

Slam or No Slam by Steve & Mike Sep 9, 2013 Mon Eve
No one bid slam no Board 20. Should we bid it? And, if so, how? Never think Double Dummy when deciding whether a slam should be bid or not. What matters? Can the bidding determine if 12 or 13 tricks are possible? This goes well beyond just HCP. We need to decide whether we have 12 tricks and enough Aces and Kings so that opponents cannot cash 2 or more winners on the opening lead. Beyond these 2 requirements, Marshall Miles advises we should **bid all slams that are at worst on one finesse, and avoid slams if they are at best on one finesse.**

West deals, BOTH vulnerable. Here's West's hand. Let's discuss 3 different bidding schemes. Playing Standard American or 2/1 Game Force there are 2 possible opening bids to consider: 1♦, and 2N. If we choose 1♦ we need to think about our 1st rebid. Here 2NT would be a standout (3♦ would show 6 cards and 15-17 HCP). An opening 2N would be 20-21 in most circles. This hand has 19 HCP. Look more closely. The 5-card ♦ suit adds value, so do the two 10's and the intermediate cards. We like the upgrade to 2N. Let's play out 3 auctions from West's viewpoint (assume opponents pass throughout):

WEST
 ♠ K 10 8
 ♥ A J
 ♦ A K J 7 6
 ♣ K 10 7

| You | Partner | Comments |
|-----|-----------------|--|
| 1♦ | 1♥ | |
| 2N | 3♣ ¹ | Natural and game forcing. Promises 5♥ cards or some 4441 shape. |
| 3♦ | 4♦ ² | Your 3♦ promises 5. Partner shows 1=5=4=3 or 1=4=4=4 with slam interest. 3♥ here by you would show 6-cards. |
| 4♥ | 5♣ | Both bids show Aces. Using RKB over 4♦ will not let us find the ♦Q. Control bidding assures we don't miss key Aces. |
| 6N | | West sees 5♥, 5♦ (at worst finessing ♦Q) and 2 ♣ tricks = 12 tricks. With the guarded ♠K, bid NT (Match Points). Partner corrects to 7N with the singleton ♠A – the 1 trick we might be missing. |

--OR--

| You | Partner | Comments |
|-----|---------|--|
| 1♦ | 1♥ | |
| 2N | 3♣ | If 4N is 1430 RKB for ♦s, 5♠ shows 1 or 4 Key Cards. You now have no way to ask for the ♦Q. That's why advancing players use Minorwood |
| 3♦ | 4♦ | (keeps the keycard ask much lower – more room to find the trump Q). You have to guess on this auction – not a good bidding strategy. |
| 4N | 5♣ | |
| ??? | | |

9/10 - 99er Leaders

- 1st OA: **Mark Mitchell & Gail Zimmer** (61.9%)
- 2nd OA: **Peg Jervis & Pat Lindeman** (60%)
- 3rd OA: **Karen Kalla & Richard Horvitz** (58.1%)



New! Tues Eve 6:30 PM Sharp!
 Have a question?
 Mike & Steve will

discuss any bridge topic of interest before the Tuesday Game. See this newsletter for first topics! We'll discuss 1 or 2 topics before the game. Your feedback was very encouraging. Come early and join the fun!

CBA NLM Games – Play Often!

NEW! NLM Game Tues Mornings 11 AM

- Mon <2000 7 PM
- Tues NLM 11 AM
- Tues 99er 7 PM
- Wed Home Style 11:00 AM [Wed 199er 6:30 PM NKY]
- Thu Eve 7 PM (if attendance warrants)
- Fri NLM 11 AM (Lecture 10:30) [1st Fri 99er 10AM NKY]
- Sat 99er 10 AM to 12 Noon Supervised Play

Area Tournaments

- Sep 9 – 15 Fort Wayne IN R
- Sep 13 – 15 Pineville KY S
- Sep 20 – 22 Lucas KY S
- Sep 24 – 29 Fairborn, OH R

For Details go to <http://tournaments.acbl.org/display.php>

Let's look at bidding starting with 2N:

| You | Partner | Comments |
|-----|---------|--|
| 2N | 3♦ | Jacoby Transfer |
| 3♥ | 4♣ | Natural. GF. 5+♥ and 4+♣s |
| 4♦ | 5♦ | 4♦ shows 5 Cards or the ♦A. 5♦ shows 1=5=4=3 or 1=4=4=4. |
| 5♥ | 6♦ | 5♥ shows the ♥A. 6♦ is an offer to play |
| 6N | | See 1♦ auction – count tricks. Play NT. |

Bidding Footnotes:

- 1) 3♣ might be a very popular convention called *New Minor Forcing*. This convention allows the partner of the NT bidder to show an invitational hand and ask for 3-card support for their major (with 4 card support opener would have raised directly).
- 2) RKB over minors takes up too much space. Experts use the otherwise idle 4-bid as the RKB ask, called *Minorwood*. Responses follow RKB, but responder signs off in 4 NT or 5 of the agreed minor.

