

The Real Deal

by Larry Cohen



Larry Cohen, a many-time National champion, is a popular writer and lecturer, living in Boca Raton, Florida. Information on Larry's upcoming activities can be found by visiting www.larryco.com.

One of Larry's favorite teaching methods is to analyze random deals. He feels that any time you deal out a deck of cards, there are numerous lessons that can be learned.

This issue's "Real Deal" was dealt by **Julian Laderman**, author of a number of popular books about the game.

What should South open the bidding? South has 14 high-card points but should add one for the five-card diamond suit.

I would gladly treat this hand as good enough for a 15–17 one-notrump opening. Aside from the 14 high-card points and five-card suit, there are two further positive features — as well as one negative feature — to the hand.

One positive is that the points are in aces and kings. Those cards really should count for a little extra, while queens and jacks should be devalued a tiny bit. I love to have 'prime cards.' Also good is the fact the five-card suit is headed by two honors.

Having honors in your longs suits is better than having them in your short suits.

What is the negative? **Any time partner opens a Poor spot cards. I would notrump and I have a five-card major, I show it.** something like:

♠ K 7 ♥ A 10 2 ♦ A K 10 9 3 ♣ 9 4 3.

Still, I am proud of South's 1NT opening and recommend that this hand is too good to open 1♦ and rebid 1NT.

as a transfer — it shows that you have that suit. Doubling a Jacoby Transfer should promise at least a five-card suit, and a good one. You should want the suit led. Never make a Lead-Directing

Double with something like five to the jack. Usually you want two high honors.

Should East double? I don't think so. The hearts are only so-so, and furthermore East can tolerate a

minor-suit lead — East has cards there as well. I might occasionally make a lead-directing double with only queen-ten-five times if the other suits are three small and three small.

So, East passes and South must bid 2♠. West passes, and so should North. North has only 6 high-card points, and it would be a stretch to do any more bidding.

Let's say North passes. Should East balance? We can see that East-West has a ten-card heart fit, but I think that is just tough luck. It is too dangerous for East to balance, especially vulnerable. East should pass. With shortness in spades, it would be a different story. Interchange the spades and diamonds so that East holds:

♠ Q ♥ Q 10 7 5 3 ♦ A Q 2 ♣ K 10 5 2, and I'd never sell out to 2♠. I would balance with a takeout double. But on the actual deal our auction is:

THE REAL DEAL

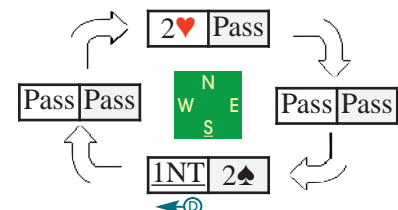
DEAL: 9
DLR: SOUTH
VUL: E-W

	NORTH	
	♠ 10 9 8 6 5	
	♥ —	
	♦ J 7 5 2	
	♣ A J 8 6	
	[2♥] [Pass]	
WEST	[N W E S]	EAST
♠ J 4 3		♠ A Q 2
♥ K J 9 8 4		♥ Q 10 7 5 3
♦ 10 9 8		♦ Q
♣ Q 7		♣ K 10 5 2
[Pass] [Pass]		[Pass] [Pass]
	SOUTH	
	♠ K 7	
	♥ A 6 2	
	♦ A K 6 4 3	
	♣ 9 4 3	
	[1NT] [2♠]	

West does not have nearly enough for a vulnerable overcall. West passes.

North should transfer to spades. Any time I have a five-card major and my partner opens notrump, I show it.

Over North's 2♥, East has an interesting decision. East can't risk bidding anything, but could make a 'Lead-Directing Double.' Any time you double an artificial bid — such



THE OPENING LEAD

What should West lead? This is fairly easy. It is usually not necessary to attack against a partscore. I prefer a safer lead. So, I would lead the $\heartsuit 10$. Not only is it 'safe' but some day it also might set up a diamond trick for the defense. Not this day!

THE PLAY IN $2\spadesuit$

What should declarer play from dummy when the $\heartsuit 10$ is led?

Declarer should play low! To see why, look no further than this actual deal. Playing the $\heartsuit J$ is wrong. West is unlikely to have led the $\heartsuit 10$ from $\heartsuit Q-10-9$. If declarer plays the $\heartsuit J$, East's $\heartsuit Q$ forces the $\heartsuit K$, and West's $\heartsuit 9$ is eventually promoted into a trick. If declarer correctly plays low, the $\heartsuit J$ in dummy is preserved and there are no diamond losers for declarer.

So, let's assume declarer guesses to play low from dummy and wins East's $\heartsuit J$ with the $\heartsuit A$. Now what?

Always worth considering is whether or not to draw trump. Here, you want to draw. You have tons of winners and just want to take them. To use your diamonds, you need to get rid of the enemy trumps. However, there is a big dilemma.

You want to start trumps from dummy to lead up to your $\spadesuit K$. But how do you reach dummy? You have potential entries everywhere but they are all problematic. If you cross to the $\heartsuit J$, it will likely be ruffed. If you cross to the $\clubsuit A$, you are opening up that suit for the defense. If you ruff a heart in dummy, you are shortening the long hand, a no-no.

So which will it be? I don't think it is 100% clear. That is the problem with these 'Real Deals.' If it were a normal teaching deal, there would be a right answer. Here, it's a bit of a guess.

Let's say you choose to ruff a heart to reach dummy. Surely, you want to retain the $\heartsuit A$ for later — don't dare release that card! So, you play the $\heartsuit 2$ and ruff to lead a spade.

What should East do? When in doubt, play second-hand low. It won't matter on this layout, but some day East would rise with the $\spadesuit A$ and drop

partner's singleton $\spadesuit K$! That's a good way to lose a partner. Also bad would be if partner had a singleton $\spadesuit J$ or $\spadesuit Q$.

So East plays low and declarer wins a trick with the $\spadesuit K$. Now what? Surely more spades. Declarer wants to get those kiddies off the street.

East wins and has nothing good to do. If East leads a heart, declarer can ruff in dummy — again retaining the $\heartsuit A$ for a later stopper — and lead dummy's last trump, hoping the remaining trumps fall.

They do. So, declarer might take three spade tricks, five diamonds, and two aces for ten tricks. \heartsuit



Julian Laderman

This deal is from **Julian Laderman**, who was introduced to bridge at age 6 by his father. He was too young to hold all the cards and had to put them face up on the table, making it easy to play against him!

A PhD in applied mathematics from NYU led to a career as a professor of mathematics and computer science. In 1989, he won Teacher of the Year Award for his ability to make complex subjects understandable.

Bridge has always been a wonderful companion. When travelling, he often drops in on a local club, and he likes to meet fellow bridge players.

In 1998, Julian started writing a monthly bridge column for THE BRONX JOURNAL. He has twice won the ABTA Book of the Year Award. A BRIDGE TO SIMPLE SQUEEZES won in 2006 and A BRIDGE TO INSPIRED DECLARER PLAY in 2009.

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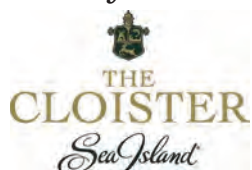
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