

Hand illustrates levels of skill

THE BRIDGE CROWD



WOODY BOYD

The plateau of advancement in bridge can be easily illustrated by the design of a pyramid. The novice at the base, the average above, the masters above that and the world class experts at the apex. At that pinnacle where the truly great perform, we who are below find much of what they do mystifying, yet we are respectful of their enormous talent and hold their reputations in reverence. Here is a hand that should be a fair comparative example of the different levels of technique.

North has a superb 19 HCP and holds the master suit. East has at least one bid pending North's first call. South has a bid only if his partner opens

pairs find makeable slams sometimes with considerably less than HCP book requirement. Two in our suburban midst of fun family participants are Earl and Natalie Kender of Troy. They have been diligently working at developing a winning club partnership, and I am impressed with their effort to date. Here's an example of their advancement. As you can see, it required Earl's very best technique.

Natalie E Earl W
1A — 2A —
2V — 4NT —
5♦ — 6NT Passed Out

E/W vulnerable

▲ Q J 10 6 5
♦ A J 10 7
♥ Q 7 5
♠ 3

▲ 2
♥ Q 9 6 5 4 3
♦ 10 6 4 3
♠ 9 5

▲ K 8
♥ K 9
♦ K 9 8
♠ A Q J 8 2

▲ B 7 4 3
♥ 2
♦ A J 2
♠ K 10 7 6 4

Natalie was a little shy of high card values for her opener, but she did have the majors and a wealth of confidence in her partner. With his 20, nothing could keep Earl from slaming.

When the dummy came down, Earl knew he had much work to do. There were five spades, three hearts, a diamond and two clubs if the king was on side. That equaled 11, but where was the 12th? The prognosticators said it couldn't be done. Note how Earl handled it. He won dummy's heart jack and immediately played to his diamond king. East ducking. Then the heart king and five rounds of spades ending in dummy. Next dummy's heart ace and at trick (10) the successful club finesse. Poor East was being too constricted coming down to the three card ending of the diamond ace and club king-10. At trick (11) Earl placed East on lead by playing a diamond to his known ace and the inescapable club play. You've just witnessed a bit of the best, executed by one of our ardent club participants.

Woody Boyd teaches local bridge classes and is a life master. He lives in Bloomfield Township.

The Average N E S W
1A 2♦ 2A —
4A — — —

The Life Master N E S W
1A 2♦ 2A —
4A — — —

The Expert N E S W
1A 2♦ 2A —
3A — 4♦ —
4NT — 5♦ —
5W — 6A —

Both Vulnerable

▲ J 6 4 3
♥ 7 6 2
♦ J 9 8 2
♠ 5 2

▲ K 10 9 8
♥ Q J
♦ 5 4
♠ A K Q 7

▲ Q 7 5 2
♥ A 10 9 8
♦ 7
♠ J 10 9 8

▲ K 5 4 3
♦ A K Q 10 6 3
♠ 6 4 3

the festivities. Poor West is almost barren, but the decks 40 HCP limit doesn't promise everyone Utopia.

Only the expert pair found the makeable slam which was spurred by South's four-diamond splinter bid. It suggested a club-spade fit, singleton diamond and the top of his first response. Some will wonder what is expert North's five hearts purpose? In this sequence, it specifically asks partner to bid slam only if he has the spade queen. He does and therefore he did. You see the really fine

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