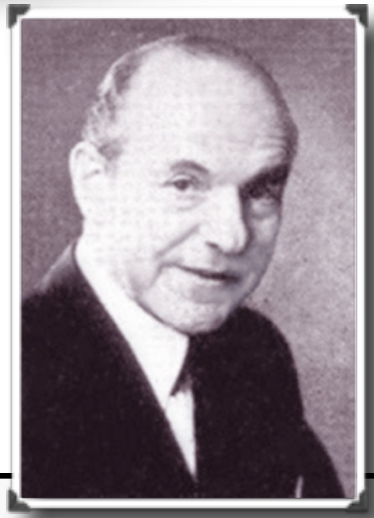
MOSCOW PULLMAN DAILY NEWS

May, April 1, 1994 ◆ Pullman, Washington/Moscow, Idaho ◆ Volume 82, Number 78 50¢



Victor Mollo

Defeated by an old bridge habit

BRIDGE

Victor Mollo built many humorous stories around a cast of bridge-playing animals. Today's deal - no April fool - appeared in *Bridge in the Menagerie*.

The best player was the Hideous Hog, who sat South. HH usually opened with the weaker minor, a lead-inhibiting bid user before putting the contract into no-trump on the next round. Here, however, North had a good hand with impressive diamonds. Of course, Mollo never explains why HH made the egregious underbid of three no-trump, or why he didn't convert to the letdown seven no-trump. But that, as they say, would have ruined a good story.

West led the heart 10. The Hog won with dummy's jack, played a spade to his ace and cashed his three heart winners, discarding dummy's spade losers. Now HH had to cash three club tricks. But if he "finessed" the club queen, West was bound to lean over the table as if winning to collect the trick. Then East would know who had the club king. Suddenly HH remembered the Gasper Coup. Leading a low club toward the dummy, he immediately thrust a packet of cigarettes (gaspers) at West. Then HH "finessed" dummy's queen. He continued with the club ace and a club off the dummy. Convinced West had the king, East discarded his spade queen.

Having won trick eight with his club king, the Hog crossruffed the last five tricks to bring home his grand slam.

The moral of the story is twofold: Don't smoke against contracts that will be made on a crossruff.

4-1-94

NORTH
♠ 9 8 7 3
♥ J
♦ A K Q
♣ A Q 8 7 4

WEST
♠ K J 10
♥ 10 9 8 7
♦ 4 3 2
♣ J 10 2

EAST
♠ Q 4
♥ 5 4 3 2
♦ 10 8 7 6 5
♣ 9 3

SOUTH
♠ A 6 5 2
♥ A K Q 6
♦ J 9
♣ K 6 5

Vulnerable Neither
Dealer South

South	West	North	East
1 ♦[1]	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 NT	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
5 ♣	Pass	7 ♦	All pass

Opening lead. ♥ 10