

# District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 5 Issue 3

## From the Editor

The NABC in will start on March 21.. I hope you take advantage of the opportunity to watch some of the play on BBO. [www.bridgebaseonline.com](http://www.bridgebaseonline.com) They will broadcast the Vanderbilt Knockout beginning Tuesday March 26 and it is an opportunity to watch the high level players in action.

Donna Compton has her 2nd article in this issue. Don't miss it!

I'm interested in your feedback, so please send your comments to [paulcuneo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:paulcuneo@sbcglobal.net).

Paul Cuneo  
ACBL District 16 Director

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From Susan Banks - Unit 174



I hope everyone is having a good spring. This month's person of interest is Joe Baker. I met Joe when he signed up to play in the mentor mentee game several years ago. His mentor took me aside after the game and said Joe was a solid player. I have only played against Joe, but that assessment still holds.

Joe was born at Fort Sam Houston Hospital in San Antonio. His father was in the Army at the time as WWII was coming to a close. He grew up in San Antonio; attended Alamo Heights HS. Joe moved to Houston in 1965 to attend the University of Houston. He rented an apartment in Montrose for \$85 a month. Joe received a BS in Math from UH in 1968.

Joe worked for SW Bell/ ATT for 13 years before starting a head-hunting firm in 1980, Search Consultants International. His firm is hired by companies to find Environmental, Health and Safety Professionals for them. Joe retired 3 1/2 years ago so he could play more Bridge.

Joe met his wife Judy at UH. She is from South Louisiana (Cajun Country) and he is blessed to have been introduced to the fine folks of that area, as well as their great food. They have been married for 51 years and are blessed with 2 sons and 2 grandsons, all who live nearby in Houston. They have traveled all over the world visiting such faraway places as China, Tahiti and Moscow

Joe has always enjoyed playing card games from an early age. Growing up his family played Canasta. Later they played Hearts, Spades and another bidding game called Sargent Major.

Joe played a little bridge in college and in his early career but just as a social thing – he never got serious until deciding to play duplicate in about 2005. Joe played for about 3 years and then got busy at work. He returned to regular duplicate play after retiring.

Joe currently takes regular lessons with a small group from Gary King. We think he is the best!

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Joe said “Bidding and making slam contracts is my favorite part of Bridge! Seriously, guys like me are usually pretty self-reliant. Bridge is teaching me something I need to practice every day - how to be better at working with others to achieve a goal.”

In addition to bridge, Joe says he plays at golf and practices YOGA regularly at the Houstonian. He is also an avid supporter of the University of Houston – GO COOGS! He also regularly meets with a group of men who mentor younger men.

## Upcoming Tournaments

**299 Tournament**

**April 25-28**

**Bridge Club of  
Houston**

Don't forget the Unit 174 Election Sectional is coming up April 5, 6, and 7<sup>th</sup> at the Marriott.

See you at the tables

## Better Bridge Habits

### Pre-game Preparation

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. This month's tip is to spend at least 10 minutes before each game discussing your conventions and agreements with your partner. Several good things will happen when you do this. Among them are that you'll get both of your minds focused on bridge, you can refresh one another's memories on the conventions you play and you'll have clarity on which conventions are “on” over interference.

From Donna Compton - World Champion and Master Teacher

Last month, I introduced the Squirrel and how distractions in play often prevent the squirrel from

successfully crossing the street. Creating a “Trick 1” plan helps Squirrel stay focused. Let’s take a look at how to avoid the distraction once a plan is made. Unexpected trump breaks is a common disruption in the plan for Squirrel.

Let’s say Squirrel is playing in a 5-3 heart fit. The assumed break (odds) is 3-2. When Squirrel cashes the second round of hearts, left hand opponent shows out! At this point, squirrel stops breathing, which in turn stops air flow to the brain. Well, if the brain isn’t getting oxygen, then the thinking becomes cloudy and the plan goes right out the window! So, what does the Squirrel do?

**Step #1:** Squirrel puts declarer’s hand face down on the table.

**Step #2:** Squirrel takes a deep breathe.

**Step #3:** Squirrel pick declarer’s hand up.

**Step #4:** Squirrel reviews the “Trick 1” plan. And finally,

**Step #5:** Squirrel focuses on the fact that every player in Squirrel’s seat has the same unexpected break. This calming of the mind allows Squirrel to clear away the mind’s fog and modify the plan accordingly.

You may be thinking, does this really work? Yes...It Works! Let me tell you a quick story about a world champion whose game was changed by using the squirrel’s breathing technique. We were in some far-off land and I was his captain. While watching him play on vugraph, I noticed that when the cards broke as expected, he took his tricks. However, when there was an unanticipated break, the entire hand fell apart resulting in two or three fewer tricks than everyone else in the competition.

Between sets, I pulled him aside and told him what I suspected was going on ~ lack of oxygen to the brain. He confirmed that it felt like his brain became dull every time something unplanned happened. I recommended he take the steps described

above and see what happens. By this time, our team had advanced to the semi-finals and we went on to win the Gold Medal!

When we returned to the States, I received a thank you note which I still have to this day. It said, "I cannot tell you how grateful I am for your advice to 'just breathe.' You have changed my game forever!" It's amazing what a little oxygen can do for your game!

