



South African Bridge Federation

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THE BRIDGE PLAYER'S MANTRA

**BE ALERT.
KEEP CALM.
THINK CLEARLY.
ACT DECISIVELY.**

NUMBER 24!

With input from Chris Bosenberg, Craig Gower and Neville Eber



In the Teams Championship Head-to-Head Finals, everything, and I mean everything hinged on the last board, board 24; whichever team gained an advantage would be crowned Champions. And what a challenging board it was to play at the end of the final taxing session. Again, we've decided to leave the names out of it, but you may make your own assumptions!

♠ KQ64
 ♥ 9742
 ♦ J32
 ♣ J5
 ♠ AJT98 ♠ 753
 ♥ QJ ♥ AT6
 ♦ A9 ♦ Q87654
 ♣ AK32 ♣ 4
 ♠ 2
 ♥ K853
 ♦ KT
 ♣ QT9876

Dealer: W

Vul: None

At the one table, NS found themselves in 3♣ doubled, duly going down 2 for – 300 but still with a small over-all lead!

It now all hinged on how EW did at the other table. They duly found the optimum contract of 4♣, and received the expected heart lead, ducked to South's King. Back came the ♣2, and now we are decision-point X with three critical choices:

Choice 1 – play low, North wins with the King, comes back a second spade, and we go down!

Choice 2 – Go up with the Ace and maybe make it. Play A♣ and ruff a club; cash two heart tricks' pitching a diamond from hand. Then return to hand with the ♦A and ruff another club; we still go down as North will soon have more trumps than we have, and we will also not make our K♣.

Choice 3 - Go up with the Ace and make it! How? Cask the AK♣ and play a third club, aiming to ruff in dummy. Any expert North would ruff first with the Queen, and then continue with the ♠K and a third spade. It looks like we'd have to go down one with a loser each in clubs and diamond and only one discard; but don't despair. Play off all your trumps to come to this position:

♥ Q ♥ AT
 ♦ A9 ♦ Q4
 ♣ 2 ♣ --

South is now holding the ♦K which he has to protect along with the ranking club; this proves impossible on the lead of the ♥Q to the Ace followed by the ♥T. Unfortunately, we chose Choice 1 and went down! And that was that!

IT'S ALL A MATTER OF PRIORITIES



It's their much-anticipated wedding night and Roy and Susie are just getting down to the business of wedded bliss when his cell-phone rings! Roy answers and Susie has to endure a ninety-minute conversation about *bridge*!! [She, of course, doesn't even play the damned game!] In a nutshell, the caller had gone down in a very makeable six spades. When the call finally ends, Su, by now in tears, sobs "How can he be so inconsiderate. That was terrible." "You're right, honey. All he had to do was take a finesse against the queen!"

A BRIDGE to ETERNITY



The devil appeared before a bridge player and made him an offer. "I can arrange some things for you," the devil said. "I'll make sure you win every tournament you enter. Your partners will love and worship you; your opponents will fear and respect you and you will live to be a hundred. All I want in return is your wife's soul which will burn in hell for eternity." The bridge player thought for a moment. "OK, I give up ...What's the catch?"

