

LESSON 2

Developing Tricks – Promotion and Length



General Concepts

General Introduction



Group Activities

Sample Deals

GENERAL CONCEPTS

Play of the Hand

Developing extra tricks through promotion of high cards

- Handling suits that are unevenly divided (the high card from the short side)
- Losing tricks to the opponents early in the play

Developing long suits

- Considering the likely way that a suit will be divided
- Estimating how many extra tricks you can get from a long suit
- Handling a suit that is unevenly divided (ducking a trick)
- Using the two techniques together
- Another look at counting winners and losers
- Choosing the suit to develop when you have a choice

Bidding

Review of rebids by opener

- Generally, the more you have, the more your rebid moves up the Bidding Scale

Review of rebids by responder

- Responder considers opener's description, responder's own hand and the goal of needing at least 25 combined points to bid a game. Responder leads the partnership to the right contract.

Guidelines for Defense

Choosing the suit to lead against a suit contract

- Considering your partner's bid suit
- Honor sequences
- Long suits
- Short suits

Choosing the card to lead against a suit contract

- Top of touching honors
- Top of a short suit
- Fourth best

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

“In last week’s lesson, we were fortunate enough to have the number of tricks needed to make the contract. If the contract was 3NT and you needed nine tricks to make it, you found that you had nine winners; all you had to do was to take them. If you were in 4♠, you could afford three losers. If you had only three losers, then you would take your tricks, being careful to draw trumps first.

“This week, when you compare the number of tricks you have with the number of tricks you need, you’ll find that you fall short and have to develop more tricks. You have to consider the third step in your PLAN, *Analyze your alternatives*.

“The focus of this lesson is to work on the alternatives for developing tricks in two ways: through promotion and through length.”

GROUP ACTIVITIES

EXERCISE ONE: Promotion

Introduction

“One of the most effective methods of developing tricks is through the force of your high cards. Give up one of your high cards in order to promote another high card into a winner. This is easiest to do when you have a sequence of high cards. To see this, take out the heart suit only, and arrange the cards face-up on the table as follows:

N — K Q J 10
S — 8 7 6 3

“There is a trick-taking potential in this suit, but no sure tricks. In order to enjoy your winners, play the suit and drive out the opponents’ ♥A. It’s a good trade. They get one trick, and you get three tricks. The cards are evenly divided between the two hands, so it doesn’t matter in which order the cards are played. Change the cards as follows:

N — K 3
S — Q 7

“You have only two high cards, but you can develop one trick by driving out the opponents’ ♥A with your ♥K or ♥Q. Let’s get rid of kings and queens:

N — J 10 9 8
S — 5 4 3 2

“You have to be more patient. You will have to give up the lead to the opponents three times while you drive out their ace, king and queen, clearing the way for your eight to be a winner. Now try this example:

N — Q 10 3
S — J 7 2

“Notice that the high cards don’t have to be on the same side of the table. Play one of your high cards, either the queen, jack or 10, to drive out one of the opponents’ high cards. Then play the suit again. You can promote one trick in the suit.”

Instructions

The students can work in groups to answer this exercise.

“Look at Exercise One and decide how many tricks you expect to take in each of the layouts. How many times would you have to give up the lead to the opponents before you could enjoy your winners?”

DUMMY:	1) K Q J 10	2) J 10 9 8	3) Q 10 3	4) K 3	5) J 8 7
DECLARER:	7 6 4 2	5 4 3 2	J 7 4	Q 7	10 9 4
	<u>3;1</u>	<u>1;3</u>	<u>1;2</u>	<u>1;1</u>	<u>0;0</u>

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise.

Conclusion

“The more high cards you have in a suit, the more potential the suit has for taking tricks — even when the opponents have one or two higher cards. Sometimes a lot of patience is required in order to develop winners. Don’t be afraid of losing the lead to the opponents, if it will help you develop the tricks you need.”

