

July 2016 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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Edited by Sam Khayatt

Page 14, column 3, under the deal: Playing 2/1 or Standard American the 4S bid by North would be incorrect. That would be a preemptive call with a weak hand and at least five spades. By bidding this way with a borderline opener, slams can easily be missed. In this case the 4S bid is correct, as South denies having 16 HCP by not bidding 1C (that's the bid for 16 or more HCP in Precision).

Page 15, column 1, second full paragraph: Lall makes a preemptive 4H bid. This is a good bid because it is virtually certain North/South has a vulnerable game following the Jacoby 2N bid. The opponents both have openers and they've uncovered a nine-card fit. So they are scoring at least 620. East/West is not vulnerable so they have to be set at least four tricks (800) for a penalty double to work. It tells partner what to lead. And the four-card diamond suit is likely to yield a trick. The long card might set up, or the opponents might discard incorrectly as they might have trouble playing East for four diamonds. Of course, the bid also used up valuable bidding space for North/South.

Page 16, column 1, first paragraph (refers to hand on page 15, column 3): Playing the Q of clubs (from dummy) on the opening lead is a standard play. If East has the K of clubs, he may very well cover the Q. East can't see through the cards and does not know that declarer has the singleton ace. In this case it didn't matter as West has the king. Good plays are not always rewarded.

Page 25, column 1, second paragraph under NOTRUMP OPENING BIDS: Bidding 1N with a five-card major, with cards in the other major, and 3-2 in the minors is common. Doing it with two cards in the other major risks a transfer into your two-card major—especially as the shorter you are in a suit, the more cards in it are available for partner to have. Personally, if the preponderance of my points is in my five-card major, I will bid it, and rebid it if I have to. Also, if my points are mostly aces, I will tend to bid a suit. Aces play better in suit contracts; paint (Kings, Queen and Jacks) plays better in notrump.

The Bidding Box (p. 37 – 39)

Problem 1

West has seven HCP and six clubs. Traditionally, this hand is too weak to bid at the two-level and must pass as Adam did. It would require 10 HCP (or close) to bid. But Stark did bid 2C. This is a key agreement to have with your partner. Modern players (especially in match points) tend to bid a lot. Sometimes, they will crowd you out of the auction if you are too conservative. Note that Adam had second thoughts, and wished he had bid 2C. The 10 HCP requirement was discussed in Pat Harrington's column last month (page 46).

Problem 4

Bridge Bulletin auction. When West bid 1S, he was denying four hearts, otherwise he would have supported partner with a known 4-4 or better fit. When West bid 2N, he was denying three hearts or he would have made a delayed raise in hearts, showing exactly three. East was showing a good five-card suit when he bid 3H; so now West can raise hearts, showing his doubleton.

Problem 5

Five of a minor is usually not a good match point contract. It's worth 400 points (not vulnerable), so the hand makes four in 3N, that's 430, making the 400 a poor score. So, it is always worth thinking about raising five of a minor to six to try for a good match point score. This is not true in IMPS (team games), as the extra 30 points don't have the same impact.

Page 40, deal 1: Both Falk and Robinson make the same point. When the opponents have bid 2 suits, a cue bid in one of the suits shows a stopper in that suit.

Page 44, Alder: When playing a notrump contract, like the 3 NT contract in the first deal, a good guideline is to duck your winner in the suit you are weak in. The idea is to cut communication between the defenders. In this case, run East out of spades so he can't lead one back to West. The "Rule of 7" (more of a guideline than a rule, as it doesn't replace thinking): subtract the number of cards you have in a suit from 7. In this case you have five spades, so $7-5 = 2$. That means you should probably duck twice.

Page 46, Harrington

Hand 2: Add three points for your singleton as you are supporting partner's suit.

Hand 6: Rebidding your own suit tends to show six cards. There are exceptions to this.

Hand 3: A jump rebid of opener's suit shows 16-18 points and a good six-card suit (if you have more than 18, you are too strong for this bid).

On the second auction, the negative double of 1S by East promises four hearts in this auction, so West can bid accordingly. Do not confuse this situation with a takeout double. If your RHO bids 1H and you double, you are not promising four spades; you are promising three cards in all unbid suits (and you are promising an opening hand). You would like to have four spades, but you are not promising four spades.

Page 51, Lawrence: When West opened the bidding in first seat and declarer is looking a 27 HCP, that leaves only 13 for the defenders. Therefore, West almost certainly has the K of spades. So in this case, it is correct to forget the spade finesse and pray that it drops. With four spades out, it will drop only about 12% of the time, but that's better than a play that will never work.

Page 55, Boehm, column 1, bottom: When partner makes a splinter raise, kings and queens in his short suit lose value, but kings and queens in the other suits gain value.

Page 58, Walker, column 2, bottom: Plan your second bid before making your first bid. The choice is to make a takeout double or to bid 2H. 2H is the better bid because it leaves you better positioned for your second bid. The key is that you are not strong enough to double and bid, so there's a good chance your heart suit will be lost if you don't bid it.

Promotions (page 61)

- Melody Euler: Tournament Director
- Wolf Schroeter: Tournament Director

Rank Advancements (beginning on page 65)

- Nancy Strohmer: Gold Life Master (page 67)