand. Now cash the two good hearts on the board.

The hand was played in diamonds ten times, yet only three declarers made five. This was the entire hand:

North

♠ A 10 5 4 2
♥ J 9 6
♦ ---
♣ K 10 8 6 3

West

♠ 7 6
♥ Q 5
♦ A Q 10 9
♣ A J 9 5 2

East

♠ Q 9 8 3
♥ A K 7 2
♦ K 7 4 3 2
♣ ---

South

♠ K J
♥ 10 8 4 3
♦ J 8 6 5
♣ Q 7 4

There is no need to cash the hearts and take a discard early in the hand. The key is to ruff clubs with dummy's trumps. If you draw trumps first, you only get five diamond tricks. This way you score seven diamond tricks.