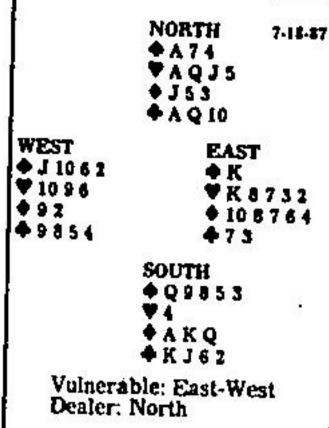
BRIDGE

James Jacoby



West East South Pass 1 **4** Pass Pass Pass 4 NT Pass Pass Pass 5 NT Pass Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: ♥ 10

Wounded, but not fatally

By James Jacoby

North-South had plenty of high cards to be in a slam, and they also had eight cards in the trump suit. But the texture in spades was a little weak. You often lose two tricks when the defenders hold five to the K-J-10. Here, after winning dummy's ace of hearts, declarer played the spade ace. When East produced the king, South played another spade and conceded down one. But even after this bad split in trumps was revealed, South could have reduced his trumps to the same length as West's and have made the slam.

At trick three, South should play the queen of hearts, ruffing East's king. Now three rounds of clubs ending in dummy will tell declarer that West started with four clubs. Declarer can try to cash the jack of hearts or not. If South decides that the heart jack will live without being ruffed, then be should make his contract. The play proceeds: heart jack, discarding the diamond queen, then A-K of diamonds, followed by the last club. Declarer now has Q-9-8 of spades, while defender West is left with J-10-6. Playing a low spade will put West on lead with nothing to do but lead back into the declarer's strength, and 12 tricks will be made.

Declarer might guess wrong and try to take three top diamond tricks. Then West will make a trick with his little spade and set the contract. But even that is better than just giving up at trick three by playing a second trump.

A new book by James Jacoby and his father, the late Oswald Jacoby, is now available at bookstores. It is "Jacoby on Card Games," published by Pharos Books.

POETS CORNER

GROW UP
Winter mornings
should begin
with the hint.
of toast
in nostrils
just touching
the edge of an ancient quilt
Wondering
bow to instantly

from bed to kitchen
without frostbite
a major challenge
The advance
from home to school
a battle
with snowballs
satisfactory ammuniti

as satisfactory ammunition
The more
I watch
I'm convinced
kids don't grow up
they just grow older

Take a snowball to work.

Marlowe C. Dickson

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