EXERCISE TWO: High Card from the Short Side

Introduction

“You’ve heard this maxim before when taking winners: *win the first trick with the high card from the short side*. We’ll see how this works when you are trying to promote winners.

“This time, one player take the diamond suit and one player take the club suit. We’re going to look at two suits in a deal. Put the cards face-up on the table as I call them out:

NORTH (DUMMY)		
♦ K J 10 9 8 2		
♣ A 3 2		
WEST	■	EAST
♦ 7 3		♦ A 6 5
♣ K 10 6		♣ Q J 7 4
SOUTH (DECLARER)		
♦ Q 4		
♣ 9 8 5		

“Let’s play these suits in two different ways. First try winning the first trick in diamonds with a high card from dummy, the ♦ K. Assume the opponent (East) doesn’t play the ♦ A. Now play a small card from the dummy to the ♦ Q in declarer’s hand — again East doesn’t play the ♦ A (we’ll see why this is a good idea for the defenders in another lesson).

“So far, declarer has won two tricks. After the ace is driven out, there will be three more good tricks in the dummy, if declarer can get to them. Declarer can get to dummy with the ♣ A and play diamonds again to drive out the ♦ A. Now there are diamond winners in the dummy, but they are stranded with no way to get to them.

“Let’s see what else might happen. Suppose we start by leading the ♦ K. East takes the ♦ A while we play a small card from the declarer’s hand. Now East leads back a club to drive out dummy’s ♣ A. We can play a small diamond over to our ♦ Q, but the rest of our winners are again stranded in the dummy. This time we took only one trick in the suit!

“The best way is to start by playing the ♦ Q, the high card from the short side. If East wins the ♦ A, we’ll have no trouble taking the rest of the tricks. If East doesn’t play the ace, we can lead the suit again to drive out the ace. Even if East refuses to take the ♦ A a second time, we’re now in the dummy. We can lead diamonds one more time, forcing East to take the ace.

“Now our remaining diamonds are winners, and we have our carefully preserved ♣A so we can get to them. What a difference! We get five diamond tricks instead of two.”

Instructions

“In each of the examples in Exercise Two, assume there is also an ace in another suit in the dummy. How many tricks do you expect to get from the suit? How would you play these combinations? What would happen if you weren’t careful?”

DUMMY:	1) K J 10 9 4	2) Q J 3	3) K Q 10 3	4) J 10 5	5) Q 10 9 8 3
DECLARER:	Q 7	K 4	J 4	Q 7	K J
	4; play <u>Q first</u>	2; play <u>K first</u>	3; play <u>J first</u>	1; play <u>Q first</u>	4; play <u>K first</u>

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise, without letting the discussion last too long. Go over what would happen in the first example if you weren’t careful.

Conclusion

“By starting with the high card from the short side when promoting winners, you increase your chances of not stranding a suit — that means you won’t be looking across the table, wondering how you’re going to get to winners on the other side.”

EXERCISE THREE: The Division of the Opponents' Cards**Introduction**

“Have you ever wondered how the opponents' cards were divided but been afraid to peek? Here's a helpful guideline, so you don't have to look:

“If there are an even number of cards outstanding in a suit — two, four, six — then the cards tend to be slightly unevenly divided. For example, if the opponents have six cards, they would probably be divided 4–2, rather than 3–3.

“If there are an odd number of cards outstanding in a suit — three, five, seven— then the cards tend to be divided as evenly as possible. If the opponents had five cards, they would probably be divided 3–2, rather than 4–1.”

Instructions

“If the opponents hold the number of cards shown in Exercise Three, how would you expect them to be divided between the two hands?”

1) 3 2) 4 3) 5 4) 6 5) 7 6) 8 7) 9

2–1 3–1 3–2 4–2 4–3 5–3 5–4

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise.

Conclusion

“If the opponents have an even number of cards in a suit, the cards are likely to be divided slightly unevenly. If the opponents have an odd number of cards in a suit, they're likely to be divided as evenly as possible.”

