

## March 2017 ACBL Bulletin Bridge Notes

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**Page 12, Eddie Wold** article, third paragraph: “You can only get as good as the people you play with and against. You have to have access to those kinds of people to improve your game.” These are words to live by. I’ve always been grateful that the best player at the club I played in was my regular partner (four times per week) for years. We also frequently got to play against one particularly good pair that made me pay attention.

**Page 18**, both auctions: East passed with 11 HCP and two aces (including an A J 10). It’s customary to downgrade flat hands a point, making this a 10 point hand. And when you don’t have the spade suit, you will often be outbid. There are those who open all 11 point hands – especially in third seat. But on this deal, two world-class players chose to pass.

**Page 32-33**, Column 3, last paragraph: When looking at equal honors in dummy, like QJ, the standard play is not to cover the first time an honor is played but wait until the second one is led. There are exceptions. But in the deal shown, by waiting to cover the second honor, it prevents declarer from setting up the whole suit.

### **The Bidding Box (p. 37 – 39)**

#### **Introduction**

Shi and Palmer (World-class players) open all 11 HCP hands. Levitina and Sanborn (World-class players) open 11 HCP hands with controls (typically aces and kings).

#### **Problem 4**

The 2 NT is the Jacoby 2 NT bid showing an opener, typically flat with at least four-card trump support. The 3C response shows shortness: singleton or void.

The **Bridge Bulletin** auction advocates opening the six-card diamond suit instead of the five-card spade suit. Standard bidding advocates opening your longest suit first. Sometimes you will have problem showing a five-card major later – especially if you don’t have the strength to reverse – about 17 HCP, depending on distribution.

### **It’s Your Call (p. 41 – 43)**

#### **Problem 2**

With North opening 1D and then jumping to 3D (showing 16-18 HCP and a good six-card diamond suit), several panelists (Korbel, Robinson, Cohen, Colchamiro) all envision similar hands for North and explore for the diamond slam. The South hand has four very good cards (AK of spades, J of diamonds and A of clubs). Trump support and 3 quick tricks are enough to look for slam. Slow-developing tricks (queens and jacks) are not particularly useful.

### **Problem 3**

Those who bid 2D are using that as an artificial bid, It does not show diamonds. 2D is fourth suit forcing (either for one round or to game based on partnership agreement).

### **Problem 5**

South's CQ and CJ are in front of the club bidder. Although they are still worth something, they are not worth what they would have been if clubs hadn't been bid by the opponent behind you. Colchamiro, Donn and Lawrence make this point.

#### **Page 44, Alder**

- Column 1, second paragraph: The two basic techniques for reducing your losers when playing a trump contract is to ruff them in the hand with the shorter trumps (the long trumps are usually good anyway) or to discard them on winners in the other hand
- Column 2, second paragraph: Ruff high when you can afford to do so. Avoid over ruffs, especially if you see that the opponent's carding makes them likely. Ask about their signaling.

#### **Page 45, Shafer**

- First paragraph: A new suit by responder is forcing as long as neither partner has bid notrump and responder is not a passed hand.
- Column 2, bottom - Column 3, top: Plan your play before you play to trick one. Plan to set up your fifth diamond before you cash all your high spades. If you cash all your high spades first, they will win the third diamond trick and cash their SJ to set your contract.

#### **Page 46, Harrington**

- Column 1, second paragraph, Two-level overcalls (in the direct seat) show close to an opening hand. But in the balancing seat, you need to protect partner's hand. So after an opening bid, followed by two passes, if you have 8+ hcp you normally need to bid – balance. That's often called "borrowing a king" (three points) from partner. When partner responds to your balancing bid he should subtract the three points when he bids.
- Column 1, bottom - Column 2, top: Take out doubles in the direct seat require shortness in the opponent's bid suit, an opener, and support for the other three suits (this last requirement can be relaxed if you have a strong enough hand – approximately 16 HCP).

#### **Page 47, Berg**

- Column 1, second paragraph: You can overcall at the two level over your opponent's weak two-bid with any opener. To bid over a pre-emptive bid that causes you to bid at the three-level shows a good 14 point hand.
- Column 1, fourth and fifth paragraphs: You should not pre-empt a pre-empt. Don't bid over a pre-empt to go down. If you make a jump bid over a pre-empt, you are showing a good 6 card suit with 16+ HCP.

- Column 2, fourth paragraph: In the balancing seat, push to balance over a pre-empt. Borrow a king.
- Column 2, fifth paragraph: Bidding 2N over a weak two-bid shows a strong notrump (15-17 HCP) with the opponent's suit well-stopped (typically 1 ½+ times).
- Column 3, third paragraph: When you have long trumps on defense and another long suit, lead your other long suit – not trumps (unless your trumps are so strong that you can pull declarer's trumps). The idea being to make declarer trump so he loses control of the hand and goes down – hopefully a lot.

