

Learning Points – When 2 card support makes a fit

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E Deals

♠ AKQJ9

NS Vul

♥ QJ

♦ 7

Mike

♣ AQJ98

Steve

♠ 654	N	♠ 32
♥ K1087642	W 2 E	♥ A9
♦ Q	S	♦ AKJ9853
♣ 75		♣ 102

♠ 1087

♥ 53

♦ 10642

♣ K643

Deep Finesse:

NS: 4♠, 4♣

EW: 3♦, 3♥

Saturday Afternoon October 25, 2008. Grand National Pairs Flight B Qualifiers.

Misfit hands are often seen with long suits and shortness with partner. Here a 5 level sacrifice paid handsomely.

The Bidding

East's opening bid would be made by many. Since we play Precision, ♦s aren't a real suit yet. Partner does know East's hand is limited to 15 HCP and holds at least 2 ♦ cards. West's jump shift is of the weak variety. This typically shows 4-7 HCP with 7+ cards in the suit and the majority of the points in the suit bid.

North's 3♥ cuebid is typically played as a strong 2-suiter. East decides to intervene subtly, persuaded that a 9 card ♥ fit plus an 8+ card fit for opponents in one of the black suits means there are a lot of Law Tricks to be had on this hand. Besides, showing a fit first then bidding ♦ later is better. If West is on lead, East wants to suggest a ♥ lead is fine, partner.

East	South	West	North
1♦	Pass	2♥	3♥
4♥	4♠	5♥	Pass

Passed Out

North leads ♠ AK

South ekes out a 4♣ call probably counting on the ♣ fit more than the 3 small ♠. West didn't hesitate to bid 5♥. North passed deciding that South couldn't have more than 4 HCP on this auction and 5♠ needed a red Ace plus a findable ♣K. A penalty double here is not automatic (would you?).

The Play

The ♠ AK is an obvious lead. South showed 3♠ cards and North switched to ♣. Booking 4 black suit tricks, North continued with a 3rd ♠ to trick #5. Declarer ruffed in dummy and was down two. 5♥ down 2 for -100 earned 6.5 matchpoints of 8 (81%).

Post Mortem

When vulnerability is favorable and you have at least one 9-card fit, don't be afraid to bid them up! Yes, North South could have extracted -300 and saved a few matchpoints. The point here is that the 5 level is for the opponents, except when it's not!

This is an 18 trump hand (9 ♣ for North South and 9 ♥ for East West). If North South make 11 tricks in ♠, we make 7 in ♥. If they make 10, we make 8. In the actual result we made 9 tricks because the ♥QJ fell in 2 rounds, and East had modest working shortness in ♠. Complementary short suits can often enable extra tricks.

Indeed the 5 level can be right – the magic is in knowing when! Sometimes listening carefully to your opponents about what they did and did not say is all you need.