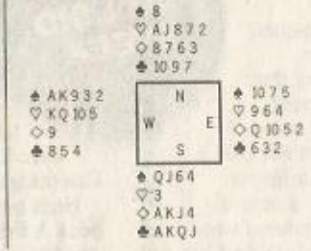
Bridge

2005 **Sally Brock**

Next weekend is one of the high spots in the London bridge calendar: the Lederer Memorial Trophy takes place at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club, in Earls Court. This is an invitation event for top teams, both British and international. It is a fantastic opportunity to watch great players up close, both at the table and on the VuGraph presentation.

This year, Zia Mahmood, Andrew Robson, Tony Forrester and Sabine Auken will all be playing. For more details, visit www.metrobridge.org.uk.

Today's deal was one of the best-defended hands from last year's event.



Zia Mahmood is quite rightly known for his sparkling declarer play, but on this occasion he made fewer tricks than anyone else in the field.

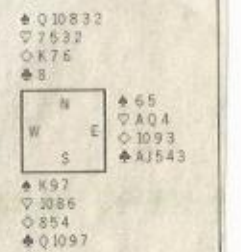
West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	2 ♡	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

The star of the show was Ireland's Hugh McGann, who got his side off to a good start when he led the queen of hearts rather than the three of spades, which was the choice at other tables. Zia won in dummy with the ace and East, Tom Hanlon, played the four, showing an odd number.

With the queen of diamonds likely to be offside, Zia chose to play diamonds from the top. When he found out the bad news, he continued with his four club tricks. West discarded two spades and East one.

Zia now got off play with the queen of spades, East unblocking the 10. West won the king and found the only card to give him a chance: the 10 of hearts. This created an entry to his partner's hand with the nine. Zia won the jack, but there was nothing he could do. West had managed to avoid the endplay and the defence could always come to five tricks.

Last week's quiz:



Against your three no-trumps, North leads the three of spades and South plays the king. Plan the play.

Solution: The sure route to nine tricks is to win the ace of spades, cross to dummy with a heart and run the ten of diamonds. If clubs break 3-2, it would be as good to duck two spades, then play on clubs, but that fails when clubs are 4-1.