



## Weekly Wisdom

### The Sydney Bridge Centre mini lesson

Julian Foster (many times NSW representative) will be analysing an interesting hand from each Saturday ARVO BBO session. His column is updated weekly and published on the Sydney Bridge Centre website, under “Learn Bridge”.

You are also welcome to [send questions](#) about hands that you have played. Please use “Weekly Wisdom” as email subject. We will collate them and let our panellists leading by Julian Foster to answer them.

### Should you respond light? Should you protect?

#67360 BBO – Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022

<b>6</b>	♠ T9	Dir: E																														
	♥ 9654	Vul: E-W																														
	♦ 74																															
	♣ AJ973																															
♠ KQ83	♠ 72																															
♥ T82	♥ AQ3																															
♦ KQJ2	♦ T963																															
♣ 52	♣ KQ86																															
5	♠ AJ654	<table><tr><td></td><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr></table>		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	1	-	-	-	-	S	1	-	-	-	-	E	-	3	1	-	2	W	-	2	1	-	2
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11 11	♥ KJ7																															
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Board 6 last week included decisions around whether to respond to partner's opening bid and whether the other side should protect the auction.

East actually has the first decision. Most passed but two tables chose to open. Even though it is an advantage to get into the auction first I think I would draw the line here and pass. It's not a particularly attractive hand and we are vulnerable against not. If I do open it would be 1♣ which at least indicates a reasonable lead to partner.

Assuming East does pass, South has a normal 1♠ opening (unless playing weak NT). North has to decide whether to respond and, if he doesn't, East then has to decide whether to come back in. At 3 tables neither North nor East bid and 1♠

became the final contract. I would have bid on both the North and East hands. Even though North only has 5 points I would definitely respond 1NT for several reasons:

- It gives much less information away. Passing advertises to the opponents that we are very weak – 1NT doesn't (I could have up to 9 points for that) so it's much riskier for them to come in.
- It keeps open the chance of finding a much better spot. Imagine partner has a strong hand with a 5512 shape. We could even be making 4♥! Passing may lose the chance of hearing something else from partner.
- I have a doubleton spade. So there isn't really any rebid partner can make that I will really hate. If he bids 2♦ I can always give preference back to 2♠.
- My 5 point hand isn't actually that bad. Firstly it includes an ace and secondly all my points are in the 5 card club suit which could easily be quite useful to partner. There are plenty of much worse 5 point hands around!

I would also bid as East – whether or not North passes or responds 1NT. In both cases I would make a takeout double. Although it's not perfect (we would like a singleton spade and 4 hearts) I think it's clear when North passes – we could easily have a decent contract our way, selling out to 1♠ is very conservative (and, even if it is going off, we are only taking 50s because they are not vulnerable). It is important for the hand in passout seat to “protect” the auction. If North responds 1NT it's a bit riskier to double but I would still do so – see advanced section for more.

After East doubles South doesn't have anything more to say but West will now compete in diamonds – probably to 3♦.

3 tables played 1♠ by South and 3 tables played in diamond partscores East West. Against 1♠ West has an easy ♦K lead. It is good play for declarer to duck this (see advanced section). This will allow declarer to score a diamond ruff in dummy and lead a heart towards his hand. The ♣A is another entry to lead another heart so it looks like declarer will score 2 hearts, 1 diamond, 1 diamond ruff in dummy, 1 club and 2 trumps to scramble home.

In diamond partscores the best lead by North is actually a heart but, in practice, he is likely to lead the ♠10, being his partner's suit. The contract then plays quite nicely because declarer can draw trumps and lead towards his KQ holdings in both black suits. The defence can take their 3 aces and will get one heart but not two because declarer will be able to

discard a heart from his hand on the ♣Q or a heart from dummy on the ♠Q. Declarer effectively scores 3 trumps in one hand, both black KQs, the ♥A, and one black suit ruff in the other hand for 9 tricks.

### *Key points to note*

- It is well worth dredging up a response to a 1 level opening bid with only 5 points – it keeps open more options for your side and it makes it harder for the opponents.
- It's important to re-open where reasonable after a 1 level opening is passed to you. Frequently partner may have had to pass on quite a reasonable hand. Sometimes your side might even be making game!
- As a passed hand, don't be afraid to come back into an auction if you have suitable shape. Partner knows you are limited so he won't go overboard when competing.
- When the defence lead a suit where you hold the Ace (only) and a low doubleton in dummy it is frequently best to duck the first round to immediately set up a possible ruff in dummy. This is especially true if you prefer the hand on your left to be on lead.

