

Bridge

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The Bermuda Bowl and the Venice Cup, the Open and Women's world championships, begin on Monday in Monte Carlo. If the events can recapture the excitement of the last championships in Paris two years ago, the World Bridge Federation will be well pleased. On that occasion, Germany mounted a tremendous comeback in the final 16 deals to win the Venice Cup from France by a tiny margin. But the triumph of the United States in the Bermuda Bowl was still more remarkable—down at half-time by more than 90 IMPs to a powerful Norwegian side, they clawed their way back over the closing stages before winning it well inside the final furlong.

England will be represented in the Women's series by Nicola Smith, Heather Dhondy, Michelle Brunner, Rhona Goldenfield, Nevena Senior and Sandra Penfold. They have an excellent chance of a medal, but will face strong competition. Four of the team took part in the Lederer Memorial Trophy last weekend, and although they didn't finish in the medals, the experience against strong opposition was excellent preparation.

On this deal from their match against my team, a great deal of imagination was shown in the bidding.

North-South vulnerable, dealer West

North

- ▲ 9 6 2
- ♥ A 9 8 4
- ♦ Q J 10 9 7 6
- ♣ None

West

- ▲ 7 5 3
- ♥ J 10 7 6 2
- ♦ 8 4
- ♣ 10 4 3

East

- ▲ A 10 4
- ♥ 5 3
- ♦ 5 3 2
- ♣ A 9 8 6 5

South

- ▲ K Q J 8
- ♥ K Q
- ♦ A K
- ♣ K Q J 7 2

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	1NT	Double
2♠	2♥	2♠	Double
3♣	4♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	6♦	Pass	6NT
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

West's opening bid was a rare thing these days— an out-and-out psychic. South, who was still counting his points by the time the bidding reached him, had to deal with a somewhat unusual position, and began with the obvious double of East's one no trump. Among expert players, this bid is used as a takeout of hearts, but West wasn't going to wait for anyone to take it out. He decided to introduce his second "suit" with two clubs.

North's bid of two hearts was a general strength-showing move, and East's two spades was conventional. Since he couldn't have a spade suit (he would not have responded 1NT if he did), he was showing a strong raise of what he fondly believed to be his partner's clubs. South produced another double, wondering what on earth was going on, and West retreated confidently to three clubs. Now North did jump in diamonds, and when one of his opponents finally passed, South was left with a headache. Eventually, he emerged with 4NT, not knowing whether North would think this was Blackwood or natural.

Whatever North thought it was, he knew where he wanted to play, so he bid it. All seemed well until South, bewildered by the whole affair, decided to convert to six no trumps. East's final double was the least imaginative, but most readily understandable, call of the entire auction, and the contract was one down.

North-South were a little apprehensive about this, but they need not have worried— for, remarkably, the result at the other table was the same! There, West had stoically passed, but East's opening bid of one spade had sown confusion in the enemy ranks. Good luck to the English in Monte Carlo, but don't try bidding like that!