



West
♠ A65432
♥ Q5432
♦ 2
♣ 3

Hand Evaluation by Steve Moese

We had a fun conversation about hand evaluation last night and I thought it might be good to recap some of the points from Let's Talk Bridge. Salty Roarke offered this hand and asked how

to evaluate the hand in the following auction.

Do we use Loser Count?

Length Points? Shortness

Points? How should we

bid it?

The first thing we talked

about is hand evaluation. **High Card Points predict tricks very well when both hands are balanced (no suit longer than 4 cards) and the final strain is No Trump.**

When we play in a suit contract, distribution is a major consideration. Let's look at how strength and length collaborate! Consider the following 10 HCP Hands:

Hands	HCP	Losers	QT	Length
A: ♠Axx ♥Kxx ♦Qxx ♣Jxxx	10	9.5	1.5	7
B: ♠Axx ♥KQ ♦Qxxx ♣Jxxx	10	8.5	2	8
C: ♠AJxxx ♥KQxx ♦xx ♣xx	10	7	2	9

Say Partner opens 1♠ and we get to game in ♠s. Which hand makes the better dummy for partner? If we could see the hand play before we have to bid it, maybe we can inform our evaluation decision. We can't do that at the table, but we can take insights from card play that help us bid more accurately. Case in point: If we are in a 5-3 fit in ♠s, then declarer can ADD TRICKS to the total by ruffing cards in the SHORT TRUMP HAND (the hand with 3 trumps – usually responder/dummy). Therefore if we have 3 trumps, the hand is better if we have a doubleton or singleton or void. If we have 3+ cards in all side suits, partner will not be able to ruff in the short hand. That's why the 3=3=3=4 pattern should be devalued when deciding whether to bid a suit contract. Likewise, a 3=3=3=4 pattern has HCP in short suits. When HCP are in long suits (5+ cards) they pull more than their weight. Each top honor brings us one trick closer to setting up the small cards as winners. KQxxxx is much more valuable (in terms of trick potential) than KQ or KQx. In fact KQ doubleton is NOT worth 5 HCP (unless partner has freely bid that suit!). Why? The opponent's Ace will wipe out 2 HCP

11/19 – 99er Future Master Leaders

- 1st OA: **Andy Heldman & Gail Zimmer** (70.2%) **WOW!!!**
- 2nd OA: **Barbara Cooper & Judy Crotty Hall** (64.6%)
- 3rd OA: **JUdtih Lucas & Linda Drasnin** (58.9%)

CBA Newcomer Games – Play Often!

Mon 7 PM	Tue 11 AM	Tue 7 PM	Fri 11 AM	Sat 10-12 AM
		Let's Talk BRIDGE 6:30 PM	Free Lesson 10:30 AM	Supervised Play

Celebrations at the Cincinnati Bridge Center

Nov 24 Granovetters Grand Life Master Celebration

Join all 8 District 11 Grand Life Masters to celebrate both Matt and Pam achieving this pinnacle rank. Come meet the greats in the game. \$10/person includes lunch & bridge. **1PM Sunday**

Nov 30 John Altman 2013 King of Bridge Game

Join us for a special game honoring Cincinnati's own John Altman, the ACBL 2013 King of Bridge. Take a break from holiday shopping and join us for the fun! **1 PM Saturday.**

Dec 11 Holiday Party

Wed. Eve. Drinks **6 PM**, Food **6:30 PM**, Game **7:15 PM**. \$22 per person in advance. See directors or Diane Thaller and Melanie Onen. Details on the web.

Area Tournaments

Nov 15-17	Dayton, OH	S
Dec 26-Jan 1	Cincinnati OH	STaC
Jan 15-19	Independence OH	R
Jan 25-26	Lexington KY	D11 GNT Finals

ACBL Tournaments <http://tournaments.acbl.org/display.php>



by Steve & Mike
Tues Eve
6:30 PM Sharp!

immediately, and their J might win the 3rd round! If it's their suit, they win the race to length tricks. In terms of trick taking potential in a sit contract our three hands rank C > B >> A.

A hallmark bridge article by Jeff Rubens "In and Out Valuation" teaches an important lesson. How do these 3 hands rank supporting partner in a 4♠ contract?

D: ♠Axx ♥Kxx ♦Qxx ♣Jxxx Again, all have 10 HCP.

