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Bridge

A New Book From England Offers 45 Difficult Problems

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For a major analytical challenge, cover the East-West hands shown in the diagram. Then reconstruct the concealed hands so that the absurd contract of seven no-trump (reached perhaps by the muddled, fictional sequence shown) cannot be defeated.

For a minor challenge, look at the full diagram and decide how to make 13 tricks with any lead.

-- The diagrammed deal has not been preserved by The New York Times --

The major challenge is one of 45 difficult inferential problems presented in a new book from England: "Bridge: The Ultimate Limits" by Eric Mansfield. (\$14.95 from Barclay Bridge Supplies, 8 Bush Avenue, Box 909, Port Chester, N.Y. 10573.) Squeeze Is Needed The solver naturally starts by giving East all seven spades, so that West cannot lead the suit. He then assumes that the Q-9 of clubs will fall doubleton, giving five tricks in that suit. But he is still a trick short.

A squeeze is needed, but it seems that a heart lead is fatal. It turns out that East must be given the four cards above the seven spot that are missing in the red suits, giving the layout shown.

It still takes some dramatic play to make 13 tricks after a heart lead. South must win in his hand and take five club tricks, discarding all dummy's diamonds - a quintuple unblock. Since East's diamond eight has been made a singleton, South takes four tricks in that suit to reach this ending:

The diamond two is led, the spade king is thrown, and East is squeezed. The East hand, spot for spot, is the only one possible. It is no surprise to learn that the composer of this puzzle is a high-ranked aeronautical engineer and a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Source