

BRIDGE

Boris Schapiro

The 1988 Lederer Memorial Cup was sponsored and hosted by the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. Warwick Pitch, the secretary, deserves to be congratulated for the support which he has given to duplicate bridge in London. The Cup, contested by eight teams of international players, was won conclusively by England (Jeremy Flint, Rob Sheehan, Sally Horton and Steve Lodge). Scotland were runners-up, some 61 victory points behind. An award for the best played hand was achieved by Steve Fishpool, representing London in a match against Poland. Here is the deal:

<p>♠ J ♥ K Q 9 7 4 ♦ Q 7 5 2 ♣ A J 10</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	<p>♠ Q 10 7 2 ♥ 5 2 ♦ 8 3 ♣ 9 8 6 3 2</p>	<p>♠ A K 8 6 3 ♥ 10 ♦ A K 9 6 4 ♣ Q 5</p>
N						
W E						
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West dealt at love all and this was the auction:

West	North	East	South
Lesniewski	Greenwood	Gawres	Fishpool
1♥	pass	pass	double
pass	1NT	pass	2♠
pass	3♥	pass	4♦
pass	4♠	all pass	

West led the king of hearts which declarer won. He then played a spade to the ace and noted the fall of West's jack. Abandoning trumps, he led a club to dummy's king and then switched to diamonds. After cashing the ace and king he ruffed a diamond with the nine. East over-ruffed and led back a trump. This was the best defence, otherwise declarer simply ruffs another diamond. Declarer read the hand well because he finessed the 8 of trumps and came to 10 tricks. I am surprised this was the best played hand. Possibly the judges were persuaded by the spectacular finesse and also because no other declarer bid and made Four spades. The correct technique in this type of contract is to attend to the side suit before touching trumps. If at trick two a diamond is played to the king and the ace of diamonds is cashed, a diamond can then be ruffed. East can over-ruff and lead a trump but declarer wins with the ace. He then ruffs another diamond. The contract then succeeds as the cards were lying, but also should West turn up with a doubleton trump.

I wonder if declarer would still have achieved an award for playing the contract in the mundane way which I have described?