

# Today's Play Problem

by John Carruthers

( Taken from the bulletin of 11<sup>th</sup> World Youth championship @ Bangkok)

This deal is from the second semi-final session of the LM Pairs at the recent Chicago Nationals. If you can, it is important to achieve +800 (down four) to beat the +620 you would have scored in 4♥. Can you do it?

Dealer North. E/W Vul. Matchpoints.

♠ K Q 3 2  
♥ A Q  
♦ 9 6 4 3  
♣ Q 6 3

♠ J 9  
♥ K 9 2  
♦ A Q 10 5  
♣ A J 9 7

West North East South

1♣ 1♥ 1♠  
2♠ 3♠ 4♥ 4♠

Dble All Pass

## Solution to Today's Play Problem by John Carruthers

Dealer North. E/W Vul. Matchpoints.

♠ K Q 3 2  
♥ A Q  
♦ 9 6 4 3  
♣ Q 6 3

♠ J 9  
♥ K 9 2  
♦ A Q 10 5  
♣ A J 9 7

You, West, lead the two of hearts to dummy's queen, partner's jack, and declarer's three (you are playing oldfashioned count and attitude). Declarer plays the ace of hearts – four, eight and nine, then the king of spades to partner's ace, four and nine. Partner returns the ♣7 to the jack, queen and three. Plan your defence.

♠ A 8  
♥ J 10 7 6 5 4  
♦ 7  
♣ K 10 8 2

♠ 10 7 6 5 4  
♥ 8 3  
♦ K J 8 2  
♣ 5 4

Your partner's 4♣ bid has been very helpful. He has six hearts that you know about (♠J at trick one), so is either 1-6-1-5, 1-6-2-4, or 2-6-1-4. How do you determine which?

A switch to the jack of clubs covers all three possibilities.:-:-

(i) When partner is 1-6-1-5 you have only one club trick coming and no diamond ruff. Either the ♣J will hold, or declarer will cover and partner will win the king. Of course, 800 will not be possible on this lay-out.

(ii) Partner is 1-6-2-4 and will encourage clubs if your jack holds. If declarer covers, partner will win and return his remaining diamond and you will again no that no ruff is available as he does not have room for a second trump. Again, 800 will not be possible.

(iii) The critical case, and the one where 800 is possible, is when partner is 2-6-1-4. If declarer covers the ♣J, partner wins and returns a club to you. You now know that he does not have a second diamond to lead, so you play the ♦5 for him to ruff, still retaining the ace-ten over declarer's king-nine. If declarer does not cover the club, partner discourages and you again give him his ruff.

You defend so beautifully, don't you think?