We bid this slam if we pay attention to length tricks and key cards, while avoiding the tunnel vision that HCP alone offer. West has 19 HCP but the 5-card suit and

Board 20 ♠ J 7 6 4
 West Deals ♥ 8 7 6 4
 Both Vul ♦ 9 5
 ♣ Q 9 3

♠ K 10 8 ♠ 2
 ♥ A J ♥ K Q 10 9 5
 ♦ A K J 7 6 ♦ Q 4 2
 ♣ K 10 7 ♣ A J 4 2

N
 W E
 S

♠ A Q 9 5 3
 EW 6N; 6♥; ♥ 3 2
 6♦; 6♣; 2♠ ♦ 10 8 3
 ♣ 8 6 5

strong intermediate cards make the hand worth more like 20-21. East has 12 HCP, but in a ♦ contract it is worth 15 Support Points.

We will often miss good slams if we think only to: "We have 31 HCP – not enough for small slam," and no further. Think **TRICKS**.

Notice no one bid this slam in the Monday Night Game. Next time you find this situation, think tricks, not just HCPs.

| Bd 20 | Minorwood Scores | | MPs | |
|--------|------------------|-----|------|------|
| | N-S | E-W | N-S | E-W |
| 5 ♦ W | | 620 | 6.93 | 0.07 |
| 3 NT W | | 660 | 5.79 | 1.21 |
| 3 NT W | | 690 | 2.93 | 4.07 |
| 3 NT W | | 690 | 2.93 | 4.07 |
| 3 NT W | | 690 | 2.93 | 4.07 |
| 3 NT W | | 720 | 0.07 | 6.93 |

Western Cue Bids – by Steve Moese What is a Western Cue Bid? How do we use it? This bid was popularized by the Western Scientific crowd in the 60's and 70's. A Western Cue bid usually occurs at the 3-level and asks partner if they have a stopper in opponent's bid suit for NT purposes. It can be confused with the support cuebid. A NT stopper is: A, Kx, QJx, Q10x, J10xx. Here are a few examples of different cue bids.

| South | West | North | East | Comments |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------|--|
| 1♠ 2♥ | 2♣ Pass | 2♦ 3♣ | Pass | 3 suits are bid by our side. 3♣ asks for a NT stopper. North can pass 3♥, 3♠, 4♦. If South rebids 4♣, it's a slam try. |
| 1♠ 2♠ | 2♣ Pass | 2♦ 3♣ | Pass | We have bid only 2 suits. 3♣ SHOWS a stopper (asks partner about the unbid suit ♥). 1 ASK, 2 SHOW . With 1 unbid suit the Q bid asks for a stopper. With 2 unbid suits the Q bid shows a stopper. |
| 1♠ 2N | 2♣ Pass | 2♦ 3♣ | Pass | South has shown a ♣ stopper by bidding 2N. 3♣ is a slam try, either the Ace or useful shortness. South should show ♦ support now if possible. |
| 1♠ | 2♣ | 3♣ | | 3♣ = ♠ limit raise or better. South can bid 3N on the way to 4♠ to show a NT stopper (NOT Axx(x) please). Why not Axx(x)? Partner will be short and this is a poor stopper for NT. Bid 4♠ instead. |
| 1♠ 3♣ | 2♣ | 2♦ | Pass | 3♣ is GF and ambiguous. North will show a NT stopper if they have one. |
| 1♠ 3♣ 4♦ | 2♣ Pass | 2♦ 3♦ | Pass Pass | If South supports ♦ over North's NT rebid, it is a ♦ slam try and 3♣ showed the Ace! Sometimes the real meaning of the cue bid comes from what partner does next. |
| 1♠ | 2♣ | 4♣ | | Splinter Bid with 4-card ♠ support. 0/1 ♣ and 11-14 or so working HCP. Never count HCP in the singleton. This is not an attempt to play ♣s and is not a Western Cue Bid. |
| 1♣ 1♥ 2♥ | 3♣ 3♥ 3♥ | Pass Pass Pass | | A preempt in ♣s. Partner will have 7+ cards and a weak hand. Minors only. A Western Cue Bid – Opener has 5+ ♥s. Partner can't want to play ♥s. Partner will have 8+ tricks, needing a ♥ stop. No stop? Bid 4♣ - pass or correct. Partner will tell you what minor they hold. |
| 1♠ Pass | 2♣ 3♠ | Pass | 3♣ | We've bid one suit. There are 2 unbid suits. Too much to show, so this must be an ASK – Western Cue Bid! |

