

August 2023 ACBL Bulletin Notes

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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. 36-39).
 - Problem 2: The Bridge Bulletin auction explains how to avoid a disastrous 4♠ contract when the partners' hands don't fit. Both contestants ended up in 4♠. The *Bridge Bulletin* auction ended in 3♠ which was below average but not a complete disaster. Sometimes there is not a good auction that lets you stop low enough.
 - Problem 7: The Jacob-Klimowicz auction shows East jumping with its killer club suit (and the ♥Q) to get to the highest scoring 5♣ contract.
2. "It's Your Call" by Sue Munday and Jim Munday (p. 40-43), Deal 3. The auction is headed toward slam. The winning call is a 5♠ cue bid as it's the call that keeps the Grand Slam in the picture.
3. "Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder (p. 44).
 - Hand 1: South, having responded 1NT, has the ♠AK so cannot possibly also hold the ♥A. So, East should play West for the ♥A.
 - Hand 2: Giving declarer a ruff and a sluff usually gives declarer an extra trick. An exception to this guideline occurs after the defense has taken all its side-suit winners. Then giving declarer a ruff and a sluff doesn't hurt and, in this case, generates a trump trick for the defense. When partner ruffs with the ♠8 it sets up a trump trick in the West hand. This is called an uppercut
4. "Parrish the Thought: Eight ever, nine never?" by Adam Parrish (p. 45). When there are five trumps out to the Queen it is usually right to finesse for the Queen. When there are four cards out including Queen, there is just a slight advantage to try to drop it instead of finessing. However, preempts change the odds and make the finesse against the preemptor's partner the correct play. Also, you might want to finesse to create a needed entry
5. "Lessons Learned: Research" by Michael Berkowitz (p. 48). A "take all your chances" deal. This deal has two chances: the finesse or setting up a long diamond. The key is to try to set up the long diamond first. If it works, you made your contract. If it doesn't work, you can still play for the ♣A to be in front of the ♣K. If you finesse against the ♣A first, you will go down before you get to try to set up the long diamond.
6. "Ask Jerry" by Jerry Helms (p. 51), hand at the bottom of column 2. Partner has opened a weak 2♠ and you have no high-card points. The opponents have at least game and likely a slam. With four spades and a stiff heart, you have an easy 4♠ call, unless you are vulnerable and they are not.

7. "Chalk Talk: Threat suits" by Eddie Kantar (p 53). When you are missing only one trick for your contract, play all your winners in the suits that can't possibly get you another trick. Watch the discards. If a defender discards a card in a suit that you have chance to get that last trick in that is usually the place to try to get that last trick.
8. "Boehm on Bridge: Card School favorites – Part 5" by August Boehm (p. 56), first deal. The hand is made by setting up the fifth card in North's awful five-card spade suit, carefully using dummy's hearts as entries, and ruffing high in the South hand.
9. "Better Bridge with Bergen: Improve your bidding judgement – part 27" by Marty Bergen (p. 57). This piece echoes Jerry Helms' advice, above. If you are in third seat after two passes, the weaker you are the surer you are that the opponents have game, if not slam. So, you should strive to bid with a shapely hand and make it hard on your opponents.
10. "Test Your Play" by Eddie Kantar (p. 59, 61), Hand 1. Identify the danger hand: West. You do not want West leading through your ♦K, so when you give up the lead make sure it's to East

Our Favorites

“Card Play 101” by Phillip Alder (p. 44)

♠ Q 3 ♥ A K 10 8 ♦ K 4 ♣ K Q 9 5 3			
♠ J 10 9 6 ♥ Q J 4 ♦ Q 9 7 6 ♣ J 6	N W — † — E S	♠ K 8 5 4 ♥ 6 ♦ A J 8 5 2 ♣ 10 7 2	
♠ A 7 2 ♥ 9 7 5 3 2 ♦ 10 3 ♣ A 8 4			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West leads the ♠9. Plan the defense.

What we know:

1. The ♠9 cannot be fourth-best, so it must be top of nothing. South has the ♠AK.
2. South’s 1NT response shows 6-9 (or a bad 10) HCP.
3. Since South is known to have the ♠ AK and, therefore, seven HCP in those two cards, South cannot have the ♥A. If South held the ♥A, he would have 11 HCP and would not have responded 1NT to the 1♦ open.

When East wins the ♦A, East must lead the ♥3 (showing East wants a heart return) to West’s ♥A. EW then take four hearts and the ♦A for down 1.

“Test Your Play” by Eddie Kantar (p. 59, 61), Hand 1

♠ Q 10 ♥ Q 10 2 ♦ K Q J 10 9 ♣ A K Q			
♠ 9 8 7 6 5 ♥ A 8 7 ♦ 8 5 ♣ 7 6 2	N W — † — E S	♠ J 4 2 ♥ K J 9 3 ♦ A 7 2 ♣ 9 5 3	
♠ A K 3 ♥ 6 5 4 ♦ 6 4 3 ♣ J 10 8 4			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The opening lead is the ♠J.

Your first play is important. You cover the ♠J with the ♠Q and East plays the ♠K. Let East have the trick. East can’t hurt you with a diamond lead, but West can.

When East leads a spade, now you win your ace.

The proper heart play fits with Adam Parrish’s article. You can’t afford to let West in, so don’t play the hearts to split 2-2 when you can safely lead toward the ♥T. It is not a problem if East were to win the ♥Q; then all the defense would get is one spade, one heart and the ace of diamonds. Making 4♠, which is the point at IMPS.

In the layout Kantar shows, he rewards you with no heart losers for playing properly.