

October 2019 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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Page 36, Bidding Box, Problem 1 – *Getting to the right slam*

The *Bridge Bulletin* auction demonstrates two key bids to get to 7D:

1. The 3D rebid by opener. Yes, this bid typically shows 16-18 HCP. However, the diamond suit is worth more than it appears: there are seven (!) of them, the AQ combination is worth more than six points and the AQ combination is in the seven-card suit. Furthermore, the outside SA and protected CK are prime values, making the 3D bid correct.
2. 7NT is likely to go down. One spade, two hearts (unless it's your lucky day), five diamonds and three clubs = 12 tricks. In a diamond contract, declarer can ruff out the heart suit until the last one is set up for trick number 13.

Page 54, **Boehm**, – *Unblocking*

Unblocking—playing a higher card than necessary to a trick—sometimes gives up a trick from your hand or takes one away from partner. However, you unblock so that:

1. One of you can run a long suit
2. The correct hand is on lead

The three deals demonstrate how to identify situation that call for an unblocking play.

First deal

This deal shows the need to plan and think before playing to the first trick. The opponents have led the H5 against a 6N contract. The free finesse looks enticing, but if you take it, you will never get the two club tricks in your hand. You need to win the HA at trick one and unblock the AK of clubs. You will then be able to use the HK as an entry to the two clubs in your hand, picking up one spade, two hearts, five diamonds and four clubs. 12 tricks.

Second deal

In this deal, a heart lead makes the club finesse a disaster. The two red aces are your only entries to dummy and one will be burned before you can get in. Your only entry to the clubs after they are set up is the DA. So, you must pull trump, lead the CA and another club, giving up a trick to the CK (unless it fell singleton under the CA). When you get back in, lead a diamond to the A and run the rest of the clubs.

Third deal

The deal in column 3 shows the need to look for entries that are not obvious. The key to this hand is that you need three entries to the dummy. The heart suit can provide all three, if you don't waste them. The HQ and HT are obvious entries. The H4 is the likely third entry as long as you preserve the H2 so you can lead it toward the H4. Course, if the hearts go 3-0, there goes your entry, but that's unlikely (it happens only about 22% of the time).

Page 59, **Kantar**, Problem 2,

This type of situation comes up a lot. We get in an impossible contract. The key is to find a line of play that might work and play for it. Sure, 4S is hopeless if the defenders take two diamonds off the top. It's unlikely that we will avoid losing the AK of trump.

But since opponents did not win two diamonds off the top, we should try to pitch a diamond on the fourth heart. We need to:

1. Ruff the opening club lead in dummy, so we can take the heart finesse (yes, we need some luck)
2. Take the heart finesse
3. Ruff a second club. Yes, it's a winner but we have to get back to dummy to take the heart finesse again.
4. Take the heart finesse again
5. Cash the HA (you might pause to pray they're 3-3)
6. Ruff your other high club to reach the 13th heart
7. Play the 13th heart. As long as neither defender can trump with the outstanding small spade and the SA and SK are in different hands, you are home. When they ruff the 13th heart, you pitch your diamond loser. You will lose only one diamond and two spades. It's always better to play for something good to happen than to give up.