

August 2016 ACBL Bulletin Notes

Jeff K and Sam K

Page 22, column 1, bottom to column 2, top: Over partner's 4H bid, 5H hearts asks partner to bid 6H if partner has at least second-round control of the opponent's suit. In this case, spades. Course you would only make this bid with a partner who knew what it means.

Page 22, column 3, deal and comments following: The 2D bid is a marginal overcall as in standard methods, a two-level overcall in the direct position (as opposed to the balancing position) promises an opener and a 6 card suit more often than a five-card suit. South upgraded his hand as the A Q 10 of hearts behind the heart bidder provides more than 6 points in that suit. The 3H by North is a Western cue bid, asking partner to bid 3N with a heart stop. Given that South has shown a heart stop, West does not lead a heart so that he doesn't finesse his partner.

Page 22, column 3, bottom to page 23, column 1, top: When West led the K of spades (an unbid suit) against the notrump contract, South now knew that West had the A of spades. South can then lead towards the Q of spades to get a spade trick. Without the K of spades lead, South would be unbelievably brave to try this.

Page 24, column 3, first full paragraph: A Lightner double against a notrump contract requests partner (who is on lead) to lead dummy's first bid suit. In this case it is difficult to know if East meant his double as a Lightner double or just a plain penalty double. West got it wrong.

Page 24, column 3, deal: When West leads a heart, South can no longer take his nine top tricks. He needs the A of hearts as an entry to his A of clubs. When it's knocked out, he can no longer take two club tricks. If diamond hadn't split 3-0, then the 10 of diamonds would have been an entry to the A of clubs. Really bad luck.

Page 26, column 1, second paragraph: West's weak 2S bid would be the choice of a lot of good players. Sure he only has five spades; however, he is in third seat, not vul, vs. vulnerable opponents. That is the perfect time to preempt light. And as anemic as the diamonds are, he does have four of them; on a good day, one will take a trick. Plus opposite a passed partner, 4H is odds on to make – vul.

The Bidding Box (p. 37 – 39)

Problem 4

One West chose to open with 1 NT because of the decent 5 card diamond suit. The other West chose not to open it 1 NT because even though the diamonds are nice, the hand includes 3 jacks and 2 queens. Those are soft values. Queens are worth less than 2, and Jacks are worth less than 1.

Problem 5

Bridge Bulletin auction. West could consider passing with his opener and probable 2 heart tricks. It's close. I would be more inclined to pass if I were playing IMPs (teams) and I thought we had given a board away and now we need one back. Playing match points (pairs), it's less likely that I will try to go against the field to get a top/bottom.

Page 44, Alder: The Rule of 7 was discussed last month also in his column. When in notrump, and they lead a suit, subtract the number of cards you (and dummy) have in that suit from 7. That's how many times you should usually duck. First two paragraphs. Course you should not duck if you have the led suit well-stopped and are open in another suit.

Page 45, Shafer, column 1, bottom to column 2, top: When North opens 1C, rarely will he have a five-card major. When South responds 1 NT, that denies a four card major. Therefore a major suit lead is often best. East should play the lower of touching honors, the Q of hearts, on defense. If West were doing the leading, or were declarer, he should play the higher of touching honors.

- Returning partner's suit is often correct when defending against a notrump contract.
- Leading into a tenace (AQ, KJ, Q 10) is rarely correct.

Page 46, Harrington

Deal 1

(a) 1S is a 100% forcing. As long as responder has not passed, and neither partner has bid notrump, any call by responder is 100% forcing.

(b) 2S shows five spades, double would show four. With a weak hand you would have to make a negative double with five spades. It would be a matter of style and partnership agreement how strong you would need to be to bid spades with five. With 10 points, bidding spades with five is automatic. With less than that it's not automatic.

(c) When bidding after a 1H overcall, double shows exactly 4 spades, bidding spades shows 5+.

Deal 2

(a) Your 1S call is automatic. But if partner doesn't support your spades do not rebid spades on your second call. It is rarely right for responder to rebid a 5 card suit. The ways of finding a 5-3 fit include new minor forcing by responder, and delayed raises by opener.

(b) Over the 1H overcall, double shows exactly four spades, and bidding spades shows five or more.

Deal 3

When partner bids one minor and your opponent overcalls the other, double shows at least four cards in both majors.

Deal 4

When East bids hearts that promises at least four hearts and fewer than four spades. With 4-4 in the majors, East would have made a negative double.

