

12. Not bidding a second suit when you should

Imagine this conversation.

“I want to watch the football.”

“I’d like us to go to the cinema.”

“I’m going to watch the football; it’s a crucial game and if Arsenal lose, we won’t make the Champions League next season (blah blah).”

Deadlock. Disharmony. Let’s make a tweak.

“I want to watch the football.”

“I’d like us to go to the cinema.”

“Or how about we go for a nice meal together.”

“Okay, great.”

The meal was neither’s first choice, yet together (the key word in bridge too) it was the best outcome.

So, like the (dis)harmonious couple, you should strive to introduce your second suit when you can economically do so — or you may miss your best trump fit. It’s more descriptive, showing nine of your cards (normally, if you bid a second suit, you’ll have five cards in your first).

What Happened

We won’t dwell on the play in 3♠, which went one down. (To make 3♠, you need to void dummy of clubs straight away then ruff your third club with ♠2.)

What Should Have Happened

Declaring 4♥, you win ♣K with ♣A (ducking fine) and retain trump control by leading ♥2 to ♥J. East wins ♥Q, returns a second club to West’s ♣10, and West switches to ♦9.

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Neither

♠ Q2 ♥ AJ63 ♦ AJ742 ♣ 72	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 104 ♥ KQ9 ♦ KQ105 ♣ J963
N					
W E					
S					
♠ J987 ♥ 105 ♦ 986 ♣ KQ108	♠ AK653 ♥ 8742 ♦ 3 ♣ A54				

What Happened

S	W	N	E
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠(1)	Pass	3♠(2)	end

(1) “I could hardly bid a suit headed by an eight.” (This is completely wrong — if a suit contains four cards, it’s biddable.)

(2) Presumes there’s no heart fit given partner did not rebid 2♥.

Contract: 3♠, Opening Lead: ♣K

What Should Have Happened

S	W	N	E
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥(1)	Pass	4♥(2)	end

(1) Correctly showing his five-four shape.

(2) Loving his ♠Q and ♥AJxx holdings.

Contract: 4♥, Opening Lead: ♣K

You win ♦A and cash ♥A. Leaving the master ♥K out, you now play ♠Q and lead to ♠AK. East (say) ruffs the third spade and tries ♦K. You ruff then ruff a fourth spade. You ruff a third diamond, cash the fifth spade and score the last trick with dummy’s remaining heart. Ten tricks made.

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