

## July 2018 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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### Never Say Die (p. 9-14)

#### Board 19 (p. 12)

H. Lall bids 2D in first position with his weakish six-card diamond suit, while Levin chooses to pass. This is a difference in styles. On this deal, the 2D bid was effective. West was always going to pass, even without a bid in front of him. But given the 2D bid, East, despite the strong hand, now has no good bid. The best Nickell could do was bid 2H. And so EW missed the 3N game, which was found at the other table, where South did not pre-empt.

#### Board 30 (p. 13)

J. Lall opens the East hand 1H – a very light opener in first position. That made it difficult for NS to find their spade slam. At the other table, Rodwell makes a normal pass in first seat and NS found their spade slam.

**Page 29, Ruling the Game**, column 3, third paragraph: If you can't remember your partnership agreement, just say so. Don't guess at an explanation. Guessing tells your partner what you think and what you think is unauthorized information to your partner.

**Page 32, BridgeBash**, column 2: This is a strip and end-play hand. Declarer ruffs a diamond and pulls trump, hoping to put East in with a heart on the second round of hearts. It works! East must either lead from his SK or surrender a sluff and a ruff. And the contract comes home.

### The Bidding Box (p. 37 – 39)

#### Problem 2

With 13 HCP opposite 12 HCP, slam is almost cold if you bid the right one. Slam is cold because you have a double fit in clubs and diamonds. The 4-4 club slam works because you get two pitches (a heart and a spade) on the long diamonds. The 6-4 diamond slam won't work as you'll lose a spade and a heart. Notice that the scorer gave 6C a near top, and 6D a near bottom.

#### Problem 5

West bids 2H bid is fourth-suit forcing in standard methods. It says nothing about hearts; it just forces partner to bid again. Any number of spades can be passed, making a spade bid incorrect.

#### Problem 6

*Bridge Bulletin* auction: Playing 2/1, West's first bid must be 1N, as 2D would show an opener. East's second bid in standard methods must be 3C. Any number of hearts is non-forcing; 2C is also non-forcing. 3C is the natural forcing bid, forcing to game. West having limited her hand with the initial 1N call, can now bid 2D at her second turn. Having jumped to 3C on the last call, East can now bid 3H.

#### Problem 7

When Sally feared a misfit, she passed to protect the plus score in pairs. Going minus when you have the majority of the strength is never good, but in pairs the need to stretch for game is not what it is

in team games (IMPS). A standard auction makes it easier to find the 5D game as West's opening diamond bid really does show diamonds.

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

#### **Problem 1**

Having a partial spade stopper is enough for most to bid 2N. It's the most descriptive bid for strength and shape, and it leaves Stayman, relays and transfers in play. The hand is too strong to pass – especially at IMPs where you don't want to miss a vulnerable game, and a double is inappropriate with the doubleton diamond.

#### **Problem 2**

Bidding no trump with a void is distortion of this hand, so the choice is between clubs and hearts. The second pass by South was converting partner's takeout double to penalty, showing a heart stack. A heart bid would be a cue bid, as it is unlikely that we want to play in East's five-card suit. Two panelists chose to cue bid diamonds to make it clearer that they are cue bidding.

**Alder, page 45:** Both hands have the same message. If an opponent passed (before any bids have been made), and then shows up with 9 HCP, he can't have a missing A. Holding a missing A, he would have had 13 HCP and opened the bidding.

### **Page 46, Harrington**

The first deal has three fast losers, and one slow loser, the heart. The heart loser needs to be discarded on a good diamond. Declarer must do two things to make this happen:

1. Set up the diamonds before pulling trump. If declarer pulls trump first, West will continue to lead hearts, turning the third heart into a fast loser before it can be discarded on the long diamond.
2. Plan ahead at trick one and win the HA in the closed hand, leaving the HK as transportation good diamond(s).

The key to the second deal is to play the HA and HJ from declarer's hand. Don't finesse. If the defense takes the HK, declarer will then pitch the diamond loser on the HQ. If the defense ducks the HK (unlikely) then declarer loses only two clubs and a diamond. Either way, the contract makes.

**Page 47, Parrish, column 3:** South could invite game with a 3S bid – but then North would go to game if he is in the top half of his bid. In this case, South cares primarily about the club suit, so a better way to invite is with a help suit game try in clubs – 3C. North will now accept the game try with the important CK in the first hand, and will not accept it with the probably useless red suit honors in the second hand.

