

Board of the Week 71

By Dick Chapman

Some boards are so poorly bid or played that, if bridge magazines had comics sections, that's where you would find the report.

Today's hand is such. It was so bad it was funny.

BBO casual pairs, imps scoring, vulnerable vs. not, you sit East and hold these cards:

♠AK2 ♥A632 ♦AJ106 ♣62

South passes, partner opens 1 spade, North calls 2 hearts. Your call? You have a game on, but let's slow down a bit: 3 hearts.

Partner 3 spades. Back to you. Don't give up! Try 4 diamonds. Partner 4 spades and now you are going to give up.

As Johnny Carson didn't say, "Not so fast, Bridge-Breath." North doubles 4 spades. What is going on? Does North have a spade stack and AK of clubs and KQ of either red suit? No way. If that were the case, partner wouldn't have anything. And you trust your partner.

The proper call here is pass. You are going to make a doubled contract and it's going to be a very good score. But no, you get greedy. You have set spades as the suit and you know that partner knows that's the suit, so you redouble. Now it gets interesting. You have all intention of making and racking up a huge score. However, partner is not in on the joke.

As we all know, most if not all redoubles are for rescue: "Partner, run somewhere." But you are thinking, surely Partner knows that we have a strong spade holding (because of the diamond cue bid being a slam try).

Partner is thinking "Surely, you can't be serious." And you are thinking "I am serious and don't call me Shirley." But partner can't hear you think and bids 5 diamonds!

Double by North. What do you do? It's getting ludicrous by now, so why not redouble and someone is going to laugh. It may not be you. That's the final contract, 5 diamonds redoubled, vulnerable.

The opening lead is the heart jack.

	♠8 ♥KQ84 ♦K5432 ♣QJ8	
♠QJ765 ♥96 ♦Q98 ♣AK5		♠AK2 ♥A632 ♦AJ106 ♣62
	♠10943 ♥J107 ♦7 ♣109743	

Win the ace and lose a heart. South plays the 10 but North overtakes and leads the 8 of spades. You win the ace (to unblock) and suspect a diamond stack. Over to the ace of clubs and play the diamond queen, which holds. Did you unblock the jack? Of course you didn't, because this is the comics page. You should have. Now you can take a second finesse but not a third one. After the second finesse you can see that the suit wasn't coming in anyway. You have to let North score a trump but you still have a shot to make.

Lead the king of spades, which North ruffs. Now your trump are equalized. North leads a top club won in dummy and the rest is easy. Finesse the final diamonds (AJ over Qx) and use the unblocked spade 2 to get to dummy's final three spades. Making the contract for a nice even 1000.

Have you counted all the errors? You would need a calculator to keep track. Let's start:

- North's overcall of 2 hearts
- North's double of 4 spades
- East's redouble of 4 spades
- West's run to 5 diamonds (I suppose this is an error, since East never promised a diamond suit, but partnership agreements or non-agreements are a factor)
- North's double of 5 diamonds
- East's redouble of 5 diamonds (should go to 5 spades, as this layout makes 6 spades easily)

- The defense against 5 diamonds redoubled

I'm sure there are many other errors, but the comic strip editor only allows so many panels of gags per day. It's BBO play, and you never know who your opponents are or what sort of silly stuff will happen.

It is obvious our score of +1000 was the top on the board, worth 9.4 imps. Other scoring possibilities are interesting:

- 4 spades doubled making 6 = 1190
- 4 spades redoubled making 6 = 1880
- 5 spades redoubled making 6 = 1600
- 6 spades doubled making 6 = 1660
- 6 spades redoubled making = 2070
- 5 diamonds redoubled down 1 = -400

Do you have an agreement with your partners regarding redoubles? My partner and I did not, so the redouble of four spades put partner under a great deal of pressure. The redouble of 4 spades was just bad bridge (running what would have been 1190 down to -400 or +1000), but you can get away with playing bad bridge on the comics pages.

You know how the ads used to say "Don't try this at home, kids"? I'll just say "Don't try this in the finals of a regional knockout, kids."

I would also date myself and use the expression "see you in the funny papers" but I have worn out this metaphor and will just say "see you at the table."