



## 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. To subscribe, please email your name and email address to [office@sydneybridgecentre.com](mailto:office@sydneybridgecentre.com).

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.

### #49037 BBO – Saturday ARVO session 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021

23	♠ K75	<i>Dir: S</i>																									
	♥ K8	<i>Vul: Both</i>																									
	♦ AQ83																										
	♣ J987																										
♠ A96	♠ QJ3																										
♥ 9	♥ AQJ7652																										
♦ KJT75	♦ 942																										
♣ AT64	♣																										
13	♠ T842	<table border="1"> <tr><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	-	-	-	S	2	-	-	-	E	-	3	3	-	W	-	4	5	1
♣	♦		♥	♠	NT																						
N	2		-	-	-																						
S	2		-	-	-																						
E	-	3	3	-																							
W	-	4	5	1																							
12	♥ T43																										
10	♦ 6																										
5	♣ KQ532																										

Board 23 last week had the vast majority of the East West field playing in 4♥. The auction typically started P 1♦ P 1♥ and quite a few Wests now rebid 1NT. Personally I would have rebid 2♣. I have nothing to be ashamed of with my rebid and I don't like to imply a balanced hand when I don't have one.

Besides, there is still plenty of time to get back to no-trumps if that is where we belong.

Here, after a 1NT rebid, East naturally thinks West has a balanced hand with at least 2 hearts so they are very tempted to bid to 4♥ with a "known" 9 card fit. Dummy was no doubt quite a disappointment!

Another reason not to rebid 1NT is that partner could still have a strong hand with clubs and we might be able to make a high level club contract. Further, after a 2♣ rebid (which is hardly encouraging to East) at pairs there is a case for East to be more conservative and perhaps only invite rather than just blast 4♥ (playing teams you can't risk not being in the vulnerable game as the bonus for making is so large).

The field here however almost all bid to game. 4♥ was played 13 times by East and made 10 of those times, 4 with an overtrick. Yet Deep Finesse is beating the contract. Let's see how.

South needs to start by leading their singleton diamond. Leading singletons to try for ruffs can often be good defence. But there are some guidelines for when it's worthwhile and when it tends not to be. Leading singletons tends to be a good idea when:

- You have a weak hand (because there is more chance partner will have the entries you need him to have to give you ruffs)
- You have trump control as well (because you can stop declarer drawing trumps and then hope to get partner in to receive your ruff)
- Your trumps are fairly short (if they are long, you are often better off leading a long suit hoping to force declarer to ruff instead and lose trump control)
- Your trumps are not otherwise going to be tricks (a holding like AQJ is probably 3 tricks anyway so there is no point using them for ruffing!)
- It's in partner's suit or an unbid suit (sometimes if it's dummy's main suit even if you get a ruff it just sets the rest of the suit up for declarer and their other side suit losers get discarded on it later).

Here our only slight concern is we might set dummy's diamond suit up but we satisfy most of the other criteria so the diamond lead is definitely the best option.

It works well. North will play ♦Q, ♦A and give South a ruff. At that point many Souths continued with the ♣K trying to set up a 4th trick there. But that didn't work – declarer could win the ♣A (discarding a spade), take a heart finesse, draw all the trumps and cross back to dummy with the ♠A to discard their last losing spade on the ♦K.

To beat 4♥ South has to switch to a spade and not a club. See advanced section for why, and how South might get this right.

Note that 4♥ is pretty lucky to even have a chance. It's only because North has precisely ♥Kx so the K drops under the A after the finesse wins. Without that declarer would also have a trump loser. So it's not a good contract. Two pairs stopped in heart partscores. I think they were quite unlucky. In theory they were correct but in practice so many pairs allowed 4♥ to make that they got a bad score. There isn't always justice in this game!

