



Bath Replays

36 Misfit, misbid, misplayed

Board 20. Thursday June 18, 2009.

This humdinger of a hand could only have been dealt by a computer with a sadistic streak. With North holding eleven red cards and two black singletons and his partner holding eleven black cards and two red singletons, it was a bidding horror story for NS pairs, while those sitting EW just sat back and enjoyed the fun.

I was sitting North, and was wondering which of my two red suits to bid when West made up my mind for me by opening 1♥. I had always been told that when an opponent opens your suit in front of you, you should keep your head down and see what happens. Ignoring this sound advice, I decided to muddy the waters with a 2♦ bid. Partner, of course, showed her good 6-card spade suit, and when West passed I was stuck for a second bid. Why couldn't I have kept my mouth shut? Partner would have overcalled 1♠, West would have repeated her hearts and I would have had a nice fat double to bid. (Unfortunately, partner would take this as a negative double and show her clubs, and we would be back in trouble. One of those hands you can't win under any system.)

♠ 2		♠ J73
♥ AQ1063		♥ 8
♦ A106542		♦ QJ873
♣ 6		♣ 7542
♠ KQ8		
♥ KJ9752		
♦ K		
♣ K83		
		♠ A109654
		♥ 4
		♦ 9
		♣ AQJ109

I couldn't possibly repeat my weak diamonds, so opted for the lesser of two evils with 2NT, hoping partner would pass. But they never do, do they? She bid 3♣, asking me to pick a suit. At this point, most NS pairs started passing, ending up in 3♣ or 3♦, and managed to salvage something from the wreckage. Some brave souls, including me, opted for 3NT and all went off, some doubled.

Our auction had gone like this:

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	All pass	

Here's the play at our table:

East ignored her partner's opening heart bid (on which I had gambled the NT game) and instead led ♦Q, crashing her partner's bare King. This isn't as good as it looks, as East is now holding all the top diamonds and can beat any diamond lead I make. I won with the Ace and took stock.

East had opened the bidding with only KJ in her trump suit, so must hold the ♣K and two of the missing spade honours. If this was correct, I had a slim chance. I led a club, finessing the Queen to West's King. She led back the ♥9 and I finessed the 10, winning the trick. Crossing to the table with ♠A I cashed my club tricks and led the ♠10, throwing West in to lead away from her hearts. Making 1 diamond, 4 clubs, 1 spade and 3 heart tricks for my game.

Now why couldn't I have played it that way? Instead, I tried to endplay East with the diamond suit and went one off with the rest of the No Trumpers.

*Jim Corbett
July 2009*