

Ask Dwight for Newsletter, October 13, 2019

From Board 6 on Monday Afternoon September 16.

Hi Dwight,

My partner and I need some help on bidding Bd 6 Monday, afternoon September 16th. We were sitting east/west and the opponents didn't bid.

I opened 1C, partner bid 4NT. Using 1430, I bid 5S. Partner bid 5NT, asking for kings and I responded 6C (no kings other than K of clubs). Partner passed and we ended up in 6C making 7. A better contract would have been 7C, 6NT, or 7NT.

How do we get there?

Thanks,

Kwita Di Lemma

Monday aft, September 16th
Board 6

North	West	East	South	HCPs
♠ K J 7 2 ♥ Q 9 5 4 3 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ 4	♠ A ♥ K 8 ♦ A K 9 8 ♣ A J 9 8 7 3	♠ Q 9 5 ♥ A ♦ 10 6 5 ♣ K Q 10 6 5 2	♠ 10 8 6 4 3 ♥ J 10 7 6 2 ♦ Q J 7 ♣	6 19 11 4

Dwight's Response for Monday afternoon, September 16th, 2019

Hello Kwita,

What a great hand. Getting to seven is not easy but I think it can be accomplished. I will give you the auction I recommend below and then provide an explanation of the bidding. There are a few key points to keep in mind first:

- 1) Whenever you suspect there is a slam you should always go slowly, so partner's first bid of 4NT leaves little or no room for slam investigation.
- 2) Always allow partner to further describe their hand as easily as possible and at the lowest level possible.
- 3) Look for the negative inferences or lack thereof before making the final call.
- 4) Lastly, whenever you hold a singleton ace, in general, you should avoid playing in NT "unless it is right".

See my response as follows:

Assuming you are playing inverted minors and the opponents are silent throughout, my auction would be:

1C-2C,

3C-3D,

3H-3S,

4C-4D,

4H-4NT,

5S-7C.

Explanation of the bids:

2C = inverted minor (either GF or 10+, no 4 card major, forcing for 1 round)

3C = I have nothing to say except I have clubs and a relatively weak opening hand

3D = game force, Q-bid generally denying interest in playing NT but forcing opener to say something

3H = Q bid of HA

3S = Q bid of SA

4C = I have no more to say.

4D = Diamond control (second) with slam interest (by not bidding either 5 clubs or using RKCB yet, allows opener another chance to Q bid)

4H = second round heart control (Since responder West is looking at the HK, it is now *clear* to West that opener (East) must have the singleton Ace of hearts in order to have second round control.

4NT = RKCB, knowing that opener may or may not have the K of spades but it does not matter since West has no losers in spades holding the singleton Ace.

5S = 2 controls and the trump Q.

7C = we have all the tricks! Responder West's reasoning should be that Opener holds at least 6 clubs to the KQ, since she showed shape (never a no trump bid having been given 2 opportunities), so there can be no club losers. Also, there can be no heart losers since East has singleton ace of hearts. There can be no spade losers (West holds singleton ace).

Diamonds are the only possible concern.

Opener's shape is almost surely 3, 1, 3, 6 on this bidding, which means the losing third diamond in East's hand can be parked on the King of hearts. (as is the case.)

The only possible *glitch* could be that Opener's shape is 2, 1, 4, 6 (might not bid the four-card diamond suit since too weak to reverse). Even then, 7C could be wrong but still well over 85% since partner could hold the diamond Q as well. Partner did open and has shown 5 points in clubs and 4 in hearts, for a total of 9 HCP so they "must" have another 4 points approximately in spades and/or diamonds...which means they can have the DQ easily. If not, there's still the 25% chance that the diamond QJ can be finessed, sitting under the AK.

I know that is a rather lengthy *scientific* response but as I said it is not an easy grand slam to bid accurately. Note 7NT is only 25%; needs the double finesse in diamonds.

Let me know if you have further questions.

db