

Region 9 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 9 Issue 8 - August 2023



From the Editor

An email recently went out district-wide regarding how to opt-in or out of the various newsletters and announcements that are sent you.

To quickly edit what you receive (at any time), just go to the bottom of the email, click on "Preferences" and make your selections accordingly. Easy-peasy!

If you would like to contribute an article highlighting an IN player (or yourself) to be included in a future issue of this IN Newsletter, please send that my way along with a picture of the player.

Your feedback and suggestions for this newsletter are welcome.

Lauri Laufman
Editor

INnewsletter.d16r9@gmail.com

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August/September Intermediate/Newcomer Tournaments

Non-Life Master (0-750mp) Regionals

Sept 7-10 New Braunfels NLM Regional* Flyer: [Click Here](#)

*This is being held concurrently with an Open Sectional.

IN Sectionals

Aug 17-19 Beaumont 499er

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Sept 14-16 Denton NLM <750mp Fall Pairs

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Sept 21-24 Bridge Club of Houston 499er

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Upcoming Tournaments In General

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: Kat Giannaula (Unit 207)



When I retired, the first thing that captivated me was tennis. My neighbor told me that people play tennis well into their 80's and I was all in. Despite having a lack of natural skills, the social connections and regular release of endorphins has kept me motivated and happy for years.

What does that have to do with bridge you might ask? While playing tennis, I met two women who had not only been playing tennis together for a long time, they were also longtime bridge partners. I didn't know what bridge was, but I greatly admired their partnership. Then, a group of tennis players invited me to a beginner bridge class. Our teacher loved the game so much, she taught us for free. It was clear that it brought her great joy and that she wanted to spread that joy to others. Since the game was complicated and strategic, the practical side of me was convinced that my brain would benefit from playing regularly and thus keep me mentally fit well into my later years.

At first, my playing would be what is considered party bridge. So much was left to chance and the wine helped. As time went by, I was introduced to duplicate bridge. As with tennis, the competitive side of me jumped in with both feet. I started playing outside my little group and learned there is a whole world of bridge players out there and I loved all of them! On the whole, bridge people are the most lovely people on the planet!

I am now playing as often as five times per week, and I have to be careful that bridge does not interfere with my beloved tennis! I have met and admire so many new people. A lot of work is needed on my game, but that is half the fun of it. I love trying to keep up with my new friends and acquaintances. And, I am very much looking forward to the tournament phase of my new passion.

Bridge Ditty

Hope you enjoy the following article by Bill Gates, written back in 2010:

What makes for a good bridge partner?

I'm lucky that I get to play with bridge players who are dramatically better than I am, and who are nice enough that they will understand my game and appreciate why maybe I led the wrong thing or didn't shift to the right suit or evaluated the hand just slightly wrong. They'll make comments that add to my knowledge, increasing the chance I might do it right next time. And that's a lot of fun.

I'm amazed that some of these bridge players remember all the hands. You play 50 or 60 hands in a

day, and you go to dinner that night, and they know every single one. Bob Hamman, one of the greatest bridge players of all times, is kind of the ultimate of that. If I misplayed some hand three years ago, he can still tell you the spot cards that were in there. Bob himself has misplayed very few hands when I've played with him, but I do make sure to remember those so I have my modest defense ready.

The classic form of the game is the team format where you have four people and you're playing for the normal game-type scores. Warren Buffett prefers that, because it's just the traditional form of the game, and doesn't make a big deal of the small differences of a no-trump contract versus a suit contract.

I like both team and match point. I like match points because there are just two of you playing, so there are slightly fewer variables. You usually get hand records afterwards, and a lot of tables play the same hand, and so you can look at all those different scores and see what happened. And because it's so excruciatingly important to take every trick you can, match point highlights any sloppiness in defensive or declarative play. So it forces you to think, okay, I've got to learn about squeezes, I've got to keep track of the shape of the hands I don't know as the hand goes on and take full advantage of that.

Republished from GatesNotes.com

Eddie Kantar's Tip

A Choice of Two Finesses

Notrump: with a choice of two finesses and only stopper remaining in your weakest suit, ask yourself which finesse, if it loses, leaves you with the most REMAINING tricks.