### *More advanced*

I've discussed the concept of "protection" before but after 1♠ P P I think it's clear for East to re-open. There are many reasonable hands that West will not have been able to bid on over 1♠. There are even times where our side will make game! West might have a balanced 14 count that wasn't quite strong enough to overcall 1NT. Now we have a combined 25 points. What's more it's known that almost all the opponent's strength is concentrated in one hand which frequently makes it easier for us to play the hand and harder for the defence (the hand with the strength lands up having to lead away from its honours). In those circumstances you often find game making on fewer values than usual. A good rule of thumb for protecting is for the hand re-opening to mentally add 2 or 3 points and bid accordingly – while the other hand mentally subtracts 2 or 3 points.

If North responds 1NT, it's now riskier for East to come in because North could have up to 9 or 10 points and South up to about 20 so we could get into trouble. But, on balance, I think I would still double. Note that double in this sequence is effectively the same as it would be immediately over 1♠ - i.e. takeout of spades. The fact that East is a passed hand also (perhaps perversely) provides some safety – you are maximum for your pass but partner knows your hand is limited to there is little risk he will go overboard. Had South been dealer, that would not be the case.

Another possible auction has South opening a weak NT (yes even with the 5 card spade suit – it's usually best to describe the broad nature of the hand). Here, he would quite likely be left to play there. Although it's not a great spot today, as long as South gets out for 2 off he scores -100 which is still less than he would have conceded defending diamonds. This is an example of how effective the weak NT can be – it's almost impossible for West or East to safely enter the auction over it. North could be sitting there with anything from 0 to 10 points and only he knows which side has the balance of the values.

Playing in 1♠ on the ♦K lead I said declarer should duck. Why? Two main reasons. Firstly it is far more attractive to have West on lead – a trump switch comes round into the AJ, a heart switch comes round into the KJ. Secondly it keeps declarer's communications more fluid. He can next play a diamond to the A and ruff one. Had he taken the Ace at trick 1 and returned one to set up the ruff – not only could East now get on lead with the ♦10 to play a trump through, but also there is no immediate entry back to hand to take the ruff except the ♠A. There can sometimes be a third reason. It doesn't matter so much on this hand but on some hands it might be critical for West to find a key switch and it will be much harder for him to do so at trick 2. A good general philosophy for declarer is to lose tricks you know you will always have to lose as early as possible before the defenders know as much about the hand. It is much harder for them to defend accurately at trick 2 than trick 7 or 8, say, when they have seen more cards (and possibly signals) from partner.

Julian Foster (many times NSW representative)

## A fun way to learn from the experts – F2F NSWBA Teams of Three



The Teams of Three is one of the most popular events organised by NSWBA! You form a team of 3 players and we invite advanced players to be your Captain. Your Captain will play 2 matches with each player. It's a fun way to learn about team matches in bridge, it's also a great opportunity to learn from your Captain partner.

This one-day congress will be held on **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022** at the NSWBA clubrooms on Level 1, 162 Goulburn Street, Sydney, 10am start (please arrive at 9.40am to draw team captains).

Attractive prizes. \$50 per player (lunch included). **RED** masterpoints.

Please find the [details](#) and enter via MyABF.

## F2F Friday Workshop is back!

We are as pleased as you are that Will is running his Workshops again. The Friday Workshops are filling up! Please book in early to avoid disappointment. The next two workshops will be held in the City on:

- **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June:** Reverses and Jumps
- **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July:** The 2NT Jacoby Raise

\$50 for member (both Sydney Bridge Centre and Strathfield Bridge Club members can enjoy the special rate) / \$55 for visitors. Please find the [details](#) on our website. [Booking](#) essential for catering purpose.

## Regular F2F and Online sessions at 3 venues

### - F2F @ CITY -

There will be sessions every day from Monday to Thursday at City, with a separated field for Supervised players on Wednesday morning. All morning sessions start at 10.00am. We have two evening sessions – the Tuesday night is for Open (7.15pm start), please contact office for pre-arrangement if you are not a regular of this session. The Wednesday night is a study group for Supervised players, 6.30pm start and aim to finish at 9.00pm.

### - F2F @ CANADA BAY -

We have been running Monday and Thursday Morning sessions in Canada Bay Club, 10.00am for 10.15am start. Starting from 1<sup>st</sup> June, there will be **NEW session on Wednesday afternoon for Supervised players**. Details will be announced soon! Please keep an eye on our website.

Member's rate for both Sydney Bridge Centre and Strathfield Bridge Club players in any session and events run by either club in either venue.

Please find the details of [the session timetables](#) and find out [more about our venues](#) on our website.

### - ONLINE @ BBO -

If you prefer to play online, there are regular club sessions on Monday morning (10.15am), Thursday afternoon (1.45pm) and Saturday afternoon (1.45pm) on BBO. To join our online game, please follow this [step by step guidelines](#). BB\$4 for 24 boards.