

Bridge at the Village Lesson Hand—December 17, 2018

Brian Potter, Club Manager and Club Director

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On this week's lesson deal—board sixteen—North–South have a 29 HCP grand slam in diamonds. West's ruff of East's opening lead is the only possible successful defense, but West has no void. The North–South challenge comes in the auction.

Board: 16 Dealer: W Vul.: EW	♠ ♥K6 ♦QT987643 ♣AK4	♠T985432 ♥T72 ♦ ♣Q52	Possible Auction West North East South Pass 1♦ (1) Pass (2) 2♣ (3) Pass 2♦ (4) Pass 2♥ (5) Pass 3♦ (6) Pass 4♦ (7) Pass 5♠ (8) Pass 6♣ (9) Pass ¿? (a) All Pass																										
<table style="margin-left: 40px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♠AQJ</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♣AK4</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♠T985432</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♥J8543</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♥T72</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♦J52</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♣Q52</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♣T3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	♠AQJ	♣AK4	♠T985432	♥J8543	♥T72	♦	♦J52	♣Q52		♣T3			<table style="margin-left: 40px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">N</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">W</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">S</td> </tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	<table style="margin-left: 40px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♠K76</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">12</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♥AQ9</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♦AK</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">12</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">♣J9876</td> <td style="padding-right: 5px;">17</td> </tr> </table>	♠K76	12	♥AQ9	9	♦AK	12	♣J9876	17	Lead: ♥10, ♣2, or ♠10		
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Bidding Notes—Board 12

- (1) With 8½ likely offensive winners in hand, some players might open this hand 2♣ planning on a diamond contract. Such a plan may work well, but with a modest holding, partner might, expecting four defensive winners of partner, consider a hand resembling ♠Q96 ♥J974 ♦52 ♣J874 worth a penalty double. Embarrassing results may easily follow.
- (2) With the seven-card spade suit empty at the top, some players may preempt in spades with equal or favorable vulnerability. At unfavorable, “pass” is best.
- (3) In most partnerships, South is too strong to respond 3NT. 2♣ will do for now.
- (4) North shows a minimum range (11–15 points) with a six-card suit.
- (5) South's *reverse* (the 2♥ rebid forcing a three-level preference to clubs) shows extra values—usually, an opening hand or better—a game force in most partnerships.
- (6) North shows a seventh diamond. North knows this hand has a 26 HCP deck (♥AK, ♦AKQJ, and ♣AKQ) for North–South. The right 11 HCP in South (♥A, ♦AK, and ♣xx), make a 23 HCP grand slam possible. South's game force without misplaced values in spades, have North sure of 6♦ and considering 7♦.
- (7) Having shown an opening or stronger hand, South sets trumps in the nine-card diamond fit. Since there's a game force on, North will not pass 4♦.
- (8) Exclusion Blackwood—North–South use *Kickback* when they ask for key cards in any suit. North's jump past the key card ask suit (hearts in this auction) in an unbid or adversely bid suit announces a void in the suit of the jump and asks for key cards in the other three suits (excluding the void suit). This pair uses 1430 responses to both *Kickback* and *Exclusion Blackwood*.
- (9) South shows three key cards which must be the ♥A and ♦AK. Now, North can count twelve top tricks: ♥AK, eight diamonds, and ♣AK.

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- (a) North has run out of room for scientific bidding. If South holds the ♠A, ♥Q, ♣Q, or ♣xx with an unlikely third diamond there are thirteen top tricks. Otherwise, 6♦ may be the last plus score. Now, North must choose between stopping in 6♦ and risking going down one in 7♦.

Opening Lead Notes—Board 12

- » North–South have bid strongly and North has shown a spade void. That and East’s trump void reduce the choices to a rounded suit (assuming that North has been honest about the spade void) or a spade (on the chance that North has psyched *Exclusion Blackwood* to deter a spade lead).
- » With an honest North, East should pick the ♥10 (giving nothing away) or a small club (establishing the fourteenth and fifteenth tricks for North).
- » With a North who thinks you might fall for a psychic spade void, you might try the ♠10 to keep North honest against you in the future.

Play Notes—Board 12

- » North–South have thirteen top tricks: 3 hearts, 8 diamonds, and 2 clubs. A heart lead gives North a chance to fumble communications and win only twelve tricks. Any other lead either helps or does no harm.

Thoughts on Board 12

- » This board demonstrates the importance of maintaining an awareness of how one’s hand (and partner’s) change in value as the auction advances. North’s estimate of the hand’s potential grew from partscore to game to slam to grand slam as the auction revealed more and more about the South hand.