

## #19 - Hand of the Week – Is NT better than a minor suit contract?

You and partner are playing East/West.  
None vulnerable. North is the dealer.

Dir: North Vul: None		♠10 8 7 4 3	
		♥10 9 4	
		♦8 7 4	
		♣8 5	
♠K 2	North	♠A J 5	
♥A Q 2	West	♥K 8 7 6	
♦J 9 5 3	33	♦10	
♣K Q 10 2	South	♣A J 7 6 3	
0 15 13 12		♠Q 9 6	
		♥J 5 3	
		♦A K Q 6 2	
		♣9 4	

See next page for bidding analysis, actual results with real players, the computer-generated prediction and thoughts on what you can learn from this game.  
If you wish to practise the bidding first, do not look at the bidding below.

**Bidding:** (One possible scenario with analysis.)

<b>N</b>	Pass	0 HCP
<b>E</b>	1♣	13 HCP, no 5-card major, bid longer minor
<b>S</b>	1♦	12 HCP, plus 1 for length. overcall with a good 5-card suit
<b>W</b>	Double	15 HCP, 1 stopper in diamonds, enough pts for game, double forces East to bid again, West not sure if there is a fit in clubs, 3NT could be a final contract. If E/W agree that 2NT is forcing, that would be a good bid to use. West does not want to risk that East may stop bidding before game is reached. West knows there is not a fit in a major suit since East has, at most, 4 of a major; otherwise, East would have opened in a major.
<b>N</b>	Pass	With so few pts, it's probably better to stay silent
<b>E</b>	2♣ or 1♥	West did not bid hearts or spades. Is the double asking for a major suit?
<b>S</b>	Pass	
<b>W</b>	3NT	There is no 8-card fit in a major suit. Generally, a NT contract will net a higher score than a minor suit with fewer tricks required for game. West must ensure that a 3NT contract minimum is reached or they will miss out on the game bonus points. "The one who knows, goes!"

As you will see on the next page, most pairs ended up in 3NT, but it was not the best contract to be in.

**Actual Results (East/West viewpoint):**

Nine pairs were in a NT contract: seven in 3NT, one in 2NT, and one in 1NT. Three pairs were in a club contract, but none in game. The top score for E/W was 3NT taking 6 tricks.

**Computer-Generated Prediction:**

E/W can make 6♣, 6♥, or 4NT.

**What is there to learn from this game?**

Sometimes a fit in a minor suit will give you a better chance at making a slam, compared to a NT contract. No one ended up in a heart contract, but 6♥ would have given the highest score if it made. Sometimes a 7-card fit in a major can be a good contract, though an 8-card fit is recommended. Even though the computer predicts that 4NT is makeable, one pair made 6NT. It would all depend on the lead. If South did not overcall 1♦, the lead may have been different. If North leads a diamond, N/S will keep E/W to only 10 tricks as West's Jack will stop them from taking any more than 3 tricks. South should not hesitate to overcall at the 1 level with a good 5-card suit and even fewer than opening pts. If nothing else, it is a good lead-directing bid. North should lead a diamond if South bid it. So one can conclude that the pair who made 6NT did not get a diamond lead.

**Opening Lead:**

♦8 from North. (Diamonds should have been bid by South so North should lead it.) Some pairs have an agreement that they will lead the top card of a suit bid by partner. In this case, it won't make a difference as to which diamond North leads.

Dir: North  
Vul: None

♠10 8 7 4 3  
♥10 9 4  
♦8 7 4  
♣8 5

♠K 2  
♥A Q 2  
♦J 9 5 3  
♣K Q 10 2

North
33
South

♠A J 5  
♥K 8 7 6  
♦10  
♣A J 7 6 3

0
15
13
12

♠Q 9 6  
♥J 5 3  
♦A K Q 6 2  
♣9 4

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	6	3	6	2	4
W	6	3	6	2	4

Board No 33 None Vul Dealer North

Pairs		Contract			Scores		Points	
N/S	E/W	Bid	By	Tks	N/S	E/W	N/S	E/W
6	12	3NT	W	4	430	4	4	7
7	14	1NT	W	4	180	7½	3½	
8	16	2NT	E	4	180	7½	3½	
9	1	3NT	W	6	490	0	11	
10	3	3NT	W	4	430	4	7	
11	5	3NT	W	4	430	4	7	
12	7	4♣	E	6	170	10	1	
13	9	3♣	E	6	170	10	1	
14	11	3NT	W	4	430	4	7	
15	13	3NT	W	5	460	1	10	
16	15	3NT	W	4	430	4	7	
17	17	3♣	E	6	170	10	1	

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