

# Region 9 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 9 Issue 10 - October 2023



## From the Editor

Trick and Treat? Or better yet, treat your partner and opponents with a smile and kind word while continuously taking lots of tricks while at the bridge table.

The IN story provided this month is one I have never encountered before at my table - get ready to laugh a little. And for those of you interested in possibly how the director came up with that decision, read onward to our "It's the Law".

Got a story you would like to share or feel like highlighting an IN player? If so, please send them my way.

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by Michele/Dale Domec

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## Upcoming Intermediate/Newcomer Tournaments

### Non-Life Master (0-750mp) Regionals

Oct 27-29 Houston NLM Regional (in Galveston) \* Flyer: [Click Here](#)

\*This is being held concurrently with an Open Sectional.

### **IN Sectionals**

Oct 28-29 Austin Fall 0-50

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Nov 3-4 Austin Fall NLM

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Nov 16-19 BCOH 499er Tournament

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Dec 1-2 Austin Winter NLM

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](mailto:Beginner20Bridge@gmail.com).



## **Highlight - Michele and Dean Domec's Story**



*Story provided by Michele and Dean Domec from Unit 201*

You never know what might happen at the Bridge table, especially when it's the afternoon of the second day of a tournament and this is the fourth session we had played.

Both teams were bidding, the contract ended up in 3 Spades, and East was the Declarer.

South led the King of Hearts, the suit he had bid more than once. West laid out the dummy. All players are studying the wrong dummy in the North and then East notices that North's dummy has an Ace of Hearts in with her Diamonds. East politely tells North, so she moves the Ace of Hearts out of her Diamonds and into her Hearts, and then it hits her.

She notices two dummies on the table and realizes that her partner is not the Declarer, and she has exposed every one of her cards dummy style. She hurriedly scoops up her cards and hides them.

It becomes apparent to everyone at the table that we were all looking at two dummies but didn't immediately realize it since we were focused on the Ace of Hearts being mixed in with the Diamonds.

Then there was an uproar of laughter at the table.

The Director was called who explained that North had to lay her cards back down dummy style and East could continue to play two dummies instead of one. Needless to say, North felt very much like a dummy when she realized she had laid out a second dummy on the table.

Perhaps the real dummies were the four of us that were at the table. I was one of those people.



## Better Bridge Habits

### Completely Learn Your Conventions

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. This month I want to focus on learning conventions. As new players, many of you are eager to learn and try conventions. All too often a player only learns the first step response to a convention they are playing.

The tip this month is to learn the complete set of responses, the defenses against the convention AND the methods to cope if the opponents interfere.

### Eddie Kantar's Tip

#### Equal Values

As declarer, play cards you are known to hold if it cannot cost you a trick.

For example, if a queen is led, dummy has small cards, you have KJ doubleton and the ace is played on your right, play the king. NOT the jack. Third hand knows you have the king from the lead of the queen, and the opening leader knows you have the king from partner's play of the ace.

Since the king and jack are equals, and since they both know you have the king, PLAY IT! PLAY IT!

[www.kantarbridge.com](http://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. Here is a combination from the Encyclopedia that seems to occur frequently:

A Q 10  
x x x

We can maximize our chances of 2 tricks by leading a small card towards the 10. If that wins or our right hand opponent rises with the K, we have our 2 tricks. If it loses to the Jack, then finesse the Queen. The probability of taking 2 tricks is 76%.

## Demon Defense

The following practice hand comes from Eddie Kantar Teaches Advanced Bridge Defense.

East- West Vulnerable. Dealer South.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1S	2D	2S	1H
pass	3H	(all pass)	pass

NORTH (Dummy)

♠ 7 2  
 ♥ 6 4 2  
 ♦ A Q 10 8 5  
 ♣ K Q 2

WEST	EAST (You)
♠ K Q 10 9 5	♠ A J 3
♥ K 7	♥ 9 5 3
♦ 7 6	♦ K J 9 4 2
♣ J 8 7 4	♣ 10 9

SOUTH

♠ 8 6 4  
 ♥ A Q J 10 8  
 ♦ 3  
 ♣ A 6 5 3

Partner leads the ♠K and you see at a glance that dummy's diamonds are worthless to the declarer. The main value of the dummy will be in ruffing a spade (partner figures to have five spades and declarer, three).

Your play is to overtake the opening lead and return a trump in case partner has the ♥Q or ♥K. South, not playing with mirrors, will probably finesse the queen losing to partner's king.

Partner, following your defense, and trusting you to have the diamonds all bottled up, returns a trump.

If you and partner keep your wits about you, declarer is destined to go down one.

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## Better Bidding

### Two Club Opening Bids

The following comes from This Week in Bridge (TWiB) Lesson #415 by Robert Todd at [advinbridge.com](http://advinbridge.com):

#### GENERAL

When we have a great hand, we need to be able to make a bid that partner cannot pass. An opening bid of 2♣ shows a great hand and does not mean anything about ♣ - it is "strong, artificial and forcing". This opening promises a hand that has close to game (or better) on its own and feels that it can't afford to open with a simple 1-level natural bid. 2♣ opening bids are forcing to at least one level below game ("game minus 1"). So even if partner has no values, we must play at least 2NT, 3-Major, or 4-minor.

#### WHAT KIND OF HANDS OPEN 2♣ AND WHY?

There are a variety of types of hands that may open the bidding 2♣:

Balanced hands with 22+ HCP

- There is no other way to show hands with this many HCP.
  - Single-Suited Unbalanced Hands with 20+ HCP (usually 9+ tricks)
- These hands have 6+card suits and are afraid that if they open at the one-level if they might play there when they can make a game.
  - Two-Suited (or Three-Suited) Unbalanced Hands with 10+ tricks and a large number of HCP.
- These two-suited hands have almost game in their hand and are often interested in slam.

