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**The Fine Italian Hand** was a Bridge Column written by G. Belladonna and B. Garozzo, Stars of the Italian Blue Team and eleven-time world champions.

### Today: Garozzo in Defense

For the past several years my partner, Benito Garozzo, has been known as one of the most deceptive and dangerous defenders in the game of bridge. One of the reasons he has acquired this richly deserved reputation is that he often waits until the very last minute to take a trick, to the dismay of his opponents. A hand which became known as "the hand of the year" in 1963 helped us win the World Championship, that year against the United States.

Here is the complete deal:

	<p>♠7 4 ♥4 2 ♦Q 8 ♣K 10 9 8 6 4 2</p>	
<p>♠Q J 10 3 ♥Q 10 9 5 ♦10 7 ♣Q J 5</p>		<p>♠2 ♥A 8 7 6 3 ♦A 5 3 2 ♣A 7 3</p>
	<p>♠A K 9 8 6 5 ♥K J ♦K J 9 6 4 ♣—</p>	

In both rooms the final contract was 4♠ doubled. In the Closed Room, Giorgio Belladonna encountered no great difficulties in playing the hand and he lost the obvious four tricks: the Ace of Hearts, the Ace of Diamonds, and two spade tricks, and went one down, doubled for a loss of 200 points.

In the Open Room the play was very interesting indeed. I led the♥5 to Benito's Ace, and Benito returned his singleton trump, which declarer won with the Ace. He

then led a Diamond to dummy's queen ... and Benito casually played small.  
Declarer led dummy's last diamond and Benito played small again!

Do you see what happened!

Benito had managed to create a problem for his opponent where there had been none at the other table, and as so often happens, when he had a problem the player made the wrong decision.



Kantar, Garozzo, Eisemberg, Belladonna

The American declarer reasoned that I was short in diamonds (he was quite right), and since he was convinced that I had the Ace of Diamonds (how could he guess that Benito had ducked twice so smoothly?) he elected to play his ♦9, hoping that Benito had the 10532.

I was very surprised but pleased to win my ♦10, and returned a trump. We, therefore, won two trump tricks, two diamonds, and the Ace of Hearts, for a gain of 500 points at our table, and 300 points overall.

Notice that from Benito's point of view, he could not lose by ducking since Declarer could only trump one diamond in the dummy. However, Benito realized that he might be able to score a 'coup' by ducking and that's exactly what happened.

The moral of the story is very simple: if you have nothing to lose by NOT

taking a trick, it often pays not to take it. Declarer may suddenly find himself

with a problem he never would have thought of if you had played routinely.