



A DEFENSIVE GEM

Maurizio Di Sacco

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ J 2 ♥ 3 2 ♦ 7 5 3 ♣ Q 10 8 6 4 3	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q ♥ Q J 9 8 7 5 ♦ 10 2 ♣ A K J 2	♠ 9 6 5 4 ♥ A 10 4 ♦ K Q J 6 4 ♣ 7
	N											
W		E										
	S											

West	North	East	South
<i>Levin</i>	<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Roll</i>	<i>Robson</i>
1♠	Pass	2♥	3♦
3♠	4♣	4♠	All Pass

Robson set the boat of his partnership on a course for troubled waters - three diamonds floats into the 800 territory - and Forrester sportingly pushed the boat out still further. But his opponents ignored them - I wonder why Josi Roll did not apply the axe to four clubs: if he had done so, Amir Levin could have, in turn, doubled four diamonds as well - and settled for 4♠.

Forrester started the defence off on the right foot by leading a diamond, and Levin ducked, giving Robson a choice of defences. Reasoning that declarer would not have ducked if a shift was dangerous to him, he played a second diamond honour.

Levin could now reason that playing a spade to dummy's queen, then a heart towards the king is no good: the third, then the fourth round of diamonds would promote a trump trick for the defence, and four in all, so Levin carefully avoided this, finding instead a splendid play: he led his low heart from hand, and put up dummy's queen. Had Robson won that, and continued with a further top diamond, declarer could have ruffed in dummy, then used the

heart king as his re-entry to hand to draw trumps, conceding just one trump trick. Had Robson returned a heart instead, declarer could have led out trumps from the top, again losing just one trump: he takes three top trumps, crosses to the club ace and plays the heart jack to pitch his diamond. But when the first round of hearts went to Forrester's three (true count) and dummy's jack, Robson ducked!

Now declarer played a second heart. Robson won his ace, and carefully shifted to a club to dummy's jack. All declarer could do was to lead dummy's top heart, pitching a diamond, but Forrester ruffed and led a club for his partner to ruff, for down one.



Tony FORRESTER
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