

## April 2018 ACBL Bridge Bulletin Notes

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### Letters to the Editor (p. 8-10)

Page 8, Column 1, **Thanks for the help:** An opening bid that can be made with fewer than 3 cards is:

1. Announced if the opening is a non-forcing bid
2. Alerted if the opening is forcing

Page 8, column 2, **Getting Shorted:** You should count points for short suits only when you have a good fit with partner's suit.

### The Bidding Box (p. 37 – 39)

#### **Problem 1**

Jared/Michael auction (same as *Bridge Bulletin* auction): When Jared bids 3H (as responder), he is showing six hearts. Rebidding a five-card suit as responder is usually incorrect. The possible 5-3 fit is often uncovered when opener makes a delayed raise, or when responder uses new minor forcing. See the Problem 1 on page 40 and the Harrington article on page 46.

#### **Problem 3**

*Bridge Bulletin* auction: When North transfers South to Hearts, and then East bids 2H it can't be to play (not in the opponent's five-card or longer heart suit). It's just a cue bid to show values. When East subsequently bids 3H, it's a Western cue bid asking for a heart stop. West's bids 3N bid promises a heart stop.

#### **Problem 5**

*Bridge Bulletin* auction: Usually you want to play in an eight-card major suit fit as opposed to notrump. You are looking for a ruff(s) to yield extra trick(s). However, if both hands are balanced a ruff is unlikely so it is often right to play in notrump. If you have extra strength you should lean more toward playing in notrump.

In IMPS (team games), bidding and making 3N is almost as good as bidding and making four of a major. Furthermore, it is often easier to make nine tricks than ten and you sometimes avoid an unpleasant ruff.

#### **Problem 7**

Both Wests and the *Bridge Bulletin* auction open the West hand 1D rather than 2C, although the hand is strong enough for a 2C opener. It is relatively standard not to open a three-suited hand with a strong 2C bid because it is often difficult (or impossible) to show all three suits after opening 2C.

#### **Problem 8**

*Bridge Bulletin* auction: Note the West jump to 4C, showing about 9-11 points.

## **It's Your Call (p. 40-43)**

### **Problem 1**

All the experts on the panel agreed that by North rebidding his clubs that it showed six clubs. This was covered in problem 1 on page 37 and in the Harrington article on page 46. The only debate is whether North is likely to have 4 or 5 diamonds when his third bid is 3C. Some think North should have a five-card diamond suit to bid it for the first time at the three-level; others think it's a good hand with four diamonds (and six clubs).

### **Problem 2**

The choice here is between 1H and 3 C. NS is non vul while EW is vul and you want to get in the way of the opponents' auction. The benefit of trotting out the miserable heart suit is that you want to find the 4-4 heart fit, if you have it, and to make it hard for them to bid hearts if partner is short.

The 3C bid is an inverted minor bid, showing weakness and taking up bidding room. The 1H bid scores a little better here; however, as Korbel notes, it may backfire by getting partner off to the wrong lead.

### **Problem 3**

Since 2C is Michaels (showing hearts and spades), the 2H bid is a cue bid showing strength and a heart control. The panelists expect to be playing slam, probably in a minor.

### **Problem 4**

There there is no perfect bid. Five panelists choose 2N which is right on high card points but shows only five spades. Four panelists choose 3S which is a bit of an under bid. As Cohen states, he would like to bid 3 ½ spades.

### **Problem 5**

Cohen dismisses the EW bidding to the three-level, as non vul opponents vs. vul is often an invitation to interfere in the bidding when they have a fit – which they do, in spades. Shi passes as she does not want to go negative in match points; however, in IMPS she would bid on as she is more afraid of missing a vulnerable game.

## **Page 44, Alder**

Hand 1, lead: North and South have bid and raised diamonds, and you have four of them. You expect partner to have one or a void. Normally you would lead the D9 (denying an honor in the suit); in this case you would lead the D2 – suit preference. Let partner know he can reach you in the lower of the two other suits (not diamonds, and not trumps/spades) so you can get in to get him a (another) ruff.

