



Bath Replays

22 Opening light

Board 25. Thursday 6 Sept, 2007.

North was the dealer and EW were vulnerable when this deal came up earlier this year.

♠ J985		
♥ 632		
♦ 86		
♣ K1065		
♠ AK7		♠ 10643
♥ 85		♥ A4
♦ KQ4		♦ AJ9753
♣ AJ974		♣ 3
♠ Q2		
♥ KQJ1097		
♦ 102		
♣ Q82		

The auction went like this:

<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	
Pass	1♦	2♥	3♣	
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠	
Pass	4♥	Dble	Pass	
Pass	Redble	Pass	6♦	All pass

Let's review the auction. If you're going to open light, this is the type of hand. The diamond suit is good enough to control the auction, plus you have two honour tricks, and support for spades.

South's jump overcall is spot on: a good suit and cramping the auction.

How do you play West's 3♣? Not as non-forcing, I hope. If you do, then ... Oh dear! Flexibility is what is required here: you have to be able to describe your hand with a forcing bid; a negative double could see you bounced out of the auction with no way to describe your hand.

When North passes and East rebids his diamonds, what should West do next? A slam could be close; 3NT could be best: how do you know which? 3♠ is natural, though in this instance a fragment and a cue bid agreeing diamonds. If East signs off in 3NT, West can force again with 4♦. Anyway, East cue-bids hearts on the way to 4♠, South doubles, West passes (awaiting clarification on the heart control), and East confirms first round control with redouble. West can now bid the small slam in diamonds.

The play is straightforward. East sets up the clubs and finally leads a spade to the ten after cashing the AK.

Pointers from this hand:

- If you open light, ensure you have a suit good enough to control the auction.
- When the auction has been bounced, you should only double for take-out when you do not have a good suit to bid, i.e. with a balanced hand. It's also best not to play these awful negative free bids. This means that you have to place a lot of emphasis on a take-out double, and risks the auction getting too high before you have a chance to describe your hand.

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