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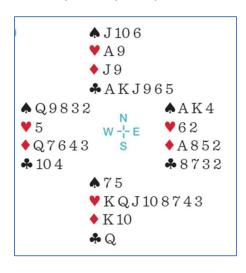
These are the articles that we believe will benefit our readers the most.

- 1. "The Bidding Box" moderated by Josh Donn (p. 41-44).
 - a. Problem 5: The *Bridge Bulletin* auction finds the best scoring contract by showing the heart length in the first two bids. Both expert pairs got to a poor contract by showing their club length on the second bid. The distribution needs to be shown at a low enough level to avoid a disastrous 4♥ bid.
 - b. Problem 7: The *Bridge Bulletin* auction finds the best-scoring auction by focusing on distribution. Both competitors ended up in a 4 ♠ contract on a seven-card fit. Spades are unlikely to split well since South has preempted. The experts missed the best scoring nine-card club suit.
 - c. Problem 8: The *Bridge Bulletin* auction finds the best-scoring contract by making an extra bid that finds the grand slam. Both competitors ended up in a small slam that scored well but not as well as the grand.
- 2. "It's Your Call" by Sue Munday and Karen Walker, Deal 3 (p.48). Thirteen of the 16 experts chose the 5♣ control bid, showing an interest in slam and denying a heart control (controls are bid up the line). The 5♣ bid was awarded the highest score. Boehm chose 5 ♦ as he reasoned that partner does not have a heart control when partner chose to bid 4 ♦ instead of 3 ♥ over the 3 ♦ bid. If partner does not have a heart control, then there is no reason to look for slam when the opponents can cash the ♥AK. Before the 4 ♦ bid, North has not supported diamonds, so those of us less expert than Boehm would think it would be too early for a control bid in hearts.
- 3. "Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder (p. 50). Deal 1 presents a common situation where you can use partner's count to force declarer guess correctly to make his contract. Many novice players would cash the ◆A and then play a diamond, hoping partner has the ◆K. That would hand declarer the contract when declarer has the ◆K. Play a low diamond instead. If partner has the ◆K, you still make the ◆AK. But if declarer has the ◆K, now you make declarer guess when partner has the ◆Q. If declarer guesses that you are leading from the ◆A, declarer puts in the ◆K and makes the contract. But if declarer guesses you are leading from the ◆Q and plays the ◆T, she goes down. Many declarers will play the ◆T and go down as many novice players will cash the ◆A when they have it.
- 4. "Parrish the Thought: Cover an honor with an honor" by Adam Parrish (p. 51). This is a basic lesson on when to cover. The basic idea is that you should cover an honor with an honor to promote a J, T or 9 to take a trick. If there is no card to promote for your side, do not cover.

- 5. "Lessons Learned: Don't follow the leader" by Michael Berkowitz (p.54). Don't blindly return partner's lead. Think. In this example, there is a long diamond suit in dummy and an entry to it, the ♣A. Partner's ♥4 lead was made before this information was known. Now it is clear to switch to a club to remove the entry to the long diamonds. And to hold up the ♦Q until there is no longer a diamond in declarer's hand.
- 6. "Challenge of the Month" (p. 56, 61). Make the contract by setting up the long hearts and paying attention to your entries. Make sure that you save the ♣2 to give yourself the third entry to the long hearts.
- 7. "Boehm on Bridge: Card School favorites part 3" by August Boehm (p. 62). Two deals that require proper timing. "Timing" (also called "tempo") is playing your cards in the correct order.
- 8. Consults with the Doctor:" The art of balancing in the 21st century (continued) by Dr. James Marsh Sternberg (p. 69). The topics covered include scrambling 2N, showing two places to play, and balancing with a four-card suit to keep the auction low.

Our Favorites

"Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder, Deal 1 (p. 50)



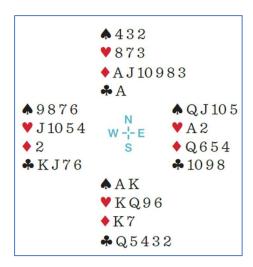
The auction is brief: South opens 4 ♥ and everyone passes. Partner leads the ♠3. You win the ♠K and cash the ♠A, partner following with the ♠2. The ♠2 is partner's way of telling you not to continue spades because he holds five of them. Partner knows there is only one more spade out; if you lead it, it will be ruffed.

You need two more tricks to set the contract; they must come from the diamond suit. Resist the urge to lay down the ◆A, hoping that partner has the ◆K. If your side has the ◆AK, you will get your tricks. You need to maximize your chances of getting two tricks when partner does not hold the ◆K.

You must force declarer to guess. Play a small diamond. Declarer must guess whether you are leading from the \diamond A or toward it. If declarer puts in the \diamond K (just as if she had finessed the \diamond K against your \diamond A), she makes her contract. If she puts in a lower card, you win when partner holds the \diamond Q and leads back to your \diamond A.

Many declarers will guess wrong and put in the ◆T, assuming that you would not be leading away from the ◆A, but are likely to be leading away from the ◆Q. Newer players in East's chair might cash the ◆A and newer declarers might be expecting that to happen.

"Lessons Learned: Don't follow the leader" by Michael Berkowitz (p.54)



South opens 1NT; North bids 3NT, ending the auction.

Partner leads the fourth-best ♥4. Yes, the club suit better but it is often best to lead an unbid major against a notrump contract.

Because you can see both the ♥2 and the ♥3, you know that partner has only four and the opponents have more hearts than your side does. Leading a heart back looks unappealing.

Dummy's diamonds look like a great source of tricks, so the proper play is to play a club at trick 2 and remove the only non-diamond entry to dummy.

Declarer tries to tempt you by playing the ◆J from dummy. You must duck. You cannot possibly set up a diamond trick for your side by covering. Declarer wins the ◆K and plays a diamond to the dummy. West shows out. So, the only diamond winners for declarer are the ◆AK.

Declarer makes are two spades, two hearts, two diamonds and a club. Down 2.