EXERCISE FOUR: Developing Tricks through Length**Introduction**

“Let’s see how to put our knowledge of the likely division of the opponents’ cards to work. Long suits are wonderful. The more cards in a suit your side holds, the fewer the opponents have. That means that after the suit has been played a few times and the opponents have no cards left, your cards (no matter how small they are) will be winners.

“It helps to decide how many tricks you can expect from your long suits by considering how many cards the opponents hold. Then estimate how they might be divided — an odd number of cards divides as evenly as possible and an even number of cards divides slightly unevenly.”

Instructions

“If the opponents’ cards are divided as you would expect, how many tricks are you likely to get from each of the suits in Exercise Four? How many tricks would you get if the suit were divided as favorably as possible?”

Do the first two examples with the entire class and then have them work with their groups.

DUMMY:	1) A K 6 3	2) A 5 4 2	3) A 8 7 4 2	4) K 8 7 5 3 2	5) A K 8 6 2
DECLARER:	7 5 4 2	K Q 3	K 6 3	A 4	7 5 4 3
	<u>3; 3</u>	<u>3; 4</u>	<u>4; 4</u>	<u>5; 5</u>	<u>4; 5</u>

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise.

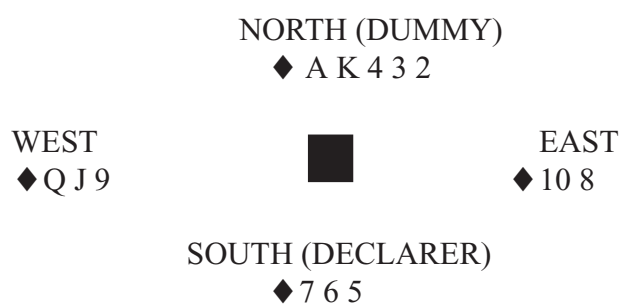
Conclusion

“Long suits are a good source of tricks if you are willing to be patient. Often you have to give the lead to the opponents once or even several times in an effort to turn a small card into a winner. Think about how the opponents’ cards are likely to be divided, then play your long suit and see what happens.”

EXERCISE FIVE: Stranding a Suit**Introduction**

“Here’s another useful trick you can write down and put under the magnet on your fridge.

“When a suit is unevenly divided between your hand and the dummy, sometimes you have to be careful about the order in which you play the cards. You don’t want to find yourself with winners you can’t take. Put the diamond suit face-up on the table as follows:



“Suppose the only high cards in the dummy are in the diamond suit. You want to develop winners, taking advantage of your length in this suit. If you play the ♦ A and ♦ K, you’ll have to give up the third trick to the opponents. Unfortunately, by the time the suit has been played three times, there are no diamonds left in declarer’s hand. There are two good diamonds in the dummy, but they are stranded.

“Now see what happens if you lose the first diamond trick to the opponents. Play the ♦ 5 from your hand and the ♦ 2 from the dummy. You lose this trick, but now there are still two diamonds in declarer’s hand to get to the good tricks in dummy.

“Giving a trick to the opponents which you could have won is called ducking. Ducking tricks can be very useful when trying to establish long suits. In this example, you could have ducked either the first trick or the second trick to the opponents.”

Instructions

“Assuming there are no high cards in the dummy other than the ones in this suit, how would you play the layouts in Exercise Five in order to avoid stranding your established winners in the dummy? How many tricks would you expect to take? How would you expect the opponents’ cards to be divided?”

DUMMY:	1) A K 7 6 3	2) A 8 6 4 2	3) A K 8 7 4 2	4) A 8 6 3 2	5) A 7 6 2
DECLARER:	8 5 2	K 9 3	6 3	7 5 4	K 4 3
	Duck once	Duck once	Duck once	Duck twice	Duck once
	<u>4;3-2</u>	<u>4;3-2</u>	<u>5;3-2</u>	<u>3;3-2</u>	<u>2(3);4-2</u>

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise.

