

## May 2017 ACBL Bridge Bulletin Notes

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**Page 28, Editor's Picks**, column 3: **Keys to Winning Bridge** by Frank Stewart. Improvements to most bridge players game is best accomplished by learning to declare and play defense well. Creating a sophisticated convention card is of far less importance for most of us.

He also says the same thing that all the really good players (like Bob Hamman and Eddie Wold, say), is that the best way to improve is to play up. Play against the best players you can. It's also nice to have the best partner you can. This has everything to do with what you want out of bridge, if you want to become better you need to be willing to take your lumps from those you can learn from. If your primary goal is to maximize your chance of immediate success, and to maybe socialize, then play against your peers.

**Page 33, Ruling the Game**, column 2, bottom: "it is not correct to Alert bids that do not require one, as that could remind partner about the meaning of his bid."

**Page 35, Top 50 Clubs**: Westside Bridge Academy, 15<sup>th</sup> largest club. BBO ACBL tournaments, dwarf the total of the 50 largest clubs.

### **The Bidding Box (p. 37 – 39)**

#### **Problem 3**

With a big hand (roughly 17+ points) double and then bid your suit to show a big hand. Plan your second bid before making your first.

#### **Problem 6**

**Bridge Bulletin Auction**: this shows the proper responses to the Jacoby 2 NT Convention. The 2N bid shows an opener (or 13 dummy pts) with four cards in partner's major and typically no singleton or void. With a singleton or void, responder would splinter. (Side note: splinters typically have an upper HCP limit, so a very strong responder would bid 2N even with shortness). Opener's rebids show shortness (three-level bid) or another good five-card suit (four-level bid). With a flat-ish hand, opener jumps to game with a weak-ish opener, bids 3N with an intermediate opener (which responder usually puts back in the major by the end of the auction), or bids three of the major with significant extras.

#### **Problem 8**

Dunitz's double is a support double, showing exactly three-card support for partner's hearts. A direct heart raise would show four or more.

### **It's Your Call (p. 40 – 43)**

#### **Problem 1**

Colchamiro: "Stiff aces are usually not good for notrump."

### **Problem 3**

Cohen: just bid your longest suit in response to partner's take out double – 4C. There is little reason to think you can make 3 NT opposite a passed hand.

Rigal is envisioning the layout: partner has a near-opener and support for the unbid suits. He also has a near-opener and the unbid suits. Therefore, EW are getting nearly all of their tricks in diamonds. So he is leading a trump starts to cut down on the ruffs in the short hand.

Meyers, like the others, is planning ahead: if her marginal 3H call gets doubled, she will make an SOS redouble, telling partner to run.

### **Problem 5**

You are short in clubs, making it more likely that partner has a stack. Colchamiro (and a lot of the others) trap passes, giving partner a chance to make a penalty double. Again, Colchamiro is planning his second bid (spades) in case partner does not make a penalty double.

Henneberger likes the flexible and space-saving pass, making the point that bidding in front of partner shows a minimal, shapely opener.

## **Page 44, Alder**

### **First deal**

The key to this deal is to count your tricks; you need to make dummy's long heart good. There are seven hearts out. When there is an odd number of cards out, the suit splits evenly over 60% of the time. So over 60% of the time, the hearts will go 4-3 and your 5<sup>th</sup> heart will be good.

You need all the spade entries, so you must not waste the S2, as you need it to get under the low spades in dummy for the final entry to the long heart.

### **Second deal**

Most of the time you want to be in the "golden fit," 4-4 in a major. Sometimes it's right to ruff your losers (usually in the short trump hand) but sometimes it's better to set up a long suit in dummy. Count your winners and loser both ways when you have a choice before playing to trick one.

## **Page 45, Shafer**

### **Overcalls in a suit**

One-level overcalls require just a good 5 card suit. I play them with as few as 6 HCP. I am asking for that suit to be led. Two-level overcalls require a good five-card suit (used to be that a six-card suit was more common than a five-card suit for this bid) and an opener.

### **Overcall of 1NT**

This bid shows 15-18 HCP (note that Bergen (p. 57) has an exception to this but Billy Miller (p. 63) does not) and a stopper in the opponent's suit. 1 ½ stoppers is better. Overcalling 1N does not promise a stopper in all suits.

You must pass if you don't have a hand with a suitable overcall, or that meets the criteria for a 1N bid, or meets the criteria for a take out double (at least 3 cards in each of the unbid suits). You always open with opening strength but sometimes you can't overcall with opening strength. You need a reliable partner to protect you in the balancing seat.

### Pass is *not* a four-letter word

Let the opponents play if they are playing in your good suit. Look to compete if the opponents are bidding your short suit when you have a good suit of your own.

