

Region 9 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 9 Issue 1 - January 2023



From the Editor

Happy New Year!

This month I'm pleased to share one 99er's first tournament experience. It's a doozy and I hope it tickles your funny bone as much as it did mine!

If you've an "I/N story" to share - please email it my way. Be it about your journey into duplicate, education, lessons learned, partnerships and friends made, or some unique bridge experience... it matters not.

2023 brings with it many new opportunities within our bridge community. Check your unit calendars for special events being held in your area.

By way of tournaments within District 16, [click here](#) (for District 15, [here](#)) to learn what is on tap and start making your plans to attend!

Comments and suggestions regarding this newsletter are always welcome.

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Highlight - I/N Player: Amy Seitz (Unit 207)

Pictured are Amy Seitz along with her husband and bridge partner, Dan Seitz

Years ago, I play (nervously) in a duplicate tournament with my aunt Wanda Persons, an experienced excellent player in McAllen. I thought we had mentioned the silly gambling three no trump bid in fourth seat and dismissed it.

When auntie bid three no in fourth seat, I excitedly assumed she had 25-27 points! I had six spades to the AJ10, and that's all, and was happy to bid four spades. Knew nothing of transfers at that time.

To my confusion, auntie bid 5 clubs. Right hand opponent asked me if we bid gambling three no, and I said no.



Wanting to clarify that I had six spades, I bid five spades. Auntie bid six clubs, and I had a glimmer of suspicion of what she had and passed. Right hand opponent boomed out a resounding double!

Auntie proceeded to make the doubled six clubs, utilizing my three baby clubs, a singleton, and setting up spades. Top board! Right hand opponent squawked for the director, pointed at me, and accusingly stated that I had said we didn't play that gambling bid.

The director patiently looked the hand over, listened to all sides, and said, "For them to be cheating, they had to know what they were doing. And obviously,

they had no clue."

A memorable introduction to tournaments for me.

Editor's note: Amy and Dan currently play in a couples' duplicate group, and she's in several ladies' groups. Although not yet back to playing in a sanctioned duplicate game, they would like to do so.

Better Bridge Habits

Study Every Day

Surely many of you have made resolutions to improve your bridge game in 2023. One of the best ways to improve is to develop a habit of daily study.

Whether you choose to learn from the web, books or CDs, I'd like to encourage you to pick a topic and then work your way through it by studying for 15 - 20 minutes a day. Eddie Kantar, Mike Lawrence and Larry Cohen offer both books and CDs and it is hard to go wrong with them.

Eddie Kantar's Tip

Forcing Bid

After a single raise, a new suit is forcing. Think of the 2D bid as having the strength of a reverse which means 17+ HCP, minimum.

Opener	Responder
1C	2C
2D (forcing)	

Opener is NOT running away from a short club. Opener is trying to get to game with a big hand. Opener may have: S. A4 H. 84 D. AK97 C. AK764.

In this sequence, 2NT by the opener after the 2C response shows 17-18 HCP. When responder limits a hand with a single raise and opener bids again, opener is trying for game with extras.

<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. *This month:*

With 8 trump and missing both the K and J:
A 10 x x
Q 9 x x

As declarer, you need 3 tricks from this suit. For a 78% chance of doing so, finesse the 10 and if it loses to the Jack, finesse the 9.

Demon Defense

Think Like Declarer

Taken from Buck Buchanan's January 2021 Zoom presentation. Buck was recently recognized by ABTA as a 2022 Master Teacher and by District 16 as the 2019 Teacher of the Year.

You have heard the auction. What does it suggest to you about declarer's plan for play of the hand? Which of the common options will declarer go with? If you can get a sense of what declarer's line of play will be, you can sometimes find a way to foul it up.

Here's how a defender might create an advantage:

If declarer is thought likely to establish dummy's suit, the defenders should try to develop and cash their own tricks quickly. An active defense (leading away from honors, for instance), even at the risk of giving away a trick, might be necessary.

If declarer is apt to try to ruff losers, lead trumps (at any time during play of the hand).

If dummy is balanced, and declarer will have to try to build winners out of dummy's high cards, defend passively. Avoid giving anything away. Let declarer do all the work.

Similarly, if the declaring side conducted an invitational auction, they have no points to spare. Don't give anything away.

These tips won't always work, but they'll help you gain defensive tricks in the long run.

Click [here](#) to watch Buck's full presentation and [here](#) to see a sample hand explained.

Bidding Tips

From Robert Todd's article "The Cardinal Sins of Bridge", we covered **Cardinal Sin #1** last month. This month we conclude his article with:

Other "Major Sins"

Of course, there are other major sins - here are a few of them and brief summaries of some of the problems they can cause for both you and partner:

Suppressing Support for Partner's Suit in a Competitive Auction

If you have support for your partner's suit but fail to show it in favor of bidding your own suit, you run the risk of the opponents preempting the bidding and

leaving your side to guess what to do at a high level – and that is not good bridge.

Off-shape or Bad Takeout Doubles

In a competitive auction, partner must be able to count on your takeout double to have support for ALL the unbid suits (at least 3-card.) If we start making bad or off-shape takeout doubles, partner will often compete too high in our short suit – and the doubled contract that will likely ensue will be very expensive for our side!

Taking a Second Bid as a Passed Hand

When we are a passed hand, partner can make tactical bids. He can make light overcalls or take other “non-standard” actions. If we are a passed hand, we should strive to describe our hand in one call and not hang partner for being creative.

Not Getting Your Hand Off Your Chest Early in the Auction

When you don't bid enough early in the auction you often are faced with having to make difficult decisions later in the auction – that never leads to winning bridge! Bid early, bid often, then get out of the way!

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It's the Law

Declarer has five four options...

When we make a face-up opening lead at partner's turn to lead, the Director will be summoned politely and will inform the declarer that he (or she) has five options.

What happens if we make a lead in the middle of the hand at partner's turn to lead and declarer notices *before** playing to the trick? The director is summoned politely and...

Law 56, Defender's Lead Out of Turn

The declarer has four options (divided into two categories):

1. Declarer may accept the lead and play continues (option 1).
2. Declarer may require us to retract the lead and the withdrawn card becomes a major penalty card. Because the lead will now be made by our partner, declarer has three options:
 - a. Require our partner to lead the suit. We return the withdrawn card to our hand and play any legal card to the trick. Even if partner cannot lead the suit, we still return the withdrawn card to our hand.
 - b. Forbid our partner from leading the suit as long as she is on lead. We return the withdrawn card to our hand and play any legal card to the trick.
 - c. Allow the withdrawn card to remain on the table as a major penalty card, to be played at the first legal opportunity. Our partner may lead any card.

*If declarer either calls a card from dummy or plays a card from his own hand, he has accepted the lead and it is considered a correct lead; play continues as if there were no irregularity.



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