Conclusion

“When you have a limited number of winners in the dummy, it may be necessary to take your losses very early in a suit — even to lose the first trick. You must make certain you have cards left in declarer’s hand in that suit, so you can get to the winners you worked so hard to establish in the dummy.

“Before we put our new card-play skills into practice, we’ll quickly review some bidding guidelines. Let’s look at how you choose what to lead against a suit contract.”

EXERCISE SIX: Leading against a Suit Contract

Introduction

“There are several guidelines for leading against a suit contract. Leading the top of a sequence is still a good idea. When leading against a suit contract, the sequence doesn’t have to be in your longest suit. The sequence can be as short as two cards in length.

“If you have a short suit, a singleton or a doubleton, you might lead that (lead the top of a doubleton). You are hoping to use your trumps to ruff some of declarer’s winners.

“Leading low from a suit with only one or two honors can be dangerous, especially if it’s a suit bid by the opponents. Sometimes it’s a good idea to lead a trump — if you think declarer is planning to use dummy’s trumps to ruff some losers or if every other suit looks very dangerous to lead.”

Instruction

“Which card would you lead from each of the hands in Exercise Six against a contract of 4♠?”

1) ♠ J 6 3 ♥ A 6 3 ♦ K Q J ♣ J 9 5 4 <u>♦ K</u>	2) ♠ 10 9 4 ♥ Q 10 6 5 3 ♦ 10 9 7 3 ♣ 3 <u>♣ 3</u>	3) ♠ J 5 2 ♥ K 8 7 ♦ Q 5 2 ♣ K Q 10 9 <u>♣ K</u>
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Follow-up

Discuss the exercise. Remember that the focus of the course is the play of the hand. The next course, *Defense in the 21st Century*, focuses on defense and goes into the reasons behind the rules for leading. At this point, a very brief set of guidelines is presented.

“On the first hand, the ♦ K, top of a sequence, is recommended. On the second hand, leading the ♣ 3 is recommended (although there is nothing wrong with the ♥ 5 or ♦ 10). On the last hand, the ♣ K is recommended. Leading away from your high cards in other suits is more dangerous.”

Conclusion

“Leads against a suit contract have some similarities to notrump leads. First of all, the top of touching high cards is a good choice. Leading from long suits could work out well, lead low if you don’t have a sequence, but is more dangerous, especially if the opponents have bid the suit. You have the added possibility of leading a short suit, hoping to create a void in your hand so that you can use your trump cards. Finally, if nothing else is appealing, you can try leading a trump.”

EXERCISE SEVEN: Review of Rebids by Opener**Introduction**

“Opener can start the bidding with one in a suit, holding anywhere from 13 to 21 points. Opener’s rebid narrows the point-count range and tells more about the distribution of opener’s hand. Opener places the hand in one of three categories:

Minimum Hand	13 to 15 points
Medium Hand	16 to 18 points
Maximum Hand	19 to 21 points

“Holding a minimum hand, between 13 to 15 points, opener can pass if responder has raised opener’s suit to the two level or if responder has bid 1NT and opener has a balanced hand. Both the two-level raise and the 1NT response show that responder has a minimum hand of 6 to 9 points and are not forcing. If responder has bid a new suit, opener must bid again and make a bid that describes the hand at the cheapest available level. Opener can raise responder’s suit, bid a new suit at the one level, bid notrump to show a balanced hand, bid a new suit at the two level if it is lower ranking than the first suit or rebid the original suit.

“With a medium hand, 16 to 18 points, opener jumps a level when raising partner’s suit or rebidding a suit. Opener doesn’t jump a level when bidding a new suit, but can bid a new suit at the two level even if it is higher ranking than the first suit.

“With a maximum hand, 19 to 21 points, opener jumps two levels when raising partner’s suit or rebidding a suit. Opener also jumps one level when bidding a new suit (jump shift) or bidding notrump.”

