

Learning Points – Tales From the NAP 6

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Bidding Level: Intermediate

West Deals
Both Vul
MPs

♠ KQ10
♥ Q10875
♦ K9
♣ Q86

Mike

Cincinnati Sectional and North American Pair Qualifier - Session 1 of 2 sessions. My partner is Mike Purcell. We play a 2/1 version of Precision.

When you deploy the Unusual Notrump convention, you want to declare the hand. You've just handed declarer a blueprint for the distribution. There is one exception – we can defeat their contract.

♠ 72
♥ J
♦ 105432
♣ AJ973

Steve

The Bidding

West's opening bid is a bit light but common – few can resist 12 HCP with Ks and Qs even though they lack 2 quick tricks. North passes in tempo holding West's suit and an opening hand. East chimes in with a 6-card ♠ suit and a constructive/borderline invitational hand. At favorable vulnerability South could not contain his inclination to commit an Unusual Notrump bid showing the minors. West passes, unsure of East's ♠ length. North offers the better minor and East shows ♠

West North East South
1♥ Pass 1♠ 2N¹
Pass 3♣ 3♠ Pass
4♠ All Pass

South leads ♣7

1 = Unusual for the minor suits.

length. Now West thinks this bare opener is a gold mine and bids the vulnerable game. North hasn't enough defensive tricks on his own to double so the opponents buy their spade game.

West Deals
Both Vul
MPs

♠ J6
♥ AK964
♦ Q86
♣ K104

♠ KQ10
♥ Q10875
♦ K9
♣ Q86

♠ 72
♥ J
♦ 105432
♣ AJ973

NS: 2♣, 2♦,
EW: 1♥,
2N, 3♠

The Play

The ♥J seems risky. After all West did show 5+ ♥s. Instead South tries the ♣7. North wins the ♣K and cashes the ♥A and ♥K. On the ♥K South signals attitude with the ♣3. North complies, seeing nothing better to do. NS win the 1st 4 tricks. 4♠ down 1 for +100 is worth 14.5 of 17 match points (85%).

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|---|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|----|----|
| Pair | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| MP | | 9.5 | 5.5 | 12 | 17 | 14.5 | 2.5 | 14.5 | 7 | 14.5 | | |
| Result | | -140 | -170 | -110 | 500 | 100 | -200 | 100 | -150 | 100 | | |

Two different sections played these hands, here are the rest of the results:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----|----|
| Pair | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| MP | | 14.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 9.5 | 2.5 | 9.5 | 0 | 9.5 | 5.5 | | |
| Result | | 100 | -200 | -200 | -140 | -200 | -140 | -620 | -140 | -170 | | |

Post Mortem

Getting to 4♠ on the EW hands requires serious optimism and overvaluation. The rule of 22 is a great way to be sure you have opening value in 1st or 2nd seat. Add HCP (12) to your cards in your 2 longer suits (8). Add your quick tricks (1.5). When this totals 22 or more, open the hand. The total for West is 21.5. Do you feel lucky? East's hand improves once partner can support ♠s. Unfortunately EW have 4 unavoidable round suit losers.

Learning Points

1. When RHO opens 1 of your major, pass in tempo without a care in the world. Don't bemoan your opening (or stronger) hand. You've just learned that your long suit will not have an easy time

developing length tricks. You've also learned the hand is a misfit. You know what to do with misfits, right? Why suffer when opponents should?

2. Avoid leading the opponent's suit, even when you hold a singleton. The suit you are developing might just be theirs!
3. When defending, remember attitude signals. They locate top tricks before declarer can get going.
4. Strain to intervene at favorable vulnerability with 5-5 hands. You'll be surprised how effective this will be over the long run.

Keywords: Competitive Auctions, Rule of 22 for Opening Bids