

March 2020 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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Page 41, It's Your Call, Problem 3 – After preempt, 5CM or Double?

Partner opens 1♥ and Righty preempts 3♣. Now what? The winning bid is DBL, chosen by 10 of the 14 panelists. They make this bid despite having a five-card spade suit headed by the queen. The reason given is flexibility. If partner should bid spades, they want to investigate slam. If partner bids a red suit, they will sign off in 3NT. They are also concerned that if they bid 3♠ partner will raise to 4S with just a doubleton, and that would be bad.

Mike Lawrence is one of the 3♠ bidders; he notes that doubling loses the chance to tell partner that we have a fifth spade, and we'll likely miss a 5-3 spade fit. Preempts are effective; the doublers were willing to give up the five-card major in exchange for the flexibility in choosing a contract.

Cohen and Boehm chose 3NT. They note that the preempt made the auction difficult and that 3NT is a favorite place to play when that's one of the choices. Course they gave up the opportunity to look for the 5-3 spade fit or investigate for slam with the 3NT bid.

Page 45, Parrish the Thought – Don't overthink; just answer the question

When partner makes an invitational bid, focus on your hand, not his or hers. You have described your hand within a specific range. Partner has asked you to accept the invitation if you're on the top part of the bid and to decline it if you are not. Simply make that determination and bid accordingly.

Page 48, Ask Jerry – Responsive Doubles

Helms defines a responsive double: *Any time your partner makes a takeout double or an overcall sandwiched between the same suit bid and raised...advancer should have the option to make a responsive double. This responsive double shows the values to compete, and tends to show two possible places to play.*

Page 52, Mike's Bridge Lesson – Watch the spots

Dlr: West ♠ 9			
Vul: Both ♥ 7 5 3 2			
♦ 8 6 5 3			
♣ Q 10 8 7			
♠ A Q 10 2			
♥ A K Q 10 8			
♦ A K 4			
♣ 3			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
3♠	Pass	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West leads the ♣A then switches to the ♥J (looking to minimize the spade ruffs). If declarer doesn't take the knee jerk line of trying to ruff two spades in dummy, the contract is cold.

After the ♥J lead, declarer knows hearts are not 4-0. So, just count the tricks: five hearts (pull trump, leaving one in dummy), two diamonds and three spades (two spades and a ruff).

The key to making the contract is the ♠9 in dummy Just play a low spade and let West win the ♠J. That'll be it for the defense. Later win your ♠A and play the ♠Q. When West covers, ruff the ♠Q. Now the ♠A T is the tenth trick.

Page 55, The Real Deal – Restricted Choice

Cohen's column contains an example of **restricted choice**: when West plays the ♠Q under the ♠A and the ♠J is still out, it is with East two-thirds of the time. Finesse East for the ♠J.

Page 56, Challenge of Month – Dummy Reversal

This month's challenge shows a typical dummy reversal hand. Ruff dummy's little spades with high trumps (all three), pitch the little diamond when pulling the last trump with the ♥J. Now all that remains are high minor suit cards.