

29/9/88

BRIDGE

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THE NEXT few weeks will be busy. The bridge Team Olympiad is to be staged in Venice (8-22 October) with a field of over 50 countries participating, and I anticipate writing a daily report from Venice.

As a prelude, the Lederer Memorial is to be played in London during the coming weekend and, as well as most of the leading British players, the Polish holders of the Olympic title will be taking part. Without being unpatriotic, I make them favourites for this warm-up event, but I doubt that they will be able to repeat their success of four years ago (in Seattle) in Venice.

This week's deal (see next column) featured in the Lederer some 15 years ago.

One thing was painfully clear — North-South would not have had the slightest trouble in collecting at least nine tricks if they had ended in Three No-trumps. At one table, however, South opened One Club and North responded Two No-trumps. In their partnership methods this showed a reasonably balanced hand with

at least 16 points and South felt obliged to show his spades. With concern about a possible weakness in diamonds, North went on to Four Clubs in the hope of a slam.

Game all; dealer South.

North

♠KQ3

♥A107

♦852

♣AQJ7

West

♠95

♥KQJ9

♦K764

♣854

East

♠J862

♥865

♦J1093

♣102

South

♠A1074

♥432

♦AQ

♣K963

South ended in Five Clubs and West led the king of hearts. Regretting his earlier bidding, declarer held off for one round and won the heart continuation. He drew trumps in three rounds and tested the spades but West showed out on the third round. There was still the diamond fi-

nesse in reserve but South did well to exit with his third heart to leave West on lead.

As another heart would give declarer a ruff and discard, West's line of least resistance would have been to try a low diamond — fatal as the cards lie.

Instead he worked it out carefully. If South's last spade was a winner he would have played it to discard a heart from dummy. Therefore South had a losing spade as well as a loser in diamonds. In no way could a ruff and discard help South's cause, and West exited with his last heart. Now South was left with a choice between losing a spade or taking what proved to be a losing diamond finesse.

Lederer Memorial Trophy, at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club, 32 Barkston Gardens, Earl's Court, London SW5: Saturday 1 October, 2pm and 8pm; Sunday 2 October, 1.30pm. Admission at the door £2 per session (£5 season ticket) Students and OAPs half-price.

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