

Region 9 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 9 Issue 5 - May 2023



From the Editor

Thank you for reading our monthly Intermediate/Newcomer (I/N) Newsletter. Included in this issue...

Highlighted is a submission by Patti Monroe who lives in the Georgetown area. It is always interesting to me how people develop their partnerships. This one appears to have succeeded with golden results during the Longview Regional in April.

A bit longer than most snippets you find here, I read "The Courtship of Miss Two Notrump" and thought it quite entertaining. Hope you do too.

A story of your own to be highlighted in a future issue as well as comments and suggestions for this newsletter are always welcome.

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Upcoming Tournament Play

Upcoming Tournament Info within our region:

For District 16, [click here](#).

For District 15, [click here](#).

Especially for Our 0-50 Players

District 16 provides a 12-board game on BBO just for players having 0-50 masterpoints for \$3 every Monday at 4:00. A director (Ken, Consie or Kim) and assistants will be on hand to offer guidance during the game.

For more information, check out our Frequently Asked Questions [D16 0-50 Game Frequently Asked Questions](#) or email Beginner20Bridge@gmail.com.

Highlight - I/N Player: Patti Monroe

My bridge partner and I met almost a year ago when I moved into her neighborhood. We talked about playing bridge together and we both wanted to achieve Life Master. As we each needed mostly gold points, we made a plan to go to the Longview Regional.

VA and I played about 6 times in our local bridge club before the tournament and we thought we communicated very well. Both of us have been playing with very high up life master mentors for three or four years and had never gone to a tournament before with somebody close to our level.

We found two other ladies in our Bridge club (M.J and Pam) who said they would also like to go. They had only played twice before, so we were a brand-new team kind of put together at the last minute.

On Tuesday April 4, our new team drove to Longview Texas. We played all day Wednesday thru Saturday. We were so excited and amazed that each day we came in 1st, 2nd or 3rd and got more master points than any of us had expected. More than I had ever dreamed of.

VA is a great partner fit for me. She watches everything that I signal, she doesn't ever seem to get tired, she is a "Steady Eddie ", She helps me learn from my mistakes in a very gentle way, and being a former math teacher, she is an excellent bridge player and very smart. I imagine sometime everybody struggles with a new partner, but it has never been that way when I play with VA. It's not tiresome playing with her it's a pleasure and smooth as silk.

I am honored to have been her partner. We of course are making plans now for our next tournament and looking for a team.

Below is a photo of our team at this tournament. It turned out that all four of us were a good fit together.



MJ Riedlinger, **Patti Monroe**, Pam Beck and VA Miller

Better Bridge Habits

Tabling Dummy

Dummy's hand is exposed once the opening lead has been accepted and is face up.

Wait until the lead has been established (by the correct player) before pulling anything from your hand. This will serve to avoid giving them any hints as to what is in your hand.

Eddie Kantar's Tip

Equal Spot Cards

From Eddie Kantar's online tips:

As declarer, being able to take a trick with one of two equal cards, take the trick with the higher equal. The exception is at notrump when you have an AK stopper. If you plan to take the trick, take it with the king. Taking the first trick with the ace is very suspicious. If that were your only stopper, why didn't you hold up?

(As defender) When signaling encouragement with equal spot cards, signal with the higher equal. With A987, signal with the 9. If you signal with the 8, you deny the nine!

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Improved Declarer Play

Card Combination in Play

As declarer, many times the ability to make our contract depends on playing one of the suits in a way that maximizes our chance to take tricks. Here is a combination that was presented me along with the following commentary that came up twice over a short period of time.

AK10xx
Qx
J

Declarer leads the Jack from the South hand. What should West be thinking? The first question West should ask is what is the distribution. West knows that 6 cards are missing. If declarer held 3 would he lead the Jack?

Not likely as good technique would be to lead to the 10 and if it wins, you get all 5 tricks if both defenders follow suit. If it loses, you are guaranteed 4 tricks as long as West follows to the 1st trick.

If declarer holds 2 cards would he lead the jack? Yes, to insure he could finesse twice if it wins. Thus West must cover the Jack with the Queen and hope that declarer has 2 cards in the suit and that partner with 4 cards has the 4th trick. Nothing is lost if declarer has 3 cards. Both times we saw the combination, the hand with Qx did not cover and got a bad board.

Demon Defense

Defensive Signals - Attitude

In February we shared Larry Cohen's overview of the three major types of defensive signals - Count, Suit Preference, and Attitude. In March we discussed count and in April, suit. This month Larry Cohen is cited with his simple explanation of attitude preference.

"This is by far the most important signal. It is used in two very important situations:

a) Partner leads to the trick. If partner or dummy is winning the trick, tell partner your attitude. Play a high spot card if you like it, low if you don't. For example, partner leads a spade and dummy's ace takes the trick. Play the 8 if you have KQ82. Play the 3 if you have 843.

b) You make your first discard. Throw the 9 if you like/want hearts; throw the 3 if you don't like hearts.

