

Double Dummy

by Phillip Alder

In November last year, I traveled to Charlottesville, Virginia, to see the first public showing of *Double Dummy*, which is a movie about the 2012 World Youth Team Championships in Taicang, China. In particular, we follow the fortunes of the USA1 team in the youngsters (under 20) event: Zach Brescoll-Adam Kaplan and two pairs of brothers: Adam and Zach Grossack, and Andrew and Richard Jeng.

This was the fruition of a dream of John McAllister, a bridge fanatic from Charlottesville. His fellow-producers were Jeremy Goldstein and Derek Sieg, and the director was Lucas Krost, all non-bridge players.

The 250 or so people in the theater really enjoyed it. I must admit that I was biased because I appear a few times.

Double Dummy was shown as part of the Virginia film festival. Every audience member was asked to give the movie a vote from 1 to 5. Almost 100 percent voted 5.

Now McAllister is hoping that *Double Dummy* will be seen in other theaters, by both players and nonplayers. If you would like to arrange a showing in your area, please email McAllister at mcalljohn@gmail.com or me at phillip@bridgeforeveryone.com.

The highlight of the tournament in Taicang from the U.S. point of view was the fourth quarter of the semifinal against Israel. Down by 30 international match points before it started, Israel gained 12imps on the first deal of the session. Then, though, the United States took the last thirteen boards by 74-0(!) to win by 182imps to 150. (Sadly, they lost to Poland in the final.)

The movie makes mention — a tad too quickly, even for bridge players — of two deals in this set. Let's see what you would have done on them.

1. North (Dummy)
Dir: North
Vul: N-S
♠ A K 10 8 7 6
♥ Q 10 7 5 4
♦ K 5
♣ —

Declarer (You)
♠ J
♥ A 3 2
♦ A 8 4
♣ A K Q 10 8 6

West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	2♣ (a)
Pass	2NT (b)	Pass	3♣ (a)
Pass	4♠ (c)	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- (a) Game-forcing relay
- (b) At least 5-5 in the majors
- (c) 6=5=2=0 and at least 8 zzz points (A=3; K=2; Q=1)

West leads the diamond six, fourth-highest from at least one honor or second-highest from a weak suit.
How would you continue?

2.
 Dlr: East
 Vul: N-S

North (Dummy)
 ♠ A K 9 7 3
 ♥ A K 9 7
 ♦ A 7
 ♣ K 9

Declarer (You)
 ♠ 8 4
 ♥ Q J 6 4 3
 ♦ 10 8
 ♣ A 6 3 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1♣ (a)	1♠	2♥ (b)
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣ (c)
Pass	4♠ (d)	Pass	4NT (e)
Pass	5♣ (f)	Pass	6♥ (g)
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- (a) 16-plus points
- (b) Five-plus hearts, game-forcing
- (c) Control-bid
- (d) Roman Key Card Blackwood
- (e) One key card
- (f) Asking for the heart queen
- (g) Showing her and denying a side-suit king

West leads the spade deuce. What is your plan? Take your time — this is difficult.

Dir: North
 Vul: N-S

North
 ♠ A K 10 8 7 6
 ♥ Q 10 7 5 4
 ♦ K 5
 ♣ --

West
 ♠ 9 4
 ♥ K 9 8
 ♦ 7 6 3 2
 ♣ J 9 7 5

East
 ♠ Q 5 3 2
 ♥ J 6
 ♦ Q J 10 9
 ♣ 4 3 2

South
 ♠ J
 ♥ A 3 2
 ♦ A 8 4
 ♣ A K Q 10 8 6

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Ginossar</i>	<i>Kaplan</i>	<i>Reiter</i>	<i>Brescoll</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♣ (a)
Pass	2NT (b)	Pass	3♣ (a)
Pass	4♠ (c)	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- (a) Game-forcing relay
- (b) At least 5-5 in the majors
- (c) 6=5=2=0 and at least 8 zzz points (A=3, K=2, Q=1)

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Zach G.</i>	<i>Levy</i>	<i>Adam G.</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	4NT (a)
Pass	5♦ (b)	Dble	5♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- (a) Roman Key Card Blackwood
- (b) One key card

This type of deal is why Eddie Kantar proposed 14-30 RKCB responses. If Hila Levy had responded five clubs to show one key card, Adi Asulin could have relayed with five diamonds to ask for the queen of hearts -- not that six hearts is any great shakes.

Taken in isolation, the right play for one heart loser was to cash the ace, then to play low to the ten, which would have gained when West had K-J-x-x. But declarer's entries were not good.

Levy took twelve tricks, guessing the hearts correctly.

There was more at stake when Brescoll was in six hearts, after an auction where the American system pre-empted them. West led a diamond. Declarer won with dummy's king, played a heart to his ace and returned a heart, rising with dummy's queen. Now the contract could not be beaten.

