



MOOS NOOS 5

Nov 3 2019

Final Mini Moos for 2019

Numbers were right down for the final Mini Moos for 2019 held at Cambridge on Sunday afternoon Nov 3 with only 10 novices participating.

With two ring-ins they were able to play a 10-round movement and have every other player except one as a partner.

There was good representation from clubs with the first five all coming from different clubs.

Results from Mini Moos 5 at Cambridge

1	Nick Saunders	Te Aw	88
2	Alison Mackenzie	Wait	87
3	Janet Livingstone	Camb	84
4	Colin LeQuesne	Mata	81
5	Sid Naera	Morr	79
6	Malcolm Mackenzie	Wait	72
7	Hugh Bobbett	Camb	64
8	Val Ferguson	Morr	63
9	Christine de Vries	Roto	62
10	Jude Lipanovic	Roto	58



FIRST: Nick (Te Awamutu)



SECOND: Alison (Waitomo)



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Mini Moos action at Cambridge



FOURTH: Colin (Matamata)



THIRD: Janet (Cambridge)



FIFTH: Sid (Morrinsville)



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Theodore Lightner (1893-1981)

A Past Master whose name has a permanent place in Bridge Language



One of the greatest players from the early days of Contract Bridge, along with Ely Culbertson, Charles Goren et al was Theodore ("Teddy") Lightner.



Lightner and Culbertson circa 1930 apparently analysing a hand

to digress for a moment...

Imagine you held this hand:

♠ 6 5 2
♥ none
♦ A K Q 8 2
♣ Q J 6 5 2

You open 1♦; your next opponent bids 1♠ and the opponents take over and bid confidently to 6♠.

*You want to scream at partner "**don't lead a diamond; lead a heart!!!**" but unfortunately such table-talk is illegal. So is kicking partner under the table.*

In 1929 Lightner came up with a legal solution to this problem: You **Double!!**

The "Lightner Double" is the double of a slam **by the defender not on lead** and asks for **an unusual lead**.

Usually you do it when you have a void somewhere but it certainly means:

Don't lead the suit I have bid, and

Don't lead the only unbid suit, and

Don't lead a trump

On the hand above you can trump the heart lead and hopefully cash a diamond and the slam is defeated.

What if partner gets it wrong and leads a club? Well then the doubled slam is made and you lose an extra 230 points (-1210 instead of -980).

But if partner gets it right the gain is 1080 points (+100 instead of -980)

That's good odds for a 50/50 chance!



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For 90 years the “**Lightner Double**” has been standard for the majority of players all over the world.

Of course you lose the extra points by not being able to double a slam which goes down (only) on the normal lead but that rarely matters. One should be happy with **any** plus score on a hand on which the opponents can make game. A slightly higher plus with a double is relatively insignificant.

Board 8 from the Mini Moos was taken from a tournament where an excellent result was achieved by an imaginative use of the Lightner Double at a lower level.

8	♠ KQJ73	Dir: W
	♥ 62	Vul: None
	♦ K	
	♣ AK873	
♠ 982	♠ A5	
♥ A1098642	♥ J98753	
♦ J92	♦ J3	
	♣ Q104	
16	♠ 1064	♣♦♥♠NT
5 8	♥ AKQ104	N 2 - 3 3 1
	♦ Q75	S 3 - 3 4 1
11	♣ 65	E - 1 - - -
		W - 1 - - -

West opened 3♦; North bid 3♠ and South raised to 4♠.

West then doubled!

East thought “*what on earth is partner doing? How can he be able to beat 4♠ when he has opened 3♦ especially when I have ♠A5. He must be out of his tree!!*”

Actually East didn’t think that at all!!

What he really thought was “*partner is logical so he must be saying an unusual lead should beat this slam*”.

The logical explanation was West must have a void, in which case it is most likely to be hearts.

So East led a heart, and another heart when in with the ♠A giving partner two ruffs to defeat the contract.



A Country Slight

Bob Hamman and Eddie Kantar were professional bridge players and teachers and good friends. But as they lived along way apart (Texas and California respectively) they were more often rivals than partners or team mates.

On one occasion Hamman happened to be in Los Angeles and called in at Kantar’s place to be told he was at the bridge club taking a class at the moment.

Knowing his friend would not object to him dropping in on the class he went to the club and went in unobtrusively behind Kantar, who at that moment was describing how a particularly difficult hand was played (successfully). Kantar had not seen him come in but all the class did.

Kantar was saying “and that is another example of why many people consider Bob Hamman to be the finest player in the country”

Hamman puffed his chest out and was about to introduce himself when Kantar continued “but unfortunately all major bridge tournaments are held in the city.”



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1NT Opening – Strong or Weak?

The relative merits of strong 1NT opening (15-17 as in Standard American) or weak (12-14 as in Acol) are forever being debated.

