

Learning Points – Give the Opponents Their Due

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Defense Level: Basic/Intermediate

South Deals EW Vul MPs	♠ ♥ ♦ ♣			
♠ J94 ♥ 832 ♦ AQJ95 ♣ K3		N W 3 E S		♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
	♠ 853 ♥ AQJ65 ♦ 10 ♣ 10964			

South	West	North	East
2♥ ¹	Pass	2N ¹	Pass
3♣ ²	3♦	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

South leads ♦4

1= Ogust Ask 2=5 card suit any strength.

play that using 2N first implies a 5 card suit while a forcing ♠ response would show 6 or more and no interest in NT). South expected North to have 6 losers which when added to South's 7 ½ losers meant 10 tricks should be available -- and so bid the game.

Tuesday Night Club Game, September 28, 2010 Mr. Bob Veverka, Director. Cincinnati Bridge Association Bridge Center, 2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45241 (513) 631-8070 . Dr. Joe Fisher is my partner. We play 2/1 Game Force.

Constructive bidding after a Weak-2 bid can be touchy. Good defense is often harder to find. Here is a hand that turns on the play to trick 2. Can you find the killing defense?

The Bidding

South saw a nice ♥ suit in an 8 loser hand. Using the Rule of 2-3-4, South has 5½ winners, more than enough to open a Weak 2. NS play an asking sequence to handle this type of bid. North's 2N is Ogust like but the responses are different:

3♣ = 5 card suit (Partner responds 3♦ to ask strength in steps)

3♦ = 5-6 HCP, 3♥ = 7-8 HCP; 3♠ = 9-10 HCP; 3N = Solid Suit.

South showed a 5 card suit and West took advantage to show a ♦ suit in a hand not quite strong enough to overcall in the 1st place. North tried for game with 3♠ showing a good suit and extra values. (Some

The Play

West wins the 1st trick with the ♦A and must make the key decision.

How should West continue???

(Answer follows on the next page)

West reasoned that a ♥ was futile and that a ♦ played into declarer's strategy. A trump would take a ruff off the board. North must have one or both top trumps and partner is not likely to score a trump honor on this auction. The only place a trick might be manufactured for the defense would be if partner held the ♣A!

West backed her judgment and switched to the ♣K. When that held West continued the echo to partner who duly gave her the ♣ ruff she had earned.

Well done!

Did you find the setting lead?

Down 1 was worth only 0.63 MPs for a bottom board. EW earned a top for good defense.

South Deals EW Vul MPs	♠ AKQ1062 ♥ K ♦ 862 ♣ QJ8	
♠ J94 ♥ 832 ♦ AQJ95 ♣ K3	N W 3 E S	♠ 7 ♥ 10974 ♦ K743 ♣ A752
	♠ 853 ♥ AQJ65 ♦ 10 ♣ 10964	NS 2♣, 3♣ EW 2♦

Pair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MPs	0.63		5.69	0.63	4		7.94	2.31	6.81	4
Score	-50		170	-50	140		230	110	200	140

Post Mortem

Some point to the expansive use of weaker preempts at high-level competition. The data has shown a plus for this approach over time. Proponents justify the Weak-2 on 5-card suits as consistent with the Law of Total Tricks: If you have 5 then partner can be expected to have $8/3=2\frac{2}{3}$ cards in your suit. You only need an 8 card fit to bid comfortably to the 2 level. What matters is to have your **bidding tools** and **discipline** in hand if you do choose to use 5-card weak 2 bids...Reform your asking structure to enable showing a 5 card suit immediately. Also keep the benefit of the Rule of 2-3-4. That way you'll never mislead partner.

The defensive switch came from critical analysis of the options and an understanding of what declarer's approach to the hand would be. The ♣ switch is not so risky even if Declarer has the ♣A as partner might then have the ♣QJ...

Notice that 4♠ will make without the ♣ switch. The Modern Losing Trick Count can simplify many bid or pass decisions. South knows the 3-card fit for partner's ♠ and the shortness in opponent's ♦ are assets pointing to game. Counting losers $6+8=14$. Counting winners $24-14=10$ → We should be able to score 10 tricks. Bid the ♠ game.

For more about opening preempts see:

http://www.cincybridge.com/Lessons/20100117_Opening_Bid_Preempts.pdf

Learning Points

1. Preempt to the level prescribed by the Rule of 2-3-4-5 if you want partner to know what's going on. Weaker preempts might be fun for the preempter but they leave the partnership in the dark.
2. 5-Card Weak 2's are best when you adjust your constructive methods to cope. Otherwise you are headed for confusion (and our table we hope).
3. When partner makes a game invite opposite your Weak 2, count them for a 6-loser hand or better. Use the Modern Losing Trick Count to determine how high to bid WITH A FIT.
4. When defending, choose the logical suit no matter how risky it feels. You just might get a top board!

Keywords: Weak 2 on 5 Cards, Rule of 2-3-4-5, Lead directing overcall, defensive switch