

November 2021 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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The articles we think the majority of ACBL members will benefit the most from are:

1. "The Bidding Box," moderated by Josh Donn:
 - a. Problem 1 (p. 36) *Bridge Bulletin* auction. It is appropriate to raise partner's possible four-card major with three-card support when you have an outside singleton.
 - b. Problem 5 (p.38) *Bridge Bulletin* auction. At matchpoint scoring it is often appropriate to play in a 5-2 major fit rather than a longer minor suit fit.
2. "Parrish the Thought" by Adam Parrish (p. 45). It is standard to make a balancing bid when the opponents have shown an eight-card major-suit fit and are about to play in at the two-level. This is especially true when the suit is hearts. If a good player lets you play 2♥, it's likely he has a trump stack.
3. "Lessons Learned" by Michael Berkowitz (p 48). Defending when you know that partner no longer can get in. If a killing play is not available to you, at least avoid a poor play.
4. "Ask Jerry" by Jerry Helms (p 51). When to use a Jacoby transfer and a subsequent bid to 4♥ or 4♠ vs. when to use a Texas transfer. A Jacoby transfer followed by 4NT is a quantitative bid. However, a Texas Transfer followed by 4NT is ace-asking (key card or Blackwood).
5. "Chalk Talk" by Eddie Kantar (p. 53). Think at trick one. Making your slam at IMPS requires giving the defense, at trick one, a trick to which they are not entitled, so you have the entries to set up dummy's long suit to make your contract.
6. "Defensive Maneuvers" by Paul Ross (p. 54). Figuring out that's it's appropriate to duck your ♥K, and remember to signal partner that you want hearts continued.
7. "Challenge of the Month" (p. 55). A "take all your chances" deal.
8. "Boehm on Bridge" by August Boehm (p 56). A clever deception play at trick one. Taking a trick with an unnecessarily high card to keep the defense from finding your true weakness.
9. "Better Bidding with Bergen" by Marty Bergen (p. 57). It is often correct to preempt aggressively in third seat – especially with favorable vulnerability. The weaker you are the more likely the opps are to have game or slam.
10. "Test Your Play" by Eddie Kantar (p. 59, p. 61), Deal 2. Respecting a five-card suit, even when it's weak. In this case, setting it up is the way to make your contact.
11. "Bridge with the Abbott" by David Bird (p 64). Cutting off communications with the dummy.

Our Favorites

“Chalk Talk” by Eddie Kantar (p. 53) – *Giving up a trick to ensure the contract*

Dlr: South	♠ K 8 6 4 3 2		
Vul: E-W	♥ A K 3 2		
IMPs	♦ –		
	♣ 6 5 4		
	♠ A 5		
	♥ J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4		
	♦ –		
	♣ A Q 3		
West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	4♥
Opening lead: ♥Q. Plan the play.			

A lazy declarer will win the ♥A and risk the contract on the club finesse. A 50% play.

If declarer wins a high heart and then sets up the spades, before risking the contract on the club finesse, that’s an improvement. As long as the spades are not 4-1, he will make the contract. However, they split 4-1, 28.3% percent of the time. Still, not bad. He can set up the spades 71.7% of the time and, if they don’t split, then take the club finesse. That will give him an 85.8% chance at making your contract, a big improvement over the 50% of a straight finesse,

However, at IMPs, overtricks are small change, so declarer can make this contract nearly 100% of the time by letting West win the ♥Q!! There are still three entries to dummy.

Assume West next leads a spade. Of course, declarer will take ♠A, then the ♠K, before using the heart entries. A spade is led (and ruffed). If the spades split 3-2, declarer can claim. If spades split 4-1, declarer must use a high heart to lead and ruff a fourth spade. The second high heart is used to reach dummy (since it was not wasted at on the first trick). Declarer will use dummy’s last two spades to pitch the losing clubs.

The problem with winning a high heart at trick one is that both high hearts are needed to get to dummy for the two spade ruffs required to make the contract.

“Boehm on Bridge: Deception – part 8” by August Boehm (p 56) – *Hiding the weakness*

♠ J107		♠ A852
♥ 73		♥ 1054
♦ KQJ10		♦ 875
♣ QJ82		♣ 754
♠ KQ3	N	♠ 964
♥ Q9862	W	♥ AKJ
♦ 9432	E	♦ A6
♣ A	S	♣ K10963

After a 1N – 3N auction, West lead a fourth-best ♥6.

Trick one is the time for declarer to think. Declarer sees the weakness in spades. He must convince the defense that there is weakness is somewhere else – like hearts. East plays the ♥T. So, South should conceal the ♥J by winning with the ♥A.

West knows that South has the ♥K, as East would have played it, not the ♥T, at trick one. But it sure looks like East has the ♥J when South wins the ♥A.

Declarer now plays the ♣6 (concealing the ♣K and ♣3) and West must win the ♣A.

At most tables, West will lead another heart and declarer will take 11 tricks: three hearts, four diamonds and four clubs.

South’s deception won the day. If East is a sophisticated defender, he will play the ♣7 under the ♣A. Maybe that will message West that East has a value in the higher suit (spades) and not in hearts. If an inspired West cashes the ♠KQ and leads a third spade. The contract is set: four spades and the ♣A for the defense.

Bridge with the Abbott by David Bird (p. 64) – *Cutting communication*

Dir: South: ♠ 963			
Vul: N-S ♥ 852			
♦ 974			
♣ QJ74			
♠ KJ10842		♠ 75	
♥ 1073	N	♥ 6	
♦ J83	W	♦ Q1052	
♣ 2	E	♣ 1098653	
♠ AQ			
♥ AKQJ94			
♦ AK6			
♣ AK			
West	North	East	South
The	Mother of	Bro.	Sister
Abbot	Discipline	Xavier	Grace
			2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

2NT was meant as a second negative. We prefer 3C, the cheaper minor, to show a bust – no ace or king. With at most a two-loser hand, South insisted on the small slam.

East led the ♣2. South won the ♣A and cashed the ♥A.

At the third trick, South led the ♣K. West must resist the urge to trump it. If he does trump it, that will be the only trick he takes. Declarer will get in, pull the last trump and reach dummy with the ♥4 of hearts to the ♥8. He will then pitch the losing diamond and spade on the ♣QJ, making six.

Declarer tried to set up the ♥8 as a dummy entry by leading the ♥9. Again, West must resist the urge to win the ♥T. If he wins the ♥T, establishing the dummy entry, it will be the only trick he takes.

By giving up the *free* heart trick. Eventually the defense got a diamond and a spade to defeat the contract. By refusing to trump, West cut declarer’s communications to dummy. Declarer could pitch his losers on dummy’s clubs.