North (dummy)

S. AQ943

H. A96

D. A9

C. KJ5

South (you)

S. J10

H. J843

D. K2

C. A10987

North East South West

1S Pass 1NT Pass

2NT Pass 3NT All Pass

Opening lead: DQ

Should you attack spades or clubs?

If you attack clubs and the finesse loses, you remain with 8 tricks: 4 clubs, 2 diamonds 1 heart and 1 spade.

If you attack spades and the finesse loses you remain with 9 tricks: 4 spades, two clubs, 2 diamonds and 1 heart.

Attack spades.

www.kantarbridge.com

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. This month:

With 8 trump and missing the Q and J

A K 8 x x

10 x x

To win the maximum of 4 tricks, play the ace, and lead low to the ten for an 82% chance of success. If you need to win 5 tricks, play the ace and king, hoping that the queen-jack are doubleton (7% chance).

If you only need 3 tricks, with 100% probability, lead low to the ten.

Demon Defense

Opening Leads vs Slam Contracts

Robert Todd, *Adventures in Bridge*

GENERAL

When we are on an opening lead against a slam contract it is extremely important for us to get off to a good lead. We are not going to be on lead very often, so we must find the winning action now. The most important piece of information for us is the auction. The auction often tells us if the opponents have lots of extra values or are stretching to bid slam. It also gives us a lot of information about both the dummy's and the declarer's distribution. Let's see how we use this information to help guide us on our opening leads vs. slam contracts.

TYPE OF SLAM - POINTS VS. TRICKS

One thing we need to figure out is whether the opponents are in a "point-based" or "trick-based" slam. That means we must listen to the auction. A point-based slam is one where the opponents are taking most of their 12 tricks with honor cards. A trick-based slam is one where the opponents are planning to set up a long suit and generate their 12 tricks that way. Trick-based slams require fewer HCP for the opponents, which means that our side has more HCP.

When we are leading against point-based slams we want to try to develop tricks for our side without helping declarer too much. Here we may think about what 4-card suits the opponents have and if those suits are splitting or not. This will help us determine how active vs passive to make our opening lead. But when the opponents are in what sounds like a trick-based slam then it is a race: can we set up and take 2 tricks before the opponents take 12? When the auction suggests that the opponents have a source of tricks, we need to make more active opening leads.

Example 1

1NT 4NT
6NT

Here we know that opponents have two balanced hands and just barely enough points for a slam. We tend to make a more passive opening lead (like top of nothing or from a sequence) rather than lead away from an honor.

Example 2

1♠ 2♣
2NT 3♣
3NT 6NT

Here we know that the dummy is hitting with a long strong ♣ suit. If we have a holding like ♣Qxx or ♣xxx, we should make an extremely aggressive opening lead, like laying down an Ace or leading away from a King. If we think that the dummy's ♣ suit is not setting up, e.g., we are void in ♣, then we can choose to lead more passively.

JUMP TO SLAM

When the opponents jump to slam, they have had an unscientific auction. First, it is possible that they are missing two Aces. We may need to take these two Aces before they use a long suit to discard their losers. Second, they may not have a control in every suit (because with no void and a control in every suit they likely would have used an Ace-asking bid to make sure they do not miss a grand slam). Thus, leading an Ace may allow us to find partner with the King in that suit and we may be able to take the first two tricks. In these auctions, it is often the case that our tricks can go away, so leading an Ace will frequently be the only way to defeat the contract.

Example 3

1♠ 2♥
2♠ 4♠
6♠ All Pass

We usually do not want to lead an unsupported Ace (an Ace without the King) against a slam. But on an auction like this, where the opponents jump to slam without using Blackwood, we usually lead any Ace we have in an unbid suit - ♣A or ♦A.

BAD LEADS

As a general rule, leading away from a Jack is dangerous. Against a slam, leading away from a Jack is rarely a good idea. The time we might choose to do so is when the lead of that suit is called for by

the auction and nothing else seems reasonable. Then we can lead away from the Jack just as if we had no honor in the suit. Leading away from Jxx or Jxxx can be extremely costly if partner has the Queen and now the opponents do not have to lose a trick.

ATxx
Jxx Qxx
 K9x

TRUMP LEADS

When we are on lead against a slam, especially when the opponents have bid Keycard and shown the Queen, then a trump lead is often attractive. If the dummy is unlikely to have a source of tricks (especially if we have length in dummy's suit and know it is not setting up) then the asset the dummy may be providing is ruffing values. A trump lead cuts down on potential ruffing values in the dummy and is the ultimate passive action, not breaking any new suit. When the opponents have not shown the trump Queen, leading a trump can be dangerous as it may help the opponents "find the Queen".