E: ♠Kxx ♥Qxx ♦Axx ♣Jxxx What matters is the

F: ♠Qxx ♥AKxxx ♦Jxx ♣x position of the top honors relative to partner's suit. We can all agree that an Ace is always a trick, while a K is likely a trick and surely one if partner has a supporting honor. The Q however is not to the stature of the A or K and is less

likely to be a trick when in a side suit than in partner's suit. Looking at hands D, E, and F, we see D offers 2.5 tricks, and so does E. F however offers 5 tricks – the ♠ Q and ♥AKxx on the assumption partner can develop and then reach ♥ length tricks. The disparity is enormous, but simple when you think about it – a Queen in partner's long suit is certainly a trick (called a cover card) while a Q in an unbid side suit is probably not a trick. **The likelihood we add tricks to partner's hand is what matters in hand evaluation.**

Quick Tricks	Loser Count	Bergen Point Count																					
<p>These are simply the top tricks in each suit and are counted the following way: A=1, K=1/2 Q=0 AK=2, KQ=1, QJx=0 AQ=1.5, AJ10/AQ10 =1.75 Quick tricks are "transferable values" useful on offense or defense.</p>	<p>Requires and 8-card 5-3 trump fit or better. Count the missing AKQ in all suits as losers. Count only to 3 in each suit – if void, 0 losers, singleton = 1 (unless the Ace=zero) Doubleton = 2 unless the Ax or Kx (1). Qx =2 losers. Qxx = 2.5 losers. QJx is 2 losers. AKQ AKQ AKQ AKQx = zero losers.</p>	<p>Aces are undervalued, Queens are overvalued, and 10's are worth something!</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Milton</td> <td>Marty</td> <td>Steve</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work</td> <td>Bergen</td> <td>Moese</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A = 4</td> <td>A = 4.5</td> <td>A=4.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>K = 3</td> <td>K = 3</td> <td>K = 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q = 2</td> <td>Q = 1.5</td> <td>Q = 1.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>J = 1</td> <td>J = 0.75</td> <td>J = 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10 = 0</td> <td>10 = 0.25</td> <td>10 = +</td> </tr> </table>	Milton	Marty	Steve	Work	Bergen	Moese	A = 4	A = 4.5	A=4.5	K = 3	K = 3	K = 3	Q = 2	Q = 1.5	Q = 1.5	J = 1	J = 0.75	J = 1	10 = 0	10 = 0.25	10 = +
Milton	Marty	Steve																					
Work	Bergen	Moese																					
A = 4	A = 4.5	A=4.5																					
K = 3	K = 3	K = 3																					
Q = 2	Q = 1.5	Q = 1.5																					
J = 1	J = 0.75	J = 1																					
10 = 0	10 = 0.25	10 = +																					
<p>Rule of 22 Open any hand in 1st or 2nd seat that meets the following: # Cards in 2 longest suits # HCP + # Quick Tricks ≥ 22 4th seat add # ♠s to HCP and open if total ≥ 15 (Pearson Points).</p>	<p>Opening hands = 7 losers or less. Limit raises/Invitational hands = 8 Simple raises = 9; Poor hands = 10-12 Add partners estimated losers to your losers and subtract from 24 to get an estimate of the winners you can expect. This does not account for failing finesses or cross ruffs!!</p>	<p>The idea is Q's and J's are never worth as much as similar HCP counts from A's and K's. Marty's idea is complicated. I look to a simpler version only when having to make a close decision.</p>																					

Going back to our 1st 3 hands we see:

Hands	HCP	Losers	QT	Length	Rule of 22	
A: ♠Axx ♥Kxx ♦Qxx ♣Jxxx	10	9.5	1.5	7	7 + 10 + 1.5 = 18.5	None of these hands are an opening bid.
B: ♠Axx ♥KQ ♦Qxxx ♣Jxxx	10	8.5	2	8	8 + 10 + 2 = 20	But notice there is a 2.5 point difference between A and C. Change the ♠J to the ♠
C: ♠AJxxx ♥KQxx ♦xx ♣xx	10	7	2	9	9 + 10 + 2 = 21	Q and this is an opening hand!

So how do we bid Salty's hand? This hand values to 6.5 losers, 6 HCP and a high probability of at least one and maybe two 8-card fits. Using Length Points we count 6+2(♠s) + 1(♥)s + 2 for the singletons. 11 Length points is worth an invitation. Shortness points suggest 6+2+2+1 for the 6th ♠ = 11. Certainly passing 1N should not happen. In standard bidding, Responder's rebid of 2♥ is constructive. Opener will pass only with a misfit. Partner will correct to ♠s with a mild preference, and raise to 3♥s with 4 and a maximum (balanced hand). Partner will rebid 2N with a sound 14 Count and 2♠ cards and 3 ♥ cards.. So, 2♥ should be enough. A jump to 3♥ or ♠ is a game force.

