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2 June 2018

Moss Vale

Chris Bayliss

There was a lot to keep us interested at Friday's intermediate session in Moss Vale.

♠6542
♥86
♦7653
♣874

On my first hand of the day, I picked up these cards. Those who have been following our "hand of the day" series may remember the "Eights High" article of 24th April. In that article, I forecast that it would be six years until I got another hand with the highest card an eight. This hand is even worse than the last one with only two eights instead of four. Is there a "Sevens High" hand coming sometime soon?

BD: 10	♠T62	Dlr: E
	♥T742	Vul: All
	♦KJ865	
	♣7	
♠KQ3		♠J9
♥63		♥AKJ8
♦QT4		♦A
♣AJT86		♣KQ9542
	♠A8754	
	♥Q95	
	♦9732	
	♣3	
	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
N	- - - - -	4
S	- - - - -	12 18
E	6 2 3 - 3	6
W	6 2 3 - 3	

Board 10 provided a lot of interest.

The club slam is not easy to find yet three of the four east-west got there. It must be all the good creative thinking in the Moss Vale air!

With tools like inverted minors, criss cross and minorwood at your disposal, you may find a constructive auction that gets you to six clubs.

At our intermediate lessons, most of us are playing in casual partnerships and none of these tools are available. At our table, east opened 1C, west bid 3C and east went straight to six. What could be simpler than that?

Or is it a case of "fools rush in where wise men fear to tread"?

Incidentally, the intermediate classes at Moss Vale are a bundle of fun. Sometimes we even learn something too. And that includes the teacher!

13 June 2018

Unbeatable!

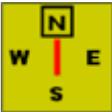
Rakesh Kumar

This hand from the recent Victor Champion Cup Teams event in Melbourne could have had a sonnet written about it ... "How shall I endplay thee? Let me count the ways." It's instructive because of what it demonstrates about handling trumps and keeping control.

At our table, North opened a weak 2H showing a 5-card heart suit with a 4+ minor suit. Shortly thereafter, East was declarer in 4S and North cashed the ♣A, then switched to a heart.

On the face of it, there are 4 losers: one in diamonds and another 2 in clubs, because South has all the missing medium and high cards in that suit. However, when South shows out after declarer cashes the ♠A and K, North's exact shape can be inferred *viz.* 3-5-4-1.

Board 5 ♠T86
Dealer N ♥KJT54
Vul N-S ♦Q854
 ♣A

♠AQJ542		♠K73
♥6		♥A9
♦T7		♦AJ93
♣7653		♣KJ84

♠9
♥Q8732
♦K62
♣QT92

Makeable contracts

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	
10						
7	N	-	-	3	-	-
16	S	-	-	3	-	-
7	E	3	1	-	4	2
	W	3	1	-	4	2

The key to the play is to then *not* draw the last trump, but instead to ruff a heart to hand. Now declarer can take the split-honour diamond finesse. When the ♦10 loses to the king, South has lots of choices, all bad. A diamond return allows East to dispose of a club on a winning diamond, a heart return provides a ruff-and-discard, also allowing a club to be shed, while a club return yields a ruff, but now North is endplayed in diamonds and hearts!

All in all, a very cute hand ...

