

District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

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From the Editor

Of Movie Stars, Bridge and Romance

Joseph Frank Keaton, known professionally as Buster Keaton (1895-1966), was an American comic actor and film maker. He was best known for his silent films, in which his trademark was physical comedy with a consistently stoic, deadpan expression, earning him the nickname “The Great Stone Face.” Buster played bridge all his life and met his wife Eleanor thanks to this hobby.

Eleanor, 18 years of age and a dancer at MGM, was keen to learn how to play bridge. She was taken to a house “where they played bridge every day and there was a good teacher.” The house was Buster Keaton's and he was her good teacher. It was several months before a romance began and all because Eleanor shouted in response to heckling by a fellow card player, Buster looked up from his cards and really noticed her for the first time.

Nearly two years after they first met, Eleanor asked Buster to marry her, and on May 29, 1940 they were wed. Buster was 44 and she was 21. None of their friends thought it would last and they actually tried to talk her out of marrying him. Luckily they didn’t and Buster and Eleanor were happily married for nearly 26 years.

Courtesy of *greatbridgelinks.com*

Carol Jewett, Editor

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Upcoming Tournaments and Events

Regionals:

San Antonio June 30-July 6 [Info](#)

Sectionals:

- D16 Royal STaC - Apr 14-20 [Info](#)
- Spring (Houston) 499er - Apr 24-26 [Info](#)
- Dallas - Apr 30-May 3 [Info](#)
- Austin May 1-4 [Info](#)
- Dallas May 2-3 [Info](#)
- Fort Worth May 16-18 [Info](#)
- Austin 0-50 May 17-18 [Info](#)
- Houston June 6-8 [Info](#)
- Midland June 6-8 [Info](#)
- Georgetown June 7-8 [Info](#)
- Austin NLM June 7-8
- District 16 STaC June 9-15 [Info](#)
- Spring (Houston) 499er June 19-22 [Info](#)

Events:

- District 16 Zoom Spanish Lecture - Third Saturday of Each Month at 12:30 p.m.
- District 16 Zoom I/N Lecture - Fourth Saturday of Each Month at Noon

Dallas GNT Flights B&C May 2-3 [Info](#)
0-100 masterpoint games every day at 6:00 p.m.
0-200 masterpoint games every day at 6:00 p.m.

For Information on Other Tournaments in General for District 16, [click here](#).
♠♥♦♣

KUDOs

On March 18, during the Rockport Duplicate Club’s bridge game, Unit 187 presented Terry Spang, Rockport, with the District Star Award. This annual award honors unit volunteers who work steadfastly at the unit level to promote bridge, and to further unit activities.
Also honored were Unit President Mary Anne Wilkinson, Corpus Christi, and Anita Moore, Aransas Pass, recipients of District 16 Unit Goodwill Awards. The Goodwill Award recognizes and honors District 16 players who exhibit a spirit of courtesy, kindness and tact at the bridge table. These individuals are our ambassadors of goodwill to all players. Congratulations to these worthy appointments!



The Bidding Commandments

At the ACBL District 16 Regional Tournament in Houston in 2022, Gary King gave a presentation on the bridge 10 Commandments for bidding, play and defense. Here is an abridged and edited version of his commandments on bidding:

“The Bridge 10 Commandments on Bidding”
By
Gary King

1 - Understand and Remember Your Job - If you are the opener you are the crew and your job is describer. All of your bids tell a story about your hand. Opener follows the priorities and instructions of responder. If you are the responder

then you are the captain. Your bids do not show, instead they set priorities, ask questions, and give instructions. Captain is trying to answer only two questions. What level? (partscore, game, slam) What denomination? (trump fit or no-trump). I estimate 50% of bidding errors are a result of one or both players forgetting their job.

2 - Correctly Evaluate the Distribution - The key to accurate bidding is proper evaluation. When you first look at a bridge hand the length method is used. The hand strength is the high card points (HCP) plus one point for every fifth card or longer. Count all the high cards including queens and jacks and even if they are singleton. At the moment in the auction that you become aware that the partnership has a major suit fit you switch to using the shortness method. This is true for both players, opener and responder. The shortness method awards 5 points for a void, 3 points for a singleton, and 1 point for a doubleton. You can use one method or the other but not both at the same time. Switching to the shortness method will never decrease the value of your hand.

3 - Trust the Point Count - As captain, add the value of your hand to the known range of opener’s strength to determine the level question. If you are assured of 25+ points together bid game either in the known fit or no- trump. If the values are short of 25 then retreat to the best part score available.

