

Lindsay's Challenge - May 2019 newsletter:

An Uppercut K.O.

Sometimes it is up to the defenders to serve declarer with an uppercut knockout play that makes achieving the contract impossible.

North

♠ 9 8 5 4

♥ 7 6 5

♦ K Q 3

♣ A Q 7

West

♠ A K Q J 2

♥ K 9 2

♦ J 7 6

♣ 10 2

East

♠ 10 3

♥ 10

♦ 10 9 8 4 2

♣ 9 8 6 5 3

South

♠ 7 6

♥ A Q J 8 4 3

♦ A 5

♣ K J 4

South dealt and opened one Heart and West interposed one Spade. With no further interventions, North/South then proceeded smoothly to 4 Hearts.

How can the East/West partnership prevent South making 4 Hearts after leading the Ace, King and Queen of spades from West?

West lead out the Ace, King and Queen of spades. East could have idly discarded a club or a diamond on the winning Spade at the third trick. In that event South's game would have been unbeatable.

But East was concentrating and remembered that West had interposed. This meant that it was highly probable that West had five spades. In that event South would ruff the third lead. East decided that to do the best to make declarer pay dearly in order to win the trick. So East played the useless ten of hearts on partner's winning spade! South had to play the Jack of hearts to win this trick.

And now if you examine all the hands you will see that West must make two Heart tricks with the King and nine regardless of what declarer may do. East's uppercut with the singleton trump gave South no chance of bringing home the game.