### *Key points to note*

- Don't be concerned about rebidding a minor suit. There is no need to rebid no-trumps just because you have a singleton in partner's suit.
- Try to keep no-trump openings and rebids to balanced hands – it makes it easier for partner to judge.
- Leading singletons against suit contracts trying for ruffs is often a very effective defence.
- Be more inclined to lead singletons from a weak hand.
- Watch suit preference signals from partner when giving you a ruff (see advanced section).
- As a defender try to project forward to see how the play might go and then consider if there's a distribution where declarer's expected play won't work (see advanced section).

### *More advanced*

So how can South work out to return a spade not a club after receiving the diamond ruff?

Two reasons:

1. Suit preference signals
2. Projecting what will happen and imagining a winning layout for our side

When North gives South the ruff, they should return the ♦8 and not the ♦3. This is the higher of their remaining diamonds which is a suit preference signal for the higher of the two side suits – i.e. spades. It's not always possible for partner to read the suit preference card (or even be sure that partner had a choice when playing it to start with) but it should be possible here. East will have played the 2, 4 and 9 so the only diamond South hasn't seen is the 3. If East had that, he has been extremely devious in the play! But it is also more likely that East only has 3 diamonds to start with – with 4 he might have shown support in the auction or investigated a possible high level diamond contract. Therefore South can infer the ♦8 is likely to be North's highest and that he had a choice when leading it.

But there's another thing South should consider. He has seen East has 3 diamonds and can infer he probably has 7 hearts (assuming he has rebid them several times). So that only leaves 3 black cards. If they are divided 2-1 then project forward to consider what will happen. Whichever suit we play declarer will win the ace, draw trumps (with the aid of the finesse) and then cross back to dummy with the other black ace to discard their remaining loser on the ♦K.

Is there anything that can prevent this? Only if declarer's black cards are divided 3-0. Now if we switch to the suit he has 3 in, he cannot later use the other black ace to get back to dummy. Nor can he take a discard on the ♦K straight away because we still have trumps.

So South should consider that the only way they can beat the contract is if declarer is void in one of the black suits. Which is more likely? Surely clubs. We can see 9 clubs between our hand and dummy but we can only see 7 spades. What's more if declarer had a void spade partner would have 6 of them to the KQJ and, with ♦AQ as well, they would have definitely have been bidding spades in the auction! Therefore we should hope declarer is void in clubs

and try to knock out the spade A from dummy. Our wish about the distribution comes true and dummy and the contract are both effectively dead!

You might consider that perhaps North should give South the diamond ruff at trick 2 without cashing the ♦A first (i.e. without setting dummy's diamond suit up)? While that would work on this hand it could be extremely embarrassing if South had in fact led a doubleton diamond! The 6 could easily have been led from 64 or 62. So that's not a realistic defence.

Julian Foster (many times NSW representative)

## The greatest learning experience – The Online Teams of Three



A fun event for players to learn directly from an advanced player in a relaxed environment. We invited these advanced players based on the recommendation of the NSWBA Event Committee to play Captains, who will take turn to partner with each team member throughout the day. You are not only learning from the Captain of your own team, you will also learn from other Captains when they are your opponents!

The [NSWBA Online Teams of Three](#) will be held on RealBridge, an online bridge program with built-in video support, so your Captain can give you “face-to-face” feedback.

**RED masterpoints awarded.** \$30 per player to be paid in advance via our online payment portal. We intend to run 3 separate fields for Novice, Restricted and Open players, so we can assign the most appropriate Captain to your categories. Please nominate the field you would like to compete in.

Enter in advance required. Please contact Wing on [office@sydneybridgecentre.com](mailto:office@sydneybridgecentre.com) to enter in the meantime as the NSWBA website is experiencing some technical issue. There will definitely be 3 separate fields for Novice, Restricted and Open players, so you can compete in your own league. Please nominate the field you would like to compete in.

## The Sydney Bridge Centre online sessions on BBO

Our clubroom on Goulburn Street is temporary closed under the current restriction. We are running regular club session online on BBO for the moment and will resume our F2F sessions once we can. Please keep an eye on our [website](#) for the latest announcement.

### 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.

24 boards, BB\$4 per person per game.