



AN HONORS eBook FROM MASTER POINT PRESS

Mark Horton

# Misplay More Hands with Me

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Master Point Press  
214 Merton St. Suite 205  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
M4S 1A6  
(647) 956-4933

[info@masterpointpress.com](mailto:info@masterpointpress.com)

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# Introduction

This is a sequel to *Misplay These Hands With Me*, which was published by Master Point Press in 2007. It intentionally imitates the ‘over the shoulder’ style of Terence Reese which was espoused in *Play Bridge With Reese* and *Play These Hands With Me*. Some of the deals have previously appeared in my series in the ACBL Bulletin but the majority are brand new.

A good player possess many skills – Reese wrote a player who attempts to reconstruct the unseen hands is one in a thousand – and on many of the deals in this book that approach would have worked for the declarer. Concentration also plays a part – I would say a major one – and many a contract that has foundered would have made with just a little more effort. As is so often the case it is only after the contract has failed that the player realises there was a winning line. Although the aim of the book is to be instructive, I have tried to inject more than the occasional dash of Reese.

Mark Horton

Shrewsbury

March 2019

# Winter Of Discontent

Early in the year, I have grown into the habit of escaping the rigours of the English weather by taking a trip to the South of France. The combination of some Mediterranean sunshine, a top class event and the lure of the tables at the Casino in Monaco are irresistible.

My partner in a big team event is of the highest calibre, albeit one prone to the odd flight of fancy.

Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ AQ652  
♥ K7532  
♦ K74  
♣ —

When the player on my right passes I open 1♠ and partner replies 2♣ which we play as forcing to game. When I rebid 2♥ partner raises to 3♥ which suggests he has higher ambitions. I could bid 4♣ at this point, but it is can work badly to cue-bid a shortage in partner's suit, so I opt for 4♦. Partner bids 4♥ but with every suit under control I continue with 4♠ to which partner replies 5♦. Clearly my undisclosed club control is now all important so I jump to 6♥ which leaves us with this lengthy sequence:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠*	Pass	5♦*
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

West leads the ♦2 and I get a fair dummy.



♠ 7  
 ♥ AQJ10  
 ♦ A965  
 ♣ Q973



♠ AQ652  
 ♥ K7532  
 ♦ K74  
 ♣ —

There are no immediate losers, but developing the extra tricks I need is going to involve the spade suit and some cross-ruffing. One possibility is to take the spade finesse, but were it to lose a second diamond might be awkward, so after winning the lead in hand with the ♦K I cash the ace of spades and ruff a spade on which East follows with the king. I ruff a club, play a diamond to the ace, ruff a club, ruff a spade (on which East discards a club) and ruff a club. These cards remain:

♠ —  
 ♥ AQ  
 ♦ 96  
 ♣ Q



♠ Q6  
 ♥ K7  
 ♦ 7  
 ♣ —

When I ruff another spade with the ♥Q East discards the ♣A. I play dummy's ♣Q but East ruffs with the ♥9. If I overruff and ruff a spade I will be left with the red sevens and lose the last two tricks, so I discard my losing diamond. East continues with a heart and my seven is covered by West's eight. I win with dummy's ace and ruff a diamond, but the last—and setting trick—goes to East's ♥6.

This was the full deal:

Dealer East. Both Vul.

	♠ 7		
	♥ AQJ10		
	♦ A965		
	♣ Q973		
♠ J10943 ♥ 8 ♦ Q82 ♣ K1052	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;">                     N                      W                  E                      S                 </div>	♠ K8 ♥ 964 ♦ J103 ♣ AJ864	
	♠ AQ652		
	♥ K7532		
	♦ K74		
	♣ —		

*Post-mortem*

This was the position after trick eight:

	♠ —		
	♥ AQ		
	♦ 96		
	♣ Q		
♠ J10 ♥ 8 ♦ Q ♣ K	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;">                     N                      W                  E                      S                 </div>	♠ — ♥ 964 ♦ J ♣ A	
	♠ Q6		
	♥ K7		
	♦ 7		
	♣ —		

Declarer must ruff the spade with the ♥A! If East discards the ♣A and then ruffs the ♣Q with the ♥9 declarer discards the losing diamond. When East exits with a heart declarer plays the ♥K and when the eight falls he takes the last two tricks with the ♥7 and the ♠Q.

