

SOME INTERESTING IDEAS

Since we are fortunate enough to have live bridge, I wanted to share some hands from the South Australian State Teams – hands that involved small ‘ideas’ that will improve your game.

	♠ 5 2		
	♥ K J 3 2		
	♦ J 4		
	♣ A 10 9 3 2		
♠ Q 6 4		♠ K J 10 9	
♥ Q 9 5		♥ 10 8 7 6	
♦ Q 9 8 6		♦ A 5	
♣ 7 5 4		♣ K 8 6	
	♠ A 8 7 3		
	♥ A 4		
	♦ K 10 7 3 2		
	♣ Q J		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

1NT showed 14-16 HCP (1st and 2nd in hand), to complement our 2 over 1 bidding style; this allows us to be able to pass the 1NT response, rather than worrying about 14 HCP hands opposite a possible 11 HCP response of 1NT.

West led the ♦6 to East’s Ace. East switched to the ♠J, ducked all round. He continued with the ♠9, to indicate to his partner that his spades were ‘solid’. West is actually expected to overtake if he holds the ♠Q, which will ensure the defeat of 3NT when the club finesse fails.

At our table, West ducked the ♠9, so East assumed declarer held the ♠A-Q. Therefore, he now reverted to diamonds, misplacing the points and cards around the table. 3NT now made.

What was particularly amusing to me was that my daughter had just been telling me she was once advised that when the opponents have a bad board, it’s a good opportunity to leave the table (e.g. go to the toilet). This will give the opponents time to argue about the hand, potentially derailing further boards. Immediately this hand ended, partner needed a toilet break! I sat there and watched this theory eventuate. Our opponents started arguing, each blaming the other. I just sat back and smiled to myself – until our adjoining table politely suggested that the opponents be quieter.

My next offering involves a 'small' declarer play 'trick'.

	♠ 9 8 6 5		
	♥ 9 3		
	♦ J 8 6 5		
	♣ K 9 7		
♠ 2		♠ J 7	
♥ A J 6 4 2		♥ Q 5	
♦ K Q 7		♦ A 10 4 3 2	
♣ 10 8 6 5		♣ A Q J 2	
	♠ A K Q 10 4 3		
	♥ K 10 8 7		
	♦ 9		
	♣ 4 3		

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	3♠ (weak)	Pass	Pass
Pass (after a lot of questions!)			

If you look at all four hands, you can see that West was correct in her desire to bid. After all, with both finesses working, 12 tricks can be made in clubs or 11 in diamonds! (She was also 'correct' not to overcall 2♥ with that dreadful suit, though a 'light' take-out double would be reasonable).

West led the ♠8. South played the ♠K at trick 1. Why did he do this?

From the lead, he knew the clubs were off-side, but he wanted East to continue with clubs, rather than to switch to a heart through the King. As it happened, on the second club, West dropped the 10, trying to convey her desire for a heart lead.

South trumped the third club and drew trumps. When he exited with his ♦9, West rose with the Queen but thought that declarer held the ♦A. Perhaps she also thought that East held the ♥K from her failure to switch to hearts at trick 3? (After all, she could have switched, and even been able to over-ruff dummy – for down 2.) So West now cashed the ♥K and we made 9 tricks.

The amusing aside is that our team-mates managed to defend 2♠, making – with slam available their way. (I wouldn't be happy if they were in slam, but reaching 5-minor is plausible.)

[Only four of 24 teams reached a game East-West. One made 5♦, one failed in 5♦, one made 4♥, and somehow one made 11 tricks in 3NT by East!]

Anyway, the point of the hand is to play the ♠K at trick 1, to avert the switch to a suit you don't want led.

My final offering:

	♠ 10 7 2		
	♥ K 10 9 4		
	♦ J 9 3		
	♣ 7 5 3		
♠ K 9 6 5		♠ J 8 4	
♥ A Q 2		♥ J 6 3	
♦ K 10		♦ A 8 5	
♣ K 9 8 6		♣ A J 4 2	
	♠ A Q 3		
	♥ 8 7 5		
	♦ Q 7 6 4 2		
	♣ Q 10		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the ♥4, ducked around to West's Queen.

Declarer needed a few things to lie well – either the clubs or the spades.

At trick 2, she cashed the ♣K, which resulted in her studying my ♣10 for some time. The ♣10 should be an automatic card with any doubleton 10 but, unfortunately, declarer decided to play me for the doubleton Q-10, perhaps not realising this. Play the 10 – even with 10-5. It may lead them to play the Ace on the second round. Sadly, my declarer did this – and this time she made her contract, where many failed!

Similarly, when you hold 10-9-x in the trump suit and declarer leads towards dummy's A-J-x, seemingly finessing, you should play the 9. Next time, they may lead their Queen, hoping to drop your doubleton 10-9 (or allowing for singleton 9 as well). Give them a guess, rather than making it 'easy'.

Barbara Travis

www.bridgewithbarbara.com