

## June 2018 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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### Page 33, Jones

Column 2 explains Reverse Drury in full. Rebidding your major shows you opened light. Rebid 2D with an average opener; jump to 4S with a good opener.

Column 3, third paragraph: a “super acceptance” of a Jacoby transfer shows 4 of partner’s major and no more than six losers.

### Page 32, Ricker / ABTA

Column 2, third paragraph: When defending a NT contract with a weak hand and without a good suit, it is often correct to try to find partner’s suit. If the opponents have not shown strength in a major, that major is often their weakness. The shorter you are in a major that the opponents have not shown, the more likely partner is to be long in it.

Column 3, second paragraph: When defending a NT contract, if you can tell from the bidding that partner has nothing, it is rarely right to lead a suit that will give declarer a trick. Usually make a passive lead and let declarer play to you. Even if you can’t set them, don’t give away tricks, especially in match points.

**Page 36, Smith**, column 2, first paragraph: Players are likely to accept penalties when they are fairly/evenly applied. Conversely, not applying them fairly can lead to problems.

### The Bidding Box (p. 37 – 39)

#### Problem 1

It is rarely correct to use any form of Blackwood without at least second round control of all suits not bid by partner. The *Bridge Bulletin* auction shows the DA of diamonds being cue bid over 4H and the slam being avoided. The Barnes bid of 4NT instead of the cue bid landed Barnes in a slam off the AK of clubs. Course, if the defense doesn’t lead a club, 6H will be made by pitching a club on the high spade.

#### Problem 3

*Bridge Bulletin* auction: the keys to this auction are:

1. West’s 4H bid was a splinter, not a cue bid, because it was a double jump. The splinter also showed agreement that clubs would be the trump suit. A 3H cue bid (no jump) would be asking if partner has a heart stop on the way to a 3N contract.
2. East’s 5D bid was a cue bid, showing the DA. A common treatment is to cue bid first or second round controls below the game level, but only first round controls above the game level. So, this shows the DA, since the auction is above game in clubs. West is looking at a doubleton diamond, and neither opponent has bid diamonds, so it’s highly unlikely East has a diamond void.

#### **Problem 4**

West/Barnes has a weak opening bid, but it does meet the suggestion of 22: 11 HCP + nine cards in his longest two suits = 20 and two quick tricks (CA and KQ of diamonds). When East bid 1H, Barnes made a reasonable 2H bid, implying four hearts when he has only three. His other choice would be 2C. At match points, people strain to avoid the minors. 1N is a poor bid with the small doubleton in spades. And East made a reasonable bid of 4H, expecting more from West.

Feldman and the *Bridge Bulletin* auction passed the West hand, rather than open 1C. High cards in short suits (KQ of diamonds) are worth less than high cards in long suits and the unsupported HJ is of dubious, if any, value.

#### **Problem 5**

*Bridge Bulletin* auction: The 3S cue bid of the opponent's suit in response to the unusual 2N bid shows a good hand (which West has). It shows support for at least one of partner's suits, and interest in game or slam. A cue bid is forcing for one round and asks the 2NT bidder to bid his cheapest suit at the cheapest level with a weak hand (less than a good ten points), or to make any other bid with a good hand (a good ten points or more). East's jump to 4H is a splinter, showing a singleton or void in hearts and a good hand.

#### **Problem 6**

*Bridge Bulletin* auction: It is difficult to show all three suits when opener has the strength for a 2C opener and a three-suited hand. Larry Cohen has recommended against that in an *ACBL Bulletin* last year. In this case, by opening 2C, the contestants missed the club slam, which is easily reached when the East hand opens 1C.

#### **Problem 7**

McWhinnie liked the double fit that he had with partner and his prime values in partner's suits, so he forced to game with the 3H splinter.

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

#### **Problem 1**

The majority of the panel passes as they don't think they have a good call on their first turn and they know they'll get another call once West takes the transfer to spades.

#### **Problem 2**

There is no perfect call on this hand, but Cohen and five others felt that 2N was less wrong than the alternatives. 2N is the right value bid (invitational), but lacks a spade stop. Donn points out because he has so many spades, the opponents might not be able to run a long spade suit. Any spade you hold is one fewer for the opponents to run.

The second choice is 3C, which is also wrong, but some considered it the least lie. Raising partner's second suit (and a minor) with only three is not a good choice, but it could be the best choice.

Meckstroth and two others pass. At match points they are willing to miss a possible game to avoid going minus.

Boehm overbids with 2S so that partner will get to play it, as there is no benefit to the lead going into the South hand.

### **Problem 3**

This problem highlights a useful bid that experts know. You have to decide whether to make it part of your partnership agreement. When you open a minor (m) and partner bids a major, your 4m shows a good six-card minor and four-card support for partner's major. Some choose not to make the 4C bid as the hearts are so weak. They bid either 2D to play in notrump or 4H to play in a heart game, with no interest beyond game.

### **Problem 5**

The 2H bid is fourth-suit forcing, an artificial bid that says nothing about hearts. However, the panelists know that North's 2N bid is strange. They are looking at the AKQ of hearts and partner bid 1S (not 1H) over South's initial diamond bid. So it seems North has bid notrump without a full heart stopper. Making that call implies some sort of problem with the hand. It appears he is short in diamonds and doesn't want to rebid his black suits. Most panelists think this hand is a mismatch and settle for game despite their intermediate opener opposite partner's opener.

