



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.

Multi 2D v Weak twos and responding to them.

#65256BBO – Saturday 24th September 2022

8		♠ J875	Dlr: W
		♥ J5	Vul: None
		♦ Q6542	
		♣ KQ	
♠ 962	♠ KQ3		
♥ KQ9763	♥ T84		
♦ J97	♦ 8		
♣ T	♣ AJ9743		
		♠ AT4	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT
		♥ A2	N - 3 - 3 1
		♦ AKT3	S - 3 - 3 1
		♣ 8652	E 1 - 3 - -
			W 1 - 3 - -

This is likely to be my last column looking at a hand from the Saturday BBO session. Like most of the BBO sessions the number of tables has been falling as face to face bridge returns. It's likely I will instead start looking at a hand from the Monday duplicate session held at City and Canada Bay as that's now the largest combined session. The only real difference with a column from a face to face session will be I can't view the auctions or play, only the travellers. So I may have to guess how some of the results came about!

Board 8 last week was a competitive deal where East West can make life quite hard for North South. All but one table opened the West hand (in one case with a multi 2♦ and others with a weak 2♥) and I definitely would have opened this as well. Natural weak twos are a good pre-empt and often more effective than the multi

2♦ - see advanced section for the reasons why.

North isn't strong enough to act so it's East's next bid. I would bid 3♥ - over both a natural weak two and a multi 2♦. This raises the auction to an uncomfortable level for North South as we'll see shortly. One table bid 4♥ which could certainly be right if the club suit is worth lots of tricks but I think it's a bit too much. Other tables either passed 2♥ or bid it over 2♦. This isn't a good idea – it makes it much less risky for the opponents to come in. Note raising 2♥ to 3♥ is NOT invitational – it's just raising the pre-empt. If you are genuinely interested in game, you should make an enquiry about partner's hand (usually with 2NT). 3♥ over a multi 2♦ is not invitational either but it is “correctable” – that is, it is prepared to play in 3♥ or 3♠ depending on which suit partner has. That works on this hand because East has 3 cards in both majors. If East doesn't have support for both majors he has to bid at the level he is prepared to play at – so with, say, 3 spades and 1 heart he'd have to bid 2♥ in case partner had hearts (if he later finds partner has spades he might then raise). With 3 hearts and 1 spade he could bid 2♠ in case partner has spades (but prepared to have partner correct to 3♥). This is actually one of the disadvantages of the Multi 2♦ that's discussed further in the advanced section.

Let's look at South next. He has probably got the best hand at the table. If someone opened a weak 2♥ you'd definitely make a takeout double. So you should be happy to do so if that's the level of the bidding when it reaches you. At the 3 level, it's not so nice since you are committing to a contract of at least 3♠. You probably should still double (partner could have had to pass with quite a reasonable hand) but it could certainly backfire - you have 2 hearts (you'd prefer 1) and you only have 3 spades (you'd prefer 4). You might not easily find a good fit your way and East can be sitting with quite a strong hand to bid 3♥. If South does double, North will probably bid 3♠ but he might go too high reasoning he has a lot more than he might have. Both North and South have to guess – only East truly knows whose hand it is.

We'll look briefly at the play in both 3♥ East West (which will probably be the contract if South doesn't bid) and 3♠ North South (which will probably be the contract if South does bid).

First in 3♥ North will not have heard any bid from partner. If he leads a spade that will quickly set up two spades for the defence to go with a diamond and the ♥A. But he may well just lead his longest suit – diamonds. South wins the ♦K and might now consider playing ♥A and another to try and stop diamond ruffs in dummy but he should be very wary of doing

that – see advanced section for why. He is probably better off playing a 2nd diamond himself. Dummy ruffs but now whatever declarer tries, the defence can still hold him to 9 tricks (see advanced section for how).

Lastly consider 3♠ by North which one table reached. East led his singleton diamond. Declarer won in hand and played two rounds of trumps, East putting in the ♠Q on the first round and winning the ♠K on the second. When he tried a heart, declarer could win the ♥A, draw the last trumps (luckily for him they split 3-3). He now scored 5 diamonds, 3 spades, a heart and a club for 10 tricks and +170. The defence could of course have done better – they could have taken ♣A, club ruff and diamond ruff. But that's all they'll get – they won't actually score a heart trick – see advanced section for why not.