Do not make attitude signals with cards above the 10. Don't signal with what could potentially be a trick. Of course, you won't always be dealt the right card to signal with."

Eddie Kantar writes in his book "Modern Bridge Defense" about reading partner's discards.

Assuming that you are playing standard discards where a high card encourages a suit and a low card discourages, it's hard to know whether cards like the 4 or the 7 are high or low.

"To determine the real meaning of the discard you should look around to see whether any lower spot cards are unaccounted for. If all the lower cards are visible, assume it is a discouraging signal. If 2 or 3 lower spot cards can't be seen, assume it is a positive signal. With one missing, you're on your own."

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The Courtship of Miss Two Notrump

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We were all enthralled by the introduction of Miss Notrump in Marlene Walters' article "The Courtship of Miss Notrump" appearing in the Bridge Bulletin in May 2014.

She was a beauty and often charmed by suitors, Mr. Stayman and Mr. Jacoby who both had their vested interests of inquiry. Mr. Stayman wished to inquire whether Miss Notrump possessed a four-card major suit. Mr. Jacoby was more forthwith and instructed her to bid 2 Hearts or 2 Spades when he transferred her by bidding 2 Diamonds or 2 Hearts to offer his five or more card Heart and Spade suit respectively.

Miss Notrump knew how to play their game and would rebid as she saw fit; land perhaps in a part score, 2 or 3NT, or a major contract, depending on the intervening bids to reveal the strengths and preferences of the couple. Certainly, one of the world's best two-timers, Miss Notrump often accepted one and rejected the other but not too harshly and she never knew when she would be back on stage and in the courtship spotlight.

Miss Two Notrump is Miss Notrump's second cousin. Whereas Miss Notrump is no ordinary lady; with 15 to 17 high card points and a balanced hand, she is a rare commodity occurring in less than 10% of the fair ladies attending the ball. Miss Two Notrump possesses additional charms with her 20 to 21 high card points and also a balanced disposition. She is a knockout, a very rare commodity with only about 1 in a 100 to match her beauty!

That Miss Two Notrump attracts gentlemen is an understatement. Certainly, the aforementioned Mr. Stayman and Mr. Jacoby are always hot on the scene, but also Mr. Stayman's cousin, Mr. Puppet Stayman.

Mr. Stayman and Mr. Jacoby employ similar tactics as with Miss Notrump. Mr. Stayman (holding 1 or 2 four-card majors and at least 8 high card points) asks if Miss Two Notrump's disposition includes a four-card major suit with a 3C bid. A 3D response indicates no four-card major, and the couple settles into a 3NT contract. If however the lady's response is 3H or 3S and finds favour with the suitor, a game rebid is advanced. If perchance, there is no agreement or fit on the major suit proposed, a 3NT contract is the best alternative.

Mr. Jacoby also uses the same lines as with Miss Notrump. He bids either 3D or 3H to show a five-card heart or spade major suit. Miss Two Notrump looks over her hand, and if she possesses at least 3 cards in Mr. Jacoby's inferred major suit, she advances to game and becomes the declarer. Her beauty and charms remain hidden from her Opponents. If however, Miss Two Notrump holds only 2 cards in Mr. Jacoby's major suit, she decides to gracefully exit in a 3NT contract.

Now enters the new suiter, Mr. Stayman's cousin, Mr Puppet Stayman. As the name implies, he's a magician of sorts and knows how to pull all the strings. He is always looking for a major game and the higher game scoring potential if possible, instead of a 3NT contract.

Mr. Puppet Stayman introduces himself with a 3C overture and instead of asking for a four-card major as his brother Mr. Stayman, he asks Miss Two Notrump if she has a five-card major which she is off to do. She replies 3 of the major if indeed she does. Mr. Puppet Stayman will advance to game if there is a fit (he has at least three-card major suit support and game going points) or if not, settles down in a comfortable 3NT game.

If perchance, Miss Two Notrump doesn't have a five-card major, but one or two four-card majors, she replies 3D which her suitor promptly announces "Alert" to tell all, if asked, this is an artificial bid with special meaning, "No, I don't have a five-card major, but I do have one or two four-card majors".

This response gets Mr Puppet Stayman's attention. If he does not hold a four-card major, a quick exit is made to a 3NT contract. However, Mr. Puppet Stayman is a sly old fox and knows if he bids his four-card major, he will be declarer and the full beauty of Miss Two Notrump will be on display as she must table her hand and not keep it hidden. This is when his magical techniques come into play. He bids the other major suit, rather than the four-card major suit he possesses. For example, if he has a four-card heart suit, he bids 3S. Miss Two Notrump has her wits about her and responds 4H if she has a four-card heart suit. She welcomes the opportunity to declare in a 4H major game. If perchance, she has a four-card spade suit, she knows from her suitor's 3S bid, he doesn't and understandably signs off in 3NT.

