

## COMPETING WITH THE MICHAELS CUEBID

East is the dealer and opens 1♣. When your RHO opens a minor and you have 5-4 or better, in the majors, there is a conventional bid you can use to ask partner to pick his best major. The bid is 2♣ and it is called the Michaels's cuebid.

|          |       |
|----------|-------|
| <b>S</b> | South |
| ♠        | 98653 |
| ♥        | K1082 |
| ♦        | 42    |
| ♣        | K2    |

With a hand this weak and suits this pathetic, it is best used when not vulnerable. However, if you pass as you normally would, the opponents will find a comfortable fit in a part score – or even a game. Your good distribution allows you to make it more difficult for them to find that fit.

Your LHO doubles, which is a support double indicating forward going values and at least 4 clubs. Your partner jumps to 3♠. He likes his hand and jumps to encourage you if you have extra values. East passes and you do also. 3♠ spades becomes the final contract.

East leads the ♥5. Take over from North and plan the play.

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| <b>N</b> | North  |
| ♠        | A104   |
| ♥        | A96    |
| ♦        | K10653 |
| ♣        | Q9     |

East leads ♥5

|          |       |
|----------|-------|
| <b>S</b> | South |
| ♠        | 98653 |
| ♥        | K1082 |
| ♦        | 42    |
| ♣        | K2    |

This is a hard hand to count losers for. You have an unavoidable club loser and a probable heart loser. If spades break in the expected 3-2, you have 2


spades losers. To make the contract, you must find the  $\heartsuit A$  in West and hold the diamond losers to one.

You play low from dummy and West plays the  $\heartsuit J$  on the first trick. You win the  $\heartsuit A$  and start in on the spades by leading the  $\spadesuit A$ . West plays the  $\spadesuit Q$ . Hoping that wasn't a singleton, you must lead the  $\spadesuit 10$ , tempting East to play his known  $\spadesuit J$ . That way, it will crash with the  $\spadesuit K$ , if West has it. Sure enough, East falls for the ploy and West's  $\spadesuit K$  falls. Now your spades are good.

West returns a club, won by East's  $\clubsuit A$ . East leads back a trump, attempting to cut down on a ruff in your hand. You win in dummy and try the diamond finesse, but it loses. You are set one trick for -100.

This may sound disappointing, but notice that  $4\clubsuit$  by East is cold scoring -140.

This is the entire deal:

|                | <b>N</b> North<br>$\spadesuit$ A104<br>$\heartsuit$ A96<br>$\diamondsuit$ K10653<br>$\clubsuit$ Q9 | <table border="1"> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>3<math>\clubsuit</math></td> <td>1<math>\clubsuit</math></td> <td>2<math>\clubsuit</math></td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td></td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> </tr> </table> | W             | N               | E           | S | X | 3 $\clubsuit$ | 1 $\clubsuit$ | 2 $\clubsuit$ | P |  | P | P |
|---|--|---|---------------|-----------------|-------------|---|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|--|---|---|
|   | W  | N   | E             | S               |             |   |   |               |               |               |   |  |   |   |
| X   | 3 $\clubsuit$  | 1 $\clubsuit$   | 2 $\clubsuit$ |                 |             |   |   |               |               |               |   |  |   |   |
| P   |  | P   | P             |                 |             |   |   |               |               |               |   |  |   |   |
| <b>W</b> West<br>$\spadesuit$ KQ<br>$\heartsuit$ QJ743<br>$\diamondsuit$ J7<br>$\clubsuit$ 8743 |  | <b>E</b> East<br>$\spadesuit$ J72<br>$\heartsuit$ 5<br>$\diamondsuit$ AQ98<br>$\clubsuit$ AJ1065  |               |                 |             |   |   |               |               |               |   |  |   |   |
|   | <b>S</b> South<br>$\spadesuit$ 98653<br>$\heartsuit$ K1082<br>$\diamondsuit$ 42<br>$\clubsuit$ K2  | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>3<math>\clubsuit</math> N</td> <td>NS: 0 EW: 0</td> </tr> </table>  |               | 3 $\clubsuit$ N | NS: 0 EW: 0 |   |   |               |               |               |   |  |   |   |
| 3 $\clubsuit$ N   | NS: 0 EW: 0  |   |               |                 |             |   |   |               |               |               |   |  |   |   |

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/yd66ogjz>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.