

## RealBridge Young Chelsea 22 Jan 2021

### Analysis for Kevin and Michael

I hope you are enjoying the RealBridge tournaments by the Young Chelsea on Friday nights and will keep going back for more! This is an analysis for your FIRST session on 22.01.21 – thankfully Dr. Hamilton has done a write-up for the second, as these things take a long time!

Your objective should be to improve on that in future events. (Michael has already had a taste of a good score, playing in the Melville).

As with the analysis for Aidan and Harry, which you’ve hopefully read, I’ve looked at things I really want to cover and divided them into a handful of lessons to be learned from this experience, which is what it’s all about.

#### Lesson 1: Okay, let’s just cover overcalls again

If you haven’t read Lesson 3 from the analysis I wrote for Harry and Aidan, I suggest that you do. It goes into detail about when you should overcall. You both overcalled with a 4-card suit at least once. I also saw a lot of 4-card overcalls midweek (not just from either of you) in the HSOG practice.

**Never overcall with a 4 card suit.** When I say “never”, I don’t mean “there is the odd exception where it is a good idea”. I mean, I’ve been playing Bridge for more than 20 years and I don’t recall ever doing it\*. And if I had done it, it would not have been a good idea. When I was your age, I’d have been kicked off the Scotland team for trying it - by the person who did this job back then.

When you are introducing a new suit as an overcall, you should have five cards in the suit. If you have a hand worth competing with, but you don’t have a 5+ card suit to overcall, Double. (Note: Yes, you CAN respond to partner’s takout Double with a 4-card suit – for one thing, that is a response, not an overcall; for another thing, you kind of have to!)

Let’s look at how it played out to illustrate my point.

On Board 3, North opened a strong 1NT (15-17, not what we play). Kevin was East and

overcalled with QJ98 of Clubs. South elected to pass – very generous not doubling since they were sat there with A10652 in the suit that Kevin bid. Michael sitting West bid 2 Spades, Kevin bid 2NT.

Now, you can say that NS missed their 4H Game and indeed they did – but they should have found a Double here and, with best defence that’s five off for -1400.

Imagine scoring up with your team-mates, and they’re quite happy to announce that they got +420 for making a Game, only for you to explain that you’ve somehow lost 1400!

Dlr: North  
Vul: All

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

Optimum  
EW 1H+1:  
-110

♠ J 10 7  
♥ A 10 7 3  
♦ A K J 7 2  
♣ 6

WEST	NORTH	EAST
WEST	13	EAST
WEST	SOUTH	EAST

♠ 9 6 5  
♥ Q 9 8 4 2  
♦ 8  
♣ K Q 9 5

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	-	-	
S	1	-	-	-	
E	-	1	2	-	1
W	-	1	2	-	1

	9	
13		7
	11	

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

On Board 13, West opened 1D and East bid 1H. Michael, sitting South, having passed originally, decided to get into the auction now with a 1 Spade overcall. Kevin, sitting North, can hardly mistake partner’s point count, given the original pass, but he expected 5 spades from partner and supported. This led to both of you thinking you have a spade fit when you don’t, and competing to 3 Spades, where you got slaughtered.

Dlr: East  
Vul: N/S

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

Optimum  
NS 1N: +90

♠ A 6  
♥ K Q  
♦ Q J 6 3  
♣ A 10 8 6 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST
WEST	18	EAST
WEST	SOUTH	EAST

♠ 10 8 5 4 2  
♥ J 4 3 2  
♦ 5 2  
♣ K 3

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

	10	
16		4
	10	

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

On Board 18, West opened 1C and East bid 1S. The opponents were happily bidding to a contract that doesn't make, when Michael, sitting South, interfered with 2D and ended up declaring instead. This went down, and you got a minus score when you could've had a plus score by sitting back and defending.

**Lesson 2: Do not surrender tricks when you have no need to**

Ducking tricks, or deliberately losing them, is part and parcel of Bridge. But if you are deliberately losing a trick, you need to have a reason for it. Makes sense, right? If you're giving up a trick, you must have some sort of strategy behind it. OK, so let's look at Board 10.

Dlr: East  
 Vul: All

Optimum  
 EW 3N:  
 -600

♠ K 10 6 3  
 ♥ J 8 4 3  
 ♦ 10 8  
 ♣ K Q J

♠ 8 4  
 ♥ A Q 9 2  
 ♦ A Q 4 3 2  
 ♣ A 10

NORTH  
 WEST 10 EAST  
 SOUTH

♠ J 9 5  
 ♥ K 6 5  
 ♦ K 6 5  
 ♣ 7 5 4 3

10  
 16 7  
 7

♠ A Q 7 2  
 ♥ 10 7  
 ♦ J 9 7  
 ♣ 9 8 6 2

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

As third in hand, West opens 1 Diamond. East replies 1NT, and this becomes the contract.

From an original holding of AQ72, Michael sitting South bravely lead his 2 of spades, away from an AQ holding. His bravery is rewarded as he finds Kevin has the King. Kevin returns the 3 of spades to Michael's Queen. For some reason, Michael decides to play a low spade here – the 7. This does not make sense to me. You should be planning to take all the spade tricks if you can – there is no reason to give up a spade. Michael needs to cash the Ace here rather than playing low.

Dir: West  
Vul: None

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

Optimum  
N 2Nx:  
-100

♠ 9 5 4 3  
♥ K J 5 4  
♦ A 10 5  
♣ 3 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST
	8	
	SOUTH	

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

7	
8	11
14	

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

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	1	1	-	1
S	1	1	-	-	-
E	-	-	-	2	-
W	-	-	-	2	-

Board 8 is a more subtle example of what I'm talking about, because it doesn't involve losing a trick immediately. It involves setting up a loser that you didn't start with. There is a basic counting issue here too, so it is worth covering.