Hand 2, defense: This is also a suit preference problem. Play the HJ under partner's HA to request a switch to the higher of the other two suits (not hearts, and not trumps/spades). So, you get a diamond lead to your ace and you can continue diamonds, trapping declarer's queen.

**Page 45, Parrish:** With an invitational hand, your first bid needs to be a clear invitation or a forcing bid, so that you can make a clear invitation on your second bid. You don't want to show a weak hand on the first bid, which partner could pass, even with game going values.

## **Page 46, Harrington**

Column 1, third paragraph: South does not rebid hearts as it tends to show a 6 card suit. Also a 2H bid shows a minimum and a 3H bid shows just under opening strength. This hand is an opener.

Column 2, second paragraph: North bids 2H on his third bid. This is a delayed raise that promises three hearts. With four hearts, North should support them on his second bid.

The hand is made only by pulling one round of trumps and ruffing the fourth diamond with the HQ.

**Page 49, Cohen:** When partner opens 2N (20-21 HCP), pass with 0-4 HCP and no five-card (or longer) major, otherwise bid. The 4N response to 2N is quantitative, asking partner to go to 6N if he is on the top of his bid.

**Page 51, Kantar,** third hand must unblock the doubleton honor on the opening lead when defending a no trump contract. When third hand has Ax, it overtakes with the A and returns the small card.

**Page 52, Lawrence:** Open the South hand 4S in third position. This is correct because partner has already passed, making slam highly unlikely to make and very hard to bid. And 4S makes it hard for EW to get into the auction.

**Page 53, Horton:** Horton opens 1N despite not having either major stopped. The 1N bid has the advantages of showing your high card strength in a narrow range and your flat shape.

**Page 54, Boehm** makes these points about discarding:

- The first discard is the most important, it may even be your only time to send partner a message
- Keep parity with the dummy to keep it from making long cards in a suit good
- Save a card in partner's suit when you have a potential entry
- When discarding from an honor sequence, discard the top of it, discard J from J 10 9
- When you have a tough choice between a negative and positive signal, go with the negative signal as the positive signal might cost a trick in that suit

The examples he gives are all negative signals that allow partner to find the killing switch.

**Page 55, Cohen:** Although it is tempting to play on clubs as you have a lot of length and strength there, that can't be correct as the opponents will certainly get in with the A (and maybe the Q) and run their diamonds to set you. You must try and make nine tricks in the other three suits. You made your DK on the opening lead, so you must try to make four tricks in each major.

The correct line of play relies on restricted choice. This basically means that when there are two equal (sequential) high cards out, and one of them drops under your honor, you should finesse the other opponent for the other high card.

**Page 56, Challenge:** The key is to play low toward your CA and CT. If East rises with an honor, take your A; if not, insert the T. Let West in; he can't hurt you. You don't want East leading through your Jx of spades (the A went on the first trick).

**Page 58, Walker:** You are allowed to make inferences on your opponents' break in tempo – at your own risk.

**Page 59, Kantar:** Deal 1 is a nice auction. South supports spades with only three because of the worthless doubleton in hearts. The unbid major is a popular lead against a notrump contract and South can't stand for a heart lead. When North then bids hearts, South bids 3N.

**Page 60, Lawrence** makes the following points in the postmortem:

- It's useful to know when you have 9 trumps rather than 8. The play is usually easier.
- A low singleton after a limit raise is a good clue that you have game. Your distribution is likely to work well for you.
- A singleton Ace is not as good as it looks. You want your aces to support/combine with other others to give you multiple tricks.

**Page 63, Dear Billy,** column 3, second paragraph: When partner makes a take out double, unless you have a trump stack, take it out. If you have a horrid hand, make the cheapest bid possible (in tempo). If the bridge gods are with you, the opponents will take you off the hook completely or at least not double you. If the bridge gods are not with you ...