- When we show 3 of the 4 suits, a cue bid of the opponent's suit **ASKS** for a stopper. (Also **ASKS** when we have shown 0, or 1 of the other suits – see above).
- When we show 2 of the 4 suits, a cue bid **SHOWS** a stopper and asks for a stopper in the remaining suit.
- When partner makes a support cue bid, we can show a NT stopper if we intend to accept the game invitation, offering partner a choice of games.
- When a cue bid follows a bid that shows a stopper (usually NT), the cue bid is a GF and might be a slam try.
- If partner bids strongly after the cue bid, partner has a 1st round control in the opponent's suit and is interested in slam.
- Finally, a western cue bid forces to 3N or a rebid of either partner's suit (no NT answer shows we do not stop their suit).

Newcomer News – Mike “Keeping Fun On My Convention Card” Purcell 513 702 4007

This coming Saturday Lorna Davis and Susan Wisner will be running our Informal Supervised Play session 10-12. This week's hand has us wishing we were in slam at the start and happy to just make game at the finish. Enjoy!

Board 3 (Tues 9/10)

Board 2 ♠ K 10 8 7 6
 East Deals ♥ —
 N-S Vul ♦ J 8 4
 ♣ K Q 7 3 2

♠ A Q 5 2 ♠ J 9 4 3
 ♥ A K Q 10 8 5 ♥ 9 6
 ♦ A Q 5 ♦ K 10 3 2
 ♣ — ♣ J 6 5

EW 4♠; 4♥; 2N; ♥ J 7 4 3 2
 E 3♦; NS 3♠; W 2♦ ♦ 9 7 6
 ♣ A 10 9 8 4

Bidding – On this hand West has 21 HCP and a solid 6 card heart suit. With large hands like these we open 2♣ (21+ HCP or 9 quick tricks, any shape except 21 HCP balanced). East has 5 HCP with a King and should be thinking game knowing their side has 26+ HCP. Here are the responses to 2♣ I play with my partners:

- 2♦ – Waiting but promises at least an A or K or 6+ HCP. Game Forcing!
- 2♥ – Artificial, shows 0-4 HCP without an A or K. Says nothing about hearts and is alertable.
- 2NT – 8+ HCP, 5+ Hearts. Alertable.
- 2♠, 3♣, 3♦ – Natural, 8+ HCP and 5+ cards

Assuming opponents pass, East will bid 2♦. West can now bid 2♥ to show their suit. East with a balanced hand can rebid 2NT. West knowing partner has 2 hearts reevaluates their hand to at least 24 support points (21 HCP and 3 for the void). On minimum hands (21-22 support points) West should go straight to game in 4♥ but with this hand slam may still be possible so West should rebid 3♥ to invite partner to cue bid controls looking for slam. East knows they have a heart fit but has minimum values and no Aces and will sign off in game.

Play of the Hand – Assuming a ♣K lead by North (K from KQ), we expect 1 loser (1♠) and wish we were in slam. Declarer will ruff the club and then start to draw trump. Immediately we see the 5-0 trump break. The good news is we can still pick up the suit. Go to dummy with a diamond and finesse hearts with the ♥9. If South ducks play hearts again to pick up the suit. If they cover you can still pick up the suit. After drawing trump, you can cash two more diamonds and the Ace of spades to make your contract (1♠, 6♥, 3♦).

Post Mortem – Sometimes you will get bad trump breaks. When this happens do not panic. Reassess the best line of play and do your best. Remember your opponents will get the same bad breaks. Just making your contract or even going down one may be a good board.

| Bd 3 | Scores | | MPs | |
|---------|--------|------|------|-----|
| | N-S | E-W | N-S | E-W |
| 6 NT E | 200 | | 8 | 0 |
| 4 ♥ W | 100 | | 7 | 1 |
| 4 ♥ E | 50 | | 4.5 | 3.5 |
| 4 ♥ W | 50 | | 4.5 | 3.5 |
| 4 ♥ W | 50 | | 4.5 | 3.5 |
| 6 ♥ W | 50 | | 4.5 | 3.5 |
| 4 ♥ W | | 420 | 2 | 6 |
| 4 ♥ W | | 450 | 1 | 7 |
| 4 ♥ W | | 480 | 0 | 8 |
| 4 ♥ W | 100 | | 4 | 0 |
| 3 ♥ W | | 140 | 2.5 | 1.5 |
| 3 ♥ W | | 140 | 2.5 | 1.5 |
| 4 ♥ W | | 450 | 1 | 3 |
| 4 ♣ x S | 500 | 0.00 | 4.00 | |

Looking to improve your game? If you have an Intel Computer we highly recommend the free software offered by the ACBL and developed by Mr. Fred Gitelman. Check it out at: <https://web.acbl.org/LearnToPlayBridge/>