

January 2020 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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Page 37, Bidding Box

Problem 1 – *Not getting to slam.*

Both pairs of contestants missed a sound slam. The Grand Slam scores best as there are a likely 13 tricks: five spades, one heart, two diamonds and five clubs.

The grand is difficult to bid as it makes because of fitting honors and no wasted values.

The *Bridge Bulletin* auction provides a path to 6NT using standard methods:

	West	East	
		1C	
	1S	2N	Flat-ish hand with 18-19 points. This hand is at the top of that range with the good five-card club suit – the AQ is worth more than six, especially with the good intermediates. In Bergen’s column last month he pointed out that a point should be added for three aces.
Showing a stop in diamonds, and wanting to be careful without one in hearts	3D	3N	Heart stop, not anxious to bid past 3N, preferring notrump to the seven-card spade fit.
An aggressive call, but 12 HCP + 1 for the fifth spade, and the AQ of spades are worth more than six, the CK is likely to fit well with partner’s club suit, and there are no queens and jacks to detract from the point count – the SQ should be upgraded because it’s with the ace. The hand can be valued at 14 points, making an invitation to slam a reasonable bid.	4N	6N	East has about as good a hand as it can have for its 2NT bid, easy to accept the invitation to 6 NT

Problem 7 – Getting to slam.

Both pairs reached the optimal 6S contract in the East.

The **Bridge Bulletin Auction** provides a path to 6S using standard methods:

	West	East	
	1D	1S	We play weak jump shifts, so 2S is not a consideration.
Showing a six-card diamond suit.	2D	2H	We play this as fourth-suit forcing to game; however, even if you don't, it's a forcing bid (new suit by an unpassed responder when notrump hasn't been bid). Although our spades are rebiddable, any number of spades would be wrong. 2S is weak, 3S is invitational and 4S is likely to end the bidding, causing us to miss a potential slam.
Preferring to play in a potential 5-2 spade fit instead of a potential 4?-3 heart fit (if the heart bid were natural, it would show four hearts)	2S	4N	Roman Key Card (3014) for spades.
Three key cards	5C	5N	Asks for kings outside the spade suit (The SK is already accounted for in the key card ask)
No outside kings	6S		

Page 41, It's Your Call, Deal 3 – When partner is a passed hand...

You open a routine 1D in third seat. The opponents are silent and your partner (who originally passed) bids 2C. The 2C bid should show 10-11 points (maybe 12 if your partner makes only sound openings in the first two positions). You have 15 HCP. On the plus side we would count the singleton CQ as its full two points because it's in partner's suit. Normally we would count it as one.

It's unlikely that partner has four spades. Most players would not skip over the four-card major to bid the five-card minor; they would bid 1S.

The winning score was 2N. It caters to partner stretching a little; it also shows your point count, 15-17. It does distort your distribution with your singleton CQ. Interestingly, Boehm chooses this over 2S as he doesn't want to help the defense.

2S is the second choice. It keeps the bidding alive and allows you to describe more of your pattern. Robinson makes the point that if the contract ends up being notrump, that it might play better from partner's side of the table. There is no clear reason that it would play better from your side.

3N is the third choice. $15 + 10 = 25$ points. 3 panelists just take their chances in 3N.

Pass is the fourth choice. Two panelists had a hard time constructing a passed hand that would make 3NT. Meyers points out the singleton CQ could well make transportation difficult.

2D was the last choice to get an award. No panelist chose this. It is usually incorrect to rebid a five-card minor on your second bid. Course, there are some that would argue that the other calls were all worse. But none was on the expert panel.

Page 44, Card Play 101—Second-hand high?

Alder describes two situations where it is necessary to try to win a trick in second seat so that your partner does not have to win it. These are situations where you do not want partner to be on lead.

The first is when declarer is trying to execute a strip and end play. You can recognize this situation when

1. Defenders' trump have been drawn
2. Declarer and dummy each hold at least one remaining trump
3. The same two suits have been eliminated from both declarer's hand and dummy

At this point, declarer's goal is to make your partner win the trick and either be forced to lead from a fragile holding or to concede a ruff and a sluff. When you are in second seat and can win the trick that partner is about to be thrown in with, do so; otherwise partner will be end-played.

In the second situation, partner is one lead away from establishing a long suit. In the example given, partner has almost established his spade suit; only the A is outstanding. The only other entry to his hand is the DA. When declarer leads a diamond off the board, try to win the next defensive trick so that partner can (hopefully) retain an entry to run his suit (after the A is dislodged).