

February 2022 ACBL Bulletin Notes

Jeff Kroll
Sam Khayatt

These are the articles that we believe would be the most useful to the most players:

1. "The Bidding Box", moderated by Josh Donn
 - a. Page 38, Problem 1. The *Bridge Bulletin* Auction. East must realize that its 12-HCP hand is worth at least 16 dummy points in support of partner's spades and jump to 3♠ instead of just bidding 2♠.
 - b. Page 40, Problem 6. Dunitz, as East. opens 2♣ followed by 2NT to make sure he declares and gets a likely opening lead into one of his AQ combinations or K6 doubleton. The *Bridge Bulletin* auction uses a splinter bid to show four (or more) heart/trump support and diamond shortness. This sequence gets to the good small slam.
2. "It's Your Call" by Sue Munday and Karen Walker.
 - a. Page 42, Deal 1. This situation highlights a failure in the *Bridge Bulletin* Standard system: how to bid (advance) after partner makes a simple overcall. Although it only scores 70 points, we agree with Lawrence, Molson and Sanborn that if we want the overcaller to bid again, we will make a cue bid. Discuss this situation with your partner.
 - b. Page 43, Deal 2. As a passed hand, East's 3♠ after West's weak 2♦ overcall shows a diamond fit. If East had held six good spades or almost any seven spades, he would have bid them the first time.
3. "Card Play 101" by Alder (page 46), Deal 1. Before cross ruffing, it is usually right to take your side-suit winners. Deal 2 is a loser on a loser play.
4. "Reasoning with Robert" by Robert Todd (page 48). When to lead trump on the opening lead.
5. "Startup Bridge" by Lynn Berg (page 49). When to give count.
6. "Lessons Learned" by Michael Berkowitz (page 50). Take all your chances.
7. "Mike's Bridge Lesson" by Michael Lawrence (page 54). Cutting the communications between the defenders.
8. "Chalk Talk" by Eddie Kantar (page 55). Keep the danger hand off lead.
9. "Boehm on Bridge" by August Boehm (page 58). When not to enter the auction with an opening hand.
10. "Better Bidding with Bergen" by Marty Bergen (page 59). When not to follow the Rule of 15 for opening in the fourth position.
11. "Bidding Matters" by Karen Walker (page 60). HCP is just the first step in proper hand evaluation. We teach this lesson frequently.
12. "Test Your Play" by Eddie Kantar (page 61), Deal 1. Playing a 4-3 Moysian fit. Ducking the first round of our side suit (spades) in order to set it up. The defense will properly attack our entry, but it won't help.

Our Favorites

“It’s Your Call” by Sue Munday and Karen Walker, Deal 2 (p.43) – *Showing a fit as a passed hand*

2. Blast off

IMPs. None vulnerable.

♠— ♥A85 ♦A1083 ♣AKJ974

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣
2♦	3♣	3♠	?

Call	Votes	Award
4♦	8	100
6♣	4	80
4♠	2	70
5♣	1	60

As a passed hand, East’s 3♠ after West’s weak 2♦ overcall shows a diamond fit. If East had held six good spades or almost any seven spades, he would have bid them the first time.

Grossack and others mention that East’s 3♠ bid makes it fairly certain he is bidding with diamond fit. How else can a passed hand introduce spades at the three-level without a diamond fit?

Four panelists just bid 6♣ as they are going there anyway with the bid club fit and first-round controls in the other three suits.

Most take it slower by cue-bidding 4♦. This shows a control in diamonds and tells partner that South

has slam interest. The panelists who made this bid are hoping for a 4♥ cue bid from North. Some would be happy with 6♣, but Grossack and Lawrence are interested in exploring for 7♣.

“Reasoning with Robert” by Robert Todd (page 48) – *Trump opening leads*

1♠	1NT
2♥	Pass

The primary reason to lead a trump on the opening lead is to prevent the declarer from trumping losers in the hand that is short in trump, usually the dummy

Opener is showing five (or more) spades and four (or more) hearts in this auction. Most of the time it’s five spades and four hearts. Responder’s 1NT denies a two-level bid.

When responder passes 2♥, she is almost certainly short in spades. With equal length in partner’s majors, responder would have returned partner to the first, and presumed longer, suit. Because though they are playing in the second suit, it is likely that declarer will be ruffing spades in dummy – the hand that is likely to be shorter in trump.

1♠	2♠
3♦	4♠

In this auction, responder has shown a weakish hand with spade support. Opener’s 3♦ bid is a help suit game try, asking responder to bid game with help in eliminating diamond losers.

“Help” comes in two forms: (1) shortness so declarer’s loser can be ruffed or (2) honors that can cover declarer’s losers.

If you hold strong diamonds, responder’s help is likely shortness so that declarer’s losers can be ruffed. Lead a trump.

“Test Your Play” by Eddie Kantar (page 61), - Ducking to set up a suit

1

Dlr: East ♠ A K Q 8 2
Vul: None ♥ A 10 3
IMPs ♦ 6 3
 ♣ A 7 4

 ♠ 6 4
 ♥ K Q J 5
 ♦ A K 7 2
 ♣ Q 5 3

You are playing 6♥; West leads a the ♦Q.

Playing IMPs, you just want to make your contract and are not concerned with an overtrick.

Count your winners:

- Four spades (when there are six out, they usually split 4-2). If you five spade tricks, then you would play for a 3-3 split, which happens only 35.5% of the time.
- Four hearts
- Two diamonds
- One club

Total: 11 tricks.

The key play is to lose a spade immediately so that the suit is set up (assuming the suit breaks no worse than 4-2) and you can later cash the spades. The defense will likely lead a club to remove the outside entry to the spade suit. This will not pose a problem as you can use your other small spade to get there.

After establishing four spade tricks, work on trick #12: a diamond ruff in dummy. Play the ♦K and ruff a third-round diamond with the ♥T. Always ruff with the highest card you can afford.

Now you can draw trump in four rounds, pitching dummy’s clubs on the long hearts, and lead a small spade toward dummy’s ♠A. Assuming the 4-2 (or better) spade split, take the last four tricks.