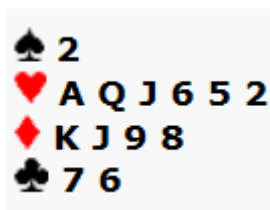


24/02/20 Hand of the week 2: Who's pre-empting who?

Here is another hand from the simultaneous pairs event, run on Thursday 13th February, another example of how to bid with distributional hands. Unfortunately this one did not work out as well!



I generally open with 11+ points on 'rule of 20', add high card points and length of the 2 longest suits together and if equals 20 or more away you go! I opened 1♥ and Martin bid 3♠. In our system this is a 'splinter' bid, agreeing trump suit, forcing to game and showing a void or singleton in the bid suit. Now things got interesting! Irene Johnson, on my right, bid 4♠. Now what?

Let's review things, Martin has forced to game and we have at least a 10 card heart fit. Martin has 0 or 1 spades, so the opposition have an 11 or 12 card spade fit. I am confident we have the balance of the high card points and I have a good second suit. I am expecting Christine Bennett on my left to be coming in with 5♠ if I bid 5♥ and we will miss our game. What to do?

I opted for a bit of trickery! If I bid 4NT suggesting Martin and I might have a slam, it might put the opponents off bidding for fear of getting a heavy penalty, and when we 'settle' for 5 hearts we will probably get the contract! As it was Christine bid 5♠ over 4NT anyway, so the bidding has been:

North	East	South	West
		1♥	Pass
3♠*	4♠	4NT	5♠
Pass	Pass	?	

Well we have missed our game, but maybe we can take them a few off and gets some points back? So I doubled. Unfortunately this is the full deal

Hand of the week 2: Who's pre-empting who?

Dlr: South
 Vul: N/S

Optimum
 EW 6S

Spades: 5
 Hearts: K 9 7 4 3
 Diamonds: Q 10 7 2
 Clubs: A J 3

Spades: Q 10 8 6 4 3
 Hearts: 10 8
 Diamonds: 3
 Clubs: 10 9 8 2

NORTH
 15
 SOUTH

Spades: A K J 9 7
 Hearts: - -
 Diamonds: A 6 5 4
 Clubs: K Q 5 4

10
 2
 17
 11

Spades: 2
 Hearts: A Q J 6 5 2
 Diamonds: K J 9 8
 Clubs: 7 6

Clubs: 2
 Diamonds: 2
 Hearts: 2
 Spades: 2
 N: 2 9 8 1 6
 S: 2 8 8 1 6
 E: 11 4 3 12 6
 W: 11 4 3 12 6

Irene rattled off 12 tricks in spades and we go for 750 and a bottom. Although NS have a good fit in hearts and diamonds, if they are left in 4♥, West will lead their singleton diamond to the Ace, followed by a diamond ruff, a spade to the Ace and a second diamond ruff. Along with a club that will mean 4♥ will go 2 off.

The summary is don't double unless you have a decent hand for defending!

Have a talk to partner about whether splinter bids might be a useful addition to your constructive bidding. A 'double jump' in a new suit agrees the trump suit and shows a distributional hand with a void or singleton.