

Mike's Bridge Lesson

BY MIKE LAWRENCE

The case for Drury

I am a Drury advocate. I doubt anyone has written more on this topic. Here is a deal that occurred in a recent championship involving good players. My thoughts are that if a good pair produces the auction shown here, then there is a clear need for Drury.

Dlr: North ♠ Q 5 4
 Vul: N-S ♥ A J 10 4
 ♦ J 8 7
 ♣ Q 9 4

♠ A 10 ♠ K 3
 ♥ K ♥ Q 9 8 6
 ♦ 5 4 3 2 ♦ K Q 10 9 6
 ♣ K J 8 7 6 3 ♣ 10 2

N
 W E
 S

♠ J 9 8 7 6 2
 ♥ 7 5 3 2
 ♦ A
 ♣ A 5

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠

South opened 1♠ in third seat —

definitely aggressive — giving North a problem.

- a) Should North make a conservative 2♠ raise?
- b) Should North bid 1NT, forcing?
- c) Should North bid 1NT, semi-forcing?
- d) Should North bid 2NT, some kind of passed-hand raise?
- e) Should North bid 3♠, a limit raise?

The answer is the ever-popular, f. None of the above.

- a) Raising to 2♠ is not horrible, but the hand is just a little too good. If North bids 2♠ and South thinks for a while and passes, North will feel ill.
- b) A forcing 1NT bid will work if South agrees a passed-hand 1NT response is forcing. Most players play that if they have a minimum opening bid in third seat, they can pass a 1NT response.

- c) Some play that 1NT is semi-forcing, meaning that opener can pass with a minimum and bid again with 14 or more points.
- d) A few play that a passed-hand jump to 2NT shows a limit raise and absolutely promises at least four trumps.
- e) And of course, there is the limit raise. This bid, like d) above, should guarantee four or more trumps. Jump raising with three, whether a passed hand or not, is just awful. Don't get me started.

The answer is to bid 2♣, Drury, promising a hand in the family of a limit raise. If opener has a louse, he rebids 2♠ and that ends the bidding. If opener has a hopeful hand, he bids 2♦ and learns more about his partner's hand. If opener has a big hand, he can bid game or make a slam try.

On this hand, opener would bid 2♠. Many players would fault South for bidding 4♠ over 3♠. This looks like a big overbid, but it's not. South expects four trumps in dummy, perhaps five, and also a little extra shape. It is wrong to make a passed-hand limit raise with a balanced hand, even if it contains four-card support. This North hand is as balanced as can be and it costs South in the play. Here is the kind of hand that South was expecting:

♠ A 10 5 4 ♥ A 4 ♦ 10 8 7 6 4 ♣ 10 2

This North hand has four trumps, nice quality points and some shape. If this is the kind of hand that South can expect from partner's 3♠, then South's 4♠ is fine. ■



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