### **Page 44, Alder**

First deal: Declarer is looking at 27 HCP between his hand and dummy. That leaves the defense with 13 HCP. Unless East opened with 10 HCP, West can't have the CK or the DK. So to make the hand, finesse East for the DK.

The second hand is similar: You are looking at 27 HCP and East has opened. Finesse him for the SQ; he is almost certain to have it. Don't automatically try to drop it because you have nine trump. The drop is only a 52% probability – not the near-certainty the finesse is, in this case.

### **Page 45, Parrish**

This article points out that it's far more important to get the basics right than it is to learn a lot of conventions. New Minor Forcing (NMF) is one of the conventions that, although not essential to get started, should be learned after the basics are in place.

NMF allows us to find a 5-3 major-suit fit, when responder has five and opener has three. NMF also lets responder know if opener is on the top or bottom part of the 12-14 HCP range. Whether opener first shows three-card support for partner's major or first shows four cards in the other major first is a matter of partnership agreement.

### **Page 46, Harrington**

This topic is about trump management and fast and slow losers. A fast loser is one that the defense can take as soon as they get in. A slow loser takes time for the defense to develop. In both the first and second deal declarer might lose the lead if he pulls trump.

In the first deal, declarer can pull trump because the defense can't burn him with fast losers and set the contract. In the second deal, declarer can't afford to pull trump until one of the fast losers is disposed of.

#### **Page 48, Helms**

Column 1, answer: agrees with Parrish (and most good players) the key to good bridge is hand evaluation, imagination, and common sense – not conventions.

Column 2, third paragraph: A key to getting better is to play against good players (Bob Hamman and Eddie Wold have said the same thing in the *Bulletin*).

#### **Page 49, Cohen**

Column 2, second paragraph: the Rule of 17 states that if partner opens a weak two and your HCP plus the number of cards in partner's suit equals 17 (or more), look for game in partner's suit. Usually this works and it works better with a major since only ten tricks are required (vs. 11 for diamonds). If partner has opened 2D, you may want to tread a little more carefully and might end up in NT or in a partial.

Column 2, third paragraph: If your hand does not meet the Rule of 17, but you do have at least three trump and ruffing values, further partner's pre-empt to the three-level. This is not an invitational bid; neither of you should bid again.

**Page 53, Kantar, #7:** Asking for aces with a void is usually wrong.

**Page 54, Boehm:** Finessing positions that advancing players should learn:

1. A K J T x opposite x x x: Play either the A or K. If the Q doesn't drop, finesse for it.
2. A K J T x x opposite x x x: You can't afford to play the A or K first as you may need to finesse twice.
3. A Q 9 opposite x x x: Play to the 9 and hope that it forces the K.
4. If the play or bidding suggests that the Q is behind the A J 9 x opposite K x x, lead the J. If it's covered, then finesse for the T.
5. Q 9 x x opposite A 8 7 x: If the bidding or play suggests that the K is behind the Q, lead low to the 9. If it loses to the J or T, then play for the Q to smother a now-stiff J or T.
6. Q T 9 7 3 opposite A 8 5 2: If the bidding or play suggests that the K is behind the Q, play the Q. If the Q is covered, win the A, losing just the one. Make the defender with the expected strength play second and not fourth.

**Page 55, Cohen,** column 2, third paragraph: Before deciding how to play the hearts, try to learn what you can about the distribution of the hand without risking a ruff. By playing clubs, you find out that West has five clubs and five spades. As East did not bid diamonds over the 1C bid, he is unlikely to have seven of them. Therefore, it is likely that West has at least two diamonds and no more than one heart. Finesse East for the HQ. This fits with Boehm's column on finessing (p. 54).

**Page 56, Bergen:** How to execute a squeeze:

1. Cash all the winners in those suits where there is no possibility of getting an extra trick – top tricks.
2. Leave an entry to the hand where the extra trick is located.
3. Keep track of the discards that the defenders make in the relevant suit(s) – the one(s) in which you're trying to develop an extra trick.
4. Lose all the losers that you have to early. Squeezes typically work best when you are planning to take the rest of the tricks.

Having the defenders discard often helps declarer. Sometimes they are squeezed, sometimes they discard incorrectly.

**Page 62, Stewart**

Column 1, fourth paragraph: Bid speculative vulnerable games at IMPS (teams).

Column 2, third paragraph: After West played the AK of hearts, he can't have the KQ of diamonds because he passed as dealer. This point – figuring out the location of certain cards – fits with Boehm's column.

**Page 63, Miller**

Column 2, first paragraph: Take the hand record "par results" with a grain of salt. They are based on a computer being able to see all four hands. The line of play is based on knowing where the cards are, not on probabilities.

Column 2, second paragraph: It is almost never correct to use Blackwood when you have a void. This fits with Kantar's column. Cue bid to show first round control at game level or higher.

Column 3, third paragraph: Bidding five of a major after the transfer is a simple way to invite slam. There are more sophisticated methods but they require a sophisticated partnership.