

Watertown Open Pairs 2-25-2012

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

	♠ A 10 9		
	♥ K J 8 7		
	♦ J		
	♣ A Q 10 8 2		
♠ K Q 2		♠ J 5 4 3	
♥ 3		♥ Q 9 6	
♦ 10 9 8 7 6 2		♦ Q 4 3	
♣ 7 5 3		♣ K 6 4	
	♠ 8 7 6		
	♥ A 10 5 4 2		
	♦ A K 5		
	♣ J 9		

West	North	East	South
	<i>John</i>		<i>Lloyd</i>
Pass	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			
4 ♥ by South			

Today I had the pleasure of watching Lloyd Arvedon and John McLaughlin play a session of bridge at the Watertown sectional tournament. This was the final deal.

The ♦ 10 was led and won by Lloyd with the ace. He played over to the ace of trump and back to the king, apparently misguessing the suit. He then passed the ♣ J, East took his two tricks, and Lloyd claimed, making five. No big deal?

Lloyd remarked after the session that he had not cue-bid 4♦, because he did not want a spade lead. Perhaps West should have led a spade anyhow, but she selected the apparently safe diamond lead. After a spade lead, Lloyd would have been guessing trumps for at most one overtrick.

Lloyd's play of the trump suit virtually assured a key matchpoint overtrick (and a second, if the ♥ Q drops). Had he finessed in trump and lost, a spade shift would have held him to four. Yes, the drop is a 2% better chance than the finesse, but that's not the main reason to play for the drop on this deal. On the lie of the cards, Lloyd's 52% play was wrong, but it only cost him one trick. Taking the 50% finesse and being wrong would have cost him two tricks. The expected payoff on his play was better than 2-to-1.

On the strength of steady, tenacious play, Lloyd and John scored a 63.59% game, winning this single-session event by 3.46 of their 843.17 matchpoints across the field.