

Weak and 4 ?  
Strong and 5 ?

Patrick, February 2018

# Storyboard for tonight

- What we mean : weak & 4, strong & 5
- Good and bad points of each
- Sample hands bid both ways

<play some hands and discuss>

<break>

- What normally goes with strong & 5

<play some hands and discuss>

<any questions>

# Where do we stand ?

- Club bridge
- Tournament Bridge in the UK
- Bridge world-wide

# PART 1

What is “weak & 4” ?

# Weak & 4

- Opening 1N is 12-14
  - but should be 11-14 when non-vulnerable
- Opening a suit guarantees 4+ there
  - always hearts with both majors and balanced
  - otherwise it varies

# Weak & 4

- PLUS POINTS

- descriptive bid for a common hand
- obstructive element – they come in at 2-level
- easy for beginners to learn

- MINUS POINTS

- could hit a penalty double
- missed major fit if passed out
- awkward suit raises with 15-17 balanced

## PART 1b

What is “strong & 5” ?

# Strong & 5

- Opening 1N is 15-17
  - some tournament players like to upgrade 14s
  - many now playing 14-16
- Opening a major guarantees 5+ cards
  - always highest suit on any 5-5 hand
  - can open 6cd minor with a 5cd major
- With a weak NT hand ?



# Strong & 5

- Opening in minors – can be natural
- With a weak NT hand
  - open a 4cd minor suit if you had one
  - else open 1♣ if you have three of them
  - else open 1♦ (has to be 4432 shape)
- More often now – “a prepared club”

# Strong & 5

- Prepared club
  - take in all weak NT hands
    - (and hands too strong for 1N)
  - only promises two clubs
  - ensures you have an “unbalanced diamond”
    - good to know in competition
    - frees up the NT rebids

# Strong & 5

- Minimum hands with a 5cd major
  - get opened 1♥ or 1♠
  - need a safe rebid if partner bids 2♣ or 2♦
- So usually goes with
  - 1N response very wide ranging, and
  - 2-over-1 as GAME FORCE

# Strong & 5

- Implications of wide ranging 1N response
  - partner passes with weak NT hand
    - nothing exciting will be missed
  - partner bids suit if an unbalanced hand
    - same boat as otherwise, except that ...
    - ... some 1N responses might now bid 2N or higher

*range of a 1N opener?*

# Strong & 5

- PLUS POINTS

- 1N is a descriptive bid
- supporting partner's 1M opener is easier

- MINUS POINTS

- competing in the opened minor tricky
- they can overcall 1m more easily (+ and -)

# When it makes a difference ...

- Unbalanced hands
  - no changes on a free auction bidding a new suit
  - supporting pre-emptively easier
- Balanced hands
  - when opener rebids 1N : no effect
  - when opener supports a major : gain
- In competition : majors good, minors bad

