

ALEX'S MONTHLY BRIDGE TIPS

Partner opens 2S. Pass by RHO and this is your hand:

S ---
H KQJ109
D 5432
C K864

What should you do?

- a) 3H
- b) Pass
- c) 2NT
- d) 3C

If you chose:

a) you have made a forcing bid and partner will bid again...likely 3S! Just what you wanted to hear. And if partner bids 4H, you are going down in 4H.

If you chose c) 2NT is also forcing and asks partner to show a feature: An Ace or a King in a side suit (non-trump suit).

If you chose d) See a)

Yes, b) is the correct answer. You are not here to save partner. Just pray for the best.

To bid a new suit in response to partner's preempt, you must have at least 13 points and if you have a misfit with partner's suit, you must have 16 or more points.

Here's another. Partner opens 1H and you have this hand.

S 65
H KQJ862
D K8
C A65

You respond 2NT (Jacoby 2NT showing 13 or more points and at least four card Heart support). Partner bids 4H (showing a minimum (13-15) and NO singleton or void. What will you bid?

- a) Pass
- b) 5H
- c) 4NT
- d) 5C

You must not fall in love with your six-card Heart suit. If you make one more bid, you are too high and you will go down. Partner said "I have a minimum and no singleton or void" and you have a minimum in spite of your six-card support. Don't go to the five-level, you may be too high.

This is Partner's hand.

S Q42
H A9543
D QJ3
C K8

Just one more:

Partner opens 1H and this is your hand:

S 765
H KQJ6
D K852
C Q4

You bid 3H (Limit Raise) or 3D if you are playing Bergen Raises. Your LHO bids 3S and Partner passes as does your RHO. Your bid.

- a) 4H
- b) Pass
- c) Double

Partner's pass shows a minimum hand where he would have passed if the auction had gone:

1H - 3H (Limit Raise)

He has rejected your invitation. Have you already told your story? Yes!

b) is the correct answer. Just Pass.

THIRD HAND PLAY... WITH A TWIST

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Keep a card to beat dummy

The general guide for the defender playing third to a trick is to play high, choosing the cheaper of touching highest cards. However when dummy has an unplayed honour (picture) card that the third player can beat, he should usually hold on to his higher card to hold over that honour card till it is played. Insert your second highest card, provided it is the 9 or better.

Exercise: You are defending 3NT. West is your partner. Declarer calls for the $\heartsuit 2$ from dummy.

	<i>Dummy</i>	
	$\heartsuit Q 5 2$	
<i>West</i>		<i>East (you)</i>
$\heartsuit 4$ (led)		(ii) $\heartsuit A J 6$
		(ii) $\heartsuit A J 10$
		(iii) $\heartsuit K 10 6$
		(iv) $\heartsuit K 10 9$
		(v) $\heartsuit A 8 3$

Answers:

(i) $\heartsuit J$. You expect this to win (assuming West has $\heartsuit K$ for his low card lead). You follow with $\heartsuit A$ (top of two left), then $\heartsuit 6$, partner's $\heartsuit K$ beating dummy's $\heartsuit Q$. In notrumps, partner could then play out any long cards.

(ii) $\heartsuit 10$. Cheaper of $\heartsuit J 10$.

(iii) $\heartsuit 10$. If this was Trick One in a trump contract, partner would not have underled $\heartsuit A$. So your hope is that partner has $\heartsuit J$, and that your $\heartsuit 10$ will force out $\heartsuit A$, leaving $\heartsuit K$ to beat $\heartsuit Q$. Even in notrumps, (or at a later trick in a trump contract - where partner may have $\heartsuit A$), you will still almost certainly be better off playing $\heartsuit 10$. If you play $\heartsuit K$, and dummy's $\heartsuit Q$ is bound to score a later trick.

(iv) $\heartsuit 9$. Cheaper of $\heartsuit 10 9$.

(v) ♦ A. ♦ 8 is too insignificant to be worth playing. Play ♦ A, though this will later see ♦ Q promoted.

South Deals	♠ 8 7 5		
None Vul	♥ A Q 6 4 2		
	♦ Q 10		
	♣ J 4 3		
♠ A J	N	♠ 10	
♥ 10 8 3	W	♥ K J 9 5	
♦ A 7 5 3	E	♦ 9 8 6 4 2	
♣ Q 8 6 2	S	♣ K 10 5	
		♠ K Q 9 6 4 3 2	
		♥ 7	
		♦ K J	
		♣ A 9 7	

West North East South

			1 ♠
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

What happened?

This pair was not playing 2/1. West led ♣ 2, dummy played ♣ 3, and East played ♣ K. Declarer won ♣ A and, with one club and one diamond to lose, did not risk the heart finesse. He crossed to ♥ A and led to ♠ K. West won ♠ A, and could only cash ♣ Q and ♦ A. 10 tricks and game made.

What should have happened?

East must insert ♣ 10 at Trick One (key play), to prevent dummy's ♣ J from being promoted. Declarer wins ♣ A and, with four top losers, has to risk the heart finesse. ♥ 7 to ♥ Q loses to ♥ K. East cashes ♣ K, leads over to ♣ Q, and West cashes ♦ A. Now comes the Coup de Grace, West leading his thirteenth club, East ruffing with ♠ 10. Declarer overruffs with ♠ Q, but West must now score both his ♠ AJ. Down three.

If you remember one thing...

As third hand, retain a high card to beat dummy's higher card.

JACK BRAWNER'S OBSERVATIONS ON AN INTERESTING HAND

This is one of my favorite teaching hands. I "created" it years ago:

With your side passing throughout, the bidding goes

1C - 1H

1N - 2NT

P

Pass by the opponents. Can you paint a mental picture of declarer's hand? Specifically: assuming normal systems and bidding, how many clubs does declarer have?

Most students get this wrong and answer "three". This is why you constantly need to reevaluate your picture of the hand with the addition of new information.

Does declarer have four spades? NO, they would have bid one spade not 1NT.

Does declarer have four hearts? NO, they would have raised partner's hearts.

Does declarer have a four card suit? YES, somewhere.

Is it diamonds? NO, they would have opened a diamond with 4D and 3C.

So declarer has four clubs? AT LEAST. Probably five, though.

If declarer ONLY has four clubs, they would have to be 3 - 3- 3 - 4. But they could also be 3-2-3-5 or 2-3-3-5 or 3-3-2-5 and still have a 1NT rebid. (This even leaves out the notrump hogs that rebid NT with a singleton heart and/or six clubs!)

Declarer likely has five clubs. Over 90%.

You also know that declarer's first bid said 12-21 HCP, their second bid narrowed it to 12-14, and when they passed the invitation from partner they likely had only 12 , as they might have bid 3NT with 13 and a five card suit and certainly would go with 14.

You know more than you think you know. The trick is learning to ask yourself the right questions :-)

Happy deducing!

Jack

Ed. note: Jack is the manager of the very excellent Naples Bridge Center.