Defending 1NT, Michael sitting West lead the 5 of hearts away from KJ54. He should lead the 4 (4<sup>th</sup> highest of a good suit), but never mind. FYI, I would probably have led 5 of spades, as leading away from a King is risky.

Anyway, the heart lead worked – Declarer tried the 10 from Dummy, and Kevin covered with the Queen. Declarer won with the Ace and tried a deep finesse of a club, losing to Kevin's Jack. Kevin decided to return his partner's Heart suit, as he normally should. Declarer couldn't beat the 9. However, Michael overtook the 9 so he could cash another heart trick. This was unnecessary. Looking at dummy, we can see you need to let the 9 hold – cashing the King and Jack of Hearts now will promote the 7 in dummy to a winner.

The only time to consider overtaking is when cashing out – when you judge that if you don't take those tricks right now, you'll never get them. Here, this clearly isn't the case. The contract is 1NT, the defence needs all the tricks they can get. Even if Kevin doesn't have another heart to play (which he doesn't), there is an almost certain entry to the West hand – the Ace of Diamonds.

In the end, Declarer committed the even greater sin of not realizing the 7 was a winner, and discarding it, so you took it off anyway. Don't expect your opponents in the Peggy Bayer to be as charitable! (But do please take advantage if they are!)

### Lesson 3: When leading from a doubleton, lead the highest card

Nice and simple this one: exactly what it says on the tin. Easily fixed; you know this one now, right? So we won't see any repeats of Board 14, where Kevin had 93 and lead the 3 and not the 9.

### Lesson 4: OK; let's talk about Board 19...

Dir: South  
Vul: E/W

Optimum  
NS 6N:  
+990

♠ 7 3 2  
♥ K J 10 8 3 2  
♦ 9 3  
♣ Q 8

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

NORTH  
19  
SOUTH

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

♠ A K 10  
♥ A  
♦ K J 7 6  
♣ A K J 9 7

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

Diagram: A box containing a 3-6-8-23 layout.

I couldn't do an analysis for you guys without covering Board 19. Sometimes, many learning opportunities present themselves on the one board, and this was the case here. For a start, there was the auction. Michael was South. His 2 Clubs Opening is fine. Kevin sitting North starts 2D then bids Hearts, but his Heart suit is probably good enough to respond 2H the first time.

In any case, there is absolutely no justification for Michael to jump to 6NT. Where did you think the 12 tricks were coming from here? You need Kevin to turn up with something like KQJxxx of hearts and the Ace of Diamonds! That would be ten points – in which case, Kevin can bid the slam. Remember when you open 2C you've already shown a good hand and are forced to game, so you don't need to rush. After Michael opens 2C Kevin knows more about Michael's hand than vice versa, so Kevin is the hand (if any) that should be pushing for slam.

Nonetheless, Michael should land on his feet here and actually make 6NT. This doesn't change my analysis of the bidding – Adam and Wan-Hew, who are in my team for the Junior Camrose, also bid to 6NT. Despite the fact they made it, they still got a telling off for bidding it.

OK, so let's look at the play. There is 1 diamond trick, 2 top hearts, 2 top spades, and four top clubs – that makes 9. If clubs split nicely enough, there is one more of them = 10. At best, the spades can provide one more trick. So there's only one chance left: The queen of hearts needs to be doubleton (or singleton with a nice club split). So this is what to play for.

The first order of business is to unblock hearts, so cash the Ace. Then cross to the Queen of Clubs. Cash the King of Hearts, and luck is in on this one – the queen drops. There are now 6 hearts, two spades, a diamond and four clubs – that would be 13 tricks, if it weren't for the fact you've already lost one, so only 12. Unfortunately, Michael plays the clubs before unblocking hearts, after which you've no entry to dummy and the contract cannot make.

**Lesson 5: Transfers are important**

Dlr: West  
 Vul: All  
 Optimum NS 4S: +620

♠ Q J 8 7  
 ♥ A 7  
 ♦ J 7 5 2  
 ♣ A 6 4

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

NORTH  
 WEST 20 EAST  
 SOUTH

♠ 9 4  
 ♥ K J 10 6 4  
 ♦ K Q  
 ♣ J 10 9 2

♠ A K 5 3 2  
 ♥ 9  
 ♦ A 9 8 6  
 ♣ 8 5 3

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

12  
 7 10  
 11

On Board 20, Kevin sitting North opens 1NT and Michael as South bids 2 Spades. This becomes the contract. What should have happened: Michael bids 2 Hearts as a transfer to spades, and Kevin bids 2 Spades. You may be wondering: Where's the harm? It ended up in the same contract, right?

Wrong. For a start, it is not the same thing. The Declarer is different, which could be crucial. In general you want the strong hand declarer. Firstly so they get the benefit of the opening lead coming round to them, and secondly to keep their high cards hidden.

Playing transfers is really useful as it let's South show a weak hand with Spades (transfer than pass), or a stronger hand (transfer then bid again).

In the future you might want to assign a different meaning to the auction 1NT-2S. something other than wanting to play in Spades as that can already be done by a transfer (for example, some play the 2S response as a transfer to Clubs, so with a weak hand with lots of clubs responder can play 3C instead of 1NT).

As with my previous piece for Harry and Aidan, if there's anything you don't understand or want me to cover in greater detail, let me know. In a way, I'm hoping some of this is obsolete, because you've played a few more sessions since this one and have hopefully learned from them. But even then, there should (I hope) be plenty advice in here that you find useful.

*\*Dr. Hamilton once overcalled 1S with AKQx*