

## Hand # 4: Playing Safe with the Globetrotters

The Eight, Nine, and Ten of Diamonds bounced into the room to the tune of “Sweet Georgia Brown.” They all wore Harlem Globetrotter costumes and the Eight of Diamonds even had a Meadowlark Lemon mask on. They each rolled a basketball around in their hands and even dribbled behind their backs as they told the following story:

Dealer: South Vulnerable: EW	<u>North</u> ♠ KJ2 ♥ Q2 ♦K1084 ♣ KQ83	<u>South</u> 1♣ 4♣ 5♣	<u>West</u> Pass 4♥ All pass.	<u>North</u> 3♣ Pass	<u>East</u> 3♥ Pass
	<u>West</u> ♠ 765 ♥ A64 ♦ QJ63 ♣ 964	<u>East</u> ♠ Q10984 ♥ KJ109753 ♦ 7 ♣ void			
	<u>South</u> ♠ A3 ♥ 8 ♦ A952 ♣ AJ10752				

“We like to play it safe,” the Eight of Diamonds said as he tossed a basketball in the air.

“Better safe than sorry,” the Nine of Diamonds said as he palmed a basketball.

“Use your intermediates the way they should be used,” the Ten of Diamonds said, “and you will win a lot of games. Just like the Harlem Globetrotters.

“We get the point,” the impatient Ten of Hearts said. “Will you please get on with it?”

“Well,” the Ten of Diamonds said. “West led the Ace of Hearts against Ms. South's five club contract and then continued a heart, ruffed by declarer.”

“Ms. South is a rather astute player and she immediately saw that she would easily make the hand if she could hold her diamond losers to one,” the Nine of Diamonds said, picking up the thread of the story as he bounced a basketball on the floor of Intermediate Place.

“yes, but she went even further than that,” the Eight of Diamonds said. “She arranged the play so well that no matter how the cards lay, she would come out with eleven tricks.”

“After ruffing the heart,” the Ten of Diamonds said, “she drew trumps in three rounds and played the Ace of Spades. Now she led a small diamond from hand.”

“Yes,” the Eight of Diamonds said, “And when West played small, she inserted ME.” The little eight's big smile was visible even through his Meadowlark Lemon mask.

“A very smart play,” the Nine of Diamonds said. “The Ten of Diamonds and I were protecting our little brother. And it was no matter whether East could win the trick or not. If East won, this player had to return a diamond or a spade to give Ms. South a free finesse. If East exited a heart, Ms South would get a ruff and a sluff to make eleven tricks.”

“Yes,” the Nine of Spades said, “her play was every bit as safe as betting on the Harlem Globetrotters.”