

14 - Hand of the Week – Bidding with Fred.

You and partner are playing East/West.
N/S are vulnerable. West is the dealer.

Dir: West Vul: N/S								
♠ J 4 3	<table border="1"> <tr><td>North</td></tr> <tr><td>West</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>East</td></tr> <tr><td>South</td></tr> </table>	North	West	12	East	South	♠ K 9 8 5	
North								
West								
12								
East								
South								
♥ Q 2	♥ 9 8 7							
♦ 9 4	♦ A K J 7							
♣ A K Q J 6 5	♣ 3 2							
<table border="1"> <tr><td>13</td><td>11</td></tr> </table>		13	11	Points				
13	11							

Before looking at our actual bidding, think about how you and your partner would bid this game. Below, I will show how Fred and I bid this game. I was West; Fred was East. First, let me introduce you to Fred (not his real name):

1. Fred is a smart bridge player and generally does very well.
2. Fred uses very few conventions. He does not use Stayman or Jacoby, for example.
3. Fred's bidding is simple. He plays the cards very intuitively.
4. Fred's favorite contract is 3NT.
5. Fred is well known and well liked in our club. He has a very good sense of humor.
6. Fred plays for fun. He never mentions when his partner made a poor bid or did not play the hand well.

Bidding: (I was playing West and I was the dealer. N/S did not bid.)

W (me)	1♣	13 HCP, no 5-card major, at least 3 clubs.
E (Fred)	2NT	11 HCP. I understood his bid to mean that he had 10-12 pts and no 4-card major. Most would bid 1♣, showing their 4-card major, but Fred wants to be the first to bid NT so he can play the hand if the final contract ends up in NT.
W	3NT	With any other partner, I would bid 3♣, steering away from NT, but Fred is different. Perhaps I should have passed and left him in 2NT. I had no extra points to take it to 3NT. Not only that, but the Queen in a doubleton suit is not worth much. It certainly is not a stopper! I figured that Fred might be disappointed by the look of my hand, but I knew he would still be happy to be playing the hand in a 3NT contract, rather than in clubs. So I took him to game and thought he might enjoy the challenge!

Actual Results (East/West viewpoint):

You can see we are Pair #10, the only ones who ended up in a 3NT contract and also the pair with the top score.

When I saw the heart lead, my heart sank. I preferred not to look at Fred's face when I placed my dummy hand on the table.

Computer-Generated Prediction:

E/W's best contract is 3♣ (which would put West as the Declarer) or 3♠ which no one bid. Fred should have gone down at least 2 tricks in 3NT. So why didn't he?

What is there to learn from this game?

Sometimes, you get lucky. Just because you get a top board, doesn't always mean it was the best contract! Nor does it mean that you were smart.

Here's what I tell my students: When analyzing games to see how you can improve, consider four factors before coming to any conclusion.

1. Did you and your partner bid the best you could?
2. Did the Declarer play his/her cards well?
3. Did the defence play their cards well?
4. Was the contract biddable and/or makeable?

Fred's top board score was due to Factor #3.

Opening Lead: This will explain it all. South led the ♥5. Fred played the ♥2 from dummy and the ♥9 in his hand took the trick! Fred ran the clubs, took his two diamond winners and made the contract.

The best lead for South is either the ♥Ace or ♥King. It will take the first trick, then South, seeing the dummy hand with the doubleton ♥Q/♥2, will see how easy it is to take 5 heart tricks immediately, followed by the ♠Ace, putting the contract down 2 immediately.

After the game was over, North had a few words to say to his partner. We kept very quiet until after the games were over and then had a good laugh about it. How lucky can you get? Fred's 3NT legend still lives on!

Dealer: West
Vul: N/S

♠ Q 10 6 2
♥ 6 4 3
♦ Q 8 3 2
♣ 10 4

♠ J 4 3
♥ Q 2
♦ 9 4
♣ A K Q J 6 5

West 12 East

♠ K 9 8 5
♥ 9 8 7
♦ A K J 7
♣ 3 2

♠ A 7
♥ A K J 10 5
♦ 10 6 5
♣ 9 8 7

	4	
13		11
	12	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	3	1	1	3	1
W	3	1	1	3	1

Pairs		Contract			Scores		Points	
N/S	E/W	Bid	By	Tks	N/S	E/W	N/S	E/W
1	6	3♥	S	-2	200	2.23	8.77	
2	8	3♥	S	-3	300	1.14	9.86	
3	10	3NT	E	3	400	0.05	10.95	
4	12	3♣	W	3	110	7.14	3.86	
5	1	3♣	W	3	110	7.14	3.86	
6	3	4♣	W	4	130	3.86	7.14	
7	5	5♣	W	-2	100	10.95	0.05	
8	7	3♣	W	4	130	3.86	7.14	
9	9	3♣	W	3	110	7.14	3.86	
11	13	2♥	S	-1	100	9.86	1.14	
12	2	2♣	W	3	110	7.14	3.86	