


53. ForcingMajorRaiseRevisited

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	♠ J1092 ♥ A3 ♦ Q43 ♣ KQJ2		
♠ AKQ ♥ J1098 ♦ 109 ♣ 10954			♠ 5 ♥ 7642 ♦ 8762 ♣ A873
	♠ 87643 ♥ KQ5 ♦ AKJ5 ♣ 6		
W	N	E	S
P	2NT	P	1 ♠
P	4 ♠	All Pass	3 ♣
--East-West Vulnerable--			

The bidding:

South, with 13 HCP and five spades, opens one spade. North, with an opener and no shortness, replies with Jacoby two notrump. South has a singleton club and replies three clubs. The hands are very similar to last week's hands except North has six wasted points in clubs opposite South's singleton.

Often when there are wasted points, the opponents can grab their setting tricks before declarer can do anything. Here the defense has three quick tricks in trump and one in clubs. Four spades is the correct bid, but can never be made.

The contract: Four spades by South

The opening lead: The ace of spades

From the bidding West knows East has at most one trump. It is unlikely that East can ruff so it may be best to draw three rounds of trump to limit the amount declarer can ruff.

The play:

As West is drawing three rounds of trump, he watches partner's discards. Partner plays the five of spades then the eight of clubs and then the three of clubs. The echo in clubs, high then low, leaves no doubt that East has the setting trick, the ace of clubs. West switches to a club and the contract is down one. The declarer has no chance to wiggle out of the unfavourable distribution of cards.

Signaling:

When East has to discard on trump, he tells partner what suits or suit he likes. In standard signaling, a high card says he likes that suit, having high card(s) in that suit, and a low cards says he does not like the suit. The eight of clubs was an adequate signal to switch to a club because West could read that as high, but the echo (in the same suit) left no doubt. An echo always tells partner the first card was meant to be high.

The three of clubs played after the five of spades would have discouraged a club switch. Sometimes a switch is not obvious to East so he can only discourage and let West decide. Here the club was the best chance.

The result: Four spades down one for -50

Notes:

-North-South got to the correct contract because South's response to Jacoby two notrump told North to go no further than game. However, it was only the unfavourable distribution of the trump suit that led to the failed contract.

-The presence of honour cards in partner's hand affects the value of shortness. North's doubleton and South's singleton were worth nothing the way the cards lay.