I prefer a heart lead to a diamond for a couple of reasons:

- a) I already have a trump trick (possibly two if the ♠A happens to be with North) so I don't necessarily want a diamond ruff
- b) there is no guarantee I am going to be able to get partner in to deliver a ruff. Perversely if my spades were worse I would prefer the singleton lead (because now there's more chance of partner getting in in trumps to give me a ruff and I am ruffing with an otherwise worthless small trump).

On a heart lead it's harder. If declarer wins, plays a diamond to the ♦Q himself to lead trumps, now the defence can win the 2nd trump, play ♣A, club ruff, diamond ruff, and will also score a heart to beat 3♠. Declarer can in fact still make 3♠ but it's not very intuitive! See advanced section for how.

Key points to note

- Natural weak twos are often more effective bids than a Multi 2♦ – they are harder to defend against.
- Raising a weak two or a multi to the 3 level is not invitational – it's making it harder (and riskier) for the opponents to get into the auction. With a genuine invite start with a 2NT enquiry.
- Major suit bids in response to a Multi 2♦ are “correctable” – prepared for partner to bid his other suit if he doesn't have the one you have bid.
- Singleton leads are more effective from weak hands with small trumps – there's no point if you have values (partner won't be able to get in) or if you have trump tricks (you don't need to use them to ruff).
- As a defender try to think about how declarer could play. If he has a choice of plays and you already know one is going to work, try to steer him down the other!

More advanced

Although the Multi 2♦ (typically showing a weak two in either major and sometimes some strong options as well) is still quite popular, it is actually less effective against experienced players than natural weak twos. There are three main reasons for this:

1. Partner doesn't know which suit you have. That means he frequently can't bid as high as he might otherwise want to because he has to allow for you having the suit he doesn't have a fit with. Imagine responder holding 3 spades and 1 heart. He will have to respond 2♥ because partner is most likely to have hearts. However if partner does have spades, the opponents have been able to get into the auction at the 2♥ level. Contrast that with playing natural weak twos. The auction can start 2♠ pass 3♠ immediately and now the opponents are starting at the 4 level!
2. The fact partner doesn't know which suit you have also means he cannot find out as much about your hand if he does enquire. That's because some responses are needed to say what suit you have. A typical scheme after a 2NT enquiry is to use 3♣, 3♦, 3♥ and 3♠ to show good and bad weak twos with hearts and spades. But over a natural weak two you already know the suit so the responses can be more specific – a typical scheme might be to describe both your strength AND quality of suit, or to show shortages.
3. As an opponent you don't HAVE to bid over 2♦, you will almost always get a 2nd chance (most commonly the auction will either go 2♥ P P back to you or 2♥ P 2♠ back to you). Now you find out what opener's suit is and can act then. You might find your left hand opponent making a strong enquiry and be very glad you kept quiet! Against a natural weak two you may have to commit to making a bid or a takeout double because you can't

risk the contract being passed out. Now if your left hand opponent is strong he may be able to double your side.

Note how exposed South is after 2♥ P 3♥ or 2♦ P 3♥. North may have had to pass with up to 14 points if he couldn't overcall or make a takeout double. East can also have a very wide range of hands – anything where he is not looking for game opposite a weak two so from almost nothing right up to about 14/15 points. Only East knows whose hand it is – South has to guess!

Now for the play. Firstly in 3♥ I said that South should be wary of playing two rounds of trumps. The reason is the clubs. He can see 10 clubs and any honours in partner's hand are going to fall very quickly making all of dummy's clubs into winners. If declarer's diamond ruffs are removed, he will turn to his alternative line of setting up clubs – which South knows is going to work very well! In fact playing ♥A and another should lead to 11 tricks as 4 club winners will quickly be set up, declarer still has a diamond ruff entry to dummy and can discard his 3rd diamond and all 3 of his spades on those winners.

