

LMT-1945

experiments with freak hands

by Dr. Paul Stern



FOR the last five years I have been experimenting in passing freak hands when dealer or second hand. Generally speaking these tactics have proved very successful.

Only once had I to regret passing second in hand, when my partner put these cards on the table, saying "There is certainly no opening bid here":

♠ 85432 ♥ A ♦ A Q 3 ♣ 9764
 I remember blushing as I quickly threw my cards in and replied "I only had a point count of 10."
 ♠ None ♥ K Q J 9 8 6 4 2
 ♦ K J 7 5 ♣ 3

But I enjoyed many of the remaining deals, for their success as well as for the great fun of watching opponents who never realised until too late what they were up against. These tactics have also helped to save thousands of points, because the opponents, once bitten, twice shy, refrained from doubling late calls, suspecting that I held at least a 7, 6, 0, 0 distribution.

Here are two of these hands. The first was dealt in the fourth round of the Tournament Bridge Association's Richard Lederer Memorial contest of 1945; the second comes from a qualifying round of the T.B.A.'s "Two Stars" pairs contest, in which there were 13 tables.

NORTH
 ♠ —
 ♥ K Q 9 7 5 2
 ♦ K Q J 8 4
 ♣ A 7

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

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

Dealer, South.
 North-South vulnerable.

Bidding—Room 1

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
No	1 ♠	Double	2 ♣
2♥	3 ♣	4 ♣*	No
5♥	No	6 ♥	No
No	Dbl	Redble	No
No	No		

Opening lead, ♣ K.
 South made 12 tricks.
 1,970 points to N.S.

* Asking bid.

Bidding—Room 2

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
4 ♠	No	No	No

Opening lead, ♦ A.
 South made 9 tricks.
 100 points to East-West.