

DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Tom Hays

October 26, 2009

The cool, rainy weather kept people at home, so only three tables showed up for Monday's game. Lou Thurston and Tom Hays came out on top. The newly formed partnership of Elaine Franks and Renee Gross finished a strong second. With the win, Lou Thurston earned player of the month honors for October.

Many conventional bids have been developed which often look strange to those who are not familiar with the systems. The purpose of these conventions is to display as much information as possible, often using bids which would otherwise be of little use.

On Board 19, North's hand has only 19 high-card points, but the distribution and strength of the two majors makes a game-forcing two-club bid quite reasonable. East's double of the artificial bid shows good clubs (though not as good as South's this time). Most players who use the strong two-club bid use a two-diamond bid by partner as a waiting bid, keeping the bidding open for the strong hand. In this case, East's double ensures that North will get to bid again, so a two-diamond bid by South in this situation should be a positive response showing good diamonds.

After North bids two spades, South should splinter. The three-card spade support is one card short of the usual, but North has promised a powerful hand. Also, South has an ace and a king for North, much more valuable than queens and jacks would be.

North could use Blackwood at this point to ask for aces, but what if South shows one ace? If it's the ace of spades, a grand slam is a real possibility. If it's the ace of clubs, however, six will be the maximum. The way to find out is to use exclusionary Blackwood. By bidding five clubs, North asks South about aces in any suit except the bid suit (clubs).

When South denies holding the ace of spades, North has to reconsider. The grand slam is impossible, but what are the chances for a small slam? Well, South has splintered in hearts, so there won't be any losers there. Further, South has no values in spades and hearts, so the strength for the splinter bid must be in the minors. Thus, North should bid six spades, expecting South to have either the ace of clubs or the king of diamonds.

When this hand came up Monday night, none of the North-South pairs made it to slam, though all took twelve tricks. Either North opened one spade, intending to jump-shift later to show the two-suited nature of the hand along with the power, or South failed to splinter in hearts. That's why so many tournament players use these conventions.

To try out your bidding and play, meet us any Monday at 7 p.m. in the Woman's Club.
 For more information or partnership assistance, call Mary Tryer at 592-2374.

Board: 19
 Dealer: South
 Vulnerable: East-West

NORTH

WEST

♠: A 9 7 3
 ♥: 9 7 2
 ♦: 10 2
 ♣: 6 4 3 2

♠: K Q J 6 5 4
 ♥: A K Q 6 5
 ♦: A 8
 ♣: void

EAST

♠: void
 ♥: J 8 4 3
 ♦: Q J 6 5 3
 ♣: K Q 8 5

SOUTH

♠: 10 8 2
 ♥: 10
 ♦: K 9 7 4
 ♣: A J 10 9 7

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Pass	Pass	2 C (1)	Dbl (2)
Pass (3)	Pass	2 S	Pass
4 H (4)	Pass	5 C (5)	Pass
5 D (6)	Pass	6 S	All Pass

- (1) Strong, not necessarily clubs
- (2) I have good clubs
- (3) No need to bid 2D after the double
- (4) Splinter (singleton or void in hearts, good spades)
- (5) Exclusionary Blackwood (all aces except clubs)
- (6) No other aces

Opening lead: King of clubs