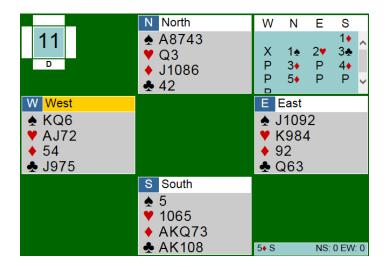
SET 'EM UP

You arrive at 5♦ on this deal.



Over West's double, North wants to get his 5-card spade suit off his chest. With his weak hand he might not get another chance. The vulnerability inspired East to advance the double to show his 4-card heart suit. South showed his second suit, clubs; but his partner returned to his original diamond suit, not wanting to play in a 4-2 club fit. South, with a very stong but unbalanced hand invited a minor suit game in diamonds. North threw caution to the wind and raised to 5.

West had the nerve to lead a trump, the \diamondsuit 5. What is your plan?

You must count the losers in your own hand before you do anything. You have 3 heart losers and 2 club losers. Your first thought should be to trump the losing heart and the two losing clubs in the dummy.

Your second thought should be that this will not be possible. The opponents have already led a trump, and you must lose the 2 hearts before you can ruffyour last heart. When the defenders win the hearts they will lead trump again. That only leaves you 1 or 2 trump to use for ruffing.

There must be another way. Look at the spades. There are five of them in the dummy. If the seven outstanding spades break 4-3 you can set up the last spade as a winner on which you can park one of your losers. If trumps break 2-2, you can pull their last trump and still have two left in the dummy for ruffing.

When you see a 5-card side suit in the dummy, think about setting it up for a loser discard. As Marty Bergen always says, "I never met a 5-card suit I didn't like."

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: http://tinyurl.com/o7aucpa or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.