

Cue Bid -- Problem

Board 7
East Deals
Both Vul



♠ K 6 5
♥ K 8 5 4
♦ Q
♣ 9 7 5 3 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♥	2 ♣	Dbl	?

Take my place as South in a matchpoint pairs game at the new Bay State Bridge in Wellesley, MA. Your partner is a solid, experienced player, but you don't recall having discussed this auction. What is going on, and what is your call?

Cue Bid -- Continued

Board 7
East Deals
Both Vul

♠ J 10 7
♥ A 9
♦ 9 8 4
♣ A Q J 10 4



♠ K 6 5
♥ K 8 5 4
♦ Q
♣ 9 7 5 3 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♥	2 ♣	Dbl	2 ♠
All pass			
2 ♠ by South			
Lead: ♥ 2			

The Standard American Yellow Card (SAYC) says a cue bid is, "natural in both suits, when the opponents have bid two suits." If that is your agreement, then this cue bid used to be the only type that was alertable: an offer to play in a suit bid naturally by an opponent. (The alert rules have changed again -- who knows, now?)

Unfortunately, the non-ACBL SAYC convention card on BBO and many players treat this cue bid as Michaels, showing 5-5 in the unbid suits. (2 NT would have this meaning, of course, but higher.)

Instead of believing partner, I believed the apparent penalty double. It turned out to be a support double, showing 3-card heart support. All I had to do was ask the opponents about the double. Like everybody, I make mistakes from time to time. What would you do now, in my place?

Board 7
 East Deals
 Both Vul

Cue Bid -- Solution

		♠ J 10 7	
		♥ A 9	
		♦ 9 8 4	
		♣ A Q J 10 4	
♠ Q 4 2			♠ A 9 8 3
♥ J 10 6 2			♥ Q 7 3
♦ A 10 7 6 5 3			♦ K J 2
♣ —			♣ K 8 6
		♠ K 6 5	
		♥ K 8 5 4	
		♦ Q	
		♣ 9 7 5 3 2	

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	2 ♣	1 ♣	Pass
All pass		Dbf	2 ♠
2 ♠ by South			
Lead: ♥ 2			

[board rotated for convenience]

Should we scowl in unison at partner and make a remark telling the opponents we are in trouble? We would probably get a bottom on the board. The right start is to say, thank you, partner -- and get on with the job.

Lacking a diamond stopper, the main hope is a cross-ruff. Win the opening lead on dummy to lead a diamond toward the queen, like a finesser. West wins the ace and leads another heart; we win East's queen with the king. Now, we try a club! Wow, West discards a diamond, so we get to win the ace. Ruff a diamond, ruff a heart, ruff a diamond, ruff a heart -- overruffed with the ace. This establishes the ♠ K as our seventh trick: two hearts, one club, and four spades.

Usually, East-West declared. All three times when West declared 1 NT, the ♣ Q was led. These were the eight results on the deal:

W 1 NT +200 7.0 [presumably ducked the ♣ K twice, trying to block the suit]
 E 4 ♦ +100 6.0 [looks like East opened 1 ♦, perhaps playing Precision]
 N 4 ♣ -100 4.5 [finding clubs probably won't win the board]
 S 2 ♠ -100 4.5
 W 2 ♥ -110 2.5 [possibly via support double]
 W 2 ♥ -110 2.5 [possibly via support double]
 W 1 NT -120 1.0 [took the ♣ K on either the ♣ Q or the next round]
 W 1 NT -150 0.0 [took the ♣ K on either the ♣ Q or the next round]

A support double or other competition produced two 2 ♥ contracts; 4 ♦ failed once.

4 ♣ failed our way, undoubled. Our horrible 2 ♠ contract scored the same, for 4.5 matchpoints out of 7, a 64% score. The opponents seldom know when you are in a 3-3 fit, As was the case here, it may play fairly well, if they fail to lead trump. Never give up!

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