



BIDDING 6-PACK 1st Oct 08

Problems

Board 3	E-W Vul
♠ 8	<i>South West North East</i>
♥ K9	??
♦ AQT75	
♣ JT985	

Board 4	Both Vul
♠ A2	<i>South West North East</i>
♥ K72	Pass 1♣ Pass
♦ KQJ73	1♦ Pass 1NT Pass
♣ AQ5	??

Board 8	None Vul
♠ J765	<i>East South West North</i>
♥ T64	1♠ Pass
♦ Q8	??
♣ K762	

Board 19	E-W Vul
♠ 86	<i>South West North East</i>
♥ AT9	Pass 1♦ 1♥ 1♠
♦ 74	??
♣ AQT743	

Board 26 (East)	Board 29 (South)
♠ AQT3	♠ AQ82
♥ Q75	♥ AJ7
♦ AKQ73	♦ AKQ74
♣ 5	

In both cases you open 1♦ and Partner responds 1♠. How do you proceed?

Solutions

Board 3	E-W Vul
♠ 8	<i>South West North East</i>
♥ K9	??
♦ AQT75	
♣ JT985	

South has 10 HCP's and a total of 10 cards in her two longest suits. According to the Rule of Twenty, this is an opening bid. Of course, just because a hand passes the Rule of Twenty does not mean that we shouldn't look at the whole hand and use some judgment. And when we have done so, we can see that this is very much an opening bid, look at those muscular intermediates in the long suits and the astonishing absence of wasted values. This is an utterly charming 10-count and one that is full value for a 1♦ opening bid.

Board 4	Both Vul
♠ A2	<i>South West North East</i>
♥ K72	Pass 1♣ Pass
♦ KQJ73	1♦ Pass 1NT Pass
♣ AQ5	??

As South, holding that lovely 19-count opposite a 12-14 Partner, are you good enough for slam? We'd rate it borderline between insisting on slam and inviting to slam, so we'll let you decide that one for yourself. But let us suppose that you are an optimistic soul and that you decide that you are going to slam regardless. Well, at least, let us make that "almost regardless", it's quite possible that there are two missing Aces. So, the optimistic South might want to try Gerber first, in which case here is a set of modified Gerber responses that is worth consideration:

- 4♦ 1 or 4 Aces
- 4♥ 0 or 3 Aces
- 4♣ 2 Aces with a minimum
- 4NT 2 Aces with a maximum

As can be seen, these responses are influenced by the 1430 responses to Roman Key Card, and, if in use in the featured auction, would, as it happens, allow North to show 2 Aces and also warn Partner of a rotten hand.

Board 8

♠ J765
♥ T64
♦ Q8
♣ K762

None Vul

<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>
		1♠	Pass
??			

For those who don't play Bergen Raises, East has an easy 2♠ bid after which West might dredge up a game try, one which East will decline. But suppose that E-W *are* playing Bergen. Now, there are no fewer than three reasonable bids from which to choose:

- 3♠: A *preemptive* 4-card raise, typically played as 0-6 HCP's. East's hand fits into this general range, but it's not exactly ideal, with two outside cards and weak trumps.
- 3♣: A *constructive* 4-card raise, 7-9 HCP's. East might choose to upgrade his hand, primarily because 3♠ is somewhat misdescriptive.
- 2♠: As neither of the 4-card raises feel quite right, East might bid 2♠, ostensibly a 3-card raise. This lies about the number of trumps but is a reasonable choice considering that neither of the alternatives is ideal.

We like a 2♠ response, thousands won't.

Board 19

♠ 86
♥ AT9
♦ 74
♣ AQT743

E-W Vul

<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
Pass	1♦	1♥	1♣
??			

Earlier, South might been more adventurous and opened 1♣. It's a tad short on the "Rule of Twenty" basis, but it is a lovely suit and the vulnerability is favorable. Anyway, she didn't, and next time around, in the actual auction, South had a hand which wanted to show game-invitational values and Heart support. A cue-bid is usually just the ticket in such a situation, and here South has a choice of cue-bids. A common treatment for using both cue-bids:

- The *cheaper* cue-bid (2♦ here) shows a 3-card raise
- The *expensive* cue-bid (3♣) shows a 4-card raise.

East was in a similar situation on Board 22. In first seat, he held: ♠ JT7, ♥ AK643, ♦ --, ♣ T9542, and the auction started: Pass (1♦) 1♣ (2♣). East is worth a game-invitational Spade raise, and with just 3-card support, he cue-bids 2♦.

Board 26 (East)

♠ AQT3
♥ Q75
♦ AKQ73
♣ 5

Board 29 (South)

♠ AQ82
♥ AJ7
♦ AKQ74
♣ 6

Two remarkably similar hands! In both cases, you open 1♦ and on both boards Partner responds 1♠. How do you proceed? You have enough for game in both cases, in which case here are the 4 obvious plans:

- *Raise to 4♠*: This bid is normally reserved for balanced 18-19 hands, so not really appropriate in either case.
- *Fake Reverse to 2♥*: The plan here would be to raise to 4♠ later, typically showing 4=4=4=1 or 4=3=5=1. Why not splinter with such a hand? The common style is for the reverse then the raise to game to show a stronger hand.
- *Jump to 4♦*: This is generally played as showing a good 6-card suit (some would say solid), 4-card Spade support and game values.
- *4♣ Splinter*: Shortness-showing with game-going Spade support.

According to the above descriptions, on Board 26, East has a 4♣ splinter. And on Board 29? We would say that this time Opener *is* worth a fake reverse followed by a raise to 4♠.

Footnote 1

Don't try one of those fake reverses with a Partner who might pass that bid! It has been known, and there's nothing more frustrating than playing in a 3-3 Heart part-score, battling to make an overtrick or two, when a slam in the 4-4 fit is absolutely cold.

Footnote 2

There was an editorial disagreement on these boards. One of the editors thought that 4♦ was appropriate on *both* hands, notwithstanding the absence of a 6th Diamond, reasoning that showing solid Diamonds was more descriptive than showing Club shortness. You be the judge, but let it not go unnoticed that a 4♦ rebid would get to the good slam on *both* of Boards 26 and 29! But if, on Board 26, you chose to splinter, Partner may not pursue slam with: ♠ KJ96, ♥ 9, ♦ JT42, ♣ AQ74. It's not a bad hand, but over half of the HCP's are opposite the short suit.