



By: **Matthew Weingarten**, National Champion
and one of District 9's former Junior Standout Players

Misfits

Misfits can be frustrating!

Remember everyone else playing in your direction has to play the hand, as well.

The big question is: *Can you handle it better than they can?*

The Auction was:

<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
1C	P	1S	P
2H	P	2N*	P
3C**	P	3D	P
3H	P	P	P

You are **South** and here is a diagram of the hand as the cards were dealt:

	xxxxx	
	Qx	
	Kxxxxx	

AKJx		QTxx
xx		AJTx
QTx		Jxx
Qxxx		JT

	K98xx	
	A	
	AK98xxx	

Playing South, you have a 7-5 hand, which is good enough to reverse. Partner's 2NT* is Lebensohl (playing it over reverses), forcing you to bid 3 Clubs**. 3 Diamonds was a signoff, but you decide to bid 3 Hearts. This is where the auction ends.

The opening lead is the Ace of Spades. While the contract may seem grim, you need to focus on playing it better than everyone else. You are in 3 Hearts, there's a fair chance that'll be the common contract. So, relax and play it!

As declarer, the best way to think about playing this misfit is by crossruffing the hand. You ruff the lead, cash the Ace of Diamond, cash a high Club, and then ruff a low club (ruffing low to begin with could be costly and cashing both high ones before ruffing would only work when they split 3-3). Now, cash the King of Diamonds and ruff a Spade. Then try to ruff a Club again, which more than likely will be overruffed with the Ace. The defense returns a Diamond, which you ruff, and it surprisingly holds. Next, you play a high Club, which forces out another trump. Now, it's impossible to go down as your 9 of Heart becomes a critical card for the making trick.

All in all, going +140 on this hand is an excellent result.

Could the defense have done better?

Yes!

Basically, East could have put a Heart on the table when they got to overruff the Club. By doing so, declarer is prevented from scoring all those trump tricks. And the opening lead is also debatable. This auction indicates a clear misfit, and it might be worth leading a trump at Trick 1. By leading trump, the result would have been fatal.

There were a variety of contracts played on this board. However, 3 Hearts was the most common contract with 5 Clubs also being popular spot.

The main take away is to take a deep breath, accept the misfit, plan, and execute accordingly. It just may be the difference between a good board and a bad one.

See you at the table!

MATT