4 - Finding a Fit is the Secret - When it comes to the denomination question, it is a search for an eight-card fit. With eight cards together you have a 3 card advantage over the number held by the opposition. Holding a nine-card fit you have a 5 card advantage. The greater the fit the more aggressive you can be in close decisions. Hands with a fit in two suits often play above the predicted potential. Hands that are misfits often play below the predicted potential.

5 - It Is All About the Major Suits - When it comes to the denomination question it is a search for an eight-card major suit fit. Once that possibility has been eliminated then other contracts can be considered. Opener starts with 1♥ or 1♠ holding a five-card suit or greater. Responder responds with 1♥ or 1♠ on only a four-card suit or longer.

6 - Notrump is Always Plan B -If the hand is a part score then a fit in any suit (clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades) is preferred over notrump. If the hand is a game hand, then any major suit fit first and notrump second. If the hand is slam hand then any fit (clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades) is first choice and notrump second. Notrump is always Plan B There are more ways to take tricks or dispose of losers in a trump contract than in a notrump contract. More ways translates directly into more tricks and greater success.

7 - Responder’s Bids Do Not Show - Responder’s bids are all designed to gather the information needed to answer the two questions. As an example, opener starts with 1♣ and responder bids 1♥. Responder is not “showing” four hearts. Instead the mind set should be that responder is setting the highest priority for opener to confirm a heart fit if one exists. In the example, opener would need four hearts to confirm a fit. If opener fails to confirm a fit then responder will proceed on the basis that opener cannot hold more than three hearts. The crew’s job is to follow orders.

8 - Forcing, Invitational, and Signoff Only Apply to Responder’s Bids - A new suit by responder is forcing. A bid of a previously bid suit is invitational by responder. Bids of 1NT and 2NT are invitational. Game level bids are signoffs or a choice of game contracts.

9 - Follow the Balanced Hand Ladder - Opener has a bidding plan for every balanced hand. The only reason not to follow through is the discovery of a major suit fit.

- 12-14 HCP - open 1 of a suit and rebid NT
- 15-17 HCP - open 1NT
- 18-19 HCP - open 1 of a suit and jump rebid NT
- 20-21 HCP - open 2NT
- 22-23 HCP - open 2♣ and rebid 2NT
- 24-25 HCP - open 3NT
- 26-27 HCP - open 2♣ and rebid 3NT where is that last

10 - Follow Partnership Agreements Religiously - Follow your agreements to the letter. If you and partner have agreed to have two of the top three honors when you open a weak two-bid, then have them. If you are dealt ♠KJ10964 ♥7♦865 ♣QJ6 and you want to open 2♠, I understand the desire to open a weak two-bid, but you must stay disciplined. After the hand you can discuss with partner the idea of changing the agreement, but while the agreement exists, stick to it. Anything else erodes partnership trust and confidence.

Eddie Kantar Hand Analysis

The hand:

♠98
♥4
♦K10943
♣A10865

♠K102
♥Q1087
♦862
♣K32

♠AQJ75
♥653
♦Q7
♣QJ9

♠643
♥AKJ92
♦AJ5
♣74

The bidding:

West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♥
2♠	Dbl	Pass	3♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The lead: ♠2

Bidding Commentary

The key bid is *North's* double. After an overall (2♥), followed by support (2♠), double by fourth hand is for takeout (called a Responsive Double). Typically it shows 5-5 in the unbid suits with approximately and 7-10 high card points. Responsive Doubles are a great way to enter the bidding without committing to either suit. *South* bids 3♦, supporting partner's known long diamond suit.

Defensive Commentary

The best defense is to start with three rounds of spades, forcing dummy (the longer trump hand) to ruff. Both declarer and the defenders should count declarer's losers (and tricks) from the viewpoint of the long trump hand.

Play Commentary

After the third spade is ruffed in the dummy, a club is ducked as an entry conservation play. Say *East* wins and returns a heart. Declarer wins, crosses to the ♣A and ruffs a club with the ♦J. Had declarer played the ♣A and a club earlier, instead of ducking a club, he would now have to get back to the dummy in another suit to ruff a club. After clubs break politely, declarer plays ♦A and a diamond. If declarer finesses, he loses to the doubleton queen, but still has nine tricks.

Summary

It is important to be able to enter the bidding intelligently after the opponents have found a fit, particularly at the two level. If the opponents have an eight card fit, your side is also likely to have one and if the opponents have a nine card fit, your side must have at least one 8 card fit. Responsive doubles, used after the opponents have supported each other, cater to these numbers.

