

March 2016

Occasionally I am asked what is BBO? Well, it's an Internet site founded by Fred Gitelman in the 90's where you can play bridge for free all day long. When you sign on you have to give yourself a rating which I know can be off putting for many of us, but as it happens I played a hand there the other day which I think you could use as a good base for determining your rating.

Bidding

Dealer East
EW vul

South	W	N	E	S
♠ 2			1C(1)	2D(2)
♥ AK	pass	3C(3)	pass	3NT(4)
♦ K109874	4S(5)	5D	all pass	
♣ 9763				

- 1) At least 3
- 2) Many would argue that this hand is too good for a jump overcall but I am concerned about the spade suit and hope to make life as difficult as possible for the opposition.
- 3) We know it's forcing but as to what it means, your guess is as good as mine.
- 4) So I'm guessing he has a fit in diamonds and is looking for a club stop from me for 3NT. Do I have a club stop? Well not really but perhaps they can only take 4 tricks in the suit, or the suit is blocked, or West fails to lead a club. But what really swings it for me is the lack of a double by East.
- 5) West finally comes out of the bushes with a spade bid. He can't be that strong so he has a lot of them.

West leads the ♥2 and dummy goes down with the following hand

North

♠ 3
♥ J953
♦ A652
♣ AQJ5

South

♠ 2
♥ AK
♦ K109874
♣ 9763

I try inserting the 9 and this is covered by the 10 and I win with the ace. I next cash the ♦K, West following with the 3 and East the Q. Plan your play.

Initial Analysis

- a) I never plan my play at trick 1, preferring to make up a plan as I go along.
You can safely join BBO with the following rating.

Rating : Novice

- b) I'll cash the ♦A, return to my hand with the ♥K then take the Club finesse. If West started with the king or clubs break, I'm home and dry.
This is not a bad plan as far as it goes but hasn't really taken account of the bidding where it is very likely that East started with 4 or possibly 5 Clubs to the King.

Rating: Intermediate

- c) I'll play the ♦10 to the ace being careful to keep the ♦4 allowing me to return later to dummy. I'll return to my hand with the ♥K, then play the ♦4 overtaken in dummy and lead another heart hoping that the Q falls. If it does then I will return to dummy with the ♣A and cash my master heart throwing the losing spade on it otherwise I'll take the club finesse and hope something good happens.
Now we're talking! You have seen the extra chance of setting up the ♥J for a discard and have been careful to play the correct diamond at trick 2 so you can get to dummy again to carry out your plan. Good try!

Rating: Advanced

- d) I'll play the ♦10 to the ace being careful to keep the ♦4 allowing me to return later to dummy. I'll return to my hand with the ♥K, then play the ♦4 overtaken in dummy and lead another heart hoping that the Q falls. If it does then I will return to dummy with the ♣A and cash my master heart throwing the losing spade on it otherwise I'll still return to dummy with the ♣A and ruff out the 4th heart. Now I'll exit with a spade. If West wins and has another club the contract is cold. If he doesn't have another club then he must give me a ruff and discard setting up the winning trick for me. If East wins he must either play into my clubs or again give me a ruff and discard.
Well done!

Rating: Expert

- e) I have given this hand some thought and realize West hasn't started with a singleton heart else East would hold 6 of them and would have opened 1H as he has at most 5 clubs. Equally East cannot hold a singleton heart as that would mean West started with 6 and as he has at least 1 diamond he has at most 6 spades. With this holding he would have bid 4D over 3NT offering a choice of majors to his

partner. It would also mean that East started with 5 spades and has failed to open 1S or raise his partner's overcall. This being so I will first cash my ♥K then enter dummy twice with diamonds allowing me to eliminate the heart suit. I now have the luxury of taking the club finesse. If this holds I can cash the ace and if West started with the king doubleton I now make an overtrick. If West shows out then I will exit with a spade end playing the opponents. If this loses to the king the defence can cash one spade trick before they are again end played. I estimate that West showing up with the ♣K doubleton is about 100 to 1 against, however the possibility of East ruffing the second heart is about 20,000 to one against. So over a large number of hands I'm gaining.

Enough already!

Rating: World class

Here is the full deal

	N		
	♠ 3		
	♥ J953		
	♦ A652		
	♣ AQJ5		
W		E	
♠ J987654		♠ AKQ10	
♥ Q62		♥ 10874	
♦ 3		♦ QJ	
♣ 84		♣ K102	
	S		
	♠ 2		
	♥ AK		
	♦ K109874		
	♣ 9763		

Conclusion

Now that you know your rating you can sign on and play with members with a similar rating. But a word of warning; not everyone gives themselves an honest rating. Once you have settled in I will give you some good advice as to how to avoid false "experts". Until then sign on to BBO and enjoy yourselves.