

Sample Email Analysis for Dan's Sessions

*(after every session, Dan really teaches everything to be learned from each hand, by email)
Beginners and Intermediates Accommodated – level tailored to the student*

Hi [student's name],

Quite exciting hands – all the doubles were warranted, don't worry.

To view results, I would go to <http://online.bridgebase.com/myhands/index.php> and type your name in. Then you can play through each hand like a movie.

Brd1: Normal auction. When they say weak NT that just means that when they open with one of a suit they have an interesting hand. Either unbalanced or 15+. No reason to change your strategy though. On defense, you chose a great opening lead: an unbid suit, and the longer safer one at that. A bad doubleton is a pretty bad lead unless partner has bid the suit. I suggest you lead a count 4th best almost always. Usually it's the count that matters most. Here I knew you had at least 3 hearts since if you had 2 declarer would have 4 and have rebid 2H not 2D. I discouraged with the 2, and then played low hearts as suit preference for clubs (since it is now known what is happening after he unblocked the hK). You gave good count in clubs, and I knew you had 2 not 1 since he is now marked for 5242 distribution on the play and auction (if he had 3 clubs he would be 5233 and have rebid 2C not 2D, and you would have 1 club and have led it originally). You made a nice switch to hearts since the ruff-sluff is no more harmful than a plain old spade ruff at that point. At IMPs we should feel this is a completely normal board.

Brd2: I am actually worth a GF rebid but since I didn't want to test our agreements over a 1C-1S-2D reverse, I went with the slight underbid of 3C. You correctly assumed I did not have 4 hearts (else would have reversed). 3N was good but you should try a new minor (3D) to get more information. If I don't have 3 spades or a heart stopper I'll rebid 3H as a kind of 4th suit (remember I can't have 4 hearts) and you can rebid 3N. Or I might just rebid 3N with a heart stopper and we have right-sided it. In the play, there was no other realistic choice but if RHO has a third heart it means they are breaking so you make anyways. A 3S rebid over 3C would be GF (as would 1m-1S-2N-3S be).

Brd3: Vs weak NT, a capp double starts at 14, and other actions are constructive, since the primary goal against a weak NT is to ascertain game chances or penalize, not just get in the way. So if I had a 5413 8-count I would pass over a weak NT, but bid over a strong NT. Their forcing pass, while alerted, was not actually a helpful explanation: it could be strong (to play 1N-XX) or the start of a scramble (the actual hand). The important thing is that we made sensible bids here. Since you would immediately run from the double with a weak hand, I assumed your 3C was stronger than 2C, but it was unlucky I had just 2. You should have played a little more quickly since it was speedball, but you should just play off trumps quickly and accept your fate. The other shot (dQx[x]) onside would possibly work but would risk going down 2 more than necessary vulnerable, and is a low percentage with South having already shown a heart honor and club honor (North did not lead a heart honor to begin with so South is marked for one).

Brd4: From QJxx you want to lead low in general unless we have shown a fit in the suit. Same with JTxx. At NT, KQxx also lead low (but at suits lead the K). Here, there was no unauthorized information (either in words or pauses) so their attempts to right themselves were completely ok despite the misbid. Remember, never penalty for misbid, just misexplanation. The 2N was a misexplanation (it's actually a general gametry opposite majors), but it did not affect our hand since he corrected it immediately and we had nothing to say anyways. When I lead the dJ without the dT (you have it), it means I'm doubleton, so you can probably play a third diamond to help me ruff if possible. He can ruff

high but in that case he eventually runs out of tricks, we bleed trump set him. Good duck on the first spade! 2nd hand low is usually right.

Brd5: Not all 12-counts can GF opposite a double, but this one can. It has a source of tricks. Best is to start with a 2H cue-bid and then bid 3H later to ask for a stopper for 3N. My double was based on the ability to use equal level conversion later. You can always double a major with 5+D and 4 of the other major, and correct a cheap club bid to diamonds, not showing extras. Here, you jumped so if I bid 3D it's forcing. However, your jumping in clubs was part of my risk in doubling, and I considered my tolerance and overall shape good enough that we might make 3C even if you do bid it. Since you know I have a few clubs (I doubled), you should play a high club discard to encourage me (you have a natural heart trick anyways, no need to ruff one more time only – better would be to ruff twice but I would do that anyways if I had just 4 diamonds). Good defense at the end, unblocking the spades in case I have the sQ.

Brd6: Nice Texas to 4S. At IMPs you don't want to invite too often if it's random. Over 5H you should double since you are pretty sure they are going down (and fav they usually know they are going down). Good lead, the singleton, and good discouragement in clubs. I could see declarer had 9+ red cards so I had to be fast with our spades. I led a low one to ensure you knew I had 3 or more.

Brd7: Just unlucky. A 7crd suit and a singleton is huge and random. I figured a basic keycard count would get us to the right place more often than not. According to our notes, I can also transfer then jump to 4C as a splinter. Then you can sign off in 4H immediately because of your singleton heart and wasted club strength. Even so, we had a shot if hearts were 3-2 or a singleton honor in many cases. I tend not to open 1N with a stiff honor in a MAJOR, unless playing with a random bad partner to ensure I declare and pd knows my strength. But with a stiff honor in a minor I am much more likely to do it since it is rarer for partner to transfer all the way to the 3-level than at the 2-level in a major.

Brd8: Good double, since once I double 2H, I cannot have a sub-minimum NV 3rd seat opening any more (those open and pass the rest of the time). On defense, whenever there is a long suit on the board with an entryless dummy, you give count. So I knew declarer was running twice from spades so I considered he had a stiff King, as we sometimes see, and your spade was low. I doubled the artificial 2H as a lead suggestion (remember I didn't open 1H), and it helped us see the board at little cost.

Brd9: Nice count in spades. With the 6 and 5, since they are equivalent, you can make a clearer signal with the 6. It doesn't matter much, but in the long run, little improvements like that make life better for partner. Eventually you can agree to always play the clearest signal, so the 5 would deny the 6 (if in a high-low), and would provide an extra inference. So say you have T982 and want to give count. Play the Ten, then the 2, rather than the 9 or 8 then 2. At the end you can win the spade finesse but it didn't make a difference since the 7 set up.

Brd10: Nice play! In general you want to try to eliminate all the side suits when preparing that kind of club play, in case someone has the singleton Ace, or the right person has the doubleton Ace or doubleton Jack (they are thrown in and have to give a ruff-sluff). But when there are still 2 spades in your hand, they can get out safely in spades. South should have ducked the club, and set us an extra one. Second hand low is usually right. But he knows you have a singleton diamond so it's impossible for you to have a singleton club on the play so far.

Brd11: This was a little unlucky but you had the perfect hand. No way to tell. Over 2C-2D-2S, 3C is the double negative, so 4S shows more than that (a trick) but not much more. 3S would be even stronger. I agree with all actions. You played that great. In a weird indirect way, this hand shows the value of conventions like Jacoby 2N and splinters which show shortness. With a 9fit and a singleton in the right place, great things happen.

Brd12: Here, you had your 2S bid, so no reason to double. If they are going down, I would be the one to double. No way to set this. We did the best we could by taking our tricks. Third seat fav is the crazy seat so we can't really be doubling opposite that. I raised to 3S to try to convince them not to bid

game. At IMPs you want to do as much as possible to mess up their constructive bidding in a way that causes them to miss game, since game bonuses are big at IMPs (not so much at MP).

Let me know what you think, and I enjoyed our lesson. Please comment on my commentary, and continue to ask questions anytime. I hope you can come Saturdays to our 2/1 sessions.

Later,
Dan