

From the Editor

I hope to see many of you in Austin for the NABC! I remember my first NABC in Dallas in 2006 and I was amazed at the great lessons and speakers we had. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn from some of ACBL's best.

A reminder that your Teacher of the Year Nominations are due by Dec. 31. **Nominations must be sent to Ed Rawlinson, 12515 Bonanza Way, San Antonio, TX 78254 by November 30.**

We're entering the Holiday Season and I'd like to wish each of you a joyous holiday season and a great year in 2022!!!

I'm interested in your feedback, so please send your comments to paulcuneo@sbcglobal.net.

Paul Cuneo

District 16 Director

In this Issue

Better Bridge Habits:

Bid and play in tempo

Eddie Kantar's Tip:

Leading from AK

Improved Declarer Play: Car
d Combinations

Demon Defense:

Opening Lead

Bidding Tips:

Bidding Agreements over 1NT

It's the Law:

When to Ask



Better Bridge Habits

Bid and Play in Tempo

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. Learning to bid and play in tempo is a challenge for all players and it takes time. Here are some tips to help with the process of bidding in tempo:

Always take about 5 seconds to bid. Use the time to think about the auction and how it might develop. What call by partner or an opponent would be the most difficult to handle? Anticipating the auction will help you maintain tempo when a difficult choice is presented. Keep thinking as the auction proceeds.

When a skip bid is made, you must pause for 10 seconds before bidding.

Know the system you're playing with your partner. It helps to review the entire convention card prior to the start of the game. This is critical if you play with several people and have different conventions with them. Not only will you improve your tempo, but your results will be better as you avoid bidding mishaps.

Avoid body language and facial expressions in reaction to partner's or opponents bids. Keeping a "poker face" helps maintain tempo, avoids causing partner ethical problems, and does not give information to the opponents.

It is unethical to attempt to communicate information to partner or to deceive an opponent by varying your tempo.

Here are two articles by Andrew Gumperz who is a professional and frequent commentator on BBO: <http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/better-tempo/> and <http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/tempo-and-bridge-ethics/>

Eddie Kantar's Bridge Tips

If you lead the ace from AKx(x) against suit contracts: (1) The lead of the ace is a trick one convention only. After trick one, the king is led. (2) In a supported suit, or in any suit partner has bid, the king is led from the ace-king. Leading the ace in either of these situations, denies the king. (3) From AK doubleton, everything is reversed.

[.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 J 10

X X X

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

Demon Defense

Auction:

You hold:

N	E	S	W	S – A732
		1NT	P	H - 86
2C	P	2S	P	D – Q10743
3S	p	4S	all pass	C – Q6

What do you lead? In his book on Modern Bridge Defense, Eddie Kantar writes, “Lead a diamond. Even though the opponents are playing in a 4-4 fit, if you can make either hand ruff a diamond, they will be playing a 4-3 fit. Later, if you can force the hand with 4 trumps to ruff a diamond, your trump holding will be longer than that of either opponent and you will have wrested control of the hand from the declarer.” www.kantarbridge.com

Bidding Tips

You hold:

S – A106432

H – KQ62

D – 86

C – 7

Your partner opens 1NT. What is your bid?

In his CD on Conventions, Mike Lawrence writes, “Basically with 6 - 4 in the majors, you choose an approach that seems best and fits into your system.” Most players will start by bidding 2C Stayman and raising either major to game if partner bids a major. If partner denies a 4 card major by bidding 2D, a delayed Texas transfer can be used as shown below.

N	E	S	W
1NT	P	2C	P
2D	P	4H	p
4S all pass			

Be sure to discuss this sequence with your partner before using it.

www.michaelslawrence.com

Its the Law

Asking Questions about the Bidding

The law is clear on when we may ask for explanation during the auction, but is silent about whether we should ask. Here are some tips to guide your thought process:

Do NOT ask until the auction is completed unless the answer will affect your decision to bid or not to bid. Asking when you have no intention of entering the auction may allow the opponents to benefit by the explanation.

Do not ask for partner's benefit. This is a violation of Law 20.

If you are defending and must make the opening lead, you may ask for explanation at the conclusion of the auction.

If you are the partner of the opening leader, wait until your partner has selected the opening lead and places it face down on the table and asks "Any questions partner?"

To ask after the auction is completed, "Will you please explain the auction?" is the best way as you do not bring attention to a specific bid.

From Duplicate Decisions:

Explanation of opponents' calls:

1. During the auction and before the final pass, any player at their own turn to call may ask for an explanation of the opponent's auction (unless required by Law to pass). Also, after a face-down opening lead, leader's partner and/or declarer may ask for and receive a review of the bidding or an explanation of the opponent's auction. Replies should be given by the partner of the player who made the call in question unless the Director instructs otherwise. If the partner does not remember the meaning of a call, they should not try to guess. "I don't remember" should prompt the Director to establish whether or not an agreement actually exists, and in that case send them away from the table and ask the bidder to explain. If the player says something like "I don't think that we ever discussed this," it seems that there is probably no agreement, and the explanation that the opponents

are entitled to is: “Undiscussed.”

2. If the partner of the player that asks a question has additional questions, they must wait for their turn to ask them.

52

3. When asking about the opponent’s auction, a player is entitled to know about calls actually made, relevant alternative calls available that were not made, and about inferences from the choice of action where these are matters of partnership understanding. The right to ask additional questions does not extend to sequences that are irrelevant for the current auction.



Example: The auction goes 1

Pass 3



. The next player checks

the opponents’ convention card for the meaning of the jump



raise to 3 and can ask about alternative raises. However, they cannot, for example, ask if the partnership uses 3- or 4-card Drury because that is irrelevant for this auction.

4. After the final pass and throughout the play period, declarer or either defender at their own turn to play may request an explanation of the opponent’s auction. Declarer can also ask for an explanation of the defender’s card play understandings. As in #1 above, the explanations should be given by the partner of the player whose action is to be explained.

5. When explaining the meaning of partner’s call or play in reply to an opponent’s inquiry, a player should disclose all special information conveyed to them through partnership agreement or partnership experience, but need not disclose inferences drawn from general bridge knowledge and experience.

6. If the meaning has not been discussed, “no agreement” or “undiscussed” is the proper response. Players should not say such things as “I am taking it to mean ...” In addition, “standard” or the name of a convention is not a proper answer. Also, when a

player explains a call as “undiscussed,” it is improper to ask a question like “But what do you think that it is?” or similar.

7. Players should be aware that the content and manner of their questions may potentially create unauthorized information, even when the question is legal. Law 16, Unauthorized Information, may apply if, for example, a successful line of defense could have been suggested by a “not so smart” question. After an alert, for example, “please explain” is an adequate request for an



explanation, but “What do you mean with 2 ?” is not. “Could I ask for a review of the auction?” is fine, but “What was the



auction, did you really bid 3 ?” is not.

53

8. A player can ask about the meaning of a single call (one does not need to ask for the meaning of the whole auction), but again Law 16 may apply.

9. A player is entitled to ask about a call, or the auction, independently of what their action will be. “A player cannot ask about the auction if he is going to pass anyway,” is a common misconception. If this were true, then the act of asking or not asking would create information by itself (if the player asked, they would show an intention not to pass, even if in the end they decided to do so).