Occasionally, Mr Puppet Stayman's response to her 3D bid is 4D to which she must alert. If anyone wishes to ask the meaning of this somewhat perplexing bid, one only has to ask when it is politically correct to ask on their turn. Miss Two Notrump will explain their partnership agreement; the 4D bid

asks Miss Two Notrump to bid her best four-game major as her suitor possesses four cards in both majors.

SUMMARY OF THE PUPPET STAYMAN CONVENTION

Mr. Puppet Stayman's bid	Miss Two Notrump's Response	Mr. Puppet Stayman's Response	Miss Two Notrump's Response
3C Five card major Partner?	YES! Bids 3H or 3S	Bids 4H or 4S to play 8+ card trump fit or bids 3NT when no major suit fit.	Pass

3C Five card Major Partner?	NO five or four card Major. Bids 3NT.	Pass	
	NO five-card major, but 1 or 2 four-card majors. Bids 3D.	With no four-card major, bids 3NT.	Pass
		With one four-card major, bids the other major at the three-level.	With a major suit fit, bids game. If no fit, bids 3NT.
		With two four-card majors, bids 4D.	Bids game in major eight-card fit.

Miss Notrump and Miss Two Notrump, both have a sense of modesty and would blush if it was mentioned they gladly entertain the rather unique suitor, the flamboyant Mr Quantitative. There was no beating around the bushes with this suitor who has great plans to invite these belles to the grand ball.

To Miss Notrump, Mr Quantitative makes a pronouncement of 4NT to which all take notice and asks Miss Notrump to pass if her holdings are only 15 HCP, or advance to 6NT if she is at her top limit of 17 HCP. Her big dilemma is when she holds 16 HCP, that's when her years of experience come into play whether to accept or politely deny the invitation and pass. Mr Quantitative has a mathematical mind and knows a small slam is a real possibility with a combined 33 HCP.

Since his invitation comes with a declaration of a minimum of 17 HCP, hence the logic of the response choice for Miss Notrump to thoughtfully consider. Make no mistake, Mr Quantitative is solely fixed to make the most of this opportunity and with 20+ HCP will forego his 4NT invitation and directly make a pronouncement of 6 or even 7NT.

Miss Notrump's Holding	Her Response to Direct 4NT bid
15 HCP	PASS
16 HCP	Use Judgement
17 HCP	6NT

Finally, Mr. Quantitative is always on the scene to court Miss Two Notrump. Remember he's the mathematician. He adds his HCP to her 20. If the total is 33, a 6NT bid is announced directly. Yes, he is forward, but no beating around the bush. Miss Two Notrump admires this approach from this handsome gent. When the couple's combined strength totals a stunning 37 HCP, Mr Quantitative regally places the seldom-used 7NT call card on the tabletop for all to admire.

As I said, Miss Notrump and Miss Two Notrump are the belles of the ball and attract sophisticated suitors wanting to have their names on the beauties' dance cards.

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It's The Law

Wait Your Turn: Pass out of Rotation

Have you ever picked up a hand that is so bad that you passed without even sorting your cards? While not advisable, it is also not allowed unless it is your turn to make a call.

Law 30, Pass out of Rotation, addresses a pass out of rotation. However, before Law 30 is applied, the director will apply Law 29, Procedure after a Call out of Rotation. Our LHO may accept our pass out of rotation and the auction continues as if our pass were legal. If our LHO does not accept our pass, then Law 30 applies.

Law 30 covers two situations: (1) when it is our right-hand opponent's (RHO) turn to call and (2) when it is either our LHO's or our partner's turn.

The first situation (RHO's turn) is covered by Law 30A: RHOs Turn to Call. When we pass at our RHO's turn to call and our call is cancelled, we must pass at our next turn to call. It is important to understand the implications. Assume further that the auction proceeds with three passes to partner. Partner bids 2♠. We must pass. Similarly, if partner has passed out of rotation, we must keep in mind the fact that he will pass our first bid, whatever it is.

Law 30B, Partner's or LHO's Turn to Call, covers the second situation. Law 30B applies only if we have made a pass out of turn without having made a previous call. If we have made a previous call, the pass out of turn is treated as a change of call and Law 25, Legal and Illegal Changes of Call, applies.

If we have passed out of rotation without having made a previous call, then partner, at his turn to call, may make any legal call (Law 30B1). However, he may not take any inference from our our-of-rotation pass.

At our next turn to call, we may make any legal call.

If the director considers our call to be comparable to a pass, the auction continues. If our call is comparable, there are no lead restrictions when partner is first on lead. (Law 30B1(b)(i)).

If the director considers our call to be not comparable to a pass, our partner must pass at his next turn to call (Law 30B1(b)(ii)). If we end up on defense, the declarer, at partner's first turn to lead, may prohibit partner from leading any one suit not specified by us in the legal auction. So, if we have made legal bids in the black suits, the declarer can prohibit partner from leading a red suit for as long as he retains the lead.

SK

