

For a Future Unit Newsletter and a corner for those not in Unit 174

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Proper hand evaluation leads to the cold slam.

One of our favorite topics is to cover how to properly evaluate a hand by moving beyond the simplistic A=4, K=3, Q=2, J=1 system. We think this is a good system to get started, But unless you move beyond it, it's like riding a bike with the training wheels on forever. It's better than splitting your head open, but you're not getting the most out of your bike. The 4, 3, 2, 1 system gives you good support, but it misses a lot of better opportunities.

The screenshot shows a bridge hand evaluation interface with the following details:

- Deal:** 5
- North (Robot):** ♠K10972, ♥J, ♦KJ86, ♣K108
- West (Robot):** ♠Q5, ♥Q7653, ♦A74, ♣J75
- East (Robot):** ♠J863, ♥10842, ♦532, ♣32
- South (texashen):** ♠A4, ♥AK9, ♦Q109, ♣AQ964
- Bidding:**
 - West: Pass
 - North: 3♥
 - East: Pass
 - South: 6NT
- Score:** 0-0, 6NT South

S 2NT (Those that end their analysis with the 4, 3, 2, 1 point system. Count 18 hcp and open this 1C which leads to missing the great small slam. This hand is worth 20 points putting it in the 2NT opener range. Bergen teaches to add 1 point with 3 aces. That brings us to 19. A good 5 card suit is worth another point, so add a point for the good 5 card club suit. That brings the hand to the 20 points we need to open 2NT.

In addition, AQ combinations are worth more than 6 points as long as they don't bid that suit behind you. This hand has nice intermediates, three 9's and a 10. This hand is a solid 2NT opener.

N 3H (Transfer to spades, showing 5+ spades)

S 3S (Don't even think about bidding 3NT. When South opened 2NT, South described its hand in a narrow range, and made North the captain of this hand. North could have a fist full of spades and nothing else. If that was the case South would be looking for a new partner.)

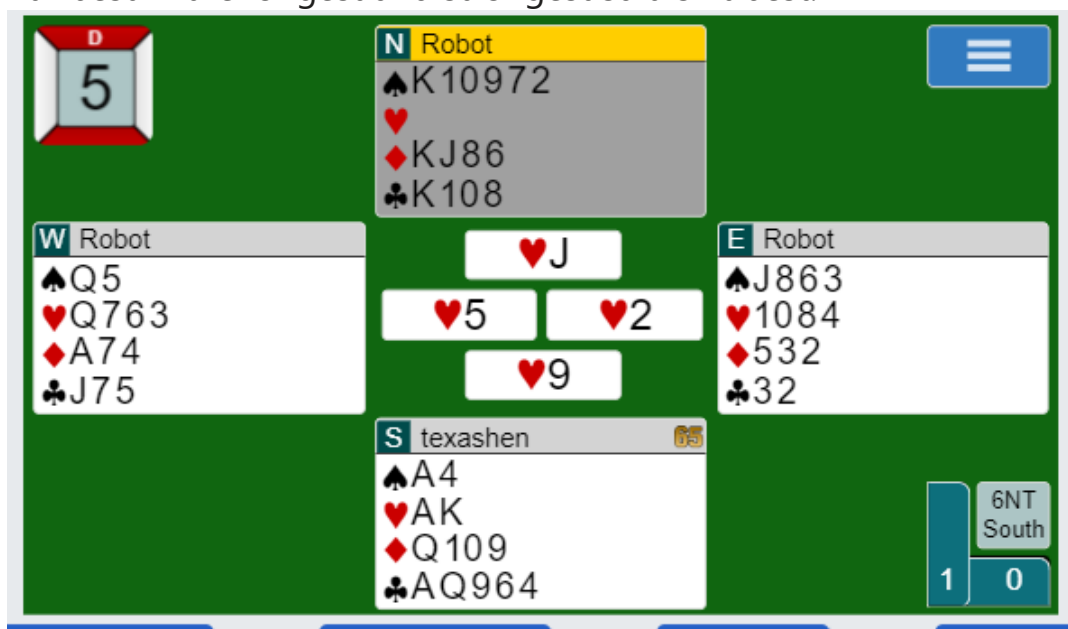
N 4D (5+ spades, 4+ diamonds and 8-11 points)

S 4NT (Denying 3+ spades, and 4+ diamonds)

N 6NT (11 hcp, 5 spades and 4+ diamonds. Top of the earlier 4D bid)

North did all the work as captain of this hand after our 2NT bid.

We get the friendly lead of the 5 of hearts. - 4th best. Defense is hard. Sometimes 4th best in the longest and strongest suit isn't best.



There was not much to the play. We take:

2 spades

3 hearts

3 diamonds (after knocking out the ace)

4 clubs

12 total tricks

The free heart trick on the opening lead didn't matter. Without it we would have taken 5 club tricks to get to 12 tricks.

Here is the play:

<https://tinyurl.com/29kll25g>

None of the other 14 pairs found this slam as they hadn't moved past the 4, 3, 2, 1 system.

Board	Result	We	They	We	They
5	6NTS=	1440		13.2	
5	3♥Wx-4	800		3.1	
5	3NTS+3	690		0.1	
5	3NTS+3	690		0.1	
5	3NTS+3	690		0.1	
5	3NTS+3	690		0.1	