Material from Chalk Talk by Eddie Kantar, American Contract Bridge League *Bridge Bulletin*, April 2011.
Eddie Kantar's Tips
<http://kantarbridge.com/>

Hold Up Plays

It is vital to understand that it is not always necessary to try to win a trick; sometimes it is critical to *not* win a trick. When playing notrump contracts, the defense will usually lead their longest suit as they are trying to establish the extra cards in that suit as winners later in the hand. We often cannot prevent this, however, we often *can* prevent an entry to that hand so that they can be cashed. This is the essence of hold up play. We allow the defenders to win the first one or two tricks in the suit they have led in order to prevent them from winning the fourth and fifth cards in that suit later in the hand. We must be patient and allow the communications between the defenders' hands to be cut.

The Rule of Seven

Generally, but not always, we are trying to prevent a defender who started with five cards in a suit from getting back on lead. If that is the case, you can use the Rule of 7 to decide how long to hold up if you have only one stopper. The formula: (number of rounds to hold up) = 7 minus number of cards between declarer and dummy). In the example above, the declarer and dummy have five cards, so we should hold up twice if we can. (7-5) = 2. Sometimes, you will even hold up if you have two stoppers. With AKx opposite two small, it is often right to let the opponents have the first trick in order to slow them down later. You can even hold up when you don't have the ace (or ace-king). With Kxx, if the suit is led to your RHO who wins the ace and returns the suit, the formula above still applies. If you have AQx, and the opening lead goes to your RHO's king, it may be right to duck even this! The ace and queen are worth two tricks in the suit; they don't have to be the first two tricks. By studying this technique, and by watching what happens when you hold up (or fail to hold up), you take another step towards understanding how the pros bring in all those great results. It isn't magic; anyone can learn these techniques, even your partner.

♠AQ6

♥A72

♦A106

♣A753

♠10872

♥QJ10

♦Q85

♣986

♠J95

♥K9543

♦72

♣K104

♠K43

♥86

♦KJ943

♣QJ2

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

Auction Commentary

Opener opens 1♣, the longer minor. Responder bids up the line 1♦. Opener rebids 2NT to show an 18-19 HCP balanced hand. Responder, with 10 HCP, adds the two hands together and gets to game in notrump.

Play of the Hand

Opening Lead: ♥4, fourth best from an unbid major with length. It's notrump, so let's count sure winners: 3 spades, 1 heart, 2 diamonds and just 1 club. Two more tricks are needed to fulfill the contract, and that diamond suit offers the best chance. It is mandatory to *hold up* playing the the ♥A until the third round. Use the Rule of 7 when you only have the ace as a stopper in the suit. Add the hearts from the N/S hands together, and subtract from 7 (7-5=2) ... you need to duck the ♥A twice. This is done to sever communication between the two opponents. Then play the ♦A and then ♦10 and *duck* it! As long as the RHO gets the lead they cannot get back to partner.

It's The Law

Everyone does it at least once or so – makes a bid that he or she then wants to change. Law 25 of the laws of duplicate bridge describes the rules regarding changes of a player's bid. In determining what, if any action may or must be permitted, the director focuses on two issues:

- Why the bid was made.
- What bidding, if any, has taken place after it was made.

Unintended Bid

Generally, a player is only permitted to change a bid without penalty if it was an “unintended” bid. When using bidding boxes the term “unintended” describes only a bid that was made as a result of a slip of the fingers in terms of pulling a bid from the box. In the case of spoken bidding it means a slip of the tongue. Therefore, a bid is not an “unintended” bid that is potentially subject to change without penalty if it results from a “slip of the mind or a lapse of concentration” and it's certainly is not an “unintended” bid that is subject to change without penalty if it was made intentionally and knowingly and the bidder has simply decided that another bid is preferable.

Change With/Without Penalty

Assuming that a player's bid was, in fact “unintended” within the meaning of the law described above, it may be changed without penalty as long as the player's partner has not made a bid. If, however, the bidding player's LHO has made any call, then he or she may change his or her bid without penalty. If he or she does so, the information arising from that withdrawn bid is authorized information for his or her partner, but not for his or her opponents. If a player has made an “unintended” bid, it must stand without change once he or his partner has made a bid.

If a player makes a bid that does not fit the definition of “unintended,” a correction is not allowed.

From time to time a player will attempt a purposeful correction of an intended bid without (or before) calling the director to rule on the situation. If this occurs the director will give the player's LHO the option of accepting the second bid or not. If the second bid is not accepted, the original bid stands, and there may be lead penalties imposed by the director. The rules regarding unauthorized information will be applicable regarding the canceled bid.

American Contract Bridge League *Laws of Duplicate Bridge*, Law 25; Duplicate Decisions, A Club Directors Guide for Ruling at the Table, as revised September 2020.