Most of those who favour “strong” cite how bad it is to be doubled and conceding 800 or so on a hand the opponents can only make a part-score on.

To quote from an American book aimed at readers unfamiliar with weak notrump: **“the weak 1NT is freely doubled with similar points as the opening”** (which is not true; a few more are needed) and **“1NT doubled is a popular contract in Britain”**.

It was not clear whether “popular” means “frequent” or “one players like to play in”!

The latter would apply to gamblers as the double of 1NT starts a high-stakes battle in which the key players are the two weaker hands, which can have at most 12 points between them.

The side which misses out on their share of those 12 points should not despair or play for a miracle but just accept they will lose and try to minimise that loss.

That is evident on this hand in the Mini Moos

9	♠ A53	Dir: N																									
	♥ 542	Vul: E-W																									
	♦ AK107																										
	♣ J95																										
♠ 9762		♠ J108																									
♥ 763		♥ AKQ8																									
♦ J53		♦ 964																									
♣ 873		♣ AK2																									
12	♠ KQ4	<table border="1" style="font-size: 0.8em;"> <tr><td>♣</td><td>♦</td><td>♥</td><td>♠</td><td>NT</td></tr> <tr><td>N</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr> </table>	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT	N	2	2	1	1	S	2	2	1	1	E	-	-	-	-	W	-	-	-	-
♣	♦		♥	♠	NT																						
N	2		2	1	1																						
S	2		2	1	1																						
E	-	-	-	-																							
W	-	-	-	-																							
1 17	♥ J109																										
	♦ Q82																										
10	♣ Q1064																										

East’s double of North’s 1NT opening is eminently correct but unfortunately South has (nearly) all the remaining points.

West fears the worst and, unless East can beat 1NT on his own, the opponents are due for a substantial score.

Any bid by West is likely to go down badly with South poised to double if it is clear to him his side has the majority of points.

Comparing the scores is important. For making 1NT doubled North-South score 180. But because East-West are vulnerable going 2 down (or 1 down doubled) will be 200. And if it is 2 down doubled that will be 500.

So the opponents making 1NT doubled doesn’t look too bad in that context. Even if an overtrick is made that is only -280.

Now look at what would happen if North-South were playing the strong 1NT.

North will open 1♦ and East will probably double for takeout. Although the points and shape are right for a 1NT overcall it lacks the necessary stopper in diamonds.

South, unless very cautious (some would say pusillanimous), will respond 2♣ or 2NT and now North-South will be unable to stop at any contract they can make.

Chalk up that as a triumph for the Weak 1NT!

But sometimes the difference in outcomes with weak or strong notrumps is hard to predict (see next)



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This next hand from the Moos was taken from a tournament where most North-South pairs played in 4♠ after West had opened 1♣.

So did most pairs in the Moos

3	♠ AQ642	Dir: S
	♥ K53	Vul: E-W
	♦ KQ2	
	♣ Q3	
♠ KJ		♠ 73
♥ Q64		♥ 1087
♦ J105		♦ 973
♣ AKJ108		♣ 97652
16	♠ 10985	♠♦♥♣NT
15 0	♥ AJ92	N 2 6 6 6 2
9	♦ A864	S 2 6 6 6 2
	♣ 4	E - - - - -
		W - - - - -

But in that tournament two of the West players opened 1NT as, according to their methods, they opened 1NT with 12 to **15** points.

Both got doubled by North.

One was left to play there and, after a spade lead, hastily ran her five clubs to concede a one-trick defeat for -200.

Although a diamond lead and accurate defence could give the defenders all 13 tricks the decision to lead a spade could hardly be criticised.

On the other occasion East belonged to the **"gotta get out of 1NT^x with a weak hand at all costs"** brigade and bid 2♣.

That bid put South on the spot.

Her 9 points should make game with partner's 16 but which game?

A bid at the 2-level would not show such a strong hand and to bid higher would be a wild gamble on what the sides best suit is.

So South doubled.

She hoped partner would take that as showing *general strength* and not necessarily good clubs and expecting North to bid a long suit if she had one.

North didn't see it that way and passed.

East's could hardly have found better trumps in dummy but his delight was short-lived!

The defence was brutal.

South led a spade and, after North-South cashed two spades and three diamonds, South led the ♥J!

It didn't matter whether or not declarer played the ♥Q as either way he could not prevent the defence making three tricks in that suit as well.

Declarer had been stripped of all his off-suit cards without making a trick!

And it was not over yet. South led her last heart (the diamond would have done just as well) which promoted North's ♣Q.

If declarer trumped low North's ♣Q would win immediately. Alternatively if he trumped high North would discard and her ♣Q would win a bit later.

That score was 1100 for 4 down doubled and vulnerable compared with 480 for 4♠ making 6♠ for North-South.

Even if North-South bid and made 6♠ that would be "only" 980.