

District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 2 Issue 1

From the Editor

The Lone Star Regional will be played in Houston from February 1 - 7. We have a great speaker program each day at 2 pm. Both Billy Miller and Robert Morris, touring professionals will be taking questions from readers of this newsletter. Please send your questions to me at the e-mail address below by the 19th.

We are very thankful to Eddie Kantar and Mike Lawrence for their permission to use their published materials. Feel free to send it on to your friends.

I'm interested in your feedback, so please send your comments to paulcuneo@sbcglobal.net.

Paul Cuneo
District 16 President and Education Chair

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From Unit 174 - Paul Cuneo

The Lone Star Regional will be held from February 1 thru 7 at the Houston Marriott Westchase. **Come and join the fun!!! Nothing generates excitement in the Houston bridge community like the regional. Games for all skill levels from 0-5 masterpoints to competition between some of the best players in the country.**

Just a reminder that on January 30...“Learn Bridge in a Day”...at Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter, Houston 77042 from 9:30am-2:30pm.

Do you have friends or family who are interested in learning bridge? This is a perfect place to start--please encourage them to come and see why bridge is the world's most popular card game!

For every five friends who list you as their referral, you will earn a free tournament play at an event sponsored by ACBL Unit 174.

For more information, please contact Walter Freitag @ mexpuppy@att.net / 832-754-4378.

Better Bridge Habits

Thinking at Trick 1

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. Thinking at trick 1 is a very important habit to develop. This month, I'm going to focus on Declarer's thinking. Mike Lawrence writes in his Private Lessons CD: "I have stated throughout this program and many of my books and classes that proper play to trick one is more important than anyone can imagine. It takes years of seeing big and little errors for you to realize the truth of this."

The following steps will help with the thinking process:

- Think about each bid as it is made. What is indicated:
 1. Strength as defined by High Card Points
 2. Distribution
 3. Fit with bidders partner
- Memorize the auction prior to the last pass.
- While waiting for the opening lead, mentally review what you've learned thus far.
- Once the opening lead has been made and dummy is faced:
 1. Count the high card points for each side. Were there clues from the bidding about their possible distribution? Any clues from the opening lead?
 2. Count your winners and losers.
 3. Look at the distribution of each suit. How are the missing cards most likely to be distributed?
 4. Make a plan to play the hand including entry management, finesses, ruffs, when to draw trump, when to take losers, etc.
- Ask "What can go wrong and how can I modify the plan to cope with that possibility?"
- Determine what is critical to count during the play to know if your plan will succeed.

At this point, you are prepared to call the card from dummy. Do not allow the opponents to rush your thinking process. Over time you'll find that the process gets easier and you will make better plans.

Improved Declarer Play

Card Combinations

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. The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge by ACBL has a section on playing card combinations. Here is a combination from the Encyclopedia that seems to occur frequently:

K 10 9 x

x x

We can maximize our chances of 2 tricks by leading a small card towards the 10. If that wins, repeat the finesse. If your left hand opponent rises with the Queen or Jack, play the King. If the 10 loses to the Queen or Jack, then lead another small card and finesse the 9. The probability of taking 2 tricks is 50%, and the probability of getting one is nearly 80%. Overall much better than leading to finesse the king.

Demon Defense

Opening Leads

Auction:

N	E	S	W
		1D	P
2D	P	2S	P
3D	P	3S	P
4S	all pass		

You are West and hold:

S – A
H - J9432
D – 832
C – A942

What do you lead? In his book on Modern Bridge Defense, Eddie Kantar writes, "It's easy enough to try for a ruff when you are looking at a singleton or doubleton, but a clever defender might be able to tell from the bidding that partner has a singleton or void in a

suit. South's bidding indicates 6 diamonds and 5 spades. Surely dummy has 4 diamonds. Lead a low diamond asking for a club return. If partner ruffs as expected and you're Ace of clubs holds, you can give partner a second ruff. When you win the Ace of spades, you can give partner a 3rd ruff for down 1." www.kantarbridge.com

Bidding Tips

Jump Limit Raises

You hold:

S – AQ63

H – 763

D – K763

C – 63

Your partner opens 1S. Your right hand opponent makes a takeout double. What is your bid?

In his CD on Conventions, Mike Lawrence writes, "Bid 2NT. This is the Jordan 2NT convention which requires 4 or more trump and 10 or more support points (HCP plus distribution), when partner opens a major suit and your right hand opponent doubles. Do not bid 2NT with only 3 card support, but re-double instead and support spades on a later round of bidding. Never re-double with 4 trumps." www.michaelslawrence.com

This bidding style informs partner of the total trump holding for your side and partner can make better evaluations about whether game or slam will make

Its the Law

Law 45 talks about when a card is played. This is a very frequent cause for Director calls. The following is from Duplicate Decisions which is published by ACBL:

"Declarer's card is played when it is held face up, touching or nearly touching the table, or maintained in such a position as to indicate that it has been played. It is irrelevant

whether either or both of the defenders see the card. If the card is held in a manner to indicate declarer has determined to play it, the card is played.

A defender's card is played when it is held in a position where it could be possible for his partner to see its face.

Declarer may correct the call of a card from dummy if it is inadvertent (i.e., a slip of the tongue) and if there was no pause for thought in indicating a desire to change the card called. An opponent, however, may change a legal play made in turn prior to the correction."

Duplicate Decisions gives the Directors guidelines for determining the correct ruling in the event the play of a card is contested. The guidelines basically boil down to NOT allowing the change unless there is overwhelming evidence that it should be changed. Here is one example of the guidelines:

"Example: It frequently occurs that declarer leads and his play from dummy is intended to be conditional on the play of LHO. He then prematurely calls a card from dummy and, observing that LHO's card makes his choice unpalatable, endeavors to change it. The change must not be allowed regardless of the tempo, for his first designation was not inadvertent. Declarer leads a club, intending to ruff in dummy. As he says "ruff," he notices that LHO has ruffed with a trump higher than any in dummy. Regardless of how quickly he says "pitch a diamond," such a change may not be allowed, because "ruff" was not inadvertent."