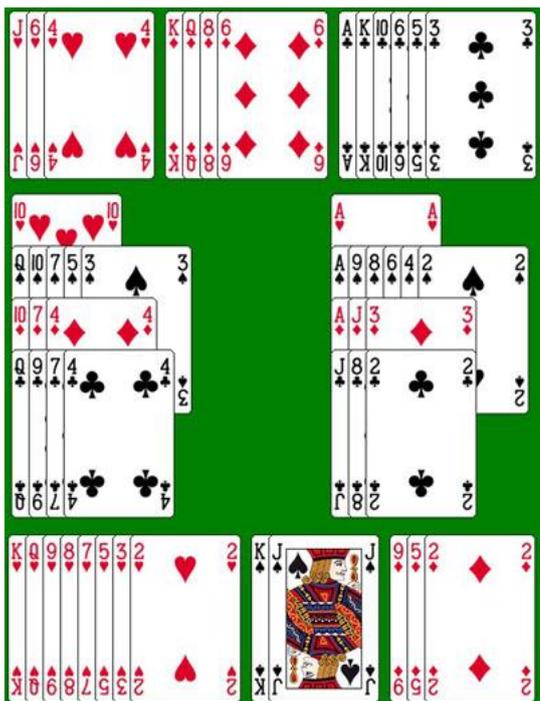Be careful of very distributional hands. Things do not always go to plan and even Aces cannot always be counted on. Such a situation arose during play last Monday.

The auction proceeded as shown below With East opening 1S

S jumped to 4H and West bid 4S.

I was sitting North and bid 4NT because I had a 5 loser hand and a void in their suit.

West	North	East	South
		1♠	4♥
4♠	4NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	5♥	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

South responded with 5D showing 1 key card so I settled for 5H.

East was looking at his 3 aces and the temptation to double was too great to be humanly able to bear. He doubled with confidence that his 3 aces would put the contract off.

The play began with West obediently leading a Spade which was ruffed in dummy with the 4H.

On the Ace and King of clubs 2 little diamonds were discarded.

The third club lead returned control to hand so that the King of Spades from hand was able to be ruffed high in dummy.

 Now the declarer has only 2 losers;   Ace of H and Ace of D; making 5 doubled.

However, at another table 5H doubled made 6!

This is possible if, at trick 2, instead of taking the Ace of Clubs immediately, first leading a small Club to be ruffed in hand and then going back to dummy by ruffing the King of Spades.

Now on Ace and King of Clubs, discard 2 diamonds.

	West	North	East	South
1	5 ♠	*4 ♥	6 ♠	J ♠
2	7 ♣	*A ♣	2 ♣	2 ♦
3	4 ♣	*K ♣	8 ♣	5 ♦
4	9 ♣	3 ♣	J ♣	*3 ♥
5	3 ♠	*J ♥	2 ♠	K ♠
6	10 ♥	6 ♥	*A ♥	2 ♥
7	4 ♦	6 ♦	*A ♦	9 ♦
8	Q ♣	5 ♣	8 ♠	*5 ♥
9	7 ♠	6 ♣	4 ♠	*K ♥
10	10 ♠	8 ♦	9 ♠	*Q ♥
11	7 ♦	10 ♣	3 ♦	*9 ♥
12	10 ♦	Q ♦	J ♦	*8 ♥
13	Q ♠	K ♦	A ♠	*7 ♥

Then lead the 4th round of C. As East is now void of Clubs, he may make a small error by ruffing with the Ace of H to try to get at the Ace of D before that trick also disappears. In that case declarer can discard the last D and make 6.

The lesson in this is that holding 2 aces against a slam or 3 aces against a five level contract is not always successful in defending a very distributional hand, even though the double is tempting!

Happy Bridging, Bal