

District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 5 Issue 5

From the Editor

Many players in D16 had an opportunity to attend a seminar by Robert Todd this past week. Robert is a teacher and professional player and we serve together on the ACBL Educational Foundation Board of Trustees. He is a frequent speaker at regional tournaments.

He offers a **FREE weekly newsletter** and has over 275 articles on his website about bridge. I encourage you to visit his website: www.advinbridge.com and subscribe.

Please continue to give me feedback about the articles in the newsletter.

My e-mail is paulcuneo@sbcglobal.net.

Paul Cuneo
ACBL District 16 Director

In this Issue

Better Bridge Habits:

Learn hand and suit patterns

Donna Compton:

Human Nature to Be in Control

Eddie Kantar's Tip:

Notrump responses to a takeout double

Declarer Play:

Card Combinations

Demon Defense:

Suit Preference
Signals

Better Bidding

4441 distribution and they open

It's the Law:

Partnership
Agreements

From Donna Compton - World Champion and Master Teacher

Human Nature to Be in Control!

One of the greatest challenges to newer bridge players is the human nature to be in control of everything. In bridge, however, this type of “gut instinct” results in many lost tricks. Let’s look at an example from Declarer’s viewpoint:

West	East
♠ K Q 8 4	♠ J 10 9
♥ A K 3	♥ 8 6 4
♦ K 4 3	♦ A 6 2
♣ 8 4 2	♣ A K 5 3

Declarer is in 3NT and needs nine tricks. Declarer is looking at two heart, two diamond and two club tricks for a total of six quick tricks. The spade suit provides the remaining three tricks to make the contract. However, human nature sneaks into Declarer’s mind ... the desire to remain in control overcomes the desire to make the contract. Instead of attacking spades at trick two, Declarer cashes the ♥AK, ♦AK and ♣AK. Once Declarer gets around to setting up the spade tricks, the defense has the setting tricks in the other three suits!

So how does Declarer avoid this pitfall? The answer is LOGIC! Giving up control is more difficult for some than others. If you have ever felt the need to stay in control as Declarer, take a deep breath and allow logic to determine your next play. In the example above, logic tells us that if we cash the six tricks in hearts, diamonds and clubs, then we don’t have enough tricks to make our contract. Logic also tells us that if we promote three spade tricks by giving up the lead one time, then we do have enough tricks to make our contract. So, what’s the problem?

The problem is that our mind likes to play games on us. It makes us think that if we lose control in spades (giving up the ♠A), then we may never get back on lead. Logic, however, tells us that we have control of the other three suits. Be strong! Use logic to overcome these feelings of needing to be in control. Remember...there is a reason that take your losses early is a great rule of thumb!

Stay tuned for the June District IN Newsletter, where we will explore “Why Do Some People Prefer Suit Over Notrump Contracts?” Please visit my teaching website www.PlayBetterBridge.com for tips, lessons, videos and bridge history. Also, visit www.UltimateBridgeVacations.com for upcoming Bridge Land Cruises and Power Bridge Retreats.

Better Bridge Habits

Learn hand and suit patterns

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. This month’s tip is to learn the hand and suit patterns. Here is a link to a paper by Ken Monzingo former ACBL President on the

topic: <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/teachers/celebritylessons/handpatternsrevised.pdf>

Learning and applying these principles can significantly improve your declarer play and defense.

Eddie Kantar's Tip

Notrump responses to a takeout double guarantee at least one stopper (hopefully two), in the opponent’s suit.

You hold: S. KJ9x H. xx D. Q10x C. Jxxx (or AJxx)

West	North	East	South (you)
1S	Dbl.	Pass	?

With Jxxx of clubs, respond 1NT. With AJxx of clubs, respond 2NT. You don't need stoppers in the unbid suits to bid notrump. A good partner will have them. 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 came up twice in the ACBL-Wide Charity game on April 27.

AK10xx
Qx
J

Declarer leads the Jack from the South hand. What should West be thinking? The first question West should ask is what is the distribution. West knows that 6 cards are missing. If declarer held 3 would he lead the Jack?