Stay tuned for the April District IN Newsletter, where we will explore "Music to My Ears!" Be sure to visit my teaching website [www.PlayBetterBridge.com](http://www.PlayBetterBridge.com) for tips, lessons, videos and bridge history."

### Eddie Kantar's Tip

**When responding to an opening bid with two four-card majors, respond 1H giving partner a chance to bid 1S. If partner doesn't bid 1S, assume partner does not have four spades and bid accordingly.**

You hold: S. AJxx H. KQxx D. Jx C. xxx

Partner	You
1D	1H
2C	?

Bid 2NT and limit your hand to 11-12 HCP. Do not bid 2S, as you know partner does not have four spades. [www.kantarbridge.com](http://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. The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge by ACBL has a section on playing card combinations. Here is a combination from the Encyclopedia:

A Q x x x

10 x

You are the declarer and need 3 tricks from this suit. Lead low to the 10 and finesse the Queen. 71% chance of 3 tricks unless East has Kx. Then it is 78%

## 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 4H contract. Partner leads the A of spades:

	N – S - J975	
W – AK102		E – Q (you)
	S – ?	

You play the Queen and partner knows it is either a singleton or doubleton. He continues with the K and you discard a low Diamond. Partner then leads the 10 of spades. He plays the 10 to tell you to return a Diamond so he can give you a 2nd ruff and defeat the contract. If partner wanted a Club, he would lead his lowest remaining spade. [www.kantarbridge.com](http://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 support and a hand that is too strong for a single raise of partner’s overcall, cue bid the opponents suit. West opens 1H and your partner bids 1S. East passes and you hold S – A87, H- 54, D – KQ87, C Q652. You should bid 2H to tell partner you have a limit raise or better in Spades. [www.kantarbridge.com](http://www.kantarbridge.com)

### **Calls out of rotation**

These laws deal with calls out of turn. The Laws use **call** for any bid, pass, double or re-double. The first principle is that the opponents have the right to accept the call out of turn if it would be a legal call. As an example, you are the dealer and your RHO places a pass card on the table. If you bid 1D, you have accepted the call out of turn and the auction would proceed normally. The same thing would happen if you called the Director and when he asks "Do you accept the call?" you say yes. Thus most of what follows is about what happens when you do not accept the call out of turn.

From Duplicate Decisions:

"NOTE: The Director should be extra careful to read the appropriate Law in making a ruling under these sections. This is one area where it is vital to understand the distinction between Laws that use the all-encompassing term "call", which refers to ANY bid, double, redouble or pass, and Laws that deal with bids only.

### **28 - Calls Considered to be in Rotation**

A call is considered to be in rotation:

1. when made by a player before RHO calls if RHO is required by Law to pass.
2. when made by a player at his turn to call before rectification can be determined for an opponent's call out of turn. Making such a call forfeits the right to rectification for the call out of turn, which is canceled, and the auction proceeds as though there had been no irregularity. (Law 16D2 applies.)

### **29 - Procedure after a Call out of Rotation**

Offender's LHO may elect to make a call following a call out of rotation, and any right to rectification is forfeited. The auction proceeds.

When the call is not accepted, the Director would cancel the call out of rotation and the auction would revert to the player whose turn it was to call. The offender may make any legal call in proper rotation, but his side may be subject to rectification under Laws 30, 31 or 32.

NOTE: If the out-of-rotation call is conventional, the provisions of Laws 30, 31 and 32 apply to the denomination(s) specified rather than the denomination named.

### **30 - Pass out of Rotation**

In general, a player who passes out of turn must pass at his next turn to call — unless his pass was conventional. If the Director determines that the pass is conventional, the penalties are the same as those in Law 31 for a bid out of turn — partner must pass for the remainder of the auction and Law 26 (lead penalties) and Law 23 (effects of enforced pass) may apply.

### **31 - Bid out of Rotation**

At RHO's turn to call — if RHO passes, the offender must repeat the call out of rotation. When that call is legal, there is no further rectification.

At RHO's turn to call — if RHO acts, the offender may repeat the denomination, with his partner passing one time only, or; if the offender does not repeat the denomination named, or if the out of rotation call was an artificial pass, offender's partner must pass for the balance of the auction. Lead restrictions may apply.

At Partner or LHO's turn to call — If LHO has not previously called, the offender's partner must pass for the remainder of the auction. Lead restrictions may apply.

### **32 - Double or Redouble out of Rotation**

A double or redouble out of turn may be accepted at the option of the opponent next in rotation (See Law 29A), but an inadmissible double or redouble may never be accepted (See Law 36).

If the double or redouble out of rotation is not accepted, it is cancelled and lead restrictions in Law 26B may apply. When made At Partner's turn to call – the offender's partner must pass whenever it is his turn to call. See Law 23 if the pass damages the nonoffending side.



At RHO's turn to call – if RHO passes, the double or redouble must be repeated, and there is no further penalty. If RHO takes any legal action, the offender may make any legal call, but his partner must pass throughout the remainder of the auction. See Law 23 if the pass damages the non-offenders.