

District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 3 Issue 4

From the Editor

I'm serving on an ACBL Board taskforce looking at the national decline in regional tournament attendance. The data shows that players with <500 masterpoints are not attending regionals as frequently as that group of players did 10 years ago.

Since readers of this newsletter are in the group, I would appreciate your thoughts on why this is happening. Please send your thoughts and comments to me!!!

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Paul Cuneo

ACBL District 16 Director

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From Unit 174 - Susan Banks



The person of interest this month is Barbara Phillips, teacher extraordinaire.

Barbara was born in a small steelmaking town eleven miles south of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Her parents taught her to play Bridge just before she went off to Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. She tells her students that she has transcripts that prove she majored in Bridge and minored in Education.

Barbara started playing duplicate bridge in the Pittsburgh area in 1963 and teaching at high schools and junior college about 1970. After making life master in 1976 (hard when one is teaching elementary school ten months a year),

Barbara started playing duplicate bridge in the Pittsburgh area in 1963 and teaching at high schools and junior college about 1970. After making life master in 1976 (hard when one is teaching elementary school ten months a year),

Barbara began teaching bridge when she retired from teaching in 1998. At that time Elaine Lyles owned the Conroe Bridge Center and she recruited Barbara to teach there. Fifteen years ago when a group formed Bridge Club of Houston, Barbara started both directing and teaching there. She has spoken at a number of sectional and regionals and directed on cruise ships. I met my husband when he walked in the door at BCOH.

Barbara said "I tell my students that I have cut down on playing to have time to share all the knowledge I have gained over the years. I absolutely love teaching bridge and the newer players who come to BCOH are really great folks. It is rewarding to help these new retirees find a meaningful pastime for the second phase of their lives."

Thank you Barbara for sharing your story.

If you or someone you know would make an interesting subject for this feature please give me a call at 281.536.1451.

There is a 299 Sectional tournament May 4-7 at BCOH. They always do a great job, so please come on out.

Other upcoming tournaments :

May 499 Sectional May 18 - 20 Westside Bridge Academy

Nearly Summer Sectional June 9-11 Unit 174 Marriott Westchase

See you at the tables

Better Bridge Habits

Attend lectures at tournaments

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. This month's tip is to attend the I/N speaker sessions at the tournaments. Tournament organizers work hard to recruit good speakers and this is a great chance to pick up valuable tips from top players and teachers. At the Houston Election Sectional this weekend, Gary King who is one of the best teachers in the district talked about the strategy for improving results at matchpoints, which is the way nearly all club pairs games are scored. It was a great short talk.

Eddie Kantar's Tip

When leading partner's supported suit, lead your highest card with three or four small headed by the 9 or lower. The lead of a low card in a supported suit shows an honor.

When leading partner's unsupported suit, lead high from a doubleton but low from any three or four cards not headed by a sequence. With the ace, if you lead the suit, lead the ace. www.kantarbridge.com

Improved Declarer Play

Improving Declarer 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 frequently appears. You are declaring 3NT and your left-hand opponent is on lead:

	Q x	
5 ???		???
	A 10 x	

You expect the opponent is leading from one of the following: K, KJ, or only small cards in the suit. Your goal is to hold them to one trick in the suit. You should play low from the dummy and win the trick with either the 10 or the A depending on what East plays. This gives you two stoppers in the suit.

Demon Defense

Signaling against Suit Contracts – Eddie Kantar writes in his book “Modern Bridge Defense” that defensive signals come in 3 packages:

1. Attitude: how you feel about the suit partner has led
2. Count: how many cards you have in a particular suit
3. Suit Preference: which suit you want partner to lead

Suit Preference signals are the simplest and the most elegant of the signals, yet the average player has more trouble with them. Here is the first case of using suit preference signals playing standard signals. You are defending a 5S contract. Partner leads the 7 of hearts:

N – H – KQ93
W – 7
E – S - 93
H - 86542
D – A742
C - 643
S – ?

Partner's lead looks like a singleton as only A, J, 10 are missing and if he had a doubleton, he'd lead the highest card. With 3 to the Ace, he would either lead the Ace or another suit. Usually partner has a trump entry and is looking for a ruff. Play the 8 of hearts signaling that your entry is in Diamonds. www.kantarbridge.com

Bidding Tips

A book worth owning and reading is “**A Treasury of Bridge Tips**” by **Eddie Kantar**. In it he offers the following advice:

With 3 card major support and a hand that is **not** strong enough for a cue bid raise of partner's overcall, do NOT introduce a new suit, as it is not forcing and denies 3 card support. West opens 1H and your partner bids 1S.

East passes and you hold S – Q87, H- 54, D – KQJ87, C 652. You should bid 2S. Do not bid 2D. www.kantarbridge.com

Alert Procedures

ACBL has published a document on the Alert procedures

- <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/AlertProcedures.pdf>

The principles behind the procedures are:

- Both pairs at the table have the right to equal access to all information contained in any auction.
- Ethical bridge players will recognize the obligation to give complete explanations. They will accept the fact that any such information is entirely for the benefit of the opponents, and may not be used to assist their own partnership.
- The opponents need not ask exactly the "right" question. Any request for information should be the trigger. Opponents need only indicate the desire for information - all relevant disclosure should be given automatically.

The alert procedure requires a delayed alert of conventional bids above 3NT on or after the opening bidder's 2nd turn to call. All too often players at all levels are not providing the required explanations and the defenders are forced to ask questions to get an understanding of the auction. The following is from the alert procedure:

"Delayed Alerts (or Post-Alerts)

Once the auction has progressed to the point that the opening bidder has had the opportunity to make a second call, conventional calls at the four level or higher are not Alerted until the auction is over.

These delayed Alerts are required to be made by the declaring side before the opening

lead. The defenders are required to Alert declarer after the opening lead but before declarer makes a play from dummy (Alerting before the lead is turned face-up and the dummy is spread is best).

The declaring side must make their delayed Alerts before the opening lead. Defenders wait until they have made the opening lead before they explain calls requiring a Delayed Alert. As with normal Alerts, the partner of the person making the Alertable call is the person who makes the delayed Alert and explains the agreement.

Example: 1♥-P-1♠-P-4♦ (splinter)

There is no Alert at the time for the 4♦ bid.

After the auction, the 1♠ bidder must Alert and explain, as required, the meaning of the call.

Example: 1♣-P-1♥-P-2♥-P: 4♣, 4♦ or 4♠

If there was a conventional meaning attached to any of these calls—ace-asking, splinter or something else—the Alert takes place after the auction."