



BIL Practice Session

With Linda Lee, 2x Canadian Women's Team Champion,
WBF World Master
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Board 1 "What Do You Say To Takin' Chances" by Celine Dion

Vulnerability: None; Dealer: North



Board 2 : "You're My Queen In The Black" by Stevie Wonder

Vulnerability: N/S; Dealer: East



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

♠ A Q 6 3	♠ A 10 4
♥ 6 4	♥ 10 8
♦ A J 6	♦ K Q 6 5
♣ A J 8 4	♣ A K 4 3

♠	N	♠
♥	E	♥
♦	W	♦
♣	S	♣

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

♠ Q 9 8 5 2	♠ Q 9 8 5 2
♥ 6	♥ 6
♦ 9	♦ 9
♣ Q J 9 8 5 2	♣ Q J 9 8 5 2

♠	N	♠
♥	E	♥
♦	W	♦
♣	S	♣

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
All Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♣	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
		6NT	All Pass

No matter how you count points, I think everyone will agree North has enough to open. Some players like to open clubs on this hand and some diamonds. South will bid spades in any case. A few frisky West players may overcall hearts but most North-Souths will end up in 3NT. East-West have at least six losers so if they get in the auction and bid higher than 3♥ they are going to go for too much against the non-vulnerable game.

East will probably lead the ♥2, making his partner very happy. South has eight top tricks and can get a ninth in either spades or diamonds. However, he can only take one finesse. If he loses either finesse the defense will be able to take four hearts as well. It doesn't hurt to play clubs first, and West will likely shed two spades and East one heart. Now, which finesse should we take?

I always like to have more than one chance to take a finesse. This deal is from David Bird and Barbara Seagram's Planning The Play. Here is what they say: "taking one or other finesse will give you only a 50% chance of making the contract. How can you do better? The answer is that you should play the A and K of diamonds first. If the ♦Q does not appear in two rounds, little has been lost. You will take your second chance, more substantial chance that the spade finesse will win." On this deal the extra chance really pays off.

*15-17

Most East will open 1NT and very few Souths (correctly in my opinion) will venture into the auction with such unfavorable vulnerability. Depending on your methods, West will first bid Stayman and then show a five card hearts suit. East will retreat to notrump with no major fit. Most Wests will try for slam and some of the Easts will accept the invitation.

I would expect to see this hand almost always played by East-West in notrump with contracts ranging from 3NT to as high as 6NT although a few may end up in hearts, and with their great spots they will likely survive the bad heart break by drawing all the trump and actually playing the hand in notrump anyway.

Against 6NT, the lead I would expect is the ♣Q. East will win and take the heart finesse right away. It is a mistake to cash a high heart first, because the chance of four hearts to the queen onside is great than a stiff queen offside (about four times greater), so it's better to use both your hearts to finesse. However, on this hand it doesn't really matter. East will surrender a heart to the North's ♥Q. Let's say North wins the first heart and returns a club.

Declarer can draw two rounds of trump ending in hand and leads a heart towards dummy. East should duck to avoid setting up declarer's heart suit. Declarer crosses back to his hand with the third spade and leads another heart. East should duck again. Declarer still hopes to establish a heart discard for one of his club losers, so he plays a third heart to the ♥K, but this time East wins and returns the fourth heart, with declarer ruffing.

On another occasion North might lead a club towards his ♣Q, hoping that West has the ♣K and his ♣Q will become a winner. But West must have the ♣K during the bidding. At this point declarer's only chance is that the ♣K is a doubleton. Declarer can make the hand now by ducking a club. When declarer later plays the ♣A, the ♣K will fall and declarer's ♣Q will be high. (You can also play the ♣A and then duck a club if you prefer.)

The play in a diamond part-score for East-West is pretty straightforward. As long as declarer takes care to cash a diamond honor first, there can be no diamond losers. Left to their own devices most declarers will finesse for the ♣Q and lose only one club trick. With clubs breaking, declarer can set up the suit with one ruff and make ten tricks losing a club, a heart and a spade.

Board 5 – “Use the Force, Luke.” – Obi-Wan Kenobi, Star Wars

Vulnerability: N/S; Dealer: North



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

	♠ K 9 6	
	♥ K Q J 10 7 4	
	♦ J 9 3	
	♣ 8	

	♠ A K	
	♥ 8 6 4 2	
	♦ Q 10 9 8 5	
	♣ K 4	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	1♦	Pass	1♥
2♣	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

After North opens with one of a minor and South responds in hearts, West, with 17HCP, will want to get in the action, and I expect West to enter the auction either with clubs or notrump. North will likely pass with a minimum, and it is up to South, who will rebid hearts. Some may choose to just bid game in hearts and others will invite game. 4♥ is a good contract but on best defense, those who stayed in part-score will be rewarded.

