

Contract Bridge

FROM KING FEATURES WEEKLY SERVICE,

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CONTRACT BRIDGE

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By Steve Becker

SOLUTION TO A PREDICAMENT

South dealer.

North-South vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ A K Q

♥ Q 4

♦ K J 9 5

♣ Q 9 6 3

WEST

♠ 10 8 5 4 3

♥ 6

♦ 8 7 6 2

♣ 7 5 4

EAST

♠ 9 7 2

♥ J 10 9 3

♦ 3

♣ K J 10 8 2

SOUTH

♠ J 6

♥ A K 8 7 5 2

♦ A Q 10 4

♣ A

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	3 NT	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	6 ♦	Pass
7 ♦			

Opening lead — eight of diamonds.

To be a good bridge player, simply relying on past experience in similar situations will not be good enough to carry you through in many cases. You must also be able to adapt to situations where things don't go exactly the way you would like them to go.

For example, take this case where South got to an excellent grand slam and went down one, losing 100 points when he should instead have made seven diamonds and scored 2,140 points.

It didn't take South long to go astray. He won the trump lead with the ten and continued with the ace, on which East discarded a club.

At this point, declarer realized that the only real threat to the contract was the possibility that the hearts might not be divided 3-2. So at trick three he led a heart to the queen and then led a heart back to the ace. Unfortunately, West ruffed, and the grand slam went down the drain.

Declarer would have done better had he taken more effective steps to guard against unfavorable divisions in both diamonds and hearts. All he had to do was to cash the ace of clubs at trick two, then lead a low trump to dummy's nine.

Upon discovering the 4-1 trump division, declarer ruffs a club, leads a spade to the queen and ruffs another club with his last trump. Now a spade to the king, followed by the K-J of trump, puts an end to the matter.

By playing this way, South scores all 13 tricks regardless of how the hearts are divided. He finishes with his four natural trump tricks, two club ruffs in his hand, the A-K-Q of spades, the A-K-Q of hearts and the ace of clubs. It seems ridiculously easy when the winning line of play is pointed out. The hard part is to think of it!

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