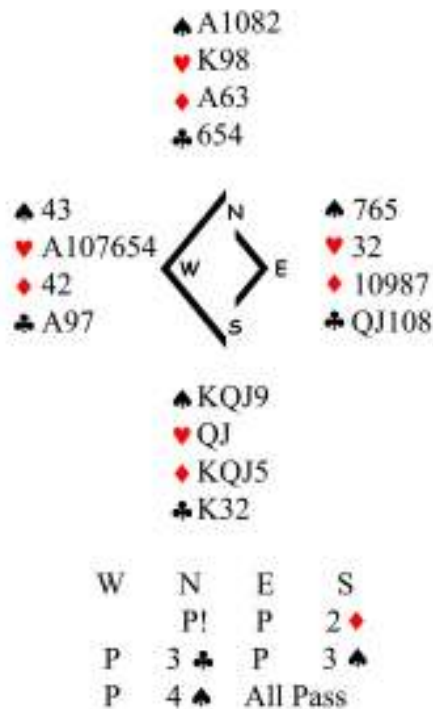


173. Mexican Two Diamond Opening

Published on page 2 of the Trail Times, Wednesday January 29, 2014



--North South Vulnerable--

Balanced 18-19 Point Hands:

Have you ever opened one club or one diamond with 18 or 19 points and partner passes? I am sure that happens enough. Did you consider yourself lucky that you were not in two notrump opposite partner's bust hand? You should have. It may not seem lucky once in a while that you go down three in one club vulnerable for a bad result, but bad results cannot be eliminated whatever bidding system you choose. The idea is to make bids that work most of the time.

There is a bid that can start you off higher and you can go down even more if partner is bust. That bid is called the Mexican two diamond bid. It is worth the risk because the strong hand plays the contract (right-siding the contract). Instead of opening two diamonds as a weak two, which, because of the frequency of the bid, is a popular use of the bid, some like to open two diamonds showing a one-and-a-half notrump. That is a balanced hand with 18 to 19 high card points.

In standard bidding, without using the Mexican two diamond bid, the way to show this hand is to open one of a suit and then jump in notrump after partner replies.

The Mexican two diamond is an enormous tool for slam bidding and right-siding the contract.

It does have a major drawback. If partner is bust with no long suit, you will need to play like an expert to avoid a bad result. Luckily, there is an expert in everyone just waiting to shine.

The system:

When partner opens two diamonds showing 18 or 19 balanced points, you want him to be the declarer. You look at your hand. 1. If you have five or more spades and any point count, you bid two hearts as a transfer to two spades.

2. The second thing you look at is your point count. If you have seven points or more and exactly four spades, you bid Stayman directly asking partner for a four card major, telling him you have four spades. If he replies spades, you raise him to game, and if he replies three diamonds (no four-card major) or three hearts (a four-card heart suit and less than four spades) you bid three spades relaying partner to three notrump. He then declares at three notrump.

3. If your spade suit is three cards or fewer in length, you bid two spades relaying partner to two notrump. Now transfers and Stayman are on as if he had opened two or one notrump directly. Simple? Yes. Just remember the three steps. This column and the next two columns will discuss the Mexican two-diamond bid.

In the hands above, South opens two diamonds and North bids three clubs directly with his four spades and more than 7 points. They find a four spade contract which makes four.

Result:

4♠S= +620

4♠N-1 -100 (QC is a natural lead by East)

Mexican two diamonds gets the strong hand playing the contract which saves a trick in this example.

Do You Have The Basics?

This is a new feature. I will have one question a week for several weeks testing your basic knowledge of bridge. Send your answer to warren.t.watson@gmail.com and I will publish the winner's name at the end of the questions.

Question 3: Partner leads a small club against a four spade contract. Dummy has Q43 and declarer plays the 3. You have AJ107, what do you play? (answer will appear here next week)

Question 3 answer: 10C

The correct answer for 3 was the 10. Two people, out of sixteen answers sent in, answered correctly. When you are winning the trick, you win as cheaply as possible, bottom of touching cards. Your partner can figure out what remaining cards you have. This, of course, does not apply when you are declaring.

Notes:

- All the bridge columns may be viewed at <http://watsongallery.ca>. The index tab is a bridge reference for all to use.
- The Kootenay Jewel Bridge Club is now every Monday at the KP Hall above Shopper's Drug Mart in Trail. Go up the stairs by the Artisan Shop. Lesson start at 11:30am and the game starts at noon.