

Richard Freeman Junior Deal Of The Year
10th European Junior Pairs, 14-17 July, Opatija, Croatia

The Extra Chance by Brian Senior

Carole Puillet of France spotted an extra chance in the Girls second qualifying session. It came on this deal against the Dutch Spangenberg sisters:

Board 10. Dealer East. Both Vul.

	♠ Q 8 6		
	♥ Q 5 2		
	♦ J 8 4		
	♣ A 8 6 5		
♠ A 3 2	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K 10 9 4	
♥ 8 6		♥ K 4 3	
♦ A K 9 7 5 2		♦ 6 3	
♣ Q 4		♣ J 10 7 2	
	♠ J 7 5		
	♥ A J 10 9 7		
	♦ Q 10		
	♣ K 9 3		

West	North	East	South
<i>Sigrid S.</i>	<i>Chaugny</i>	<i>Jamilla S.</i>	<i>Puillet</i>
		Pass	1 ♥
2 ♦	2 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West kicked off with three rounds of diamonds, ruffed low by East and overruffed. Puillet crossed to dummy with the ace of clubs and led the heart queen for the king and ace. She drew a second round of trumps, then paused to take stock. She knew that West had eight red cards. If clubs were 3-3, a club could be established by playing king and another. But if the clubs were 4-2, then East would return the fourth club and declarer would have to open up spades herself, with the honours almost certainly split between the two defenders. That would lead to one down.

There was a small extra chance and Puillet found it. She led the nine of clubs away from the king. Caught with the now-bare queen of clubs, West had no choice but to win it and was forced to open up the spades or give a ruff and discard, either of which would give the contract. Had East been able to win the club from a four-card holding, she would have returned the suit and the contract would have failed, with declarer forced to open up the spades herself - but then there was no winning line.

If clubs had been 3-3, the defence would have won and exited with a club to the king. With no entry to dummy's

thirteenth club, declarer would now have to open up the spade suit — no problem, as West would now be marked with a doubleton, leading low to the queen would ensure a spade trick. Very well done, and it helped the French pair to finish top of the qualifying stage and win the bronze medal.

