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BRIDGE

Sidestepping a Diabolical Lead

By PHILLIP ALDER

One of the most popular tournaments on the British bridge calendar is the Lederer Memorial Trophy, which began in 1945. This year's was held at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club in London on Oct. 28 and 29. Eight teams were invited; players traveled from Scotland, Denmark, France, Germany and Ireland.


The winners, playing as the All Stars, were Sabine Auken and Daniela von Arnim from Germany, Thomas Bessis from France and Zia Mahmood, who lives primarily in England but plays internationally for the United States. They finished ahead of David Gold, David Price, Colin Simpson and Tom Townsend, whose team name was England.

The diagramed deal featured extraordinary play at one table.

The North-South pairs ended in three no-trump twice, four hearts twice, six clubs once (down two), six hearts twice and six no-trump once. What is the correct way to play the trump suit in six hearts?

The given auction was produced by the Hackett twins, Jason and Justin, from England. Jason's two-club response was either natural and game-forcing or showing three-card heart support with a five-card suit and 9-12 points. On the fifth round Justin, knowing the heart fit was only 6-2 and thinking there could be 12 tricks without bringing in his hearts, decided on six no-trump.

In six hearts, South has only to play the trump suit for one loser. Six no-trump is the same

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ J 5</p> <p>♥ A 4</p> <p>♦ K Q J 7</p> <p>♣ Q 10 7 4 2</p>	<p>WEST</p> <p>♠ Q 10 7 6</p> <p>♥ J 5 2</p> <p>♦ 8 6 5 3</p> <p>♣ K 5</p>	<p>EAST(D)</p> <p>♠ 9 4 3 2</p> <p>♥ K 8</p> <p>♦ 10 9 2</p> <p>♣ J 8 6 3</p>
		
<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A K 8</p> <p>♥ Q 10 9 7 6 3</p> <p>♦ A 4</p> <p>♣ A 9</p>		

East and West were vulnerable. The bidding:

East	South	West	North
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	4 N.T.	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	6 N.T.	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

unless there is a low-club lead, with declarer either misguessing or East having the king-jack over dummy's queen-ten.

Against six no-trump, Gold (West) found the diabolic lead of the club five. Did Hackett play low from the board and go down? No way; he called for dummy's queen. Afterward he explained that an expert is much more likely to underlead a king than a jack in this situation.

Now Hackett turned to the heart suit. The best play is ace and another, which works with this layout. Second best is to run the queen, which one declarer did in six hearts to go down one. Third best is to run the ten, which would have succeeded.

Hackett made the correct theoretical play, cashing the ace and playing a second round, to land his slam.

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On Thursday a bridge tournament at the Beach Point Club in Mamaroneck, N.Y., will raise money for Gilda's Club Westchester, which supports people with cancer and their families. Before the tournament, there will be a lesson from Debbie Rosenberg, a world champion. Details are available from Dawn Dankner-Rosen at (914) 241-2910.

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