

## Bridge By The Lake

By Ken Masson



Those who read last month's ramblings may remember that herself and myself were well-placed going into the final round of our first duplicate back in Toronto this spring when disaster struck on the first board. We needed to recover smartly if we were going to finish first in our direction, East-West.

On the second board, herself, sitting East, passed in first seat and South opened 1 heart. Although I had an opening bid myself, I had no convenient way of entering the auction and so passed. North also passed and the spotlight fell on herself. Knowing that it rarely pays to let the opponents play at the one level, she made a takeout double. I was marked with "stuff" based on the bidding; indeed I could well have had a "trap pass", a strong hand with long hearts, just waiting for my partner to reopen with a double.

South passed and I had an awkward choice of bids. I didn't feel I was quite strong enough to pass for penalties, nor did I feel that game could be on for our side as my partner was a passed hand. 2 no trump, 1 no trump, 2 spades and 1 spade all struck me as viable alternatives. In the end I convinced myself that there was no point in jumping the bidding as whatever call I made was likely to buy the contract so I settled on a timid 1 spade.

To everybody else's surprise North now suddenly came alive with a bid of two hearts. When this bid came back to me visions of revenge for the debacle of the first deal leapt before my eyes and I swiftly pulled out the "double" card sending the message to partner: "we've got them!" Just one down doubled and vulnerable would surely make up for the measly score we had picked up in the previous hand. After all, wasn't I sure to get 2 hearts, 1 diamond and a possible club ruff, in addition to the tricks my partner, the takeout doubler, was sure to contribute?

I led a low spade and nearly fell out of my chair when the dummy came down with the AJ3 of hearts sitting over my lovely collection. How could he have passed the first time? Well, there was no point in worrying about that now; I had to concentrate on trying to beat the contract. Herself won the opening lead with the spade ace and switched to the king and queen of diamonds, the second of which declarer ruffed.

In quick order he cashed the king and queen of spades, before leading a heart to the dummy. I split my honors and declarer won with the ace. He now ruffed a diamond back to his hand and ruffed a spade in the dummy with the heart 3 and played a club to his ace and cashed the king – he now had 8 tricks in and had to come to another in the wash – 2 hearts doubled making three for the unlovely score of minus 870 and zero match points on the deal.

In the last two boards we had dropped from first to eighth place. That sure was some welcome home!

Questions or comments: email: [masson.ken@gmail.com](mailto:masson.ken@gmail.com)

	♠ 97		<b>Vulnerability: Both</b>
	♥ AJ3		<b>Dealer: East</b>
	♦ 8754		
	♣ 10985		<b>Bidding:</b>
♠ 10653		♠ AJ8	North East South West
♥ KQ72		♥ 9	Pass Pass 1♥ Pass
♦ AJ6		♦ KQ932	Pass Dbl Pass 1♣
♣ Q2		♣ 7643	2♥ Pass Pass Dbl
	♠ KQ42		Pass Pass Pass
	♥ 108654		
	♦ 10		
	♣ AKJ		<b>Opening Lead: ♣3</b>