(The Times) Bridge: August 14 (2008)

Andrew Robson

Teammate Tony Forrester came back to compare scores, looking hopeful about Board 6 (Match Two, Young Chelsea's Lederer).

As East Tony had played well to go just down one in Five Clubs doubled. He won South's opening spade lead with dummy's ace, drew trumps (North throwing a spade and two hearts), then exited with a spade. North won, and switched to a diamond, which went to the three, ten, and king. A diamond back to the queen was won by South's ace, whereupon South returned the jack of hearts (best).

Declarer covered with dummy's king of hearts, and now, after winning his ace, North was endplayed. A heart lead would be run to the nine; a diamond would set up a ruffing finesse position and an extra trick. A mere down one.

Enter the other room: your columnist (South) declaring Four Spades doubled. I ruffed the club lead, and led a low heart to the jack, a normal start.

The jack lost to West's king, and West continued his approach of forcing dummy's trumps, leading a second club (a diamond to East's queen would have been better). After ruffing, then cashing the ace of hearts and ruffing a third heart (revealing the even split), we have reached the crossroads.

I ruffed a third club with the jack of trumps, then led the queen. West won and returned a trump, and I was left leading diamonds out of my hand. Down one.

The third club ruff removes the threat of dummy's hearts, which I had taken the trouble to establish.

Dealer: East, Vulnerability: E-W

Teams | Advanced

	♠ QJ84 ♥ A10832 ♦ J762 ♣ -	
♠ A3 ♥ K95 ♦ K984 ♣ 8532	N W E S	♠ 105 ♥ Q76 ♦ Q3 ♣ AKQ1064
	♠ K9762 ♥ J4 ♦ A105 ♣ J97	

S	W	N	E
			1♣ Pass
1♠ Pass	2♠ (1) Double	4♠ End	

(1) Good club raise.

Contract: 4♠ dbled, Opening Lead: ♣ 8

I should instead have led a trump (key play). What can West do?

If West wins his ace, he has to force dummy with a club (or I can draw trumps and run hearts). Now I ruff the club and switch tacks, leading a diamond to the ten (then cashing the ace to fell East's doubleton queen). Game made.

If West ducks his ace of trumps, I win in dummy and lead a master heart. East must ruff (low), but I overruff, and West... Overruff with the ace and I can ruff a club and cash my fifth heart; say West discards. No good - I ruff a club and lead a master heart, discarding a losing diamond as West ruffs with his ace. Game made. Sorry Tony.

Young Chelsea Open Teams Challenge, September 20th-21st, in memory of Peter Hecht-Johansen. Details from info@ycbc.co.uk or 020 7373 1665.

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