

8/11/11 RR Teams, Parsippany Regional

Board 21

North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ K 5
♥ A K 4 3 2
♦ A 7 3
♣ Q 10 6



West	North	East	South
Pete		Brian	
	Pass	Pass	2 ♠
?			

My choice did not work out well. What would yours be? Would you choose differently at matchpoints?

Answers from the mitdlbc-discuss list and my conclusions begin on the next page. First, an overview of your sensible options:

Pass: certainly, this is a minimum hand for action, but pass seems incredibly wimpy, especially at IMPs. A pass will likely end the auction. At matchpoints, this could produce a fine swing.

Double: the flexible double is often the favorite of bidding panels. The values and 3-suit support are correct for the bid. Brian and I were playing Lebensohl: his direct bid of a suit would show interest in game; 2NT asks doubler to bid 3♣, for a variety of continuations, most likely a weak signoff. (I have read that you should not play Lebensohl as a passed hand - with nothing better to do, pass and take your penalty. You have to discuss and then remember such an exception. You might consider this, as you ponder your choice.)

2NT: an absolute minimum for this bid, and the spade stopper could not be thinner.

3♥: the suit is anemic, but this also could work out well.

This deal is instructive, with issues you may not yet have considered.

[Please turn to the next page.]

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Jason Ciano: My teammate quickly chose Double.

Adam Grossack: Asked next, this teammate quickly chose 2NT. He then proceeded to convince Jason this was correct.

Paul Perkowski: I'm not thrilled, but I'm bidding 3H at both IMPs and MPs. 2NT is the obvious alternative, but with only Kx as a stopper, opponents should be able to flush out your K and still maintain communication, putting you at a serious disadvantage. ... double can miss a 5-3 heart fit or end up in a 4-3 minor fit at the 3-level, so it's no sure-shot to get to the right strain. There's no action that doesn't have risk. Goes to show what we all know - preempts can be effective!

Waldorf: A very tough hand. This situation is relatively common. At least the vulnerability is favorable. Woolsey says that the more Aces you have, the more inclined you should be to play NoTrump. But that heart suit is so bad But the shape is so poor

I think my first choice is 2NT. Nine tricks may be easier than ten in hearts. I'm not going to get doubled by a passed hand and it's only 50 a trick. 3♥ is second. Not vulnerable against vul, I would also consider a pass. At matchpoints, I promote the pass. We may get 200 against a partscore. If we do have a game, we may take a lot of tricks on defense. Alternatively, others will be going down and we probably go plus. Even if we do have a viable contract it will be difficult to find it. A red/white weak 2-bid is usually a pretty good hand.

Steve McDevitt: Double. If partner can muster up 3 of a minor without Lebensohl I will bid 3♥. If partner goes through Leb I will let her sign off. A direct 3♥ precludes partner showing a minor with or without values. Seems very unilateral to me with only 5 of them and those spots. 2NT also shuts out the minors. Double will get you to the right strain and level.

Gary Schwartz: Add my vote for double. Matchpoints or IMPs. You have support for the 3 unbid suits and enough strength for safety at the 3 level. 3H is way too unilateral for a balanced hand with only 5 hearts. The fact that you have a single stopper in the opponents' suit isn't enough to bid NT without a known source of tricks.

Pete Matthews: I soon dismissed Pass and 3♥ from consideration, and eventually chose the flexible double (so much for those bidding panels). Brian correctly went through 2NT to sign off in 3♦, which went down two. Pass, 2NT, and conceivably 3♥ would have produced a positive score. At matchpoints, Brian would have taken his best shot over the double, and passed. At IMPs, passing would have been inexcusable: -670 would have been the whole match, not just a bottom board. Had we not been playing Lebensohl, Brian might have tried a natural 2NT.