So let's focus on the defence. Declarer is missing three aces but has enough tricks once they are gone. The way to give declarer problems is to "force" declarer, making South ruff clubs and hoping to run declarer out of trump. Let's say West starts with the top two clubs as declarer ruffs. Declarer has to give up the ♥A when you play a low club to partner's ♣J, and declarer has to ruff when, as Barbara Seagram & David Bird explain in 25 Ways To Be A Better Declarer:

"Declarer now has the same number of trumps as you do in the West seat. Declarer cannot score enough tricks without playing the diamond suit. Whether or not declarer has drawn all your trumps before playing a diamond, you will beat the contract by continuing with the ♣Q when you take the ♦A."

Board 6 – “Decisions, Decisions. (so what you gonna do?) You know you gotta make a move Are you gonna do right?” ... Brandy



Vulnerability: E/W; Dealer: East

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

	♠ Q J 10 9 8	
	♥ 9 7 3	
	♦ A 6	
	♣ 10 5 2	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	Pass	1♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass	1NT	Pass

East opens with 1♦. It's possible that South will make a light weight overcall of 1♠. If that happens I would expect West to bid clubs, otherwise West will bid 1♠. In either case East will rebid 1NT, and I expect most East-Wests to end in 3NT. The opening lead will be the ♠Q. East wins the spade. At this stage East has only eight tricks. The only way to get a ninth is in diamonds. If opponent's spades break 4-3 that will be okay since the defenders will only be able to take two diamonds and two spades. East can also survive if North has both diamond honors, even if there is a 5-2 spade break, since South will not be able to gain the lead once spades are set up to cash them. But as we can see on the lie of the cards, East is in trouble. This is what Julian

Laderman has to say in A Bridge To Inspired Declarer Play: "Declarer would like to lose a diamond to South before losing a diamond to North, so that when North gets in with the $\heartsuit K$, he will no longer have a spade to play to his partner. In an attempt to achieve this, on the second trick declarer should play a low club to dummy's ace in order to lead the $\heartsuit 3$. If East does not go up with the king, declarer plays the queen." Even if West ducks this trick as the cards lie, he will have to win the second diamond and will not get on lead again to cash spades.

Sometimes you have to force the defense to make decisions early in the hand, and some of those decisions are very hard to get right. After all, if partner has a different diamond holding, rising on the $\heartsuit K$ could give away a trick. If declarer led a diamond from dummy and you hopped up with the $\heartsuit K$, you did very well indeed. Pat yourself on the back!

Board 7 "I'm the one you would finesse till the mornin'. Let me go deep" by Blackstreet



Vulnerability: Both; Dealer: South

\heartsuit 9 5 4		\heartsuit 7 6 3
\heartsuit A 4		\heartsuit Q 10 7 2
\heartsuit Q 10 5 3		\heartsuit A 9 6
\heartsuit K J 9 5		\heartsuit 10 7 3
\spadesuit Q J 10 2	\spadesuit A K 8	
\spadesuit J 9 6	\spadesuit K 8 5 3	
\spadesuit K J 8 4	\spadesuit 7 2	
\spadesuit 8 6	\spadesuit A Q 4 2	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT

The title for this hand is not suitable for all audiences! The auction should be short and sweet, and I expect that all North-South pairs will find their way to 3NT. The $\spadesuit Q$ seems like the lead of choice for most players. Declarer has eight top tricks, but he can make a ninth trick in diamonds. Follow along with David Bird and Barbara Seagram from their book Planning The Play Of A Bridge Hand:

"You win the spade lead and lead a low diamond towards dummy. Which card should you play from dummy, would you say the $\heartsuit Q$ or the $\heartsuit 10$? Playing the diamond Q will be successful only when West holds the $\heartsuit AK$. A better idea is to finesse the $\heartsuit 10$ on the first round which will eventually create an extra trick when West's diamonds are headed by the AJ or KJ."

As the cards lie, if you follow this play East will win the $\heartsuit A$ and return a spade. You win this spade and play another diamond. West takes his $\heartsuit K$, but your $\heartsuit Q$ is now your ninth trick. West cashes his two spades but now you can claim the contract.