CONCLUSION

The most important consideration against slam contracts is whether to make an attacking lead or a safe lead. The auction should give you a good idea of which one to choose. If the opponents have a source of tricks that is likely to set up then we need to develop our second trick now, so that when we get in later, we can cash the setting trick. If we think that the opponents do not have a source of tricks (and especially if we think they do not have a significant amount of HCP) then we try to make a safer, more passive opening lead. It is important for you to listen to the auction and understand the type of slam the opponents have bid before you select your opening lead.

www.advinbridge.com

Better Bidding

The following comes from Karen Walker's collection of tips at kwbridge.com for improving one's bridge game when bidding.

Always search for a major-suit fit if one is possible, even if you've already found a fit in a minor suit. If you have a 4-card major you can show at the one-level, always bid it.

Consider playing 3NT instead of 5C or 5D when you have the strength for game, but your only fit is in a minor suit.

Keep the bidding simple. If you have a fit for partner's major, always raise.

If you have a fit for partner's suit, "stretch" to raise, especially in a competitive auction. If you have extra trumps (one more than you need for an 8-card fit), feel free to compete to the 3-level if the opponents bid over your 2-level partscore.

Stay low on misfits. When you have a minimum without support for partner and he doesn't show support for your suit, stop bidding as soon as possible. Unless you have game-going strength, don't bid higher just to show yet another suit and don't bid 2NT. Your goal is to stop in a reasonable contract, not a perfect one.

If you have length in the suit the opponent opened and are in doubt about what to bid, just pass, even when you have opening-bid strength. Don't show your problem by thinking too long about what to do.

Always assume partner has minimum point-count until he tells you otherwise. A minimum range is 12-15 points for the opening bidder, 6-10 points for responder.

If you have a minimum hand (13-15 points for opener, 6-10 points for responder), keep the bidding low until you find a fit. **Don't bid past the one-level unless:**

- You're raising partner's suit (1H-2H, 1D-1H-1S-2S).
- You're rebidding your own long suit (1C-1H-2C, 1D-1S-1NT-2S).
- You're bidding a second suit that's **lower in rank** than your first suit (1D-1S-2C, 1S-1NT-2H).

There are two types of bids that pinpoint your point-count range -- **any notrump bid** and **any bid of an "old" suit** (one that you or partner have bid previously in the auction). If you're making any of these bids, be sure you show your point count by making the bid at the proper level:

- If you know you have 25+ combined points, jump to game in your suit or notrump. Don't give partner a chance to pass below game level.
- If you have an invitational hand (16-18 playing points if you're opener; 10-12 points if you're responder) and you think you and partner **might** have 25+ points, make your bid one level higher than necessary. This usually means you'll freely take the auction to 2NT or 3 of a suit (1D-1S-1NT-**2NT**, 1D-1H-2C-**2NT**, 1C-1S-**3S**, 1H-1NT-**3H**).
- If you have minimum strength, show it by making your bid at the lowest level available.

www.kwbridge.com

It's The Law

Dummy's Rights and Limitations

The following excerpts (not in italics) come from Duplicate Decisions:

Law 42 - Dummy's Rights

Absolute rights: These are rights that dummy has and cannot be taken away.

42A Absolute Rights

1. *Dummy is entitled to give information, in the Director's presence, as to fact or law.*
2. *He may keep count of tricks won and lost.*
3. *He plays the cards of the dummy as declarer's agent as directed and ensures that dummy follows suit (see Law 45F if dummy suggests a play).*

In order to exercise the right to count tricks won and lost, dummy needs to follow the play as it occurs. If a player turns their cards in such a fashion that dummy cannot see them, the Director should require the player to fully face the cards as they play them.

Note: If declarer designates a card from dummy that would be a revoke, as per 42A3 dummy should ensure that they instead follow suit.

Dummy may not point out to declarer that they have a trick incorrectly turned unless they do so before their side leads or plays to the next trick 96 (Law 65B).

Qualified rights: These are rights that dummy can lose when they violate specific conditions listed in Law 43.

42B Qualified Rights

Dummy may exercise other rights subject to the limitations stated in Law 43.

