



## Wednesday Wisdom

### The Sydney Bridge Centre mini lesson

Julian Foster (many times NSW representative) will be analysing an interesting hand from each Wednesday morning session. This hand commentary will be sent to participants before the next Wednesday BBO session.

You are also welcome to [send questions](#) about hands that you have played. We will collate them and let our panellists leading by Julian Foster to answer them.

## #54056 BBO – Wednesday morning session 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021

<b>3</b>	♠ 6	<i>Dir: S</i>																														
	♥ K	<i>Vul: E-W</i>																														
	♦ T6																															
	♣ AQJ876543																															
♠ Q3	♠ AT9854																															
♥ T75432	♥ Q6																															
♦ AQ3	♦ J942																															
♣ K9	♣ 2																															
10	♠ KJ72	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>♣</th> <th>♦</th> <th>♥</th> <th>♠</th> <th>NT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>4</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>4</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	4	1	-	-	3	S	4	1	-	-	3	E	-	-	1	1	-	W	-	-	1	1	-
	♣		♦	♥	♠	NT																										
N	4		1	-	-	3																										
S	4		1	-	-	3																										
E	-	-	1	1	-																											
W	-	-	1	1	-																											
11	♥ AJ98																															
7	♦ K875																															
12	♣ T																															

Board 3 last week contained a 9 card suit! These are very rare and there's no established set of bidding rules for them. But their power in trick taking is obviously enormous. Let's see what might happen.

South will normally start with 1♦ (see advanced section for additional considerations in a weak NT system, however). West will probably overcall 1♥. The suit quality is poor of course but you have 6 of them and a decent 11 point hand (in fact probably worth more since the ♦K is more likely to be on your right making your ♦AQ equivalent to the AK).

North then has to decide how many clubs to bid. I would start with just 2♣.

There's no need to rush - with 9 clubs we really don't need much from partner to make 12 tricks so jumping straight to 5♣ seems premature.

Some Easts bid spades at this point. This is dangerous - you do have shape and you think the ♥Q is probably useful but you are still looking outgunned on the hand (South has opened and North has made a 2 level response). J9xx in diamonds isn't worth anything really either. With the unfavourable vulnerability you could be in big trouble. I would pass although if you are going to bid then a competitive double is an option (see advanced section).

Over 2♣, South is pretty much forced into bidding 2NT and now it's North's next go.

Some players bid 3♣ and landed up playing there. Usually a simple repeat of responders suit is not forcing (opener can have 11, you can have 10 and it can easily be the last making spot). So we are way too good for that on this hand. A 9 card suit like this should always be bidding to at least 5♣. That's what I would bid over 2NT. Slam is still possible but we now know more - we know partner is only 11-14 and our ♥K probably isn't worth much having heard hearts bid on my right. So I'd give up on slam at this point.

5♣ will no doubt then be the final contract. Several tables made the reasonable but unfortunate HQ lead (this is a reason for West not to overcall with such a bad suit!). How should declarer play?

Some declarers won the ♥K in hand and led a spade up. This should lead to them going off. East can win ♠A and switch to diamonds. In fact after the defence cash ♦AQ declarer only has trumps left so will be forced to trump and lead clubs from hand losing a trick to the ♣K as well for 2 off! But if East ducks the ♠A then declarer should make 12 tricks as they win ♠K, discard one of their diamonds on the ♥A and then take the club finesse to make 1♠, 2♥ and 9♣.

What declarer should do on the ♥Q lead instead is take the ♥A in dummy (yes crashing his own king under it)! Why? Because it gives him his only guaranteed entry to the South hand. That has a double benefit. First he can play ♥J to discard his losing spade and second he can take the club finesse (note with 10 trumps missing the K the odds still favour finessing rather than trying to drop a singleton ♣K). When that all works declarer ends up leading towards the ♦K. Even though that fails he still makes 11 tricks (2♥ and 9♣). Discarding a certain spade loser is

better than discarding a possible diamond loser (imagine the ♦A were in fact onside – now your diamond discard hasn't gained anything as you still lose the same one diamond trick you were always going to!)

Deep Finesse says the only game North South make is 3NT. I think that's pretty academic with such a long suit but it's an interesting exercise to work out how the defence hold it to 9 tricks. After all declarer has 9 clubs and 1 heart very easily! So the defence must be able to take the first 4 tricks which means they have to play diamonds - but see advanced section for exactly how they need to do this.