In the other room North was declarer and East led the jack of diamonds. Declarer won in hand, played a spade to the ace and ruffed a spade. His next, fatal, move was to cash the ace of hearts. He took a second round of trumps, crossed to the king of diamonds, ruffed a spade ruffed a club and drew the outstanding trump. There were only eleven tricks, -100 so we did not lose on the deal.

# Decline And Fall

As one advances in years, invitations to the major events that were once commonplace tend to diminish. Attending a major event in Moscow with a view to writing a report, I am unexpectedly called into action when a player is taken ill. My partner is a fine player; although we have frequently been in opposition these will be our first deals together.

Dealer South. East-West Vul.


♠ K108632  
♥ 4  
♦ K  
♣ KQ953

I open 1♠ and my partner raises me to 2♠. My partner is an advocate of the theory that when your six-card major is raised you should bid game and I am toying with jumping to 4♠ when East enters the fray with 3♥. That gives me additional options—one of which is to make a game try double. Eventually I decide to bid 3♠, leaving the final decision to partner. When West raises to 4♥ my partner bids 4♠ and East doubles which ends the auction, giving us this sequence:

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	2♠	3♥	3♠
4♥	4♠	Double	All Pass

West leads the ♦J and dummy is a mixed bag:

♠ QJ9  
♥ J97  
♦ A87642  
♣ 6



♠ K108632  
♥ 4  
♦ K  
♣ KQ953

I can score five spades and two diamonds, so the remaining tricks must come from the club suit. I win the diamond lead with the king and play a spade to dummy's queen. West follows with the five and East wins with the ace and returns the three of hearts. West wins with the queen and continues with the ace, forcing me to ruff. I could cross to dummy and play a club, but if East started with three trumps rising with the ♣A and returning a trump will ensure I am down and with only two trumps East will only need to withhold the ♣A. Instead I play the ♣K but East wins and returns a trump. I win and ruff a club, hoping West, who followed to the first club with the two, has started with the ♣J102, but it is not to be and although I can pitch one club on the ♦A I have to lose a club at the end so I am one down. This was the full deal:

Dealer South. East-West Vul.

	♠ QJ9	
	♥ J97	
	♦ A87642	
	♣ 6	
♠ 75	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;">             N W     E S           </div>	♠ A4
♥ AQ82		♥ K10653
♦ J1095		♦ Q3
♣ 1082		♣ AJ74
	♠ K108632	
	♥ 4	
	♦ K	
	♣ KQ953	

### *Post-mortem*

Declarer missed his way at trick one.

Rising with the ace of diamonds and playing a club leaves East helpless. Taking the ace and playing two rounds of trumps will see declarer win and ruff a club to get up to ten tricks.

If East tries ducking the ♣A declarer wins, ruffs a club with the queen of spades, ruffs a diamond, ruffs a club with the nine of spades, ruffs a diamond and ruffs a club, West pitching a diamond. Declarer ruffs another diamond, plays the king of spades and cannot be prevented from scoring an overtrick. In the replay the contract was also 4♠ doubled. West led the ace of hearts and switched to a spade, East taking the ace and returning the four. Declarer won in dummy and played a club but East withheld the ace and declarer had to lose two clubs at the end to go one down.

# Bad Timing

If you are lucky enough to survive to the final stages of a major event, you can experience mixed emotions, the possibility of victory tempered by the fear of failure.