Instructions

“You open the bidding 1♥, and your partner responds 1♠. What do you rebid with each of the hands in Exercise Seven?”

For each hand, identify the range for the students. They could do it for themselves, but this is a play of the hand course. There isn’t much time to spend on this review.

1) ♠ 7 6 4 2
♥ A Q J 4 3
♦ A 2
♣ Q 3

2♠

2) ♠ Q 5
♥ K 10 5 3 2
♦ K J 4
♣ A J 10

1NT

3) ♠ 5
♥ K Q 10 7 3
♦ A J 2
♣ Q J 9 4

2♣

4) ♠ 7 4
♥ A K J 7 6 2
♦ K 7 3
♣ J 4

2♥

5) ♠ A J
♥ Q J 7 6 2
♦ A Q 4
♣ K Q 9

2NT

6) ♠ K 8 4 2
♥ A Q J 6 2
♦ 5
♣ K Q 4

3♠

7) ♠ 7 4
♥ A K Q 7 6 2
♦ A K 3
♣ 10 4

3♥

8) ♠ A K 7 4
♥ K Q J 6 2
♦ 4 2
♣ A J

4♠

9) ♠ A 8
♥ A K Q 6 2
♦ 5 3
♣ K Q J 4

3♣

Follow-up

Remember that the focus of this course is the play of the hand. This exercise only acts to review the bidding, and it’s best to present only a general view — the more opener has, the more opener bids on the rebid.

The first four are minimum hands, and responder should make a minimum-sounding rebid. On the maximum hands — hands five, eight and nine — responder makes a strong-sounding rebid. On the medium range hands — hands six and seven — responder makes a medium-sounding bid. Remind the students on the first, sixth and eighth hands that they count dummy points when planning to raise responder’s major.

Conclusion

“After classifying the hand as either minimum, medium or maximum, opener bids accordingly. The more opener has, the higher opener tends to bid on the Bidding Scale.”

EXERCISE EIGHT: Review of Rebids by Responder

The only example of rebids by responder is after opener has shown a minimum hand. This is not meant to be a complete review of rebids by responder, since it would take far too long. It's an exercise to remind the students that after hearing two bids by opener, it's usually time for the responder to decide on the final contract.

Introduction

“By the time responder rebids, two bids have been made by the opener, and responder usually has enough information to place the final contract. Here are some handy guidelines when opener shows a minimum hand:

- With a weak hand, 6 to 9 points, responder either passes, bids 1NT or bids an old suit (one already mentioned by the partnership) at the two level.
- With a medium hand, 10 or 11 points, responder moves toward a game by bidding either an old suit at the three level or 2NT.
- With 12 or more points, responder bids game or makes a forcing bid — a new suit.

“Sometimes opener describes a medium or maximum hand. Responder considers the strength shown by this bid, adds it to the strength of responder's own hand and tries to place the final contract. If necessary, responder bids a new suit to get more information.”

Instructions

It's not necessary to complete the whole exercise in class if things are going slowly. Leave some of the questions for homework.

“Partner opens the bidding 1♦. You respond 1♥ and partner rebids 1NT, showing a minimum hand. What do you rebid with each of the hands in Exercise Eight?”

1) ♠ 7 6 4 2
♥ K Q 4 2
♦ A 4
♣ 8 6 2

Pass

2) ♠ 3
♥ K 10 5 3
♦ K J 5 4
♣ 8 6 4 2

2♦

3) ♠ A 5
♥ J 9 8 7 4 3
♦ J 8 2
♣ 9 4

2♥

4) ♠ K 6 3
♥ A Q J 6
♦ 10 7 3
♣ J 5 4

2NT

5) ♠ 10 8
♥ K Q J 7 6 2
♦ K 9 2
♣ 10 5

3♥

6) ♠ 6 2
♥ K J 6 2
♦ A 6 5 3 2
♣ Q 4

3♦

7) ♠ A 8 7 4 ♥ K Q 6 3 ♦ K 3 ♣ J 10 4	8) ♠ 4 ♥ Q J 9 8 6 2 ♦ A J 2 ♣ K 10 3	9) ♠ Q 8 ♥ A J 5 4 ♦ K Q 7 5 3 ♣ Q 3
<u>3NT</u>	<u>4♥</u>	<u>3NT</u>

