

Bridge at the Village Lesson Hand—November 19, 2018

Brian Potter, Club Manager and Club Director

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This week, board eight offers East–West a grand slam on 28 HCP. Working side suit shortness in all three side suits contributes to a viable grand slam with 12 HCP outstanding. Notice how East takes control after West’s natural, limited opening bid. Also note, East does not “hog the hand” to declare in clubs, hearts, or notrump.

Board: 8 Dealer: W Vul: None	♠4 ♥J982 ♦KQJ53 ♣Q65 ♠AJ9632 ♥74 ♦10876 ♣A	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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> ♠KQ ♥AK106 ♦A ♣K109832		N		W		E		S		<p style="text-align: center;">Possible Auction</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2♠ (1)</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT (2)</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣ (3)</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦ (4)</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠ (5)</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4NT (6)</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5♥ (7)</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>7♠ (8)</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	West	North	East	South	2♠ (1)	Pass	2NT (2)	Pass	3♣ (3)	Pass	3♦ (4)	Pass	3♠ (5)	Pass	4NT (6)	Pass	5♥ (7)	Pass	7♠ (8)	All Pass
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Bidding Notes—Board 8

- (1) East–West play *weak two opening bids* that always show a six-card suit in first or second seat. East will investigate slam while forcing to game.
- (2) East asks West to show a side suit feature (ace, king, void, or singleton in that order with the lower ranking suit shown first if there is a tie).
- (3) West has the ♣A or a club splinter.
- (4) East shows the ♦A and asks West for more information.
- (5) No more news.
- (6) Key Card 1430 for spades: East asks West for a count of key cards among {♠AK, ♥A, ♦A, ♣A}.
- (7) West has two key cards without the trump (spade) queen. East knows that the key cards must be the two black aces.
- (8) East counts six spade winners, five side suit top winners, and (after a ruff or two with long trumps from West) two or three long clubs. Since that adds up to thirteen tricks, East bids the grand slam.

Opening Lead Notes—Board 8

- » With no hints from South’s bidding, North has no reason to pick a lead different from a top diamond.
- » The top diamond North chooses will depend upon partnership lead agreements.

Play Notes—Board 8

- » West needs three entries to the East hand to ruff two clubs (preparing for the likely case where clubs divide 4–2). Two of the entries will permit club ruffs, and the third entry provides access to the two established long clubs.

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- » North's lead removed a red suit entry to the East hand before West could use it constructively. Thus, West must use a top spade as an entry for a club ruff.
- » West's play should follow this scheme: Win the opening lead with the ♦A. Cash one of the ♠KQ playing small from the closed hand. Lead a small club to the ♣A. Lead a small trump to the remaining spade honor in dummy. Lead a small club ruffing low in West. North showed out in trumps on the second round. Thus, there is no overruff risk. Pull South's two remaining trumps with the top spades in the closed hand discarding two low hearts from East. Lead a heart to East and ruff a club back the closed hand. Both opponents have followed to three rounds of clubs. Thus, the table's clubs are all good, now. Lead the last heart from the closed hand to the table. Cash run table's three clubs from the top. 7♠ bid and made.

Thoughts on Board 8

- » Look at the three side suits. In each side suit, shortness provides ruffing controls in one hand that prevent the other hand's small cards from being losers.
- » When West showed both black aces with the 5♥ keycard response, East *knew* that there were no diamond losers, knew that there were no fast heart losers, and knew that clubs would probably provide enough discards to cover West's losers.
- » High card points, controls, distributional points, losing trick counts, and all the other bidding rigamarole are about *estimating* the *number of tricks* a partnership can win so the partners can learn what contract to bid. When you can count exact winning tricks (e. g., six spade tricks because the partnership has a 6–2 spade fit with the ♠AKQ and West is a favorite to hold some of the ♠J109), forget about all the bidding folderall and bid the contract that your count of tricks tells you must be the best contract.