

Post Game Bridge Hand Analysis

By Chris Bosenberg

One of the findings that came out of our survey of South African bridge players is that post-play analysis is the main way players improve their skills. This is a short guide to analysing hands / results after a session.

With lockdown, we have been confined to playing bridge competitively on the Internet, but this provides bridge players with a vast array of opportunities to analyse past hands - not only their own but other players as well. Let us have a look.

If you log into BBO on the first screen at the top, click on "recent hands" and put in the date and the username you are looking for and get the results from a recent session you played in. This allows:

1. You to study your auction and replay the hand card for card.
2. By clicking on GIB, the computer will show you the double dummy play updating depending on what card you play. Remember the computer sees all the hands and thus the defence or declarer play may be unrealistically accurate.
3. By clicking on "traveller" you can study the scores of all the other players. Let us say you did not reach a good slam. You can click on the players that did and see their auction and play card for card. This may help you improve your auction in future / revise your system and get ideas on the play of the hand.

Let us take a recent hand as an example. Playing with Neville Eber, we were Vulnerable against not.

You hold as dealer

AK972

964

6

AQ92

Your partner holds.

T

A752

754

K7654

The bidding goes:

You	Opponent 1	Partner	Opponent 2
1 ♠	Pass	1NT (6-9)	2 ♦
All Pass			

HAND SCORESHEET

We got `36.11% Could we have done better. Let us first analyse the other scores.

1	3 ♣ S+2	150	97.22%
2	3 ♣ N+2	150	97.22%
3	4 ♣ S=	130	86.11%
4	4 ♣ N+1	130	86.11%
5	2 ♠ S=	110	72.22%
6	2 ♠ S=	110	72.22%

7	2 ♠ S=	110	72.22%
8	3 ♦ E-2	100	55.56%
9	3 ♦ E-2	100	55.56%
10	3 ♦ E-2	100	55.56%
11	2 ♦ E-1	50	36.11%
12	2 ♦ E-1	50	36.11%
13	2 ♦ E-1	50	36.11%
14	3 ♦ E-1	50	36.11%
15	2 ♠ S-1	-100	19.44%
16	5 ♣ S-1	-100	8.33%
17	2 ♦ E+1	-110	8.33%
18	3 ♦ E=	-110	8.33%
19	2 ♦ E+2	-130	0.00%

How did the opponents reach ♣ contracts.? Of the 4 players who reached 3 or 4 ♣ s one did because the opponents did not bid, making a 2 ♣ bid possible. One opener bid 3 ♣ over 2 ♦ and two players doubled 2 ♦ to reach 3 ♣

Our double of 2 ♦ is takeout (the better way to play it as opposed to penalties) and that was an option. 2 ♠ was not an option as it shows 6 and is extremely dangerous when p has 2 or less ♠ s. In our view we are not strong or distributional enough for 3 ♣ and the bid also shuts out the ♥ suit and penalties. We would rather double as partner may have ♥ s or ♦ s or ♣ s

Could partner have improved by bidding 3 ♣ This would have been extremely dangerous as there may be no ♣ fit. Partners know opener would have bid 2 ♥ if they had 4 ♥ s but may have ♦ s so 3 ♣ s may find no fit and was not on the list.

At the time we thought opposite 6-9 a double of 2 ♦ was a fraction light for a double but it is awfully close. Vulnerability is a factor.

CONSULT

Another analysis tool is to consult other good players and get advice/ information re their style and memory bank.

I consulted with a few good bridge players whose opinion I respect.

Bernard Donde felt with 3.5 defensive tricks he would have doubled.

Hennie Fick said he would double but it's close

Alon Apteker said: "I think form of scoring and Vul are a consideration. Vul teams, I would pass as there is limited upside to competing. I would also pass in pairs if the opponents were Vul. Otherwise, I would double. Definitely more of a case playing 2/1 given that partner's upper limit is now a bad 12. Game in Hearts could now be on as well as catching them in 2D doubled. This sequence is obviously more advantageous to double with shortness in opponent's suit than 1S – (P) – 1NT – (2H) but less so than 1S – (P) – 1NT – (2C)."

Craig Gower said if double is for takeout, I am OK with that.

Consulting does give you other ideas and opinions and influences one in the future for the better and I recommend it strongly as a positive step towards improving your game.

This hand analysis was instructional for us and it enabled us to review and consolidate our system. I hope you benefitted too.

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