

Fantoni's double dummy play

Reported by Toine van Hoof, The Netherlands

After their victory for Monaco in the 2012 Cavendish Teams, Fulvio Fantoni and Claudio Nunes finished at a somewhat disappointing 11th place in the Cavendish Pairs. Fantoni, however, was recognized for the best played deal of the tournament

(hands rotated):

Dealer : East Vul : E-W	NORTH ♠ 9 ♥ K 10 7 2 ♦ 6 5 4 ♣ 10 9 8 6 3	
WEST ♠ 10 6 5 4 2 ♥ J 6 4 3 ♦ 9 ♣ Q J 4		EAST ♠ K 8 7 3 ♥ — ♦ Q J 8 3 2 ♣ K 7 5 2
	SOUTH ♠ A Q J ♥ A Q 9 8 5 ♦ A K 10 7 ♣ A	

East	South Fantoni	West	North Nunes
Pass	1 Heart(1)	Pass	3 Heart(2)
X	3 Spade (3)	Pass	4 Heart(4)
Pass	4 Spade (3)	Pass	6 Heart
All Pass			

(1) Forcing. (2) Weak (3) Cuebid (4) Signoff

West led the ♠Q. East's double at the three level, vulnerable with a passed hand, had not eluded declarer. Fantoni correctly placed him with a void in hearts, the ♠K, the ♣K and probably both diamond honors. Even double dummy, it's not easy to see how the contract should be played.

After a long pause, Fantoni made the spectacular play of a low heart to the 7 dummy. As expected, East showed out (♦2). He proceeded with the ♠10, discarding a diamond when East played low. West won the ♣J and continued heart to the 10 in dummy. Now came the ♠9, covered by the king (ducking would not have made a difference) and ruffed with ♥Q. The rest was a piece of cake:

♥A, heart to the king, two established clubs for another diamond and a spade discard and a claim on the spade finesse (East had already been squeezed, but that did not matter). A brilliant plus 980.

The first-round heart finesse seems unnecessary, but if declarer starts with ♥A and ♥5, West can ruin his plans by inserting the ♥J, killing a vital entry to dummy.

It was not a surprise that Fantoni was the only player in the star-studded field to fulfill the 6♥ contract. The gain of 62 cross-IMPs was reduced by a time penalty of 9 cross-IMPs, but I'm sure that didn't bother Fulvio at all.