

## Bidding on Misfits

If your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one spade, a pass is the only sound action on each of the following hands.

(a) ♠ A Q 8 7 3 ♥ K Q J 10 ♦ A 7 ♣ 3 2	(b) ♠ K 10 9 4 ♥ 8 ♦ A Q 7 3 ♣ A K J 5	(c) ♠ Q 10 8 3 ♥ K J 2 ♦ A K Q J 6 ♣ 2
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I am aware that even in the expert class there are some players who cannot bear to pass on such powerful hands. They prefer to disregard the evidence of a misfit and take their chances with a bid or a double.

Well, certain players may be good enough to achieve their share of wins in spite of dubious bidding methods in such situations. Big-name players are in any case apt to enjoy a stoat and rabbit relationship with their less illustrious opponents. A large penalty may be within sight, but when the stoat fixes him with a beady eye the rabbit cannot believe it and fails to make the obvious double that he would cheerfully make in his home club. Instead he makes some inept no trump bid and the stoat is off the hook.

They may get by in spite of their methods, but I am convinced that these experts make the game much more difficult for themselves. An immediate overcall or double on hands such as the above is both dangerous and unnecessary. There is no risk of missing game by passing if partner is trained to give normal protection with about eight points. If one spade is passed out this is likely to produce a good result for the defence. And finally, if you are given another chance to bid you will be in a much better position to judge the potential of the hand and take appropriate action.

On balanced hands that are not strong enough for an overcall of one no trump, a pass is again the right answer. This is the only way of avoiding silly results such as the following.

Game all  
Dealer West

West  
1 ♥  
All pass

Two clubs were  
have saved the  
shortage in heart  
reason to make

North had one  
points defending  
same mistake, I  
double with the  
be passed out if

Of course, if I  
North can think  
reversed. Since I  
fit it is likely that  
reopen with a double

If East raises  
but if he had do  
his intentions by

In all reopenings  
influenced by West