

# District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 6 Issue 12

## From the Editor

Happy Holidays!!! I want to wish you and your families a very joyous holiday season and great year in 2021.

We'll all remember 2020 as the Covid year for as long as we live.

As I write this, vaccines are being approved around the world and the end of the pandemic looks to be in sight. So there is optimism for 2021 and the return to face-to-face bridge throughout ACBL.

Year end is a time for reflection and planning and I want to encourage each of you to reflect on your bridge journey and make plans for learning and improving in 2019.

Bridge is fueled by the efforts of volunteers at all levels. Please consider volunteering in 2019 to help your clubs and units with all the work.

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

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## Better Bridge Habits

### Learn from the Hand Records

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. This month I want to focus on analysis after the game. BBO and ACBL have them available. They are excellent learning tools. After every session, I review the hand record and look for the following:

1, What did we do well? It's fun to look over our best boards. But we need to see whether we did something very well, or whether the opponents had a bidding problem and ended up in a poor contract. If the opponents had a problem, ask whether your partnership would have avoided the problem.

2. Where do I need to improve? Look over the low boards to see what happened. Was it a bidding, lead, defense, or declarer play problem? Or was it that the opponents made a great bid or play. It is too easy to blame partner for the problems. Look primarily where you can improve and become a better partner.

### 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. Partner does not have four spades and bidding the 'fourth suit' has a special meaning. It is frequently used as an artificial force when no other rebid describes the hand. [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:

K Q x x x x x

You've preempted with your 7 card suit and found that partner is void. You should play low on the first round and then play the K. 36% chance of 5 tricks and 86% chance of 4 tricks.

## 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

**Count** signals are used to tell partner and declarer how many cards you hold in the suit being led by declarer or dummy. Once your partner knows how many cards you have in the suit, he knows how many declarer has and can improve his count of the distribution of all 4 suits around the table.

If you play **Standard** signals, a relative high card shows an even number of cards and a relative low card shows an odd number. Giving count is very important when dummy has a strong suit missing the A, K or both. Here is an example:

N – KQJ9

W – 2

E – A863

S – 5

You know from the bidding that declarer is short in this suit. Declarer leads the 5. Partner plays the 2, showing an odd number. Partner can't five or declarer would be void, so it must be 3, meaning declarer has 2. Hold up on trick one and take the second trick to cut declarer off from the suit. [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 a balanced hand containing 5 hearts and 15-16 HCP open 1NT. With 17 HCP open 1H. These hands are always 5-3-3-2 distribution with 5 hearts.

The problem with the 15-16 point hands is that there is no accurate rebid if partner bids 1S or 1NT over your 1H opening bid. [www.kantarbridge.com](http://www.kantarbridge.com)

## Its the Law

ACBL requires that each pair in a sanctioned event have two identical convention cards that disclose their agreements. Playing on BBO, that is accomplished by having one of the partners prepare the card with your agreements and then "posting" it when you play together. BBO used to enter the SAYC card as a default, but that has been discontinued. Detailed instructions on preparing and posting a card may be found on page 20 of the September 2020 Bridge Bulletin. Click [here](#) for a video that shows the steps.