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

Column 1, third paragraph: count a point for every card past the fourth card you have in a decent suit as a point; add those points to your HCP when deciding to open.

Column 2, hand 1: this has 18 points when you add a point for the fifth club. Too strong for 1N open. Bid 1C planning to bid 2N showing 18-19 points on your next bid. NOTE: a 1N rebid opposite a passing partner shows 18-19 points. So if partner passes and the opponents bid, you can bid 1N to show 18-19.

Hand 2: this hand also has a five-card suit. Judgement is needed in bridge. This suit requires too much help to set up so do not add a point for the fifth club.

Column 3, second paragraph: aces are under-valued and queens and jacks are over-valued.

#### **Page 49, Cohen**

Column 1, third paragraph: opening 3N with a balanced 25-27 HCP has the advantage of keeping things simple, but the disadvantage of not having the extra room that a 2C opener provides.

Column 2, third paragraph: in general, even with a great suit, you should have at least two aces and two kings when you make a strong 2C bid.

Column 3, last paragraph: do not open three suited hands 2C. They are nearly impossible to describe after the 2C opener.

#### **Page 51, Lawrence**

Column 3, second paragraph: when partner doubles hearts, he is likely to have four spades but it is not guaranteed. In general, it's safer to bid a major as opposed to a minor when responding to a take out double.

Column 3, third paragraph: envision possible hands that partner might have for his take-out double. By doing this, you can see that partner is likely to ruff almost all your little hearts, and when those are gone, you have very few losers. Using loser count, you will have four: one spade, one diamond, and two clubs. Partner should cover most of those.

#### **Page 54 Boehm**

Column 2, first paragraph: if you have decided that you are willing to bid 5D over 3S, do it immediately to put maximum pressure on the opponents. Note the benefits of visualizing partner's hand that led you to the 5D decision.

Column 3, first paragraph: on double-fit deals (you have two suits with fits with partner), it is far better to declare than defend. The deal in column 3 is an example of a double fit for North/South, diamonds and clubs. Both make.

### **Page 55, Cohen**

Column 1, second paragraph: when you can provide additional information that might be useful to partner without causing confusion, make the extra bid to do it. Here the 4C bid does just that.

Column 2, last paragraph: despite the fact that the South hand has 21 HCP, the fourth club can't be set up unless South is careful with his entries. The diamond king must be preserved as an entry to make this hand.

### **Page 57, Bergen**

Column 1, fourth paragraph: honors in long suits are worth more than honors in short suits.

Column 2, bottom – Column 3, top: in contrast to Shafer and Billy Miller, when not vulnerable, Bergen strongly recommends that a 1N overcall be in the 14-17 HCP range.

Column 3, third paragraph, he recommends that a 1N bid is allowable even when overcalling an opponent's minor without a stopper in that minor.

**Page 59 Kantar, Test Your Play, problem 1:** when playing in IMPs (teams), it is important to play safely and make your contract. Do not risk the contract for overtricks. Accordingly play this hand so you'll make it even if clubs split 4-1. Cash one high trump, give them a trump trick and you're home. At match points it's important to make overtricks, even if it means risking your contract when the odds are with you.

**Page 60, Lawrence:** this is another deal where you need to envision partner's hand. Bottom of Column 1: with the 2D opener being raised to 5D, and you having three diamonds, you should expect partner to be ruffing at least two of your three losing diamonds. The prudent bid is 6S, as it is likely to make and further exploration is probably pointless.

### **Page 62, Stewart**

South's hand in Column 1 presents the difficult choice between opening it 1H or 1N. If it's opened 1H and partner bids 1S (likely, as there are 11 spades that South can't see), South has a difficult rebid. If South rebids 1N, that shows 11-14, which doesn't describe this nice 15 HCP hand. I would open it a heart, and then rebid 2H over 1S. This isn't great, as partner will be inclined to think I have six hearts. Sometimes rebidding five-card major is better than the alternative.

Stewart chose to open it 1N to avoid that situation. What he risked was a transfer to spades. He was unlucky as that is just what happened. So he got to play in a 5-2 spade fit instead of a 5-3 heart fit.

**Page 63, Miller**

Column 1, response: "It is standard that a 1 NT overcall's range is 15-18 HCP..." Which is true except when you're non vul and following Bergen's advice (p. 57).

Column 2, second paragraph: when you double a suit for takeout and later double the same suit, it is still for takeout.

Column 3, last paragraph: over new minor forcing, bid the other major first with four of them. If partner has four, you will play in the 4-4 golden fit; if not, after partner bids no trump, correct to four of partner's major.

**It's Your Call, Top Scores for March** (page 80-81)

- **Jack and Jeannette Dean:** 490 (p. 80)
- **Jeff Kroll:** 490 (p. 81). 500 would have been better.