

September 2016 ACBL Bulletin Notes

Jeff Kroll and Sam Khayatt

Page 26: the new rules for opening 1 NT when holding a singleton Ace, King or Queen. If the hand contains the singleton A, K or Q, it cannot have a doubleton when opening 1 NT. Many people were already doing this. Boehm had a column recommending this, so did Helms. Course, some of the time (I would guesstimate about 25%) you will be transferred into your singleton when you do this with a singleton A, K, or Q in a major. There are 12 cards out in the suit, so on average your partner will have 4 cards in the suit, and will have 5 some of the time. Playing a 5-1 fit is not ideal, but you should take the transfer if your right hand opponent passes. I've played worse fits than 5-1.

Note that in problem 2 on page 38, it is recommended that East open 1N with the singleton K of spades.

The Bidding Box (p. 37 – 39)

Problem 1

Bridge Bulletin auction. The 2D call has the advantage of setting up a game-forcing auction. However, it makes it harder to find a 4-4 spade fit when it exists. Course, that's no problem on this hand as there is no 4-4 spade fit.

Problem 2

Bridge Bulletin auction. West does not transfer East into spades as he also has 4 hearts, so he uses Stayman to find the 4-4 heart fit. Note that this is a situation where East could have been transferred into a singleton.

Problem 4

Bridge Bulletin auction. West opens 1D, not 1C even though the clubs are longer. This is using the concept of planning your second bid before making your first bid. The hand is not strong enough to reverse, and the clubs are too weak to rebid. With one more point, or a good 5 card suit, 1 NT would be a better bid.

Problem 5

Bridge Bulletin auction. Note the recommended 2C bid by East instead of 1N. East has the A of spades, but unless West has help in spades, it is likely to be knocked out, and the defense is likely to take 5 tricks before declarer can take 9 tricks in notrump.

It's Your Call (p. 40 – 43)

Problem 1

Colchamiro: In most cases, when a takeout doubler bids his own suit instead of partner's, he is showing a strong hand. However, many modern players play Equal Level Conversion (ELC). That means that the doubler can bid a new suit, as long as he has strength in the unbid suits and he does not raise the level of the bid. The example given is that the doubler (a double of spades), can raise a 2C raise to 2D when he has diamonds and hearts without showing extra values. ELC is considered (but are not identified as such) by Lawrence in the October 2015 **Bulletin** (p. 42, column 1, bottom) and by Lee in the January 2016 **Bulletin** (p. 42, column 2, bottom).

Problem 3

Cohen: Even though you have four-card spade support, an opener, and a singleton club, you should not splinter in clubs. You are too strong. A typical range for splintering is 13-15 HCP.

Page 44, Alder, column 1 bottom, to column 2, top: Two key points when you have two stoppers in the led suit when declaring notrump.

1. If you only have to lose the lead once, don't do any ducking, just make your contract.
2. If you will have to lose the lead a second time, it is usually right to duck the first trick. The point of ducking is to break communications between the defenders. The last paragraph of the article gives an example of this point.

Page 45, Berg, column 1, second paragraph. If partner opens 1H, you should pass with your singleton. Although you don't want to play hearts, if you bid with this weak collection, and no fit for partner, it is often bad. But if partner opens 1S (third paragraph), your singleton heart is now worth 3 dummy points, so you have an easy 2S bid. The 2S bid is an effective blocking bid.

Page 47, Shafer

- Column 2, top (5): After opening 1 of a suit, and partner passes, when opener now bids 1N, that shows 18-19 HCP. If opener had 15-17 HCP he would open 1N, and if opener had 20-21 HCP he would open 2N, more than that he would open 2C. This should not be confused with the auction where opener bids 1 of a suit, and responder bids 1 of a suit, and opener bids 1 NT; that is 11-14 HCP. It's when responder has passed your initial bid that bidding 1N now is strong.
- Column 2, last paragraph: Aces are undervalued. If you are lucky enough to have all four, count this as 17 points.
- Column 3: **Upgrades and downgrades when bidding notrump.** These are important parts of hand evaluation.

Page 48, Harrington

- Column 1, first paragraph: a negative double shows four cards in any unbid major.

- Column 1, third paragraph: holding only one four card major, you should bid it following the 1C – 1D – X auction.
- Column 2, third paragraph: After 1D – 2C, a reasonable agreement is that responder's 2H or 2S bid shows a 5 card suit. So, a negative double would show only one four card major and a reasonable rebid if partner is so inconsiderate as to bid the other major.
- Column 3, fourth paragraph: a negative double of the 2C overcall shows at least 8 HCP.

Page 49, Cocheme

- Column 1, third paragraph: When you have a distributional 6-5 hand, it argues for strong bidding. If you catch your partner with a reasonable fit for either suit, you will likely take a lot of tricks. 6-5 come alive.
- Column 2, first full paragraph: Second suit agreed, trump lead. This is often an effective lead as it stops declarer from cross ruffing, or setting up his first suit after ruffing it a time or two in dummy.

Page 51, Lawrence

- Column 2, first two paragraphs: The club finesse should be taken twice to maximize your chance of making your contract. You only need either the K or Q to be in front of the ace to make your contract – a 75% shot. Taking the heart finesse is wrong, as it's only a 50% shot.
- Column 2, last paragraph: Good plays are not always rewarded in bridge. Bad plays are not always punished – sometimes they are even rewarded. Bridge is a game of statistics, what makes a play good or bad is how often it is correct and how logical it is – not if it worked on a particular deal.
- Column 3, second paragraph: Now you must take the heart finesse as you don't have the entries to dummy to take the club finesse twice.

Page 55, Boehm

- Column 1, last paragraph: Hand A is the best hand is it provides a fit with partner and a source of tricks. The proper bid is 3 NT. It's not a perfect bid, with hearts wide open and only one stopper in spades. But the bid should be made as the risk of missing the 3NT game is greater than the risk of going down.
- Column 2, first full paragraph: Hand C is best on defense as you don't have a fit in clubs. But you do have a lot of winners. A penalty double is your best call.
- Column 3, last paragraph: Pass with hand B as you don't have a strong preference for offense or defense.

Page 58, Walker, column 3, first full paragraph: Bid in tempo. If you think a long time and pass, you've given away a lot of information.

Page 65, Ruling the Game,

- Question 1: The rules for when a card is considered played.
- Question 3, point 2: Dummy can point out irregularities after the hand play has concluded, but not before.

Rank Advancements (beginning on page 67)

- Michael Bossert: Sapphire Life Master (page 68)
- Sara Bossert: Sapphire Life Master (page 68)
- Brenda Solovitz: Sapphire Life Master (page 68)
- Skip Brower: Ruby Life Master (page 69)
- Judy Gibson: Silver Life Master (page 70)
- Hugh Humphries: Silver Life Master (page 70)
- Margie Paterson: Bronze Life Master (page 78)

It's Your Call Top Online Scores for July

- Jeffrey Kroll 500 (perfect score)