W	N	E	S
		1NT	P
2♥	P	2♠	P
3♠	P	P	P

W	N	E	S
		1♣	1♥
3♠	P	P	P

W	West
♠	KQJ10652
♥	5
♦	Q5
♣	J96

E	East
♠	943
♥	A876
♦	K82
♣	A107

W	N	E	S
1NT	P	P	P

W	N	E	S
1♦	1♥	2♦	3♦
P	3♥	P	P
P			

W	West
♠	AQ
♥	Q96
♦	KJ109
♣	7543

E	East
♠	854
♥	J4
♦	642
♣	AQJ62



W	N	E	S
1♣	1♦	2♣	2♥
3♣	3♥	P	P
P			

W	N	E	S
1NT	P	P	P

W	West
♠	A93
♥	A105
♦	109
♣	AK1042

E	East
♠	Q642
♥	64
♦	K63
♣	9865

# N North

♠ A106543

♥ K964

♦ Q3

♣ 3

# S South

♠ Q8

♥ AJ2

♦ J872

♣ AK97





W N E S

		P	1♣
P	1♠	P	1NT
P	2♦	P	2NT
P	4♠	P	P
D			

W N E S

		P	1NT
P	2♣	P	2♦
P	4♠	P	P
P			





N	North
	1043
	104
	K9752
	1065

S	South
	AQ85
	95
	AJ64
	A87

W	N	E	S
	P	P	1NT
P	P	P	

W	N	E	S
	P	P	1 
P	P	P	

N	North
 Q863	
 872	
 AK	
 K985	

S	South
 AKJ74	
 K6	
 9854	
 J10	

W	N	E	S
	1NT	P	2♥
P	3♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

W	N	E	S
	1♣	P	1♠
P	2♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

W	N	E	S
		1NT	P
P	P		

W	N	E	S
		1♠	P
2♠	P	P	P

W	West
♠	AJ3
♥	74
♦	J73
♣	K8654

E	East
♠	K10962
♥	K106
♦	94
♣	AQ3

W	N	E	S
1NT	X	P	2♠
P	3♥	P	P
P			

W	N	E	S
1♦	1♥	2♥	P
3♦	3♥	P	P
P			

W	West
♠	AK10
♥	987
♦	J1065
♣	A72

E	East
♠	Q96
♥	32
♦	AQ98
♣	J943

# Conclusions ....

- You often get to the same contract
  - Sometimes they get in whichever NT you play
- 
- > Those were all hands from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - > Now those hands from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> where the choice made a difference ...



W	N	E	S
		1♥	P
2♥	P	3NT	P
P	P		

W	N	E	S
		1♦	P
5♦	P	6♦	P
P	P		

W	West
♠	10
♥	Q42
♦	J108632
♣	A65

E	East
♠	AQ87
♥	K976
♦	A75
♣	KQ



N	North
♠	10432
♥	J93
♦	AJ92
♣	52

S	South
♠	A6
♥	A1086
♦	K1084
♣	AQ4

W	N	E	S
	P	P	1♥
1♠	2♥	P	P
P			

W	N	E	S
	P	P	1NT
P	P	P	

# LET'S PLAY SOME HANDS NOW (BOARDS 1-2)

Tea break before / during / after but  
not all at once ... all done by 35  
minutes from now

# BOARDS PLAYED

Board 1 : elimination & end play

Board 2 : not giving away trick or entries

## PART 2

What goes with “strong & 5” ?

# Key Repercussions

- Opener might have weak NT hand
  - bids at 2-level “need” to be game forcing
  - 1N rebid is wide-ranging
- When partner bids at 2-level
  - 2N rebid now either weak, or very strong

# Key Repercussions

- When partner rebids a major
  - becomes a guarantee of 6 cards
- When partner reverses
  - it now longer shows extra values, just shape
- When partner supports
  - always 4+ cards

# Adoption of 2/1 Game Force

- Dominates across the world
- English Trials for places in European Team
  - 10 out of 11 relevant pairs play 2/1 GF
- Why?
  - so much more space on all big hands

## PART 3

What worries me about “weak & 4” ?



# Raising responder's major

## THE PROBLEM HAND

♠ J543

♥ AQ6

♦ KJT9

♣ A7

## THE BIDDING

1♦ – 1♠ – ?

# Raising responder's minor

## THE PROBLEM HAND

♠ KJT9

♥ AQ6

♦ AJ65

♣ J7

## THE BIDDING

1♠ – 2♦ – ?

# Missing a major suit fit ...

## THE PROBLEM HANDS

♠ Q7532

♥ K6

♦ A73

♣ A76

♠ KJ76

♥ 83

♦ KJ943

♣ J5

## THE BIDDING

1N – P – P – P

**LET'S PLAY SOME HANDS NOW  
(BOARDS 3-4)**

all done by 15 minutes from now

# BOARDS PLAYED

- Board 3 : not losing four tricks
- Board 4 : careful defence

# HAPPY TO TAKE QUESTIONS

On what we have done, or what we  
have not done ....