

225. The Double Fit

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♠ AQ108 ♥ A ♦ A10987 ♣ 965		♠ 2 ♥ KJ962 ♦ 65 ♣ Q10843	♠ 64 ♥ Q543 ♦ 42 ♣ AKJ72
♠ KJ9753 ♥ 1087 ♦ KQJ3 ♣ ---			

N	E	S	W
	P	1 ♠	P
2 ♦	Dbl	3 ♦	5 ♣
5 ♠	P	6 ♣	Dbl
P	P	Rdbl	P
7 ♠	All Pass		

--None Vulnerable--

Competition is driven by fits and prohibited by misfits. In last week's column, a player was punished because he entered the bidding at the three-level in a double misfit situation. The singleton in partner's overcall suit should have persuaded him to stay out of the auction. On the other side of the coin, if one has super fits in one suit or double fits in two suits, one can get a lot more mileage out of one's high cards.

The Bidding:

A popular rule guiding the opening of the bidding is the Rule of 20. It states that if the sum of one's HCP's and the length of the longest two suits is 20 or higher, one

should open the bidding. I believe a crucial modification to the rule is needed. One should only count the HCP's in the two longer suits exclusively.

A player should not count distribution until a golden or eight-card fit has been found. However, South, an advanced player who recognizes the power of shape, has a minimum opener. South opens One Spade, and North has four-card support and a good hand.

North makes the most descriptive bid of Two Diamonds showing ten or more points. His support, strength and shortness are important and will become apparent later in the auction.

East also realizes the importance of shape and doubles because he has the unbid suits. He is a passed hand so his partner will not get excited because of points. It is a sign of an advanced player that gets busy with the appropriate shape and not points. The statement "I had to overcall at the two-level because I had an opener" makes me cringe.

It may seem that North made a mistake allowing East into the auction, but his side can use the information portrayed by the double as well. South then raises diamonds showing four diamonds. A delayed raise would show three diamonds. Bingo, North now knows they have a double fit and also that the opponents seem to have strength in the suits they do not have any length in.

West goes as far as doubling Six Clubs for a lead. A redouble of any lead-directive double guarantees first round control. North passes the double so that he may be positive that South has a void in clubs. South complies and redoubles showing that void. Using all the information he has, North has a relatively easy call of the grand in spades.