

Mentor/Mentee game
8-Oct-2024
Mentor Discussion

Comments from Michael Lavine on the Unit 191 October 8
mentor/mentee game.

Ten pairs participated in the September 10 mentor/mentee game.
Congratulations to Ray Boylan and Henry Meguid who finished first North/South
and Ann Fisher and Jim Cunningham who finished first East/West.

Below, I have written comments on a few boards.

Board 9. The North/South hands were

North	South
♠KQ5	♠AJ9
♥852	♥974
♦KJ98	♦QT74
♣K86	♣743

North dealt. Four of the five Norths played in diamonds, going down. North opened 1d. Some Souths raised to 2d while others, who play inverted minors, raised to 3d. In my opinion, and that of all the mentors who shared one, whether playing standard or inverted minors, South's proper response is 1n. South has a balanced hand with 6-10 hcp, a classic 1n bid. To raise a minor suit, in which opener may have only 3 cards, requires either better support or some distributional values. To read more, see, for example, <https://kwbridge.com/responses.htm>. To learn about inverted minors, which invert the meanings of a simple raise and a double raise, see <https://www.advinbridge.com/this-week-in-bridge/379> or https://www.bridgebum.com/inverted_minors.php.

Board 10. The East/West hands were

West	East
♠Q8	♠AJ62
♥AJ2	♥T7

♦ Q32
♣ AKJ92

♦ KJT7
♣ Q54

All five Wests played in 3n and most Norths led a heart. I imagine the bidding went 1n-2c; 2d-3n. Three Wests went down while two Wests made overtricks. Why the discrepancy? West can count seven top tricks — 5 clubs and the two major aces — and needs to develop two more tricks. Those can come from diamonds. All West has to do is knock out the diamond ace, then West's other three diamonds will be good, for a total of 10 tricks. I'm told some Wests took a spade finesse, which lost and gave NS time to establish and run their heart tricks. That's an inferior line of play because, on this hand, the spade finesse is not necessary. Even if it wins, it doesn't set up enough tricks and EW must still knock out the diamond ace. The lesson is: COUNT YOUR TRICKS.

A secondary point is what card West should play from dummy when North leads a heart. If dummy plays the ten, then it's possible that South will cover with the King or Queen, and West will win the Ace. Then if South later gets in with the diamond ace, a heart lead will come through West's Jack and may allow NS to run hearts. On the other hand, if dummy plays low on the first trick then either (a) South will play low; West's Jack will win; and West's Ace will provide a second heart stopper, or (b) South will play the King or Queen; West's Ace will win; and EW's Jack and ten will provide a second heart stopper.

Board 14 East dealt and the full hand was

North	
♠ KJT873	
♥ K3	
♦ 8	
♣ KQ82	
West	East
♠ Q964	♠ 52
♥ QJ	♥ A9872
♦ KQT64	♦ J752
♣ J7	♣ 53
South	
♠ A	

♥T654

♦A93

♣AT964

East passes and South opens 1c. After that, there are several ways the auction might proceed. But however the auction proceeds, North has an opening hand opposite a partner who opened and should ensure that NS either bid to a good contract or double the opponents. That was one of the themes from the September mentor/mentee game too, which you can read about at https://www.bridgewebs.com/unit191brightleaf/Mentor_Discussion_2024-09-10.pdf. The tough part of this hand is how North should ensure that.

Some Wests passed while others overcalled 1d, correctly in my opinion. Then North was able to bid 1s, which is forcing, regardless of the 1d overcall. Some Easts passed and South, with a diamond stopper, bid 1n. At this point North has a choice of rebids and, to keep the auction simple, might just rebid 4s. Other Easts raised to 2d. At those tables South was not forced to bid and the bidding might be passed around to North, who would still have to make a strong call. Again, 4s would be the simplest.

After South's rebid of 1n or pass, some Norths rebid 2s or 3s. Those bids are not forcing and led to NS playing a partial when they had a good game available in 4s.