

Region 9 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 9 Issue 12 - December 2023



From the Editor

Happy Holidays.

In this month's "It's the Law" that most frequent director call is revisited from a different angle - that of how one might wish to deal with all those options.

Please provide feedback as to whether you would like us to continue including the "It's the Law" section as we move into 2024.

As for the "IN Highlight", this editor looks to you (the reader) to keep things lively by sharing a story of your own. And yes, editing assistance is available.

Lauri Laufman
Editor

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Upcoming Intermediate/Newcomer Tournaments

IN Sectionals

Feb 3-4 Austin Winter NLM
Feb 8-11 BCOH 499er Tournament

Info: [Click Here](#)
Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Early 2024 Regional (with Lots of IN and Gold Rush Opportunities):

Jan 22-28 Houston Lone Star Regional 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 \$4.50 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.



Highlight - Linda Paulette Schiwart & Joe Moore (Unit 201)



Linda Paulette Schiwart and Joe Moore met playing party bridge amidst cocktails and bacon-wrapped shrimp. During the Covid lock-down they played online against pairs from all over the world. A year ago, she decided to take her game to the next level, and signed up for lessons with a professional teacher, Joyce Ryan of Houston. Even though Paulette had never played a hand of duplicate bridge, her teacher suggested she was ready to play in Houston's 2022 Lone Star Regional Tournament. She invited Joe to be her partner. They scored well against seasoned completion. Thus, the beginning of her passion for duplicate.

She has been an active member of the Beaumont Bridge Studio ever since. By attending weekly lessons provided by Nancy Smalley, Paulette continues to hone her game. During that time, Paulette and Joe, her regular tournament partner, have earned red and gold points at every Regional and Sectional they have participated in. During the first two days at the 2023 Lone Star Tournament, they were the only team in a 300+ pair event awarded six of the coveted \$2 bills for first place finishes.

Back in the spring of 2022, after only a few weeks of duplicate, Paulette and Joe scored a 70% plus round finishing first in a national completion comparing the scores of over 2500 pairs! In the *District 16 2022 Helen Shanbrom Ace of Clubs Awards*, Paulette scored 3rd in her flight.

"Trust but verify" is Paulette's and Joe's motto, especially playing at tournaments against strangers. Suspicious after her opponent transmitted the hand results without letting her verify the score in the 2023 Lone Star Regional Tournament, she alerted the tournament director. Sure enough, 2 of 4 hands had erroneous entries. Though this is rare, it does happen. Please do not be afraid to call the director if you suspect something is amiss.

Better Bridge Habits

Practice, Practice, Practice

Looking for the ability to hone your declarer play skills?

If so, take advantage of a program called Bridge Master! Thanks to BBO, Bridge Master is now available for free on both the BBO app (click on Practice) and ACBL's website (click on Play Bridge).

There are 5 levels of play from Beginner to World Class and many hands with which to play in each level. The hands provided come with instructional solutions when you find yourself wanting some guidance along the way.

If you haven't yet, do check it out and let me know what you think.

Eddie Kantar's Tip

When discarding, keep four-card length parity with dummy.

Say dummy has a four-card suit (AKQ8), and you have the (9432). Your highest card is higher than dummy's lowest card, the signal to hang on to that suit for dear life.

www.kantarbridge.com

Improved 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 that seems to occur frequently:

A K 10 9
x x x x

We can maximize our chances of 3 tricks by leading a small card towards the 10. If that wins or our left-hand opponent rises with the Queen or Jack, we have our 3 tricks. If it loses to the Queen or Jack, then cash the A. The probability of taking 3 tricks is 90%.

Demon Defense

Strategy at Trick 2

by Larry Cohen

The big decision/choice on defense (after you've won the first trick) is whether to be aggressive or passive at trick 2. Should you bang down an ace and make a high-risk, attacking play? Or, should you just get out of your own way and let declarer do their own dirty work. Usually, the latter approach is best, but there are many exceptions.

If dummy has a side suit that might be a source of discards for declarer, that suggests aggression. If declarer might be trumping in dummy, that suggests a trump switch. If there is no reason to suspect dummy has anything of value, it is usually right to make a safe/passive play at trick 2.