Follow-up

When discussing this exercise, emphasize the concepts. The first three hands are all minimum hands. For example, on the first hand, you might say:

“Responder has a weak hand and so responder has two choices: pass or bid an old suit at the two level. What would responder choose? (Pass.)”

The students may worry about missing a spade fit on the first hand. Point out that opener would have rebid 1♠ rather than 1NT with four spades.

As you move to the next example you could say:

“Responder’s hand is still weak and so the same two choices present themselves. What would the best bid be in the second example? (2♦.) And in the third example? (2♥.)”

As you move to the second row, the general idea is that responder now has 10 or 11 points and decides to move toward a game. The hands on the third row have 12 or more points, and so responder wants to be in a game contract.

Conclusion

“After hearing opener’s rebid, responder usually has enough information to place the final contract. Responder considers the strength shown by opener and combines it with the strength of responder’s own hand to decide where the partnership should be: in game or partscore. Responder also considers the distribution shown by opener and combines it with the distribution of responder’s own hand to determine the strain of the final contract.”

SAMPLE DEALS

EXERCISE NINE: Promotion in a Notrump Contract

Introduction

“Very often, when you go through the first two steps of the PLAN, you find that you don’t have the number of tricks needed to make the contract. One way to develop extra tricks is through promotion. It’s as simple as playing your high cards in order to drive out the opponents’ high card. You sacrifice one or more tricks in order to gain one or more. Tricks are only good, however, if you can get to them. You need to be careful to keep high cards on the same side of the table as your winning tricks, so that you can get to them. This example illustrates that point.”

Instructions

“Turn up all of the cards in the first pre-dealt hand. Put them dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player.”

(E-Z Deal Cards: #2, Deal 1)

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

The Bidding

“North has enough points to open the bidding. Which suit would North choose? (1♦ with four diamonds and four clubs.)

“East passes. South can bid a new suit at the one level. What would South respond? (1♥.)

“West passes. North has a balanced hand and 13 points. What would North rebid? (1NT.)

“East passes. Since South has a minimum hand, responder can either pass or bid an old suit at the two level. What’s the better decision? (Pass.)

“What’s the final contract? (1NT.) Who is the declarer? (North.)”

The Play

“Which player makes the opening lead? (East.) What would the opening lead be? (♠Q.)

“Let’s consider the steps in the PLAN that declarer makes:

1. *Pause to consider your objective.* (Declarer needs seven tricks.)
2. *Look at your winners and losers.* (In notrump, declarer considers winners. There are four such tricks.)
3. *Analyze your alternatives.* (There is lots of potential in the heart suit. Three tricks can be developed through promotion.)
4. *Now put it all together.*

“In order to enjoy the heart winners in dummy once they have been promoted, declarer has to be able to get to them. The ♠K is a winner that will let declarer get to dummy. Declarer wants to avoid playing the ♠K until the heart winners are promoted. Therefore, the first trick should be won by the ♠A in declarer’s hand. Then declarer goes after the hearts, remembering to play the high card from the short side — that means playing the ♥J after winning the first trick.”

Follow-up

Have the students bid and play the deal.

Conclusion

“Once the PLAN reveals that extra tricks are needed, declarer looks at the best places to get these extra tricks. The hearts certainly provide lots of potential. In the fourth step of the PLAN, however, care has to be taken in two ways. Declarer needs to win the first trick with the ♠A, leaving the ♠K in the dummy. Next, declarer has to play the ♥J and lead the ♥4 to the dummy, in case the opponents decide not to take the ♥A right away.”