#### **Page 48, Helms**

- Column 2, first paragraph: East must bid 1N. This is not a great bid with the singleton A of diamonds and both major only half stopped (East needs help in both major to have them stopped even once). However, bidding 2C shows at least 10 points (and maybe more if you're playing 2/1 over a minor). Lying in a major is treacherous. Supporting with a singleton Ace is likely to get you a new partner. That leaves 1N, the least bad alternative.
- Column 3, first paragraph: Now East must pass, as East still can't bid at the two-level, and now East can't bid notrump without a spade stop. West should realize that if South passes that East likely has values and must reopen – don't pass it out.

#### **Page 49-50, Cohen**

- Page 49, Column 1, first paragraph: Cohen recommends you pass with 5-3-3-2 distribution and 11 HCP.
- Page 49, Column 1, second paragraph: With 12+ HCP and a five-card major, you should open. Many (not all) players open all 12 HCP hands.
- Page 49, Column 2, second paragraph: With 5-3-3-2 with a five-card major, usually open 1N, or you will be stuck for a rebid on your second call. There is no second bid that will describe your hand.
- Page 49, Column 2, third paragraph: With a good 17 HCP hand and a five-card major, you could add a point for the fifth card and treat this hand as an 18 point hand, planning a rebid of 2N (18-19 HCP). I would do the same if I had a decent five-card minor and 17 HCP; treat it as 18. The fifth card in a suit is usually more valuable than an unsupported jack somewhere else.
- Page 49, Column 3, top: With 5-3-3-2 and 20-21 points, open 2N.
- Page 50, first paragraph. In fourth seat open the bidding using the rule of 15: if your HCP plus the number of spades is equal to or greater than 15, open the hand. You can do this because you are not going to be outbid most of the time.

### Page 51, Lawrence

- This is a Swiss team deal. In IMPS scoring do not risk your contract to make an overtrick. In match point scoring (pairs) if the overtrick is highly likely and you're in a routine contract, you should take a small risk to make the overtrick. Here, after the spade lead, there are eight tricks for sure, and nine if the clubs split 4-2 or better. So, the proper play is to play two rounds of clubs ending in dummy. If both opponents follow to two rounds, then you have nine tricks and you should just take them. If the clubs don't split 4-2 or better (and only if they don't), then you should take the heart finesse to try for your ninth trick.
- Column 3, Postmortem: East has a clear opener even though East has only 10 hcp. East has nice shape and suit quality. Non vul with three spades, West has an easy raise to 3S.

### Page 52, Kantar

- Deal 1.
  - Although some play 2H as super negative, and some play it as a 5 card heart suit with two of the top three honors. In Kantar's recent columns it's a positive bid with 5 reasonable hearts but does not require two of the top three. After a 2C opener, a positive heart response, and an agreement on hearts as trumps, there is no reason to jump and preempt partner. Just cue bid the DA.
  - Partner should bid 6 NT in match points because it scores 10 points better than 6H. Don't bid a 50% grand slam on a finesse of a king (in this case clubs).
- Last paragraph of the column. When you are bidding, play partner for the middle of his bidding, not the absolute worst thing that can happen.

### Page 55, Boehm

- Column 1, third paragraph: When the fourth suit is bid, it is generally asking partner to bid notrump if he has that suit stopped.
- Column 2, top: Try to envision partner's hand and how your hand fits with it. The last paragraph of the article states how super-fits are more important than combined point count.

### Page 57, Bergen

- Column 1, third paragraph: Jacks are the most overrated honor card. They are particularly overrated in suit contracts.
- Column 2, hand 1: Aces are worth more than 4 points. Hands without Aces should be downgraded a point. This hand with poor intermediate cards should be passed.
- Hand 3: Three aces and a king with an ace, great intermediates. Worth bidding 4S.
- Column 3, first bullet: Three aces are worth more than 12 HCP.

### Page 58, Walker

- When you've identified a good final contract, just bid it. Don't continue to bid and tax partner and help the defense.
- Column 3, second paragraph: Before inviting, construct likely hands for partner and decide if it's worth making the invitation.

**Page 59, Kantar**, deal 1: This is another strip and end-play deal. Eliminate everything but diamonds and then throw West in so he has to lead from his DK.

**Page 60, Lawrence**, Postmortem: Despite having 11 HCP and a five-card suit, East should pass, especially in first position. Good players plan their second bid before making their first. East is stuck for a reasonable second bid if partner bids 1S. In this hand partner doesn't have spades, but the odds are he will when you have only one. Aces (high cards in general) are worth more in long suits than short suits.

### **Rank Advancements (beginning on page 67)**

- Linda Brodie: Life Master (page 67)
- Ned Earl: Life Master (page 67)
- Gene Levy: Life Master (page 67)  
Bronze Life Master (page 81)
- Cheryl Mathias: Life Master (page 67)
- Pamela Whitney: Life Master (page 67)
- Jere Hines: Gold Life Master (page 68)
- Linda Sutton: Gold Life Master (page 69)
- Puddn' Krueger: Ruby Life Master (page 69)
- Joan Torrance: Ruby Life Master (page 69)
- Judy Brown: Silver Life Master (page 69)
- Courtney Coffman: Silver Life Master (page 69)
- Donna Frederick: Silver Life Master (page 69)
- Sheila Harrison: Silver Life Master (page 69)
- Susan Barker: Bronze Life Master (page 69)
- Lisa Zummo: Bronze Life Master (page 81)