

July 2022 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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These are the articles that we believe will benefit our readers the most.

1. "It's Your Call" by Sue Munday and Karen Walker, Deal 4 (p.42). Although two panelists are content with a nonforcing 3♠ bid, seven chose to bid the aggressive game. At matchpoints it's a difficult decision, at IMPS we believe all the panelists would have bid 4S. Those who bid the game focused on trick-taking more than on points.
2. "Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder (p. 44), Deal 1. A loser-on-loser play makes the contract.
3. "Startup Bridge" by Lynn Berg (p.47). Topics covered:
  - Overcalling at the 1-level with a good suit with little else to get the killing lead from partner,
  - Doubling artificial bids for a lead,
  - Pushing them up by balancing, and
  - When to preempt.
4. "Ask Jerry" by Jerry Helms (p. 51), Deal 2: when to open a four-card major even when you're playing five-card majors.
5. "Mike's Bridge Lesson: More thoughts on balancing" by Mike Lawrence (p. 52): when to balance and why.
6. "Chalk Talk" by Eddie Kantar (p 53): four deals
  1. Go for the 50% chance instead of something hopeless
  2. Go for the 75% chance instead of something hopeless
  3. At trick one, don't burn the entry you will need to make your contract
  4. Make the key play at trick one to ensure your contract
7. "The Real Deal: Succumbing to temptation" by Larry Cohen (p. 55). Another situation where not to burn at trick one the needed to make the contract.
8. "Boehm on Bridge: Remedies for double trouble – Part 1" by August Boehm (p. 56): situations where double is takeout, penalty or lead-directing.
9. "Better Bridge with Bergen: Improve your bidding judgement – part 14" by Marty Bergen (p. 57). Topics include:
  - Going with the known 5-3 fit,
  - Planning your second bid before making your first bid, and
  - Properly evaluating your hand.

## Our Favorites

### “Startup Bridge” by Lynn Berg (p.47)

Berg discusses overcalling (or not) with hands containing few high-card points.

♠9 6 ♥K Q J 9 2 ♦8 3 2 ♣10 8 7

It is correct to overcall 1♥ over a 1♣ or 1♦ opening with this hand, even though it has only six high card points. We would make the same 1♥ bid if the ♥J were replaced by the ♥T. The hand is not strong enough for a two-level overcall. But you need to bid the hearts to help partner know what to lead. For this reason, we mark our convention card that one-level overcalls can be made with six points.

♠A 6 ♥J 9 7 5 4 ♦K 8 3 ♣J 10 8

This hand has nine points but is not worth a one-level overcall as you don't particularly want a heart lead and may talk partner out of a more promising lead.

♠A 6 ♥J 9 7 5 4 ♦K Q 8 ♣K J 7

This hand *is* worth a 1♥ overcall even though we don't particularly want a heart lead. We believe that it might be our hand to declare and we need to show our five-card heart suit.

♠6 ♥K J 10 8 6 4 3 ♦Q 6 2 ♣7 5

This is a great hand to preempt with. We have minimal defense and if partner wants to lead to us, it better be a heart.

♠6 ♥J 10 8 7 6 4 3 ♦A Q 6 ♣K 8

This is a terrible hand to preempt with. We have good defense and we don't want a heart led to us. We either open it 1♥ or pass.

**“Better Bridge with Bergen: Improve your bidding judgement – part 14” by Marty Bergen (p. 57)**

Partner opens 1♥ and RHO passes. What is the correct bid with the following hands?

① ♠AK1062 ♥1097 ♦64 ♣542

As much as we would like to bid 1♠, the correct bid is 2♥. We need to think about our second bid before we make our first bid. If partner now bids 2♣ or 2♦, which is likely, we would have to bid 2♥. In that sequence, 2♥ shows a preference for hearts over the minor and suggests only two-card heart support. 2♠ would show six spades. Better to support with support immediately.

Bergen points out that since partner has shown five hearts, partner will have four spades in the remaining eight slots less than 20% of the time.

② ♠J642 ♥5 ♦AJ10976 ♣53

This is another “think about your second bid before you make your first bid” situation. Most would erroneously bid 1♠. Then when partner makes a likely 2♣ bid (after all the other three hands have 11 clubs), we are stuck. A diamond bid would be 4th suit forcing to game in most partnerships.

The solution to this bidding problem is to bid 1NT on our first bid. If partner bids 2♣, we would bid 2♦. That sequence shows a long suit and a weak hand.

③ ♠KJ10 ♥A43 ♦KJ9 ♣Q1086

This is a classic Jacoby/Bergen 3NT bid, showing 4-3-3-3 distribution, only three trump and 13-15 HCP. This tells partner we have support and enough for game but are not ruffing anything. Partner can then take charge of exploring for the best contract. Many times, but not always, the final contract will be 3N, if the same number of tricks can be made for a higher score. If partner doesn't like notrump, partner can bid 4H or, with a big hand, explore for slam.