Towards the end of a long team event where my partner is beyond reproach, we are still in contention when I pick up this hand:


Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ KQ109  
♥ A107  
♦ AQ965  
♣ 3

My partner is the dealer and passes and East opens 1♠. I don't like to overcall at the two-level with a five-card suit, but with such prime cards it is still possible we might have a game and I bid 2♦. West has nothing to say and my partner bids 3♣ which we play as constructive but non-forcing. Although my singleton club is hardly an asset I know we have close to the right number of high cards so I go on to 3NT. Now West enters the fray with a double, which leaves us with this auction:

West	North	East	South
–	Pass	1♠	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Double	All Pass		

West leads the five of spades and dummy is revealed:

♠ 64  
♥ J654  
♦ K  
♣ KQ9864  
  
♠ KQ109  
♥ A107  
♦ AQ965  
♣ 3

The king of diamonds is useful, but it is also the only sure entry to dummy. I must be able to take three spades and at least three diamonds plus the ace of hearts, so I will need to find two additional tricks.

East wins with the ace of spades and returns the seven of diamonds removing dummy's entry. That's a blow – I was hoping East would let me win the first spade so that I could play a club while the  $\heartsuit K$  was intact. After taking the  $\heartsuit K$  I play a spade to the ten, West discarding the two of clubs, and a club to the king and ace, East exiting with a diamond. I win in hand and exit with a diamond, West winning with the ten and returning a diamond. I am up to eight tricks, but there is no way to reach the  $\clubsuit Q$  and I have to go one down.

The full deal looked like this:

Dealer North. Neither Vul.

$\spadesuit$ 64			
$\heartsuit$ J654			
$\diamondsuit$ K			
$\clubsuit$ KQ9864			
$\spadesuit$ 5	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4CAF50; width: 60px; height: 60px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">N</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">W</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">E</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> </div>	$\spadesuit$ AJ8732	
$\heartsuit$ K82		$\heartsuit$ Q93	
$\diamondsuit$ J1084		$\diamondsuit$ 732	
$\clubsuit$ J10752		$\clubsuit$ A	
	$\spadesuit$ KQ109		
	$\heartsuit$ A107		
	$\diamondsuit$ AQ965		
	$\clubsuit$ 3		

### *Post-mortem*

I expect the reader will be ahead of me here when I explain how declarer could have made 3NT.

When East exits with a second diamond after winning the  $\clubsuit A$ , declarer should simply continue with the master diamond and a diamond. West wins and is endplayed, either allowing declarer to enjoy the  $\clubsuit Q$  or having to open up the heart suit.

They reached 3NT at the other table but there was no double.

West led a spade and East won and returned the suit. Declarer won with the ten, played a club to the king and ace, won the diamond return in dummy and played a heart for the ten and king. Now West could exit with a the  $\heartsuit J$

and there were only eight tricks.

At the point where declarer is in dummy with the  $\spadesuit K$  it is right to play a heart, but it must be the jack. If West wins that he will eventually be endplayed. If East covers the jack declarer wins and cashes two spades. Provided he reads the ending he will be able to force West to surrender at some point – for example if West's last four cards are  $\heartsuit K \spadesuit J \clubsuit J 10$  declarer will, holding  $\heartsuit 107 \spadesuit 96$  exit with a heart. If West keeps two hearts he will be forced down to one club and thrown in on the fourth round of diamonds.

This line works even if East is 6-2-3-2 with a doubleton heart honour.

There is a winning defence, but it is not likely to be found at the table!

West must lead a diamond at trick one, declarer winning in dummy and playing a spade to the nine followed by a club to the king and ace. Now East exits with a heart and West wins and returns the jack of diamonds. Declarer plays three rounds of the suit to put West on lead, but a heart exit, East covering dummy's card will keep declarer off the table and eventually East will collect two spades.

## THE INSPIRATIONAL WAY TO IMPROVE YOUR DECLARER PLAY

This is the sequel to *Misplay These Hands With Me* (Master Point Press, 2007), which is based on Horton's popular series of articles in the ACBL Bulletin. In an over-the-shoulder style, the author offers an account of a plausible line of play on each example hand, always without success, then gently points out how the contract could and should have been made with just a little more thought. Perfect for improving players.



**MARK HORTON** (UK) is Chief Editor of the Daily Bulletins at the World and European Bridge Championships as well as many other international events. He is founder and editor of the free online publication *A New Bridge Magazine*, and has written more than 20 books.

