

Bath Replays

7 When not to bid (2)

Board 18. 22 March, 2007.

Dealer: East
North-South vulnerable

Our second offering features some glaring errors by North-South. The bidding went like this:

North	East	South	West
—	1♠	2♥!	3♦
3♥	Pass	Pass	3♠
4♥!!	Double	All pass	

Final contract: 4♥ doubled by South.

A quick review of the auction:

East's hand is a poor example of an opening bid. The spade suit is poor, the honours in hearts and diamonds are not really pulling their weight and the club suit is not the best. On balance though, most people would open the bidding. South's 2♥ overcall is not a good bid. The vulnerability is against him, the hearts suit is only five cards (normally six cards are required or a substantially better hand in terms of high cards) and the hand is better suited to defence. West's 3♦ is a bit of a stretch, though he does have six cards and three card spade support, and the king of hearts looks well placed. North raises to 3♥, which is passed back to West, who raises to 3♠. Enter North, who thinks her hand is worth a second bid (!) and bids the heart game, which East doubles.

Something you should never do is to go to bed with a bid. If you're going to bid game in a competitive auction bid it immediately: this puts the pressure on the opposition. In North's case, her hand is only worth one bid. She should *either* raise hearts to the three level and leave it at that *or* bid the game directly.

West led a small spade to the jack, queen and ace. Declarer crossed to dummy via the ♣A and led a small heart to the jack and king. West continued with a spade to East's king and East returned the ♦K, which West overtook with the ace; he then cashed the queen and led the jack. Declarer ruffed in dummy, but the trump promotion succeeded as East overruffed with the ♥Q (South should have cashed the ace of trumps and led a second round to prevent the trump promotion). That was two off for 500 to EW on a part-score hand.

What are the points to take from this hand?

- 1 To overcall at the two level vulnerable you need, a good 5/6-card suit and decent values; the bottom end of an opening hand, minimum.
- 2 When your hand is worth one bid pre-empt to the maximum to pressurise the opponents. Do not bid the same values twice.

Peter Sampson
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North
♠ J6
♥ 9862
♦ 102
♣ AK1095

West
♠ 875
♥ K3
♦ AQJ753
♣ 32

East
♠ KQ432
♥ Q5
♦ K9
♣ QJ64

South
♠ A109
♥ AJ1074
♦ 864
♣ 87