1. *Dummy may ask declarer (but not a defender) when he has failed to follow suit to a trick whether he has a card of the suit led.*
2. *He may try to prevent any irregularity.*
3. *He may draw attention to any irregularity, but only after play of the hand is concluded.*

What to do if, for example, during play, dummy asks a defender whether they revoked? The Laws do not prescribe any specific rectification. If the Director judges that dummy might be trying to call declarer's attention to a revoke that they did not notice, the director might consider a score adjustment. However, note that after the play is concluded dummy can draw attention to any irregularity that happened during play. Therefore, in the majority of the situations dummy will not benefit from calling attention too early. A stern warning and eventually a procedural penalty are probably enough.

If declarer tries to play from the wrong hand, dummy may try to prevent it, calling partner's attention to which hand won the previous trick. However, once declarer actually plays from the wrong hand, the irregularity is already committed, and dummy cannot prevent it anymore.

43 - Dummy's Limitations

Except as allowed in Law 42, dummy has the following limitations:

43A Limitations on Dummy

1. (a) *Dummy may not initiate a call for the Director during play unless another player has drawn attention to an irregularity.*
(b) *Dummy may not call attention to an irregularity during play.*

(c) Dummy must not participate in the play, nor may he communicate anything about the play to declarer.

2. *(a) Dummy may not exchange hands with declarer.*
(b) Dummy may not leave his seat to watch declarer's play of the hand.
(c) Dummy may not look at the face of a card in either defender's hand.
3. *A defender may not show dummy his hand.*

43B. If Violation Occurs

1. *Dummy is liable to penalty under Law 90 for any violation of the limitations listed in A1 and A2.*
2. *If dummy, after his violation of the limitations listed in A2:*
 - (a) warns declarer not to lead from the wrong hand, either defender may choose the hand from which declarer shall lead.*
 - (b) is the first to ask declarer if a play from declarer's hand constitutes a revoke, declarer must substitute a correct card if his play was illegal, and the provisions of Law 64 then apply as if the revoke had been established.*
3. *If dummy after his violation of the limitations listed in A2 is the first to draw attention to a defender's irregularity, there is no immediate rectification. Play continues as though no irregularity had occurred. At the end of play if the defending side has gained through its irregularity the Director adjusts only its score, taking away that advantage. The declaring side retains the score achieved at the table.*

Three examples will illustrate the items above. In all three, dummy lost their qualified rights (for example, by looking at a defender's hand).

Example 1: Declarer has the lead and starts designating a card to lead from dummy (out of turn). If dummy warns them, then either defender can choose if the lead will come from declarer or from dummy.

Example 2: Declarer has ♠ A98 ♥ 4. RHO leads ♠ 7. Declarer discards the ♥ 4. Dummy asks "No spades, partner?" Declarer must substitute the card played with a spade (the other card returns to the hand), and the revoke is considered established, despite having been corrected. The provisions of Law 64 will apply (one or two tricks transfer, but only from tricks made from the point of the revoke onward). Ownership of the revoke trick is determined by the legal card played. If the trick continued with ♠ 4, ♠ A, ♠ J, ♠ 2, declarer wins the revoke trick and will be subject to a possible two-trick penalty. When explaining the Law the Director should be clear about the different consequences if declarer wins the trick in their hand with a legal card or not.

Example 3: Defender leads out of turn. Dummy is the first one to call attention to it. Play continues as though no irregularity had occurred, which means that declarer has no options and the lead out of turn is accepted by default.

Example 4: Defender revokes. Dummy is the first one to call attention to it (before the revoke is established). Play continues as though no irregularity had occurred, which means that the revoke is corrected without penalty. If the revoke was already established before dummy called attention, there would be no automatic trick transfer (one or two trick penalty).

Examples 3 and 4 above are instances of the approach used in Law 43B3. Both sides are offenders in this situation. Although there are no normal remedial actions against the irregularity committed by the defense, if the defending side gains through their irregularity, the Director should award a split score, keeping the declaring side's result and adjusting the defending side's result to what would have happened if the irregularity was normally corrected.

On the other hand, if dummy draws attention to an irregularity by a defender and has not lost their qualified rights, then the Director should apply a procedural penalty to dummy, if appropriate, but the irregularity should be dealt with through the normal laws.

