

Ruling Report National Competition

Division : II B

Date : 01 October 2022

Match : Sandeman 3 – Charleroi 1

~~Open~~/Closed Room

Players: NS Vincent Dramaix – Francis Van Dierendonck (Charleroi 1)

EW Anne-Marie Hardeman – Yulian Hristov (Sandeman 3)

Board : 24 Dealer : W Vulnerability : None

Bidding

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| <p>♠ J 6 ♥ 9 6 5 2 ♦ 6 2 ♣ A 7 5 4 3</p> | <p>N W E S</p> | <p>♠ 9 4 2 ♥ A Q J 8 7 3 ♦ A 8 ♣ K 9</p> <p>♠ A K Q 10 5 3 ♥ --- ♦ K J 5 ♣ Q J 8 6</p> <p>♠ 8 7 ♥ K 10 4 ♦ Q 10 9 7 4 3 ♣ 10 2</p> |
|--|----------------------------|--|

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|------------------|
| Pass | 1 ♥ | X | 2 ♦ ^A |
| Pass | 2 ♥ | 2 ♠ | Pass |
| Pass | 3 ♥ | Pass | Pass |
| X | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Playing

| | W | N | E | S | W | N | E |
|----|---|---|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | | | ♠ K | ♠ 7 | ♠ 6 | ♠ 2 | |
| 2 | | | ♠ A | ♠ 8 | ♠ J | ♠ 4 | |
| 3 | | | ♠ Q | ♥ 10 | ♦ 2 | ♠ 9 | |
| 4 | | | | ♦ 3 | ♦ 6 | ♦ 8 | ♦ J |
| 5 | | | ♣ Q | ♣ 2 | ♣ 3 | ♣ 9 | |
| 6 | | | ??? | | | ??? | |
| 7 | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | | | |

Result and score :

3 ♥ X ?? by N → ??? for ???

Result and score in the other room :

3 ♠ +2 by E → 200 for EW (Charleroi 1)

Balance : ??? for ??? = ??? IMP

Result of the match with this board

IMP : ?? – ??

Result of the match without this board

IMP : 42 – 77

Remarks from team A (Sandeman 3)

During the bidding South alerted 2 ♦ and explained it as normal ♦ or 5-7 HCP with a ♥ fit. There was no alert and explanation on the other side of the screen.

The contract was 3 ♥ X played by North. At trick 5 East played the Q of clubs followed by the 2, the 3 and the 9 from declarer. The declarer, after that he played his card visible for his partner, for East and for West at the other side of the screen, changed his mind and played the K of clubs.

After the remark by West that he saw his card, North became angry and threw his cards on the table and refused to finish the play! That is why there is no result on this board.

The result on this board in the other room is 3 ♠ by East for 11 tricks.

Remarks from team B (Charleroi 1)

The nine of clubs did not even hit the table. So the declarer felt it normal, not to change his mind, but to pull the right card from his hand.

Therefore he played the king of clubs and could have made the contract doubled. While playing the 9 would have resulted in 2 down.

Analysis

Was the 9 of clubs in trick 5 a played card or not?

According to Law 45.C.2, *declarer is deemed to have played a card from his hand if it is either held face up, touching or nearly touching the table, or maintained in such a position as to indicate that it has been played.*

The fact that everybody could see the card is irrelevant in case of the declarer but not in case of a defender.

After a thorough investigation, I can only conclude that both parties fundamentally disagree on what happened at the table.

NS claim that the declarer's physical hand holding the 9 of clubs was well above the table and in a fraction of a second the card was replaced with the K of clubs.

EW claim that the declarer's physical hand holding the 9 of clubs touched the table and was held in this position during 2-3 seconds before the card was replaced with the K of clubs.

An international Tournament Director, who was playing at another table, was called at the table. He requested North to show how he had played the card. This was immediately contested by EW, as the way North showed it was not at all in accordance with what had happened in reality. Being unable to determine who was right, he invited both parties to file a ruling request.

If I believe NS, then the 9 clubs is not a played card and the contract is made.

If I believe EW, then the 9 clubs is a played card and the contract goes 1 or 2 tricks down.

With the elements at hand, I am unable to determine the facts to my satisfaction, neither could the TD who came at the table. Therefore, I will make a ruling that will permit play to continue (Law 85.B).

I have consulted three international TD to know what is usually done if Law 85.B applies.

Two of them suggested to assign a split score whereby each pair gets an unfavourable score. One of them recalled that a similar case occurred just before Corona during the European Championships and that was the decision taken and supported by the Head TD. Nowadays this will not any longer occur as there is a camera above every table.

The only question remaining is what happens if the 9 of clubs is a played card. Depending on the card played in trick 6 by East, the contract goes either 1 or 2 tricks down.

I have asked 3 players from Honour Division and 3 players from 2nd National Division what they would play in trick 6, knowing that North holds the king of clubs (a card shown by the declarer is authorised information for the defenders). One player of Honour and one player of 2nd Division would play a diamond, all the others would play a club.

This means that it will be 1/3 of 3♥ X -2 for a score of 300 for EW (balance +100 or +3 IMP for Sandeman 3) and 2/3 of 3♥ X -1 for a score of 100 for EW (balance +100 or +3 IMP for Charleroi 1). In total this gives +1 IMP for Charleroi 1.

Decision

I am unable to determine the facts to my satisfaction. Therefore I award an unfavourable score to each pair.

For Sandeman 3 I consider that the 9 of clubs is not a played card. Then the contract is made for a score of 530 for NS. The balance on board 24 is 730 or +12 IMP for Charleroi. The result of the match **Sandeman 3** – Charleroi 1 is 42 – 89 in IMP or **2,79** – 17,21 in VP.

For Charleroi 1 I consider that the 9 of clubs is a played card. This leads to a weighted score (see above) of +1 IMP for Charleroi 1. The result of the match Sandeman 3 – **Charleroi 1** is 42 – 78 in IMP or 4,00 – **16,00** in VP

Consequently, the result of the match Sandeman 3 – Charleroi 1 is **2,79** – **16,00** in VP.

Both teams can file an appeal against this decision. Please refer to the regulations for the treatment of an appeal, which can be consulted on the website of the RBBF.

Done at Ruisbroek (Puurs-Sint-Amands) on 08 October 2022

Robert Ketels

Tournament Director for the national competition