

Marty's Gem

Back in the days when he was playing a lot of tournaments, Marty Bergen was a regular winner. When he offers a deal and says, "I finally played a hand really well," you can be sure it's worth a look. This one took place at the 2004 Fall NABC in Orlando.

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| | ♠ 10 8 6 2 | | |
| | ♥ K 8 7 3 | | |
| | ♦ 7 | | |
| | ♣ K 9 7 2 | | |
| | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div> | | |
| | ♠ A 3 | | |
| | ♥ 9 4 2 | | |
| | ♦ Q J 10 6 5 | | |
| | ♣ A J 10 | | |
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| 1 ♣ | Pass | 1 ♦ | 2 ♦ |
| All pass | | | |

The two diamond bid was natural – but this is about play, not bidding. For better or worse, you have landed in a 5-1 fit. The scoring is matchpoints, so consider your play when West starts with the ♥5.

Solution

Bergen's first test came on the opening lead. After a good deal of agonizing, he called for the king, which won! He next played a diamond to the jack, losing to the ace. West cashed the ♥A and ♥J, and led the ♠7 to the 8, king and ace. Watch those spots carefully!

The ♦Q drove out the king, and East returned the ♠4 to the ♠3, ♠Q and ♠2. West came back with the ♠9, ♠10, ♠J, ruff. Now the ♠6 was good, and so was the ♥8.

Bergen went to the dummy with the ♣K and led the ♥7. East ruffed as Bergen got rid of the ♣J. East was forced to lead his ♠4, and Bergen discarded his ♣A, winning with the ♠6 in dummy.

With two tricks to go, Bergen was in dummy. East had the ♦8-3, Bergen the ♦10-6. The trump coup enabled Bergen to go down only one trick, which was worth 9 on a 12 top – most East-West pairs were making plus 90 in 1NT. The full deal:

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Board 16 | ♠ 10 8 6 2 | | |
| West Deals | ♥ K 8 7 3 | | |
| E-W Vul | ♦ 7 | | |
| | ♣ K 9 7 2 | | |
| | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div> | ♠ K J 5 4 | |
| ♠ Q 9 7 | | ♥ Q 10 | |
| ♥ A J 6 5 | | ♦ K 9 8 3 2 | |
| ♦ A 4 | | ♣ 8 6 | |
| ♣ Q 5 4 3 | | | |
| | ♠ A 3 | | |
| | ♥ 9 4 2 | | |
| | ♦ Q J 10 6 5 | | |
| | ♣ A J 10 | | |