

25/07/2022 Hand of the Week 92: Bidding a very distributional hand



What to open with this hand! 1♦ is unlikely to get passed out, but left hand opponent may well be distributional as well and get in a low level overcall. Opening a strong 2 takes up a lot of bidding space and might not allow you to fully show your shape to partner? On balance I would favour 1♦ which is what South bid on the night.

West bids 2♣, Partner passes and East bids 2♠

Now what?

Partners pass suggests less than 10 points and no good major suit.

However, you could still have a 5-3 fit in hearts and need to make a forcing bid- what are the options?

X Forces for 1 round- partner could bid you might still not know their strength, and West might bid anyway

3♣ Should be taken as forcing but perhaps with a stronger hand than the X? Might need a partnership understanding!

3♦ Probably the worst option as you don't get to show your major

3♥ Shows a distributional hand with good strength

On balance I would probably bid 3♥ with a plan to come in with 4♥ if partner passes and your opponents bid 3♠. Partner should not pass unless they have a very weak hand with 3 hearts.

On the night South doubled, West came in with 3♠ and North was stuck without knowing partners strength and distribution.

The full hand:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">11</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">D</div>		N ♠ 96 ♥ Q102 ♦ K8 ♣ KJ9643	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td> <td>P</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>4♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				1♦	2♣	P	2♠	X	3♠	P	P	4♦	P	P	P	
W	N	E	S																				
			1♦																				
2♣	P	2♠	X																				
3♠	P	P	4♦																				
P	P	P																					
W med029 ♠ 7543 ♥ 43 ♦ 5 ♣ AQ10852		E Erika Pick ♠ KQJ1082 ♥ J87 ♦ J64 ♣ 7																					
	S ♠ A ♥ AK965 ♦ AQ109732 ♣																						
		4♦ S NS: 0 EW: 0																					

If South bids 3♥, West may well come in with 3♠- but North has a much better understanding of partners holding and is more likely to come in with their 3 card heart suit. Note South can still come in with 4♥ if partners passes which should show North they have at least a 6-5 distribution and gives them a choice of games.

With an excellent double fit and the void you can actually make 7♥ or 7♦ but you will probably only find a slam if South chooses to open a game forcing 2♣, which might prevent E pre-empting in spades. 6/7♠ turns out to be a good sacrifice if NS do find a slam.

With very distributional hands I think it is generally better to bid your suits to try and show partner your shape. Double can show strength but leaves partner in the dark regarding your distribution which in this case is more important to get across.