Board 8 - "Won't You Show Me The Way" by Peter Frampton



Vulnerability: None Dealer: West

\spadesuit J 6 5 2		\spadesuit K 10 4
\heartsuit 9 7 4		\heartsuit K 8 5 2
\heartsuit 3		\heartsuit K 10 8 4
\heartsuit 10 9 7 5 3		\heartsuit J 2
\spadesuit Q 7		
\spadesuit A Q J 10 6		
\spadesuit Q J 5		
\spadesuit A K 4		

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1 \heartsuit	Pass	3 \heartsuit *	Pass
4 \heartsuit	All Pass		

*Limit Raise

With two many points for 1NT all West's will open 1 \heartsuit . North will pass and East will make a limit raise in hearts. If this pushes the auction up high (as here) then South will almost certainly pass. If South does enter the auction nothing is likely to come of it since North has such a very weak hand.

On this hand the defence is the thing. North will lead his singleton diamond. An astute South will rise and give him a diamond ruff. But will North be able to find the way back to South's hand for another ruff, the setting trick? Here is the answer from 25 Ways To Be A Better Defender, by David Bird and Barbara Seagram.

After winning the $\heartsuit A$, "Since you hold the $\spadesuit A$ as a card of re-entry, you should return the $\heartsuit 9$, your highest spot card in diamonds. The high spot, the $\heartsuit 9$ here will ask for the return of the higher remaining side suit. A low spot card, the $\heartsuit 2$ will ask for the lower suit."

If you use suit preference signals, you will have no problem defending this hand. Otherwise, you are just guessing.

Board 9: "There goes a loser, another loser gone wild" by Electric Light Orchestra



Vulnerability: E/W Dealer: North

♠ A 5 3 ♥ A K Q J 10 7 ♦ A K 6 ♣ 7	♠ K Q J 9 7 4 ♥ 9 ♦ 9 7 3 ♣ K 10 2 N W E S	♠ 6 2 ♥ 4 3 2 ♦ 8 4 2 ♣ 9 8 5 4 3
♠ 10 8 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ Q J 10 5 ♣ A Q J 6		

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
4♥	2♠* All Pass	Pass	Pass

*weak 6-9 with a 6 card suit

North has almost a perfect weak two bid in spades. This is passed around to West. I like just bidding game in hearts here. West has a four loser hand. He just needs one trick from his partner, and most of the time partner will have a little something. Unfortunately on this deal partner has a Yarborough. So West has his work cut out for him. West could make his tenth trick by ruffing a spade in dummy but there is one small wrinkle with that play. South almost certainly has only two spades and will be able to overruff East's tiny hearts. Julian Laderman, in the award winning *A Bridge To Inspired Declarer Play*, provides the answer: "Declarer should realize that the best possibility is to maneuver a diamond ruff instead."

My preferred line is to duck the opening spade lead and then win the likely spade continuation. The plan is to play a third spade but resist the desire to ruff in dummy. On the third spade declarer should discard a diamond from dummy. When declarer regains the lead, he cashes two rounds of trump and then ruffs the third diamond in dummy. Eventually declarer will get the lead back and draw the last trump. For this line to succeed, declarer needs South to have at least four diamonds (since South can then discard a diamond on the third spade). But this is quite likely since South is known to have some length in the minors. "There are many similar situations where declarer can gain by playing a loser from one hand and throwing a loser from another suit in the other hand," says Julian. This type of play is called a loser on loser play.

Board 10 - "It takes a brave heart to resist temptation" - Alabama



Vulnerability: Both; Dealer: East

♠ A 6 2 ♥ A Q J 5 ♦ A 8 7 ♣ 4 3 2	♠ 7 ♥ K 10 9 7 6 4 ♦ K 10 2 ♣ K J 9 N W E S	♠ K Q J 10 5 4 3 ♥ 3 2 ♦ Q 5 ♣ 8 5
♠ 9 8 ♥ 8 ♦ J 9 6 4 3 ♣ A Q 10 7 6		

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
4♠	All Pass	3♠	Pass

This hand is taken from Barbara Seagram's *Beginning Bridge* which I wrote together with Barbara. Don't let the name fool you: there is a lot for more advanced students in this book too. It is designed to take people from the very beginning to holding their own in a bridge game. East has a pretty classic weak vulnerable preempt here and opens 3♠. West has great cards and raises East to game. South leads the singleton ♥8. This hand has a trap; let's call it temptation. While it is possible that South has the ♥K, the ♥8 suggests shortness. Declarer can make sure of the hand by rising on the ♥A, drawing trump and conceding a heart to the ♥K. The defense can take two club tricks, but when East gets in he can throw his diamond loser on dummy's heart winner. Playing the ♥A at trick one is a safety play at IMPs, guaranteeing the contract. Even at matchpoints the ♥8 looks so suspicious I don't think the heart finesse for the overtrick is worth the risk. Any East that got greedy and gave into temptation did poorly on this deal.

Any East-West that does not give into temptation, enters the auction and competes to 5♣ will get a good score, since 5♣ doubled on careful play will go two down for -500 - better than -620 defending 4♠.