

follows suit with the six and the seven, so clearly he started with three diamonds. How should you continue?

Game All. Dealer West.

♠ 6 4 3 2
♥ A K Q
♦ 10 8
♣ A K Q 3

♠ A 9
♥ 6 5
♦ A K Q 4 3 2
♣ 6 5 2

West	North	East	South
1♦	Dble	Pass	1♠
2♦	3♦	Pass	4♣
All Pass			

Declarer clearly has no further side-suit losers, so you must turn your attention to making trump tricks. The full deal is:

♠ 6 4 3 2
♥ A K Q
♦ 10 8
♣ A K Q 3

♠ A 9
♥ 6 5
♦ A K Q 4 3 2
♣ 6 5 2

♠ J 10
♥ J 10 8 3 2
♦ J 7 6
♣ J 9 4

♠ K Q 8 7 5
♥ 9 7 4
♦ 9 5
♣ 10 8 7

You can beat this contract if partner has as little as the ♠J-10 doubleton. You are going to have to give declarer a ruff-and-discard twice. Continue with a third diamond. Declarer ruffs in dummy and leads a trump to his king of spades. Win it with the ace and lead a fourth diamond. East ruffs with the jack and your nine of spades has been promoted into the vital fourth defensive trick.

Can you see what I mean when I say that many of the principles that you have learned so far are no longer sacrosanct? Giving two ruff-and-discards in the same deal is hardly normal defence!



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Top Table

Andrew Robson

Andrew Robson is a former World Junior and European Champion and the first Englishman (with Tony Forrester) to win a US major. A World Individual silver and bronze medallist, he has won most major national cups many times. Andrew is Britain's foremost bridge player-teacher-writer, and has radically altered the way many people view the game.



When did you start playing bridge?

When I was about 10, at home. My parents are social players; indeed now they come to my club to play. Then I used to play with my brother at Abingdon Bridge Club as a teenager.

How often / where do you play?

I do not play every day or even every week. I play big tournaments and sometimes rubber bridge as a guest at the Portland Club.

Do you always play with the same partners / team-mates? What do you expect of them?

Mostly I play with my European Championships partner Alexander Allfrey, occasionally with Zia Mahmood. My team-mates in the Europeans are my regular teammates. I like to go through every board with them with a critical yet understanding and friendly ear, so we can all learn and enjoy.

What do you do for a living?

I run the Andrew Robson Bridge Club in South West London, where I also teach. I travel the country leading instructive bridge days mainly for charity, and write in *The Times* (daily), *Country Life* (weekly) and *Money Week* (weekly). I also have written over 20 books on the game.

What are your favourite bridge books?

I started with Culbertson's *Red Book* out of the school library (still the best-selling bridge book of all time, now 80 years old). Apart from that, anything by Reese, notably *Play these Hands with Me* and *The Expert Game*.

What are your hobbies?

Mountain biking, being a dad – which is more than a hobby (some would say mountain biking was too . . .).

What would you change in bridge?

The game is in a fascinating state of flux. Enjoyed by more and more retirees who have no card-playing background, but fewer and fewer young players, the game is polarising. Overall more and more people are playing, but for enjoyment, social reasons and to keep their brain fresh. All entirely laudable but the game needs to be kept simple for them.

Apart from my play, I devote my time and skills to this very large, very rewarding group. Yet on the other end of the spectrum, top players (a declining number, sadly) are realising more and more that the methods, particularly bidding but also defence, required to succeed, need to be quite complex, largely incomprehensible to the larger former group. So what will happen? I think a Bridge App suitable for young players is needed to try to slowly bring the two groups slightly closer together.

What's the bridge success (so far) closest to your heart?

Winning the 1991 European Championships by a record margin (that I believe still holds today, even through the years of Italian domination). Curiously, I have not played in the Europeans since then, and this year they have returned to Ireland.

Can history repeat itself? Here's hoping it can!