Not likely as good technique would be to lead to the 10 and if it wins, you get all 5 tricks if both defenders follow suit. If it loses, you are guaranteed 4 tricks as long as West follows to the 1st trick.

If declarer holds 2 cards would he lead the jack? Yes, to insure he could finesse twice if it wins. Thus West must cover the Jack with the Queen and hope that declarer has 2 cards in the suit and that partner with 4 cards has the 4th trick. Nothing is lost if declarer has 3 cards. Both times we saw the combination, the hand with Qx did not cover and got a bad board.

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 4S contract. The bidding was:

N	E	S	W
			1H
Dbl	2H	4S	all pass

Partner leads the A of hearts:

N – H – KQ3

W – A

E – S - 64

H - 1094

D – AJ86

C – J843

Partner leads the Ace and you see the KQ in dummy. Play the 10 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 4-4-4-1 distribution and 11 to 17 HCP, pass if they open one of your 4 card suits. Later if they agree on the suit in which you have a singleton, double for takeout. www.kantarbridge.com

Its the Law

Partnership Understandings

Last month we covered the Alert Procedure. It is based on the principle that everyone is entitled to know the methods their opponents use and their agreements. Law 40 on Partnership Understandings covers this.

From Duplicate Decisions:

"Players agreements, whether implicit or explicit, must be available to your opponents. However, a player may make any call or any play (including an intentionally misleading one that departs from commonly accepted or previously announced conventional practice) without prior announcement, provided it is not based on a partnership understanding. In other words, a player may make any bid that will fool partner and his opponents equally. ACBL or other sponsoring organizations, however, control the use of psychic bids by controlling the conventional usages which may impact them.

Prohibited – Partnerships may not vary their agreements during the auction or play period following a question, a response or any irregularity.

Psychic Calls – While psychic bids are an integral part of bridge, a player does not have the right to psych as frequently as he wishes simply because he enjoys doing so. A series of tops and bottoms so earned by one pair can unfairly affect the final results of a tournament.

ACBL's Policy on Psychs: Psychs are regulated by taking disciplinary action against a player who disrupts a game with frequent, random psychs. The ACBL Board of Directors has defined types of disruptive bidding that make the offenders subject to penalty.

REGULATION OF CONVENTIONS

NOTE: See the ACBL web site for the Convention Charts ACBL has established for various levels of tournament competition. In general, club games are played under the ACBL's General Convention Chart. Clubs may allow experimental conventions or agreements if they believe their particular club can handle them.

NOTE: In ACBL competition, both members of a partnership must use the same system. They must have two identical convention cards made out for the use of the opponents. Both members of a partnership must employ the same methods. Players must not refer to their own convention cards or use any other aids to their memory, calculations or technique.

CONVENTION CARD REGULATIONS

1. The Laws allow any player to refer to an opponent's convention card: prior to play; during the clarification period; and at his own turn to call or play. In addition any player may consult the opponent's convention card at RHO's turn to call; and, except for dummy, may refer to an opponent's convention card at his own turn to play. No player, however, may refer to his own convention card at any time during the auction or play.

NOTE: A player may refer to his own written defenses to unusual methods played by his opponents. ACBL has designated as unusual those methods played under the authority of the ACBL Mid-Chart and Super Chart.

2. ACBL has established for all sanctioned events:

- a. a convention card on which players list their conventions and agreements.
- b. regulations for the use of the card, including the requirement that both partners use identical methods. This requirement does not extend to style and judgment. Note: A pair is required to have 2 identical convention cards available for their opponents.

- c. a regulation that both members of a partnership must have the same point limits for an opening bid of 1NT.
- d. a regulation barring opening one bids which may, by agreement, be made on fewer than 8 HCP (not applicable to a psych).
- e. a regulation barring conventional responses or rebids of any kind when an opening natural notrump bid has a lower limit of fewer than 10 HCP or a range of more than 5 HCP.
- f. a regulation barring conventional responses or rebids of any kind when the agreed range of a weak two-bid is greater than 7 HCP or the suit could contain fewer than five cards."