

17. Inviting with a long minor

Published on Page 2 of the Trail Daily Times, December 29, 2010

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|-----|---|----|--|---|-----|---|--|---|---|-----|--|----------|--|--|--|--|
| | ♠ KJ3 ♥ A652 ♦ AJ10 ♣ K64 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ 1075 ♥ KQJ8 ♦ KQ3 ♣ J103 | | | ♠ AQ62 ♥ 9743 ♦ 9842 ♣ 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ♠ 984 ♥ 10 ♦ 765 ♣ AQ8752 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">W</td> <td style="width: 25%;">N</td> <td style="width: 25%;">E</td> <td style="width: 25%;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2NT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">All Pass</td> </tr> </table> | W | N | E | S | | 1NT | P | 2♠ | | P | 2NT | P | | P | P | 3NT | | All Pass | | | | |
| W | N | E | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1NT | P | 2♠ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | P | 2NT | P | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | P | P | 3NT | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | All Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| --East-West Vulnerable-- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

In my last column, the use of a minor-suit runout, after partner's opening of 1NT, was discussed. There are alternative ways of bidding the minor suits, such as four-way transfers, without minor suit Stayman.

Four-way transfers:

In addition to the major suit transfers, two spades transferring to clubs and 2NT transferring to diamonds can be used in response to partner's opener of 1NT. If the opener refuses the transfer and instead bids the suit below, he is super-accepting and must have three to an honour (either the ace, the king or the queen). For example, the bidding, 1NT - 2S - 2NT, shows that the 1NT opener has three clubs to an honour.

Invitational Minor suit bids:

Alternatively, over 1NT, three of a minor can show six to eight points with a good six-card minor; that is, a minor with two of the top-three honours. Like four-way transfers, these are not standard bids and must be a partnership agreement. The invitational three-of-a-minor bid is replaced by four-way transfers because if the 1NT opener super-accepts, then the suit will likely run in 3NT.

The bidding:

North opens 1NT and with a six-card club suit, South bids two spades as a transfer to clubs. Since North has king third, he super-accepts by bidding 2NT. South places the contract in 3NT. South has six tricks, and North should provide the additional three to make game.

The opening lead:

Unlike last week, East is on opening lead. His best suit is spades except it is ace-queen-empty, and he has no entries to cash the fourth spade. Furthermore, a spade lead is likely to give North, the strong hand, his king or jack. East's best and safest lead, therefore, is the nine of hearts, top of nothing. At worst, it gives declarer a finesse he can take himself. A major-suit lead is usually called for by an auction without Stayman.

The play:

Declarer holds-up until the fourth round of hearts and refuses to cash clubs because he needs them as an entry ladder. He crosses to dummy on a club and plays a diamond. Diamonds are less risky than spades. West splits his honours, playing the queen. Declarer wins the ace and plays the ten. West wins the king and shifts to a spade. East wins the ace and queen of spades and the hand is over. The defense wins two spades, three hearts and a diamond for down two before declarer gets his nine tricks.

The result:

3NT is down two for -100.

Had East's opening lead been a spade:

North wins with the jack of spades. He wins a club and then plays a small diamond towards his hand. He wants to play into East's hand because spades are safe when led by East, however, West splits his honours by playing the queen. West gets in with the king of diamonds. West could switch to a heart but it's too late to hurt declarer in hearts. West switches to a spade, and declarer takes his nine tricks before the opponents get more than four.

The result:

3NT makes for +400.