## WHAT KIND OF STRONG HANDS DO NOT OPEN 2♣ AND WHY

Two- and three-suited hands rarely open 2♣ because a 2♣ opening bid takes up a lot of bidding space. If we open 2♣ and have two suits to show, it can become difficult to have enough space to describe our hand and keep the auction below 3NT. When we have a very distributional hand, the opponents often have very distributional hands, and thus can preempt us if we open 2♠ with this kind of shapely hand. This also makes opening at the 1-level safer; our bid is much less likely to pass out when everyone at the table has a distributional hand.

## THINKING ABOUT 2♣ OPENING BIDS

The most important thing about making good decisions when it comes to opening 2♣ is to think about 2♣ openings properly. Most bridge players are excited to open the bidding with 2♣ and they are proud to open 2♣. This is the wrong way to think about opening 2♣. We should open 2♣ only when we must or when we feel obligated to because we are afraid of getting passed out at the 1-level when we can make a game. If we think of opening 2♣ as something we are forced to do and that is not a fun thing to do, then we will break the habit of opening 2♣ when we should not.

## RESPONDING TO 2♣ - POSITIVE VS. BUST

The standard method of responding to 2♣ is to respond 2♦, “waiting”, on almost all hands, and rarely bid a new natural suit. But one of the modern methods is to use 2♥\* as a “bust” bid. When partner opens 2♣, the first thing we need to do is tell partner whether we have enough to force to game (which opposite such a strong hand doesn’t take much) or we have a horrible hand and we are willing to stop short of game.

2♣      \_\_\_?

2♦\*      Artificial Game Forcing – Shows at least an Ace, King, or two Queens.

2♥\*      Artificial “Bust” – Double negative. Less than a 2♦ bid.

2♠      5+♠, usually 2/3 honors, 8+ pts (often 2-suited and not wanting to wait to show suits)

3♣      6+♣, usually 2/3 honors, 8+ pts

3♦      6+♦, usually 2/3 honors, 8+ pts

*Note: These positive bids usually have 2 of the top 3 honors but could not if they have a good hand with lots of playing strength (like they have a 5-5 hand).*

## Some Examples of 2♣ Openings

### Balanced Hands

In both of these auctions we play “Systems On”; we respond as if partner opened 2NT by using Stayman, Transfers, etc.

*Example 1*

2♣      2♦  
2NT

*Example 2*

2♣      2♥\*  
2NT

In both auctions, 2NT shows a balanced hand with 22 to a bad 24 points. A 5-card Major is common.

*Example 3*

2♣      2♦/♥\*  
3NT

This 3NT rebid shows a good 24 to 26 points. Balanced Hand. 5-card Major Common.

*Example 4*

2♣      2♦/♥\*  
4NT

This 4NT rebid shows 27-28 points. Balanced Hand. 5-card Major Common.

### Major Suit Hands

*Example 5*

2♣      2♦  
2M

This usually shows a 6+cds Major Suit with 20+ HCP. It could be a 5-4 hand, but this is much rarer.

### Applying the Principle of Fast Arrival

*Example 6*

2♣      2♦  
2M      4M

Since 2♦ is GF, this shows the worst possible 2♦ bid. It usually shows no Ace or King.

Example 7

2♣      2♦

2M      3M

Since 2♦ is GF, then 3M is forcing and stronger than a jump to 4M – usually showing an Ace or King.

## CONCLUSION

2♣ opening bid auctions are not common, but when they do come up it is important for you and partner to have good agreements about how to handle these strong hands. It can be frustrating to pick up an enormous hand and make a bid that you think is strong and forcing only to have partner pass. Avoiding that kind of misunderstanding is what having good agreements accomplishes, so make sure to discuss these auctions with your partner.

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## It's The Law

### Law 51 - Two or More Penalty Cards

#### Who's the Dummy Now?

As we have seen [reference to article above], sometimes infractions of the Laws are downright entertaining, no matter which side is at fault. In the scenario above, South is declaring. West made the opening lead; North faced the dummy and East also faced a dummy. However... because West (East's partner) was not, in fact, the declarer, what East actually faced were 12 or 13 penalty cards.

This scenario is not as rare as it seems because it is frequently mentioned in Director training. Although when the example is given in Director training, someone usually notices there is a problem before the first trick is complete... Several Laws apply to this situation.

#### Law 57D, Premature Play at RHO's Turn

This law would apply if East's first card (of the 13) was played before declarer called for a card from dummy. If the first card played by East could legally be played, then East must play that card at her proper turn.

If East's first card cannot legally be played, then it becomes a major penalty card.

#### Law 49, EXPOSURE OF A DEFENDER'S CARDS

"Except in the normal course of play or application of law... when a defender's card is in a position in which his partner could possibly see its face...each such card becomes a major penalty card..."

If East's first card cannot be legally played to the trick, it becomes a major penalty card.

#### Law 50, DISPOSITION OF PENALTY CARDS

"A card prematurely exposed (but not led...) by a defender is a penalty card unless the Director designates otherwise..."

Even if East's first card is not a penalty card because it could legally be played to the first trick, the other 12 cards are penalty cards because they were exposed before it was East's turn to play to tricks 2 - 13.

#### Law 51, TWO OR MORE PENALTY CARDS and Law 51A Offender to Play

"If it is a defender's turn to play and that defender has two or more penalty cards that can legally be played, declarer designates which is to be played at that turn."

In this case, the defender has 12 penalty cards and declarer gets to designate which penalty card is played every time it is East's turn to play.

SK

