

NORTH	NORTH
Dealer	Dealer
4	14
EAST	WEST
SOUTH	SOUTH

# Bath Replays

## 17 Leading the way

Boards 4 & 14. Thurs 4th Oct 2007

During the October Butler-scoring session, there were two hands with the same theme, which I shall introduce as bidding problems.

### Board 4

As dealer at Game All you hold:

♠ A1043  
 ♥ KQJ106  
 ♦ 108  
 ♣ 108

Do you open? Not I hope a weak 2♥ with a four-card spade suit, but how about 1♥?

### Board 14

Later in the evening, your left-hand opponent holds as North:

♠ AKJ102  
 ♥ 75  
 ♦ 96  
 ♣ J1096

After the auction

<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>
INT	Pass	2♣	?

should she bid 2♠? (INT was 12-14)

This was Board 4.

I wrongly chose to pass. "Only ten points, partner, first in hand, vulnerable and no singleton."

North open INT, which South raised to game. Did my partner find the winning heart lead? Why should he? Minus 10 IMPs.

I'm not encouraging a principle of opening on ten points and a 5-4-2-2 shape, but instead of counting points I should have noticed a semi-solid heart suit with an outside entry. The scoresheet would seem to indicate that most Wests did not make my mistake.

Here's Board 14.

It may seem that there is no point in bidding 2♠ after partner hasn't taken action over INT and West is likely to have some values.

North, however, saw the advantage of attracting a spade lead and bid 2♠. After passes by East and South, I closed the bidding with 3NT, which was immediately defeated by the lead of the ♠9.

Minus 8 IMPs.

You may think that in ignoring the 2♠ overcall on my left I was over-compensating for my timidity on Board 4, but if you swap the ♠9 and the ♠7 in the South and East hands, the contract should make if declarer gets either the hearts or the diamonds right. Anyway, the point of the hand is that 3NT always makes unless North bids 2♠, deflecting South from the likely lead of a low diamond. Congratulations to the four Norths who bid 2♠, if the scoresheet reflects the likely course of events.

The moral of these hands is that you should consider bidding on less than normal values if there may be a lead-directing benefit. If you don't believe me and the evidence of these two hands, then you might like to read Andrew Robson's article on this topic in the October 2007 English Bridge. His example is from Pairs, where even riskier lead-directing bids are in order.

*James Dunlop,  
October 2007*

♠ K85  
 ♥ 98  
 ♦ A972  
 ♣ AQ65  
 ♠ 762  
 ♥ 743  
 ♦ Q643  
 ♣ 92  
 ♠ QJ9  
 ♥ A52  
 ♦ KJ5  
 ♣ K743

♠ AKJ102  
 ♥ 75  
 ♦ 96  
 ♣ J1096  
 ♠ 76  
 ♥ A843  
 ♦ A105  
 ♣ A532  
 ♠ 95  
 ♥ J962  
 ♦ Q732  
 ♣ Q84