

Redouble Trouble -- 11-5-2013

Board 6
 East Deals
 E-W Vul

♠ K 8 6 ♥ 10 9 ♦ Q 6 5 2 ♣ Q 9 6 2		♠ Q J 7 ♥ A K J 6 ♦ K 7 ♣ J 10 5 4	♠ A 5 4 3 2 ♥ Q 8 4 3 ♦ A J ♣ A K
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♠ 10 9 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ 10 9 8 4 3 ♣ 8 7 3
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EW 3N; EW 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 3♣; EW 2♦; Par -600

West	North	East	South
<i>Christianne</i>	<i>Margarita</i>	<i>Pete</i>	<i>Rachel</i>
		1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	Dbl	Rdbl	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	All pass
4 ♠ by East			
Lead: ♠ 10			

Rachel's lead of the ♠ 10 was deadly. Deprived of a heart ruff, I was only able to come to nine tricks: four spades, three clubs, and two diamonds (on the marked finesse). On any other lead, I just lead hearts until I get my tenth trick.

However, this deal is about the bidding, where it was won and lost, not the play:

1. I opened 1 ♠,
2. Christianne raised to 2 ♠,
3. Margarita doubled for takeout,
4. I redoubled,
5. Rachel passed after my redouble,
6. Christianne bid 3 ♠, and
7. My 4 ♠ concluded the auction.

At least three mistakes were made in the bidding. What were they?

I'll give you a couple of easy ones:

1. The 1 ♠ opening is normal.
2. The 2 ♠ raise is normal.

- Pete Matthews

Redouble Trouble -- 11-5-2013 -- SOLUTION

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♠ K 8 6 ♥ 10 9 ♦ Q 6 5 2 ♣ Q 9 6 2	♠ Q J 7 ♥ A K J 6 ♦ K 7 ♣ J 10 5 4	<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid gray; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A 5 4 3 2 ♥ Q 8 4 3 ♦ A J ♣ A K
♠ 10 9 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ 10 9 8 4 3 ♣ 8 7 3			

EW 3N; EW 3♠; EW 3♥; EW 3♣; EW 2♦; Par -600

West	North	East	South
<i>Christianne</i>	<i>Margarita</i>	<i>Pete</i>	<i>Rachel</i>
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3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	All pass

3. North holds 15 high card points. Nevertheless, East-West will usually hold at least 18 (12+6) between them, for the opening bid and raise. The best North can hope for in the South hand is about 7 points; in this case, South had none at all. North needs to have good shape to make such a double, certainly three cards in each unbid suit. The doubleton diamond is a major flaw. If partner bids diamonds, you either have to pass or bid a four card heart suit at the 3-level. The ♠ QJx is a probable defensive trick, but may have little value with some other trump suit. Passing is clearly superior, but Margarita decided to roll the dice.

4. North's double appeared as I was pondering whether to try 2 NT, 3 NT, 3 ♠, 4 ♠ or 3 ♥ (all reasonable, with NT working best this time). My redouble seemed obvious, meaning (a) we were going to make 2 ♠, (b) I could double at least one unbid suit for penalties, and (c) the opponents must not be permitted to play undoubled. Well, perhaps not so obvious...

5. South passed because she was broke. This was terrible! When partner gets redoubled, advancer *must* pick a suit, if she has a preference. Points make no difference. 3 ♦ is correct, and would have been correct on ♠ 1097 ♥ 752 ♦ 10943 ♣ 873. Partner has promised at least three card support, and this is the only eight card fit likely (which might be enough to escape the danger). Passing the redouble shows no preference, and then doubler takes her best shot. (Since West holds four diamonds with an honor, she should double 3 ♦ for penalty. The double dummy result would be down four, +800, beating any game we might have made.)

6. West got confused, and removed to 3 ♠. This bid is not forbidden, but it shows complete unwillingness to defend doubled at the 3-level. More than just weakness, it shows an offensive hand. 3 ♠ would be correct on ♠ K986 ♥ 9 ♦ Q652 ♣ Q962, and ♠ K986 ♥ 9 ♦ Q652 ♣ 9762 is possible. 4 ♠ would be conceivable on better hands. On the actual West hand, and most of the time, **West should pass** over South's pass. If North then bid 3 ♥, my double might net +1,100. Over 3 ♣, I pass, and West gets to double for about +1,100. Had West been unable to double 3 ♣, she would bid 3 ♠ at that point. After the redouble, both partners should get a chance to double anything the opponents bid, unless one partner is unwilling to play that contract doubled.

7. Well, I knew my partner was confused. Still, in the long run, you don't do well if you second-guess partner's bids. It would be my fault to play 3 ♠ making four, opposite one of the sample West hands in (6). 4 ♠ was the wrong bid, for the right reasons. Perhaps I should have hedged my bets with 3 NT, which should be made with careful play on the actual deal, and which partner could have passed (or removed to 4 ♠ on those other hands).