When I asked Brescoll how he had guessed the trumps, he answered simply, "Table presence." That was worth 13 imps to USA1.

A certain well-known BBO commentator said that if West had won the second heart and returned his last heart, he would have beaten the contract. Was that right?

While you think about that, we will move on to the second problem, with the deal rotated to make South the declarer.

Dir: East
 Vul: N-S

North
 ♠ A K 9 7 3
 ♥ A K 9 7
 ♦ A 7
 ♣ K 9

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

East
 ♠ Q J 10 6 5
 ♥ 10
 ♦ Q 9 5 3
 ♣ J 8 5

South
 ♠ 8 4
 ♥ Q J 6 4 3
 ♦ 10 8
 ♣ A 6 3 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Adam G.	Asulin	Zach G.	Levy
Pass	Dble	2♠ (a)	Pass
Pass	3♣	Pass	2NT (b)
Pass	4NT (c)	Pass	3♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	5♦ (d)

- (a) Weak two-bid
- (b) Lebensohl, warning of a bad hand
- (c) Roman Key Card Blackwood
- (d) One key card

The Israeli auction was surprising. First South warned that she might have a zero-count when she was easily worth a constructive three-heart advance; then North barrelled into six hearts anyway.

A diamond lead would have been lethal, but understandably both Wests led their singleton deuce, telling the declarers that spades were definitely 5-1.

Levy won with dummy's ace, cashed the heart ace, played three rounds of clubs, ruffing the last, led a trump to his hand, ruffed the remaining club and cashed the diamond ace to leave:

North
 ♠ 8
 ♥ J 6 4
 ♦ 10
 ♣ —

West
 ♠ —
 ♥ 8
 ♦ K J 6 4
 ♣ —

East
 ♠ Q J 10
 ♥ —
 ♦ Q 9
 ♣ —

South
 ♠ K 9 7 3
 ♥ —
 ♦ 7
 ♣ —

On the next diamond lead, Zach Grossack accurately put up his queen, then played a spade, which his brother ruffed with the eight of hearts for the setting trick.

After the club ruff at trick five, the contract could have always been defeated.

Dir: East
 Vul: N-S

North
 ♠ A K 9 7 3
 ♥ A K 9 7
 ♦ A 7
 ♣ K 9

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

East
 ♠ Q J 10 6 5
 ♥ 10
 ♦ Q 9 5 3
 ♣ J 8 5

South
 ♠ 8 4
 ♥ Q J 6 4 3
 ♦ 10 8
 ♣ A 6 3 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Reiter</i>	<i>Brescoll</i>	<i>Ginossar</i>	<i>Kaplan</i>
Pass	1♣ (a)	1♠	2♥ (b)
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣ (c)
Pass	4♠ (d)	Pass	4NT (e)
Pass	5♣ (f)	Pass	6♥ (g)
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- (a) 16-plus points
- (b) Five-plus hearts, game-forcing
- (c) Control-bid
- (d) Roman Key Card Blackwood
- (e) One key card
- (f) Asking for the queen of hearts
- (g) Showing her and denying a king

At this table, Kaplan spotted the right line of play.

After winning the first trick, he cashed dummy's heart ace (believing when East played the ten that the hearts were 3-1) and club king before playing a club to his ace. Then he made the key play: He led his last spade.

At the table, West ruffed in and led his last trump, but Kaplan claimed. He could discard his diamond loser on the spade king and ruff both of his clubs in the dummy.

It would have been stronger defense by West to discard a diamond, not to ruff in. But Kaplan would have won with dummy's spade king and led a third spade, *discarding his diamond loser*.

Suppose East had played another spade. South would have ruffed high, played a diamond to the ace, trumped a diamond and crossruffed home.

Plus 100 and plus 1430 gave 17 imps to USA1.

I felt that that was easily the best play by a junior in 2012, but the voting panel of the International Bridge Press Association did not see it that way, perhaps because West defended so poorly.

Back to the first six-heart contract and the commentator's claim that if West had won the second heart and returned his last heart, he would have beaten the contract.

Yes, declarer *might* have gone down, but I doubt it. If clubs were worth four tricks, there would have been no problem. But if an opponent had four or more clubs to the jack, declarer would have needed a squeeze. So he might have won the trump and cashed the last two hearts. That would have left something like this position:

<p>♠ 9 ♥ — ♦ 6 ♣ J 9 7 5</p>	<p>♠ A K 10 8 7 6 ♥ — ♦ 5 ♣ —</p> <p>♠ J ♥ — ♦ A 8 ♣ A K Q 10</p>	<p>♠ Q 5 3 2 ♥ — ♦ J 10 ♣ 4</p>
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Now three rounds of clubs would have squeezed East in spades and diamonds. He couldn't have kept three spades and two diamonds.

I think Brescoll would have found this line.