If South had clubs under control it would be good defence to cut diamond ruffs since he knows declarer's other line won't work. But here South should try something else – for example two rounds of diamonds to force dummy to ruff. Now declarer can be held to 9 tricks. The play depends on what declarer tries. If he immediately plays trumps the defence can afford to play ♥A and another which removes the last trump from dummy. Although declarer can set the clubs up, he has to play a spade to try and reach them – now the defence can win and cash a diamond. An alternative for declarer is ♣A, club ruff, diamond ruff then trump. But now South can take the ♥A and play a LOW spade to the ♠J and ♠Q in dummy! That removes the later entry for the winning clubs. Although the clubs are already winners, North still has the ♥J so if declarer plays a club and discards a spade, North scores a ruff instead. The defence also still score ♠A as their 4th trick. Effectively there are two entries to dummy to reach the long clubs – a diamond ruff (after trumps are drawn) and a spade (after the ♠A has been knocked out). The defence need to kill these entries each time they get in.

Finally what about the play in 3♠ by North? On a diamond lead the defence win the 2nd round of spades and take both their minor suit ruffs. That's 4 tricks but when they switch to a heart declarer wins ♥A. Because each defender has taken a ruff, they have no trumps left and dummy still has 1. That means declarer's 5th diamond can be used to discard dummy's ♥2 and declarer's ♥J actually gets ruffed in dummy! There is of course one catch to that – at trick 1 declarer needs to have played the ♦10 from South under the ♦Q to leave himself with the ♦3 to be able to get back to North later on!

On a heart lead, to make 3♠ declarer needs to win ♥A and play the same way as described above – i.e. a LOW spade away from dummy to the ♠J and ♠Q. Which doesn't look remotely obvious! This time the defence can take ♣A, club ruff and a heart but they can't also get a diamond ruff. Declarer can cross to his ♦Q and now lead a spade towards South's A10 finessing against East's remaining Kx to draw the remaining trumps! This play effectively assumes East has both spade honours which, while certainly plausible given West's pre-empt, is by no means guaranteed. But, as we saw earlier, declarer can't afford the luxury of crossing to ♦Q to lead spades from North as that sets up the diamond ruff as a 5th trick for the defence. Nor can he afford to play ♠A and another as that gives up 2 spade tricks to go with a heart, ♣A and club ruff.

Julian Foster (many times NSW representative)

Sunday Funday on 9th October 2022



Sleep in on a Sunday and enjoy a relaxed game in the afternoon! We hope you enjoyed the classic cucumber sandwiches, cheese platter and everything makes a Sunday great. As requested by players the club will now run one, and hopefully two Sunday Funday each month, whenever the venue on Goulburn Street is available. The next few Sunday Funday will be held on:

- Sunday 9th October 2022, 1.30pm - 4.30pm

You don't need a partner. No need to book in, visitors and walk-ins are welcome. \$18 member (\$15 concession member)/ \$22 visitor. Refreshment throughout play and join us for a glass at the end of the session.

F2F Workshops for different levels of players!

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 workshop will be held in the City on:

- **Friday 7th October:** Playing Easy Hands. Playing Hard Hands.
- **Saturday 8th October (Half Day ADVANCED):** Slam Bidding and Advanced Plays.
- **Friday 18th November:** Improve Your Overcalls and Competitive Bidding

\$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 -

- Monday morning 10.00am – 1.15pm, Open Inclusive
- Tuesday morning 10.00am – 1.15pm, Open Inclusive
- Tuesday night 7.15pm – 10.00am, Open Inclusive (booking in advance required, please contact office)
- Wednesday morning, 2 separate sessions – Intermediate/Open (9.45am – 1.15pm with a 15mins pre-game talk) and Beginners Supervised (10.00am – 12.30pm)
- Wednesday night 6.30pm – 9.30pm, Beginners Supervised
- Thursday morning 10.00am – 1.15pm, Open Inclusive

- F2F @ CANADA BAY -

- Monday morning 10.00am for 10.15am start – 1.30pm, Open Inclusive
- Wednesday afternoon 1.30pm – 4.30pm, Intermediate Supervised (1-hour lesson plus 2-hours game)
- Thursday morning 10.00am for 10.15am start – 1.30pm, Open Inclusive

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 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.