

You start playing, and immediately pick up the following hand:

♠ AQ  
♥ ---  
♦ AKJ87642  
♣ AK7

There are two passes before you... You open the hand 2♣, your partner responds 2♦ (which you expected), and partner ends up playing this hand from the wrong side in 6♦. Partner gets a fatal club lead, and goes down 1, for -50. Is this bad luck?

On the next hand at equal vulnerability, your right-hand opponent opens 1♦, and you hold:

♠ KQ975  
♥ 8  
♦ K7  
♣ AJ986

You and your partner play Unusual NT and Michaels, but neither fit this hand. So you overcall 1♠, and your left-hand opponent bids 3♦, followed by two passes. Do you now feel comfortable bidding your second suit? You pass and score +50. Bad luck again?

You soldier on, picking up:

♠ AQ873  
♥ 965  
♦ AK84  
♣ 7

You open 1♠. Without interference, partner bids 3♦ (Bergen raise, showing 10-12 points and 4-card spade support). You confidently bid 4♠. Partner tables the following:

♠ KJ62  
♥ J72  
♦ QJ75  
♣ K8

The opponents score three hearts and one club immediately. Down one again... You leave the game in disgust. Are you unlucky? Or are you unarmed?

## **FOREWORD (Author's Disclaimer)**

**The treatments contained herein are outside the mainstream thinking of the traditional bridge community. If you decide to adopt one (or more) of these approaches, please be advised that you should NOT attempt to convince most of your partners to follow you. If that becomes their choice, embrace and encourage them, but it is unwise to lobby reluctant partners to change their well-established approach to the game. Please treat this material as “something to think about”...**

**Each of these treatments is intended to address a specific problem area in bidding, and each chapter begins with a discussion of that problem area.**

**Most of these treatments are relatively simple. None of them contain methods that are particularly challenging to remember; few of them contain artificial bids and responses. Most of the bids and responses are natural; none of them require hours of practice or pages of system notes. But each of them requires an initial investment in an assessment of what really matters in the bidding, subsequent play, or eventual defense of a bridge hand. And if you decide to embrace something you find here, there is absolutely no need to adopt others; each treatment stands on its own.**

**Two minor bookkeeping notes: Any bids that precede an exclamation point (!) are Alertable... And bids that are enclosed in parentheses indicate bids from the opponents.**

**Dave  
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