EXERCISE TEN: Promotion in a Suit Contract

Introduction

“Whenever you play a hand in a suit contract, you have to decide when to draw the trumps. It’s usually a good idea to draw them right away, especially if you have the number of losers you can afford. You don’t want to create an extra loser for yourself by having the opponents use one of their trumps on a trick you hadn’t intended to lose.

“When we consider suits that can be promoted, we count only the cards that are higher ranking as losers. This means that if you have the king, queen and jack in a suit, there is only one loser. If you are going to enjoy your two winners, however, you still have to play the suit and force the play of the ace.”

Instructions

“Turn up all of the cards in the second pre-dealt hand. Put them dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player.”

(E-Z Deal Cards: #2, Deal 2)

Dealer: East																
		♠ 9 2														
		♥ K Q 6 5 2														
		♦ 10 6														
		♣ 10 8 4 3														
♠ A K J 4 3			<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S				♠ Q 10 6 5	
	N															
W		E														
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♥ 10 3						♥ J 8 4										
♦ Q 9 7						♦ K J 3										
♣ K 7 2						♣ A Q 6										
		♠ 8 7														
		♥ A 9 7														
		♦ A 8 5 4 2														
		♣ J 9 5														

The Bidding

“East has a balanced hand, but not enough points to open 1NT. East can’t open the longest suit in the hand, spades, since there aren’t five of them (playing five-card majors). What would East open? (1♣, with a choice of three-card minors.)

“South passes. West has a hand with enough points to open the bidding and knows that there are enough combined points for at least a game. What forcing bid does West make? (1♠.)

“North passes. How does East show a minimum hand with support for partner’s suit? (2♠.)

“South passes. It’s time for West to decide on the level and strain of the contract. What is the best decision? (4♠.) Who would be the declarer? (West.)”

The Play

“Which player makes the opening lead? (North.) What would the opening lead be? (♥K, top of touching high cards.)

“How many losers can declarer afford in a contract of 4♠? (Three.) How many losers are there? (Three.)

“What could interfere with West making the contract? (A winner could be ruffed by the opponents.) When should West draw the trumps? (Immediately.) What cards can be promoted into winners? (Diamonds.)”

Follow-up

Have the students bid and play the hand. Point out what might happen if declarer doesn’t draw trumps before promoting the diamond winners.

The Play

“West leads and chooses the longest suit in the hand, which is clubs. Since there isn’t a sequence, it’s best to lead low. (♣5.)

“Declarer needs nine tricks and has one spade, two hearts, two diamonds and two clubs, a total of seven. Two more need to be developed. What’s the longest combined suit which could provide a source of extra tricks? (Diamonds.) How would declarer plan the play? (Win the opening lead and establish the two extra winners in the diamond suit.)”

Follow-up

Have the students bid and play the deal.

Conclusion

“Long suits offer the potential for developing the extra tricks declarer needs to make the contract. If declarer needs extra tricks, one of the best places to look is at the long suits. In this deal, declarer has eight diamonds in the combined hands. The defenders have only five, and the diamonds can be expected to break 3–2. This means that the two extra tricks declarer needs can be developed in the diamond suit.

“Often, before you can enjoy your winners, you have to develop them by giving up a trick to the opponents. Don’t be afraid to do this. It’s often the only choice you have in order to make the contract.”

The Play

“Which player makes the opening lead. (South.) What would the opening lead be? (♥A, top of touching high cards.)

“How many losers can declarer afford? (Three.) How many does declarer have? (Four.) Which suit offers declarer an opportunity to eliminate one loser? (Diamonds.) What does declarer hope for? (Opponents’ diamonds are divided 3–2.)”

Follow-up

Have the students bid and play the hand.

Conclusion

“Developing long suits works in both notrump and trump contracts. In notrump contracts, you’re trying to develop extra winners. In suit contracts, you’re trying to eliminate extra losers. Often all that is required is a normal division of the missing cards and declarer’s ability to take advantage of it.”