

Improving Your Bidding Judgment

Some Interesting and Difficult
Bidding problems

A Choice of Bids

- On many hands, there is more than one reasonable bid.
- And on some hands, there seems to be no reasonable bid.
- Bidding judgement involves making the best choice given what you have seen and heard.
- Let's look at some example hands.
- Keep in mind: No system can handle everything perfectly.

Example 1

- You are dealer on this hand.
- What is your opening bid.

♠ Q 2

♥ K 7 3 (16 points)

♦ A Q J 9 5

♣ A 4 3

- Would you open this hand 1♦?
- Nothing wrong with 1♦, but you have a better option.
- 1nt is a much better
 - Because of its preemptive value.
 - And it is a more descriptive bid.
 - No descriptive rebid.

Example 2

North	east	south	west
1nt	pass	2♥	pass
2♠	pass	??	

South's Hand

♠ K 10 9 7 5

♥ 3 (12 points)

♦ Q 10 2

♣ K Q 6 4

- South has a game-going hand.
- He wants to give partner as much information as possible.
- Bid 3♣.
- Partner knows you have but 5 spades and an unbalanced hand.

Example 3

North	east	south	west
1nt	pass	2♥	pass
2♠	pass	??	

South's hand

♠ K J 7 5 3

♥ K (12 points)

♦ Q J 2

♣ Q 9 6 4

- Same 12 points, but a different hand.
- The heart king gives you a stronger holding in hearts.
- Weaker clubs.
- If partner does not like spades, no trump is a better option.
- Bid 3nt.

Example 4

North	east	south	west
1nt	pass	2♥	pass
2♠	pass	??	

South's hand

♠ A 7 5 3 2

♥ K 4

♦ K J 10

♣ A J 9

(16 points)

- Do you have a slam?
- Maybe, but the one who knows is partner.
- Bid 4nt. (Quantitative not Blackwood)
- Tells partner you have 5 spades and slam interest.
- Partner has a choice of responses:
 - Pass
 - 5♠.
 - 6♠.
 - 6 nt.

Example 4

What opening bid?

♠ 10 2

♥ A K 6 4 (15 points)

♦ A K J 8 5

♣ 9 7

- If you open 1♦, what do you bid if partner bids 1♠?
- 1 nt is an underbid.
- 2♥ is a reverse, thus an overbid.
- Open 1nt.
- With two weak doubletons, 1nt is a bit dangerous, but best.

Example 5

A word about reverses.

♠ A Q 10 2
♥ A K 6 4 3 (13 points)
♦ J 8 5
♣ 9 7

- You open 1♥.
- Partner bids 2♣.
- If you play standard, bidding 2♠, would be a reverse and an overbid.
- In 2/1, once you are in a game forcing auction, reverses are not played.
- Playing 2/1, you should bid 2♠.

Example 6

North east south west

1♥ dble 2♥ ??

West's hand

♠ Q J 7 5

♥ 9 5 2 (7 points)

♦ A 4 2

♣ 7 6 2

East's probable hand

♠ K 10 2

♥ 6 4 (13 points)

♦ K J 8 5

♣ A Q 8 3

- Should you bid?
- You have only 7 points.
- Partner might have 3 spades for his double.
- You have 4-3-3-3 distribution.
- Your side has half the points.
- Your partner is behind the opener. Most finesses will work.

Example 7

North east south west

1♣ 1♠ ??

South's hand

♠ 7 5 3

♥ A K 4 (8 points)

♦ J 8 6

♣ 9 8 6 2

North's probable hand

♠ A 2

♥ 9 8 6 4 (13 points)

♦ Q 5

♣ A K 10 5 3

- Should you support clubs?
- You have only 8 points.
- Partner might have only 3 clubs.
- You have 4-3-3-3 distribution.
- Your side has half the points.
- Partner can compete.

Example 8

North east south west

1♠ 3♦ ??

South's hand

♠ K 3

♥ A Q 7 4 (12 points)

♦ 8 6 5

♣ K 10 6 2

- How do you handle this situation?
- The negative double.
- You have enough to invite partner, but not enough to force game.
- If partner bids at the 3-level you will pass.

Example 9

North east south west

1♠ 3♦ ??

South's hand

♠ K 3

♥ K Q 7 (14 points)

♦ 8 6

♣ A Q 10 6 4 2

- How do you handle this situation?
- The negative double? Some might.
- With 14 points, you have a game forcing hand.
- 4♣ would be game forcing.

Example 10

North east south west

1♠ 3♦ ??

South's hand

♠ J 3

♥ K Q 7 (12 points)

♦ K 10 9 6

♣ A 6 4 2

- How do you handle this situation?
- Some might make a negative double. .
- Best bet is a trap pass.
- You pass and expect partner to reopen with a double.
- Pay attention to vulnerability.

Example 11

North east south west

1♠ 3♦ ??

South's hand

♠ 5 4 3

♥ K J 7 (5 points)

♦ 9 6 4

♣ J 6 4 2

- How do you handle this situation?
- Pass is best.
- You pass and partner will likely reopen with a double..
- Bid 3 spades and hope for the best.

Example 12

North east south west

1♠ pass 2♠ 3♦

dbld pass ??

South's hand

♠ Q 8 4 3

♥ K J 7 (7 points)

♦ 9 4

♣ J 8 4 2

North probable hand

♠ K 9 8 4 3

♥ A Q 9 (13 points)

♦ K J 9 4

♣ 2

- What is partner's double? Think about it!
- Does partner know your hand? Yes.
- Does Partner know the maximum high-card value of your hands? Yes.
- This is a penalty double!
- You should pass.

Example 13

North east south west

1♠ dble redble 2♦

dble pass ??

South's hand

♠ Q 8 3

♥ A J 7 4 (11 points)

♦ 4 2

♣ K J 4 2

- Penalty double.
- Any double after your redouble is penalty.
- Partner says we can beat this contract bad.
- The only reason to bid on here is slam interest.

Example 14

North east south west

1♠ dble redble 2♦

dble pass ??

South's hand

♠ A J 8 7 2

♥ K J 9 4 (15 points)

♦ 4

♣ A Q 2

- Penalty double.
- Any double after your redouble is penalty.
- Partner says we can beat this contract bad.
- The only reason to bid on here is slam interest.

Final Thoughts

- When you encounter a strange or unusual situation at the bridge table.
- Don't panic!
- Stop and think:
 - What have you heard (actually seen, because we use the bidding box)?
 - What does partner know from your bids?
 - What do you know from partner's and opponent's bids?
- Draw the best inference, you can and make your assessment and act accordingly.
- Remember, no system can handle everything you might face, at the bridge table, perfectly.
- Do the best you can.