

21/09/2020 Hand of the Week 31: Using information from the bidding

Here is a hand we played in a Swiss pairs event on 5th September

Hand 1:

7 D		N m27evans 2+			
W Peter Farm	W	N	E	S	E Chris Farm
	1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass	1♣ 1098732
	2♠	Pass	Pass	Pass	♥ QJ9
					♦ 7
					♣ QJ3
	S med029 3				
	♠				
	♥ 8652				
	♦ AJ85				
	♣ AK1042				
					2♠ West
					0 0

After a contested bidding sequence partner (North) leads 6♣

If partner has lead from a doubleton we should get 2 clubs, a ruff and the A♦, so we need 2 tricks from partner to take the contract off. Where are the tricks coming from?

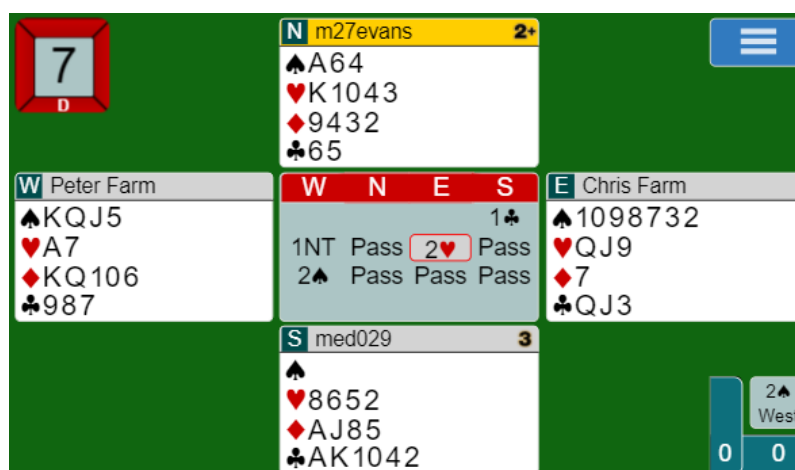
The 1NT overcall shows 15-17 points, with 6 points on table and 12 in hand we can count partner for 5-7 points. Partner is likely to hold 3 spades with an honour, so declarer cannot run the suit.

We need an extra tricks in diamond or hearts- with the singleton diamond on table then it is unlikely we will get 2 diamond tricks even if partner hold the K♦.

There is no danger in playing hearts now. If declarer holds 4 hearts then partner has a doubleton so will get a ruff on the 3rd round, so declarer will not get to throw their diamond loser. If declarer holds AKxx in spades then he will probably cash the spades, but partner will still be winning their Q♠, and can cash their K♥ at that point.

There is a chance of a trump promotion in this situation, if we can lead a 4th round of clubs, but the risk is that if declarer hold KQx in diamonds, when we cross to my A, declarer can ruff the 4th club high and then discard their heart losers on the clubs.

On balance the best chance is probably to switch to hearts now.



The heart switch establishes partners K♥, when the defence get in we now win 2 clubs, club ruff, A♦ A♠ and K♥ for 1 off

This play will be successful because if North holds Axx or Kxx in spades as we end up winning 2 spade tricks. If partner holds Qxx we can *either* take 2 spade tricks through a trump promotion in clubs, *or* establish the K♥, but cannot do both before declarer throws losers on the diamonds- but a switch to hearts does not lose any tricks and there is a 2/3 chance it will do some good!

How does the trump promotion work? South leading 3 rounds of clubs at the start, signalling for a diamond. Partner ruffs the third round low, and then returns the diamond for partner to lead a 4th round of clubs, with the holding:

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

If declarer ducks the North can ruff with the Q♠, if declarer ruffs high then this establishes North's Q♠ later in the hand.

Use information from the bidding and opening lead to help you work out partners holding- it might help you find the correct defence!