

Kokish Three-Way Game Tries to the Rescue

In a matchpoints club game, Board 2 was N-S vulnerable, and partner and I sat E/W:
West: T964 QT6 AJ743 7 **East:** AKQ3 A83 T6 AT82
 while our opponents hands were:
North: 52 972 Q982 KQ53 **South:** J87 KJ54 K6 J964

The bidding proceeded as shown - (with opponents silent throughout):

Result: Making 4, double-dummy, on any lead.

Bidding:	
<u>West</u>	<u>East (me)</u>
	1C(1)
1S(2)	2S(3)
Pass	

Discussion: Uh-oh, did we miss something? In our post-game analysis (you do those, don't you?), the following (more appropriate) auctions were discussed:

Auction A

<u>West</u>	<u>East(me)</u>
	1C(1)
1S(2)	2S(3)
3C(4)	4S(5)

Notes on Auction A:
 (1) Yes, I have no-trump-opening points, but I want to give partner a chance to respond with Spades.
 (2) We bypass 4+ card Diamond suits in favor of bidding a four-card major, and while I might bid a good five-card Diamond suit, this isn't it, so here's my Spade suit.
 (3) I'm excited, but a jump to 3S would show a five-loser hand. And while I have 17 points, I don't like my hand's spot-cards, so I'll settle for a raise to 2S.
 (4) Club shortness.
 (5) Ooh, that takes care of all my Club losers, so let's try game, partner!

Auction B

<u>West</u>	<u>East(me)</u>
	1C(1)
1S(2)	2S(3)
3S(4)	4S(5)

Notes on Auction B:
 (1)(2)(3) Same as in Auction A.
 (4) I think I have at least three tricks in the context of Spades, partner - Diamond Ace, and two Club ruffs, since I have three more trumps than my Club shortness (I know we require two more trumps than our shortness to count as a ruffing trick), but even if you have extras, you're going to need good trump honors; so, if you don't have them (or don't have extras, given my invitation), please pass.
 (5) I have them, indeed! Let's do this.

Auction C

<u>West</u>	<u>East(me)</u>
	1C(1)
1S(2)	2S(3)
2N(4)	4S(5)

Notes on Auction C:
 (1)(2)(3) Same as in Auction A.
 (4) Partner, is there a suit in which you would have accepted a Help Suit Game Try (if I had made one in that suit)?
 (5) Well, actually, I would have accepted in any suit, because I have Heart and Club honors, and borderline Diamond shortness. SO, let's try this!

Auction D

<u>West</u>	<u>East(me)</u>
	1C(1)
1S(2)	2S(3)
2N(4)	3C(5)
3D(6)	4S(7)

Notes on Auction D:
 (1)(2)(3) Same as in Auction A.
 (4) Same as in Auction C.
 (5) I'm not sure about my borderline Diamond shortness, partner, so I'll show you my Club honor.
 (6) Hmmm, that interests me, and I have something in Diamonds; does that increase your interest in game?
 (7) Yes, it does, since I also have help in Hearts. So, let's do this!

Conclusion: Kokish Three-Way Game Tries offer three paths to game:

1. by requesting help (avoiding showing a weakness in the asker's hand, as with conventional Help Suit Game Tries, which can tip off opponents to their best opening lead),
2. by showing shortness, and
3. by showing the points for game, but indicating poor honors, which partner will have to remedy in order to bid game.

In summary, once one knows about Kokish Game Tries, why would anyone want to use any other kind of game try?

References include:

Documentation for Kokish Three-Way Game Tries is available from the author upon request.

Vega in Direct Seat Over NT

In a matchpoints club game, Board 9 was E-W vulnerable, and partner and I held:

West: 864 743 QT87 852 **East:** AQ AJT9 AJ54 A96
while our opponents hands were:
North: J952 KQ652 K6 Q7 **South:** KT73 8 932 KJT43

The bidding proceeded as shown - (with opponents silent throughout):

Result: Making 3, on the lead of the S3.

Bidding:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East (me)</u>	<u>South</u>
	1N(1)	2N(2)	Pass
3D(3)	3H	3N(4)	All Pass

Notes:

(1) Announced as 11-14 HCP.

(2) Ooh, I have just the bid for a No-Trump opening (particularly a Weak NT)! How about this, showing three suits, without Spades? This bid is from among:

- 2C (Diamonds and Hearts OR just Hearts),
- 2D (Hearts and Spades OR just Spades),
- 2H (Spades and Clubs OR just Clubs),
- 2S (3 Suits, including Spades, expecting 4-4-4-1, but 4-4-3-2 is allowed), with a way for partner to inquire about whether one of my three suits is Hearts - and, if so, for me to be transferred to it, so the opening NT bidder would have to lead to me)
- 2N (three suits, without Spades, expecting 4-4-4-1, but 4-4-3-2 is allowed),
- X = Clubs and Diamonds OR just Diamonds OR Clubs and Hearts OR Diamonds and Spades (do I need to tell you this one's my favorite?)

(3) Well, I have to bid, but I'm certainly not thrilled about it.

(4) By golly, I've certainly got a big hand, and I have their Hearts well-stopped, so here we go!

Discussion: I took the opening Spade lead with the Queen, and led a low Diamond to the Ten, taken by North's King (so now I have two Diamond entries to finesse Hearts - do you see them both? - I can overtake my Jack with dummy's Queen, and given only a reasonable Diamond split, things might still work out, even though dummy is so weak. Then, North returns another Spade, taken by my Ace, so I go to dummy by over-taking the Jack of Diamonds, and lead a low Heart. North plays the Queen, taken by my Ace, and I go back to dummy in Diamonds, and play another Heart. North takes the King and plays two Spades, but since the Spades split advantageously, and they hadn't gone after Clubs earlier, I have the rest of the tricks, making three, for a top board (since, double-dummy, I can't make even a 1NT bid)!

References:

Documentation for Vega is available from the author upon request.

Stay tuned next month, for more wacky hands & gadgets.