West
♠ A65432
♥ Q5432
♦ 2
♣ 3

If you play New Minor Forcing, you still can call 2♣ and see what partner does. Rebidding 2♥ or 3♥ cheaply then fully describes your invitation. No, we don't have 11 HCP, but we do have substantial playing strength from distribution. **Invite!** (Some might Jump to 4♥ directly – that's more risk than reward.)

[Learning Points Hand Evaluation](#) ← Click for more details on hand evaluation

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

This coming Saturday (11/23) Bob Fisk & Judy Ruehl will be running our Informal Supervised Play session 10-12. This week we look at a hand that shows why a 4-4 fit is better than a 5-3 fit when choosing between Major Suit contracts.

Board 3 ♠ A 9 6 3 2
 South Deals ♥ J 10 6 2
 E-W Vul ♦ A K
 ♣ K 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ Q 10 4
 ♥ A Q 8 3
 ♦ 2
 ♣ J 8 6 5 2

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

1 = Help Suit Game Try

Bidding – South will pass and some West’s will try an unconventional risky 2♦ Weak Two bid. **Don’t**. North will open the 15 HCP hand 1♠. East will pass and South will offer a simple raise – South’s hand is really close to a 3-card limit raise but more than half the strength is in Queens and Jacks – caution. North has enough to invite. But what should North do? Time to use the well-known **Help Suit Game Try**. North bids 3♥ asking South if they have values in ♥s to bid game. This is a very useful convention. In fact it’s the best way to get to 4♥ - the best NS contract. How does South respond to partner’s 3♥ invitation? First, decide if game is right. South has great value in ♥s so the answer is an immediate YES!!!. Second, decide what to bid. Of course we have a ♠ fit. However if North made a Help Suit Game Try with a 4-card suit, then we belong in ♥s. The answer is simple. **South bids 4♥s offering partner a choice if games IF NORTH HAS 4♥s**. If not, North simply corrects to 4♠ and we should be in the right place. This kind of conditional bidding works with a thoughtful partner – practice it!

Bd 3	Scores		MPs	
	NS	EW	NS	EW
4♥ N	420		4.5	0.5
4♥ S	420		4.5	0.5
4♠ N		50	2	3
4♠ N		50	2	3
4♠ N	100		0	5
2♠ N	110		3.88	0.13
4♠ N		50	1.38	2.63
3♠ N		50	1.38	2.63
4♠ N		50	1.38	2.63

Play – East leads the ♦3 (a trump might be better but makes no difference here). We count 1-2 losers in ♠s, 1 loser in ♥s, no losers in ♦s and 2 losers in ♣s. That’s 4-5 losers – there’s work to do. How can we limit losers in ♠s to one? Play the ♦A immediately, pitching a low ♠ from SOUTH (Dummy). Now the ♥ finesse loses to West’s ♥K. a devilish ♣ return will stress NORTH putting them to the test. Since North counts on having the ♠K with East, better to play West for the ♣A (Missing honor cards are slightly more likely to be separate than in the same hand). Rise with the ♣K and draw trump. Play a ♠ toward the Q and let East win their K. Lose a ♣ then a ♠ back to the table to ruff the 3rd ♣. The 3-3 ♣ split delivers 10 tricks – a ♠ ruff is the final entry to the established ♣s.

Board 3 ♠ A 9 6 3 2
 South Deals ♥ J 10 6 2
 E-W Vul ♦ A K
 ♣ K 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 5 ♠ K J 8 7
 ♥ K 9 7 ♥ 5 4
 ♦ J 10 8 7 6 5 ♦ Q 9 4 3
 ♣ A 10 9 ♣ Q 7 3

NS 4♥; 3♠; 2♣;
 1N; EW 2♦

♠ Q 10 4
 ♥ A Q 8 3
 ♦ 2
 ♣ J 8 6 5 2

Post Mortem – When a hand has two 8-card Major fits, prefer the 4-4 fit over the 5-3 fit. Why? There are 2 ways to win: Either you can set up the 5-3 suit for 2 discards, or you can reduce your loser count by discarding from the 3-card suit. The 4-4 suit offers no source of discards (nor does pitching a loser help much) when not trump. Success on this hand requires partner raise to 4♥ with such good support, confident North will correct back to ♠s when right. (Sometimes partner has only 3 cards when making a Help Suit Game Try).

When missing 2 critical cards and no idea where to find them, place one you desperately need in the hand that is safe, and place the other opposite. Here declarer places the ♠K in the East hand so plays West for the ♣A.

Don’t forget the old grandmaster’s wisdom – Which 8 card major should we play this hand in? Why the one that’s splitting 3-2 not 4-1 of course!!!

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/>