

Bridge at the Village Lesson Hand—October 1, 2018

Brian Potter, Club Manager and Club Director

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In this week's lesson—board twelve—double dummy analysis credits East–West with a slam in either rounded suit on 26 HCP. As there are thirteen top winners (one spade, six hearts, and six clubs), this hand is more a bidding problem than a play problem.

Board: 12 Dealer: W Vul: NS	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> ♠9763 ♥9 ♦Q8532 ♣1043 ♠AQ2 ♥QJ10 ♦J ♣AKQ652 </td> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"> <table border="1" style="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> </td> <td style="width: 45%; vertical-align: top;"> ♠85 ♥AK8743 ♦109 ♣987 ♠KJ104 ♥652 ♦AK764 ♣J </td> </tr> </table>	♠9763 ♥9 ♦Q8532 ♣1043 ♠AQ2 ♥QJ10 ♦J ♣AKQ652	<table border="1" style="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		♠85 ♥AK8743 ♦109 ♣987 ♠KJ104 ♥652 ♦AK764 ♣J	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="4" style="text-align: center;">Possible Auction</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♣ (1)</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥ (2)</td> <td>‡ (2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠ (3)</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥ (4)</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4NT (5)</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♥ (6)</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6♣ (7)</td> <td>All Pass (8)</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Possible Auction				West	North	East	South	1♣ (1)	Pass	1♥ (2)	‡ (2)	1♠ (3)	Pass	2♥ (4)	Pass	4NT (5)	Pass	5♥ (6)	Pass	6♣ (7)	All Pass (8)		
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Bidding Notes—Board 12

- (1) West is about one trick short for a 2♣ opening bid. This is a very powerful hand, but it is not quite powerful enough to commit to the three level before any word from the responder.
- (2) Opening hand with length and strength in the two unbid suits. If South passes (a reasonable choice), West may jump-shift to 2♠ before either rebidding clubs or raising hearts.
- (3) Now, West sees that the adverse values are probably concentrated in diamonds (where only the ace matters) and spades (where West has solid controls). This is a cue bid of one of South's suits. West shows a good hand (but not one that must be as good as the hand West actually holds), forces for one round, and asks East to further describe the responding hand.
- (4) Minimum range (about 6–9 points) hand with *six hearts*.
- (5) West asks, "How many key cards do you have with hearts as trumps?"
- (6) Two key cards among { ♠A, ♥AK, ♦A, ♣A } without the trump queen (♥Q).
- (7) West can count one spade, six hearts, and six clubs with a diamond loser. 6♣ is a choice of slams: East may either pass or correct to 6♥.
- (8) Playing rubber bridge or IMP scored teams, East (aware that there are no side suit entries to the East hand) will usually pass so that the opening lead will come through the doubler up to the strong hand. At matchpoint pairs, East may exercise the choice of slams and correct to 6♥ to score an extra sixty points (980 rather than a mere 920) for a better matchpoint score when both slams make. This choice risks defeat in 6♥ when 6♣ makes. An entry problem may prevent East from reaching the closed hand to pull the last outstanding trump(s).

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Opening Lead Notes—Board 12

- » West's spade cue bid will probably discourage a spade lead. Thus, the opening lead will probably be an appropriate diamond by either defender. North should lead a diamond spot with or without South's double.

Play Notes—Board 12

- » Easy as the cards lie: After ruffing the second diamond, pull trumps in three rounds and run off six winners in the non-trump rounded suit

Thoughts on Board 12

- » South's defensive double (showing onside spade strength and strength in West's splinter suit) clarifies and focuses West's thinking. This clarity and focus simplifies West's approach to bidding the slam. Situations like this suggest that a defensive double against two bidding opponents may be poor strategy. Against this observation, consider the times when a defensive double enables effective competition against two bidding opponents.
- » Without the defensive double, West probably jump-shifts to 2♠. If East takes a preference to 3♣ rather than rebidding 3♥, West may settle for game rather than driving to slam.