### Key points to note

- 9 card suits are rare and potentially extremely powerful. They should be trumps almost regardless of the rest of the hands! And they should almost always be played at least at game level.
- There is no need to jump to game if you can make a forcing bid at a lower level first – you can find out more about partner's hand then to potentially be able to bid slam.
- Be wary coming into an auction where both your opponents are bidding and have not really limited their hands – especially vulnerable.
- Sometimes you may need to crash your own honours to reach one hand where the entry is more important.
- Competitive doubles arise after 3 suits have been bid – they typically show the 4<sup>th</sup> suit and tolerance (but not direct support) for partner's suit (see advanced section).

### More advanced

Playing standard your NT rebid is 11-14 so you can bid 2NT over partner's 2♣. But imagine you were playing weak NT and your NT rebid is strong (15-17 usually). This creates a horrible problem with the south hand. What do you rebid after 1♦-2♣?! 2♥ or 2♠ are reverses showing much strong hands. 2NT is also now strong. The only answer, revolting though it is, is to rebid 2♦! To avoid this you might plan ahead and open 1♥ (even if that normally shows 5) so that you have a 2♦ rebid over a 2♣ response. Or you might choose to open 1NT despite the singleton. 4441 hands are always awkward - you basically have to lie in some way, it's just a question of which lie you tell!

I mentioned a competitive double by East. This bid is typically made after 3 suits have been bid round the table. In 4<sup>th</sup> seat your double usually shows:

- Some scattered values
- The 4<sup>th</sup> suit (often 5 of it)
- Tolerance for partner's suit (so a doubleton).

It is basically saying you are happy to compete if partner can do something else. But you don't want to commit to a single action yourself.

Let's finish with the defence to 3NT even though surely no one will ever play this hand there! How can EW take the first 4 tricks? The key is what diamond East plays through. If he leads a small diamond declarer ducks and West wins the Q. But now the defence can only get one more diamond trick no matter what they do. But consider the effect of East playing the ♦J through. Now declarer is helpless - if he covers West wins but his Q then drops declarer's 10 which promotes the 9. And if he doesn't cover East retains the lead for a 2nd diamond. Overall the defence score ♠A and 3 diamonds. The play of the J is an advanced defensive play known as a "surround play" - effectively East's J9 surround North's 10 and render it useless. It works because the defence also have the 9.

Another example of this play is this combination:

	10xx	
Axx		KJ9x
	Qxx	

The only card East can play through to enable EW to take all the tricks in the suit is the J. Try it and see!

Julian Foster (many times NSW representative)

## Win an Over the Shoulder Mentoring experience with a Teams of 3 Captain!



The Sydney Bridge Centre is running a **F2F Matchpointed Swiss Pairs Congress** on Easter Monday 5<sup>th</sup> April at Level 1, 162 Goulburn Street, Sydney. It is a one-day congress with 24 boards in the morning, lunch break, then another 24 boards in the afternoon. A delicious light lunch is included.

An invaluable and meaningful prize for the Open winners, the Overall Novice & Restricted winners and the Best Novice (or Restricted) winners – **Over the Shoulder Mentoring** by Derrick Browne, Helena Dawson or Jamie Thompson (all are many times Teams of Three Captains)

**RED** masterpoints awarded. Please refer to [programme brochure](#) for details and [enter online](#).

## The Sydney Bridge Centre is now running F2F club sessions AND online sessions on BBO

Yes, we have reopened on Goulburn Street only. Rozelle and Henley remain closed for the time being. We are now running F2F sessions in the City AND also online sessions on BBO. Please find our full session timetable on our website:

<https://www.sydneybridgecentre.com/sbc-sessions/>

### For Face-to-Face sessions:

All are welcome but due to Covid restrictions the numbers are limited. It is essential that you pre-book for these sessions via this [F2F Session Booking Form](#). Walk-ins are welcome for sessions which are not fully booked.

Normal table money fee.

### For BBO sessions:

All are welcome. No need to book. Please find us on BBO / Featured Areas / Virtual Clubs / ABF-Australia. Tournament title "Sydney Bridge Centre & Friends". Tournament will open only 2 hours before the game starts.

BB\$3 per person per game.