

# Hand of the Week

February 5, 2001

North		Dealer: East			
♠ T982		Neither Vulnerable			
♥ A632		West	North	East	South
♦ A3					1♠
♣ T97					4♠^
West		P	3♠*	P	
♠ K7	East	All pass			
♥ T98	♠ 65	* Limit raise			
♦ QT86	♥ KQJ5	^ Following the tip (read below)			
♣ AQ84	♦ 72	Opening lead: T♥			
	♣ KJ653				
	South				
	♠ AQJ43				
	♥ 74				
	♦ KJ954				
	♣ ?				

There's quite a bit to point out on this month's hand. First, consider South's hand. If you didn't open, then you are making a serious mistake. You don't count points for short suits when deciding whether to open, but you do get a point for each 5-card suit. On this hand, that is two length points. When added to the 11 HCP, South has an easy opening. North has a problem in evaluation. For years, we have taught to count aces as 4 ½ and to add just a bit when you have four trumps opposite a known 5-card suit. The doubleton diamond is worth a point. Two aces (9) plus 1 for the doubleton gives a total of 10 points. If you think this total borderline, the extra for the 4<sup>th</sup> trump puts you over. This hand qualifies as limit raise.

After the 3 bid, the ball is back over the net and it is South's chance to hit it back. Some might consider passing but that would be a mistake. South started this hand with a total of 13 points and now that he has a 9-card fit, he can add additional value to his hand for shortness. Add one for the doubleton and two for the singleton for a hand total of 16 points. Partner has 10-12. Bid the "obvious" 4♠ and read the tip below.