

## Learning Points - Bidding a Spade Club Two Suiter

February 28, 2008

by Steve Moese; edited by Mike Purcell

### E Deals

None Vul

Steve

♠ 96  
♥ A109853  
♦ J85  
♣ Q3

Mike

February 27, 2008 Thursday Evening Junior Fund Open Pairs  
Kay Mulford, Director, Cincinnati Bridge Association Bridge  
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♠ 72	N	♠ KQJ43
♥ J64		♥ K7
♦ AQ763	W 30 E	♦ 9
♣ J105	S	♣ AK962

Regardless what bidding system you use, there are always some hands that are not easy to show. Knowing how to bid these hands can be a challenge.

♠ A1085  
♥ Q2  
♦ K1042  
♣ 874

Duplimate:  
EW: 4♣, 3N,  
4♠

### The Bidding

**Mike:** I am sitting East with a 16 HCP ♠+♣ two suiter. Steve and I play Precision. This hand is a 1♣ opener (16+ HCP any shape).

East	South	West	North
1♠(!)	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠ (!)		Passed Out	

However, I do not like opening 1♣ because opponents can cause too much trouble in a competitive auction. Since I'm a minimum for a 1♣ opening, I must be concerned about competitive bidding.

South leads ♣8

All of the following generic auctions are bad with a 1♣ opening:

East	South	West	North	Comment
1♣	2♥ or 2♦	X or pass <sup>1</sup>	3♥ or 3♦	showing my hand is now a very risky proposition.
1♣	1♥ or 1♦	X or pass <sup>1</sup>	3♥ or 3♦	ditto as before
1♣	1♦	X or pass <sup>1</sup>	2♥ or 2♦	not as bad. Showing ♠+♣ before we get too high will be difficult.
1♣	1♦	X or pass <sup>1</sup>	1♥	This is the worst case scenario made possible because we gave opponents the room to find their 2-suit fit.
1♠	2♠ <sup>2</sup>	Any	4♥	

<sup>1</sup> X → 6-7 HCP or pass → 0-5 HC or a penalty hand for South's suit in Precision.

<sup>2</sup> spade cue bid show heart support and invitation to game.

**Steve:** After partner's 1♠ opening, I need 8 HCP to bid, and a Forcing 1NT (8-12 HCP) fits the bill exactly.

**Mike:** 1NT (8-12 HCP) response is expected and game is now possible if Steve has 8-9 HCP and fits in spades and clubs or 10-12 HCP at 3NT. More points are needed for 3NT than usual because of my lack of diamond and heart values. I'll Jump to 3♣ to give partner an option of strains.

**Steve:** Mike sounds like he has a 14-15 HCP 2-suiter. I am now discouraged about game. His 14 and my 8 give us a King less than game. If he has a singleton in his hand we might be able to bid 4 spades, but he'll have to find that bid. I'll make the simple correction to 3♠. Unlike standard bidding, I can pass partner's 3♣ call with a minimum and 0/1 spade card (say, 1345 and 8 HCP). I shouldn't pass with a minimum and 2 spades.

**Mike:** Just what I wanted to hear. Since partner didn't bid 3NT, he's a minimum (8-10) with has exactly 2 spades and at least 3 clubs. I will bid 4♠.

### The Play

When the dummy comes down, I see I am going to have some work as ♦AQ in dummy is somewhat wasted opposite my hand. South's opening lead is a good start though allowing me to capture the ♣Q in hand. I then cash ♦A for a finesse of the ♥A. In retrospect drawing trumps from declarer's hand right away would have been better. Fortunately the ♥A is on side and when North fails to go up with it, I win

the ♥K. Now I am definitely drawing trumps. South takes the ♠A and tries to cash the ♦K. I ruff and draw 2 rounds of trumps. The bad split means there's nothing left to do but run clubs until South takes the ♠10 losing 2 trump tricks and a ♥ trick. Making 4 ♠ scored +420 and was worth 6 ½ Match Points out of 8 (81% board).

## **Post Mortem**

### **Taking the Diamond Finesse**

On this lay of the cards I could have taken the ♦ finesse and had it worked, dumped a ♥ on a ♦. This would limit my ♥ losers to 1 no matter where the ♦A lay, but the risk is that if the ♥A and ♦K are reversed I will lose the finesse and two ♥ for 3 losers total. Playing for 2 losers only as I did is always preferred.

### **Opening a 2/1 1♠ versus a Precision 1♣**

**Mike:** I may not do this every time, but I think it has lots of advantages for 5-5 hands where I am uncomfortable having to compete to the 3 and 4 level on my own after a 1♣ opening. 6-5 hands with 16 HCP still belong in 1♣ because the chance for game opposite not much go up a lot and competition is much less troublesome to deal with.

**Steve:** OK, the bidding strategy worked well here and would for similar hands. I am concerned however that if West held a 3 card limit raise, we'd still be in 4♠. With such a hand I would jump to game over opener's 3♣ jump shift and East will not know if I held wasted ♦ values. If not 6♠ would make (not the hand I actually held). That said a 1♣ Precision (2/1 or Standard!!) auction would lead to cue bidding at the 4 level and perhaps a way to get to 6♠ when it is right (say both major Aces, the ♣Q, and 3 spades).

**Mike:** Point well taken. I guess I am willing to give up some clarity for slam auctions to make it easier to compete on part score and game auctions. Knowing which path to take and when is never easy, but isn't that what we love about this game?