

Learning Points – Light 3rd Seat Opening

By Steve Moese & Bruce Parent (Mike Purcell, ed.)

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Bidding Level: Intermediate

Tuesday Club Game, July 13, 2010 Ms. Kay Mulford, Director. Cincinnati Bridge Association Bridge Center, 2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45241 (513) 631-8070 . Bruce Parent is my partner. We play 2/1 Game Force.

West Deals None Vul MPs	♠ 932 ♥ 8743 ♦ 4 ♣ AK1063	
♠ Q74 ♥ KJ6 ♦ K9852 ♣ 95 <i>Steve</i>	N W 8 E S	♠ 10865 ♥ 52 ♦ J1076 ♣ Q72 <i>Bruce</i>
	♠ AKJ ♥ AQ109 ♦ AQ3 ♣ J84	NS: 4♣, 4♥ N: 2N, S: 4N

When the bidding goes Pass – Pass to you, and you hold 3 HCP you better be ready. Opponents have at least 26 HCP between them (Partner’s pass is at most 11) and your left hand opponent will bid starting with at least 15 HCP in their hand. How can you interrupt their easy bidding approach to their game?

The Bidding

East hasn’t lost his mind. Alert to the strength of South’s hand, this 3rd seat opening bid is designed to get in the way. (*Psychic bids are controlled and not banned by the ACBL. Their use should be rare – once every several games. Partnerships cannot use controls – ways to identify psyches. Excessive psychic bidding is not allowed by the CBA. One factor is whether the partner of the psychic bidder is aware of the likelihood that a psyche has occurred*). This 3rd seat action by East is part of the bridge game. South’s double is takeout and West chose to show a constructive raise. West judged the hand as too good for an

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦ (!!??)	Double
2♦ ¹	Pass	Pass	2N
3♦ ²	Pass	Pass	Double
All Pass			
1= Simple Raise; too strong for 3♦; 2= Competing			
South leads the ♠A			

immediate preemptive raise to 3♦. South’s 2NT rebid was right on values, showing 19-21 HCP and stoppers in ♦s. Yes, this bid retains its strong meaning even in what appears to be a competitive auction. West now chose to rebid ♦s to: 1) take away the opponent’s NT bidding tools and 2) to show a 9-card fit in a constructive hand. The Law of Total Tricks says compete to the level of the number of trumps that you hold with suitable hands. South was left with the last decision and chose to double.

Position after Trick 7 - West to lead	♠ ♥ 843 ♦ 4 ♣ 106	
♠ ♥ KJ ♦ K985 ♣	N W 5 E S	♠ 10 ♥ 5 ♦ J1076 ♣
	♠ ♥ Q109 ♦ AQ3 ♣	

The Play

3 rounds of ♠s established 2 ♠ tricks for declarer. Careful to lead toward dummy’s red suits, declarer leads a ♣ at trick 4. In with the ♣A, North could do no immediate damage. The ♣K would establish East’s ♣Q as a winner and a red suit would provide a free finesse. North led a small ♥, delaying the inevitable. South wins the ♥A and leads a 2nd club (no return is better). North wins (the 5th trick for the defense) and continues ♣s. East ruffs the ♣Q in dummy the plays the ♥K and ruffs the ♥J. The ♦J fetches South’s ♦A and South is now end played. 3♦ Doubled down 2 for Minus 300 was worth 9 of 11 Match Points.

Pair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MPs	4	4	0	8	9	4		4	10.5	4	10.5	4	4
Result	-420	-420	-460	-400	-300	-420		-420	50	-420	50	-420	-420

Do you see where the opponents when wrong?

Post Mortem

After South's rebid of 2N, North cannot remain silent on this auction. North should bid 3N, content that the ♣ suit will contribute 4 or 5 tricks to the cause.

Some Norths might reason that a ♣ slam is possible given their suit, partner's strength, and ♦ shortness, and apparently finessable values held by East. Unfortunately partner has announced wasted ♦ values – values that North needs in the other 3 suits if a slam is to be made.

Better to bid the game you can make than a slam you cannot. Notice that the ♥K, ♦K, and ♣Q are all offside for any North South contract.

Learning Points

1. Know your auctions over partner's takeout double. A simple 2N rebid over competing opponents is still a very strong hand!
2. Light 3rd seat openings are useful – use them rarely or you will face corrective action by the sponsoring organization.
3. Never assume partner is opening light or making a psychic bid. Bid as you normally would – you might still get a great result.

Keywords: 3rd Seat Opening Bid, Psychic openings, NT rebid after Takeout Double