### **Page 49, Cohen**

Column 1, last paragraph: With enough aces and kings you can raise your partner's preempt to game. Queens and jacks usually aren't worth much – unless they are supporting aces and kings.

Column 2, last three hands: Even with a strong hand it is usually best to pass partner's pre-empt when you don't have a fit – especially if you don't have aces. Bidding 3N is incorrect unless you can run partner's suit or you have the contract made in your own hand.

Column 2, last paragraph: Support (usually) with trump length and a weak hand. Consider passing if vulnerable, flat and/or have a hand good for defense.

**Page 51, Helms:** The auction has gone 1C – X – XX and is now up to you. You bid 1S. How is partner to interpret your bid? Opener's 1C shows at least 11; partner's LHO has 10+; that's 21 total. Partner knows he has 19, so that leaves... 0 points for you to have. Your bid suggests a place to play, but does not show any values – there are none left to show. If you have six cards, you can jump to the two-level with the same number of points.

### **Page 52, Lawrence**

The 1S bid shows at least five spades as West would have doubled with four.

Bottom of column 2, fourth paragraph: Both West and South started with a singleton club and East knows this. EW has taken the CA, two diamonds and the SA. So when East leads the CQ, South doesn't have a counter. There is nothing for him to discard that would help. If he trumps low, West trumps with the H9. If he trumps high, West discards and that sets up the H9 – a trump promotion.

Postmortem: East is right to open 1C, not 3C, with his great 10 HCP. Nice seven-card suit, great intermediates, and two aces (quick tricks). This hand meets the Rule of 20 +2.

### **Page 53, Kantar**

#### **Deal 1**

2H promises 8+ points and a decent five-card (or longer) heart suit. Larry Cohen and others play this as showing 2 of the top 3 in hearts.

#### **Deal 2**

The 2D bid is appropriate, as supporting hearts or bidding any number of clubs is not forcing. Reversing in diamonds is forcing for one round; your delayed heart raise on your next bid shows three, not four, hearts.

#### **Deal 4**

2C is fourth-suit forcing; it does not show or deny clubs. It shows strength and forces partner to bid. Similar to Deal 2, show your strength and force partner to bid again.

**Page 54, Boehm**, column 2, second paragraph: Holding the K x behind A Q J 7 6 3 in a notrump contract where dummy has no side entries and declarer is known to hold only two, holding up the K is appropriate. Playing your small card has to be done in tempo so as not to give away what you're doing. You expect declarer to finesse again as he can't see through the cards. When you win your king (you hope) the club suit will be unreachable. And... you know that declarer has only two clubs because partner played the C2, showing an odd number. Dummy has six and you have two. Partner has either one or three and is more likely to have three.

**Page 55, Horton**, column 1, second paragraph: Holding Kx in a suit not bid by partner, it is often correct to make sure the opening lead comes to your hand. Horton bid 3N to protect his DK on the opening lead.

**Page 56, Bergen**: After the defense cashes the AK of hearts, you will squeeze West by following the steps outlined last month. Pull trump, cash your two high diamonds, and then play all your trump. West is squeezed. He can't protect both clubs and hearts. You will keep whatever he discards. If West discards a heart, you keep yours. If he doesn't discard a heart, keep your clubs and hope the third one will be good. It is on this deal.

**Page 57, Cohen**, column 1, third paragraph: When partner preempts and then doubles, it is probable that he has a void and can ruff. Having pre-empted, he is unlikely to have a trump stack or an opening hand.

**Page 58, Challenge of the Month**: As in Kantar's column, the 2C bid is fourth-suit forcing. It doesn't confirm or deny clubs; it just forces partner to bid.

**Page 59, Kantar Hand 2**: This is a strip and end play deal, you win the CQ, pull trump, cash your CA and HA and then throw the defense in with a heart. They can't play hearts without giving you a ruff and a sluff and they can't play diamonds without either locating the jack for you or setting up your KQ. If they play clubs, they will set up a club trick for you (maybe two).

**Page 60, Walker**: Get into the habit of deciding what your second bid is before making your first bid. You don't need to evaluate lots of possible auctions, just the probable ones. Your tempo breaks often help an alert declarer, and they can convey unauthorized information to partner.