

Rule 48 + Logic
Vulnerability: Both
Dealer: S

	NORTH	
	♠AQJ864	
	♥KQ52	
	♦J5	
	♣6	
WEST		EAST
♠K972		♠105
♥10		♥9862
♦108632		♦974
♣J984		♣K107
	SOUTH	
	♠3	
	♥AJ73	
	♦AKQ	
	♣AQ532	

Bidding:

South	West	North	East
1C	P	1S	P
2H	P	3H	P
4NT	P	5S	P
6H	P	P	P

Lead 10 of Hearts

Everyone has bridge rules which could be numbered for convenience. Far down the list of rules is the rule that applies to this hand. I have laughingly called it rule #48.

The rule is that if you are going to play for a cross-ruff, you have to cash your outside winners first so that the opponents cannot pitch a card and trump your winners.

The second part of the hand, the logic part, that declarer should figure out before he plays to trick one, is which suit is less likely to be over-ruffed, because an over-ruff and the play of another trump would scuttle your chances of making the hand.

You count the number of cards in the black suits and find that there are more spades than clubs, so the one that is least likely to be over-ruffed is clubs.

You win the first trick with the king of hearts, then using rule #48 you cash your three diamond winners. Next comes the two black aces ending in your hand. Next comes a club ruff, a spade ruff, a club ruff and a third spade. West can ruff low or high and south can over-ruff, trump a fourth club high and ruff another spade, beating whatever heart east plays.

Declarer now has a high cross-ruff for the rest of the tricks.

If the diamonds are not cashed early, east can pitch a diamond and trump one of declarer's diamond winners.

Taking a finesse for the king of either of the black suits is not a recommended play.