Page 47, Berg, column 1, last paragraph: it is usually better to play in a 4-4 major fit than in notrump. The 4-4 major fit will often produce one more trick than notrump – but not always.

Page 47, Berg, column 3, last paragraph: When you open 1 NT, and partner invites with 2NT. Go to 3 if you're on the top half of your bid: 17 HCP, 16 with a decent five-card suit, or good intermediates and 16. Look for a reason to bid the game – especially in IMPs (team games),

Page 48, Helms, column 1, box: It is rare when it is correct to stop short of game when both partners have an opening hand.

Page 48, Helms, column 2, second paragraph: Playing 2-over-1, 1H-P- 2C is forcing to game unless you agree that if the 2C bidder rebids his clubs that it is not (maybe 6 clubs and 10-11 HCP). But a 1H overcall followed by a 2C advance shows only 10 HCP and is not forcing to game.

Page 49, Ruling the Game, question 1: When declarer plays out of the wrong hand both defenders have the right to accept or reject the erroneous lead. That is part of the game and good defenders should take advantage of it.

Page 50, Challenge of the Month: This is the typical strip and end play deal that often makes it into the **Bulletin**. See Kantar on pages 52 and 59 and Lawrence on page 60. The idea is for declarer to rid himself and dummy of all cards that would be safe for the defense to lead. Then let the defenders have a trick where all they can do is lead a card where you get a sluff and a ruff, or they lead away from an honor and that gives declarer a trick.

Page 51, Lawrence: The key to this deal is to count. Realize that you need nine tricks. As Lawrence explains in the last paragraph of column 2, you can always get nine tricks no matter the lay of the cards.

Page 52, Kantar: another strip and end play deal.

Page 53, Horton: the key to this deal is to throw a loser on a loser. That means toss your 2 of diamonds on the third round of spades. Now you can trump a possible 4th round in dummy. In any case, now you have an easy 10 tricks and don't have to guess trumps. Course, West could have made the good play of cashing the A of diamonds to prevent the loser on a loser play. But he didn't.

Page 54, Cohen, first paragraph after the deal. The small heart lead by West promises an honor. Since East is looking at the Q in dummy and AK in his hand, he knows West has the Jack, so West wins with the 9. Refer to Shafer, page 45, for another example of winning with the lowest of touching cards.

Page 56, Bergen, column 2, top: When you know what the contract should be, it's usually correct to just bid it.

Page 57, Stewart, column 3, third paragraph: When West gets in with the Q of diamonds, he should have played his K of clubs. East would then know that he could reach West with the A of clubs. When the King wins, East now knows that West has the Ace as declarer would have taken the King with the Ace if he had it.

Page 58, Walker, column 2, second full paragraph. Bid what you're looking at. With great clubs and three hearts to the Jack, it is better to bid your clubs than hide them to make a support double.

Page 58, Walker, column 3, second full paragraph. Being vulnerable, it is not logical to raise partner's weak 2H bid to 3H just because you have three hearts. You have soft values (no aces), no singletons or voids, and your honors are not supported with other honors. Going down 2, for -200 will be bad. Just pass.

Page 59, Kantar, problem 1: this is the third strip and end play deal in this Bulletin.

Page 60, Lawrence, column 2, fourth paragraph: the lead of the 2 of diamonds is a sure singleton. Usually East will have seven diamonds for his 3D preempt. But even if he had only six, West would have two, and then West would play high low. There is nothing lower than the 2.

Page 60, Lawrence, column 3, third paragraph: a series of end-plays, eliminating

Page 68, Product Reviews, column 3, second paragraph below the deal: When dummy plays the 3 of spades leaving the Ace Jack, it is almost always correct to play the 10 of spades, leaving the King over the Jack. It is almost always correct to play a minor honor (J, 10 and sometimes the 9) and keep your major honor to trap an honor in dummy.

Page 69, box: BBO pays the ACBL \$2 million to have the exclusive right to award master points for robot games.

Page 63, Dear Billy, column 3, last paragraph. Don't keep bidding with mis-fitting hands. Stay low. Then play the contract correctly. Don't give up and go down more than you should.

Page 64, Jacobs, column 2 second full paragraph: Don't use Blackwood with a void.

Rank Advancements (beginning on page 65)

- Hans Strohmer: Gold Life Master (page 66)
- Joyce Gore: Silver Life Master (page 74)
- Jill Spence: Bronze Life Master (page 74)