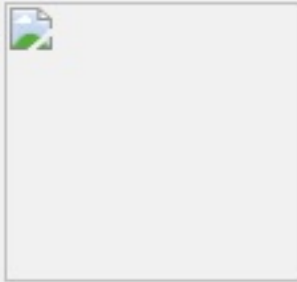
The first of five "trick 2" decision problems is presented below with a link to the answer as well as to the other 4 quiz questions/answers.

South (your LHO) opens 1♠. After North (dummy's) bid 3♠, South goes to 4♠.

Partner leads the ♣2 (Standard).

Dummy plays low and you (East) win your ♣Q (cheaper of touching).

What do you play at Trick 2?

<u>NORTH (dummy)</u> ♠ J654 ♥ Q65 ♦ A42 ♣ A65	
	<u>EAST (you)</u> ♠ K108 ♥ A72 ♦ 10986 ♣ KQ4

Choose One:

(1) ♠8

(2) ♥A

(3) ♥2

(4) ♦10

(5) ♣K

(6) ♣4

[Click here](#) for the answer as well as to test yourself on the other 4 quiz questions.

www.larryco.com

Better Bidding

Plan Your Rebid

You hold:

S - K9

H - AJ984

D - A97

C - KQ6

What is your bid? In his CD on Conventions, Mike Lawrence writes, "1NT is the correct bid. The problem with 1H is that if your partner bids 1S you will be hurting for a rebid. Over a 1S response, 1NT shows 12-14 HCP and 2NT shows 18-19 HCP. Both bids are flawed. To jump to 3H, you need a 6-card suit."

The rebid issue is why more and more players are opening 1NT with hands that have a 5-card major if

they have 15-17 HCP. It is hard to show this range of high card points with a balanced hand if you do not open 1NT.

www.michaelslawrence.com

It's The Law

Faced Opening Lead Out of Turn

You Have Five Options...

Most of us like having options. We like to consider them, weigh them, run them by others for input and generally noodle through them before making a decision. However, the five options presented by a director at the bridge table can occasionally be overwhelming. These options are presented to us, as declarer, when our RHO has placed, face-up, the first card to be played in the hand. This situation is governed by Law 54, Faced Opening Lead Out of Turn.

At this point, the best thing to do is to call the director who will present us with the five options. We may:

1. Accept the lead and see the dummy before we play from our hand.
2. Accept the lead and become the dummy. Partner will play the hand.
3. Refuse the lead and require your LHO to lead that suit.
4. Refuse the lead and forbid your LHO from leading that suit for as long as he is on lead.
5. Allow LHO to lead anything; the card originally led by RHO remains on the table as a major penalty card.

While we could opt for any of these, which is best? The answer, obviously, depends on the card led and what we know about our hand and partner's. We might want to think about the following:

- What do we know about RHO's holding in the suit led? Is the card led the top of an honor sequence, a fourth-best, top of nothing or something else?
- If we have a weak holding in that suit, we might want to refuse the lead and require LHO to lead something other than RHO's suit. On the other hand, if we hold AQ in that suit, perhaps we want to refuse the lead and require LHO to lead that suit right into our AQ.
- If partner's hand is stronger than ours, it may be better for him to play the hand, keeping his hand hidden. The only way to have partner play the hand is to accept the lead and then elect to become the dummy.

Other things to know:

- If RHO led out of turn because a player from our side informed him that it was his lead, the card is retracted and there is no further rectification.
- If we, as declarer, play to the trick from our hand, we have accepted the lead.
- If we, thinking we are dummy, begin to spread our hand, we have become the dummy.
- If we refuse the lead and require LHO to lead the suit, RHO can play any card in that suit. He is not required to play the card that he led originally.
- Assume we refuse the lead and require LHO to lead the suit originally led by RHO. If RHO is void in that suit, there is no further rectification.
- Assume we have elected option 5, to treat the card as a major penalty card. While the card is on the table, we will have options 3-5 available to us every time LHO leads.

