

District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 10 Issue 9 - September 2024



From the Editor

Of a King and Bridge

King Edward VII of Great Britain (Queen Victoria's son) enjoyed playing the game of bridge and especially enjoyed it when he could play with his very special friend the Honorable Mrs. Alice Keppel as his partner. Contemporary accounts suggest that the king was regarded as a mediocre bridge player whereas Mrs. Keppel was considered to be excellent at playing the game. Then, as now, this mismatch could lead to errors on the part of one player and exasperation on the part of the other:

"After dinner, usually, a few rubbers of bridge were played. The king was very keen on bridge, and though he played only moderately well, he could criticize mistakes. He was frequently an unlucky card-holder and thus was delighted if he won. If the cards were really bad he lost interest in the game and made mistakes. Once, after he had complained that his partners always selected cheap suits without giving him the opportunity of announcing something better, his partner, the Hon. Mrs. Keppel, left it to him to make trumps. He glanced at his cards and said, "I do not know what you will say to it, but I make No trumps." When he put down his cards (being "dummy") there was not a single trick in his hand. Mrs. Keppel, whose cards were equally bad and saw that her opponents would make a grand slam, at once replied, "All I can say sire is: God save the King and preserve Mrs. Keppel."

Sir Felix Samson's Memoirs as quoted in *King Edward VII: A Biography, V. 2*; Lee, Sir Sidney; McMillan Company (1927).

Note: The early form of bridge being played by the king and Mrs. Keppel did not involve a competitive auction to determine the nature and level of bid at which a hand would be played. Rather, the dealer or, failing a declaration by the dealer, the dealer's partner would designate that a given hand would be played with an identified suit as trumps or with no trumps based only upon an examination of his or her hand.

Carol Jewett, Editor

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Upcoming Tournaments and Events

Regional:

Ajijic (Mexico) - Sept. 24-29

Galveston - Oct. 25-27

(I/N Regional)

[View Tournament Flyer](#)

[View Information](#)

Sectionals:

Spring (Houston) - Sept. 19-22

Austin - Sept. 19-22

Beaumont - Sept. 26-28

Dist. 16 STaC - Sept. 30 - Oct. 6

Fort Worth - Oct. 8-10

[View Tournament Flyer](#)

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Austin - Oct. 12-13
San Antonio - Oct. 16-19
Galveston - Oct. 25-27
Galveston (Cruise) - Oct. 27-Nov. 3
Denton - Oct. 31-Nov. 2

[View Tournament Flyer](#)
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Event:

District 16 Zoom Lecture

[Lecture](#)

"Bridge Ethics"

September 28 at 12.00 Noon

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

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣



Bridge Math

In a perfect world, you would be able to make your suit contracts using trump cards only and you would be able to make your notrump contracts by taking the necessary number of tricks off the top. Usually, however, to make your suit contracts you need to find a trick or so in the non-trump suits and to make your no trump contracts, you need to develop a trick or so by promoting cards into winners in a suit or suits. Aces virtually always take tricks, so what we are talking about here is generating tricks with kings, queens, and sometimes (rarely) jacks. Moreover, we are talking about doing this using short card combinations because in a suit contract, the predominance of the trump suit means that the other three suits likely will be short suit combinations and in a notrump contract the generally balanced nature of the hands means that at least two of the suits will likely be in short suit combinations. Four card suit combinations divided 2/2 without an ace or a king/queen combination resolve to two possibilities in terms of generating tricks:

Kx
xx

Lead low towards the king and play it if your LHO does not play the ace. This is a 50% possibility for one trick.

AQ
xx

Lead low towards the AQ and play the Q if your LHO does not play the king. This is a 50% possibility for taking a trick with the queen.

Some five card combinations are essentially the same as the above:

Kxx
xx

Again, lead low toward the king.

AQx
xx

Again, lead low toward the AQ.

Qx
Axx

The ace is an automatic trick. Before you cash it, lead low towards the queen. You will take two tricks if your LHO has the king.

Consider these two holdings and assume you are the declarer playing them. In each case, you hold five cards in the suit facing a singleton.

AKQ10
x

AKJ10
x

In one hand you are missing the jack and in the other hand you are missing the queen. In both hands, your choice is either to play for the drop or to finesse the missing card. In each hand, your better play in terms of the odds for picking up that one additional trick is to play the finesse.

Puppet Stayman Over 1NT

One of the very first bidding conventions that new bridge players learn is the Stayman convention which the responder to a NT opener uses to ask the NT opener if he or she has a four card major. In its most basic form, the Stayman convention is used by the responder of a NT opener who has a four card holding in one or both major suits and has either a game going hand of 10 or more points or an invitational hand of eight or nine points. The theory is that if the NT opener has a four card major that matches with a four card major held by that responder, the play of a contract in that major might be preferable to the play of a contract in NT. So the basic Stayman convention ferrets out a 4/4 fit in a major between the two players. But what if the two players have an eight card fit in a major which is split 5/3? At a tournament in 2019, Robert Morris gave the following presentation on a convention that enables the responder to a NT opener to check out the 5/3 fit possibility in terms of a major suit fit.

"Puppet Stayman Over a 1 NT Opening

If your partnership occasionally opens 1NT with a five card major, then it will be smart to search for a 5/3 fit in a major. Puppet Stayman is an effective tool to have for that search. It is important to note that your partnership may have to adjust its current methods to include this convention in your convention agreements.

Using Puppet Stayman, a responder's bid of 3♣ over opener's 1NT bid asks if there is a five card major in the opener's hand. The responder's hand must meet these three requirements:

- (1) Have enough strength for game (or more),
- (2) Have at least one three card major and
- (3) Have some anxiety about a final contract of 3NT; i.e. a singleton or weak doubleton in the hand.

The auction proceeds as follows:

	Opener	Responder
	1NT	3♣

3♦ bid by Opener: "I do not have a five card major but I may have a four card major"
3♥ bid by Opener: "I have five hearts"
3♠ bid by Opener: "I have five spades"

Now responder continues as follows:

(1)

	Opener	Responder
	1NT	3♣
	3♦	

3♥ bid by Responder: "I have four spades"
3♠ bid by Responder: "I have four hearts"
3NT bid by Responder: "We will play a 3NT contract - I was only interested in whether you had a five card major"
4♣ bid by Responder: "I have five clubs and am interested in whether we have a slam"
4♦ bid by Responder: "I have five diamonds and am interested in whether we have a slam"
4NT bid ("Quantitative Bid") by Responder: "I have an opening or better NT hand myself and am interested in whether we have a NT slam"

(2)

	Opener	Responder
	1NT	3♣
	3♥	

4♥ bid by Responder: "We have a 5/3 fit in hearts and will play a 4H contract"
3NT bid by Responder: "I was looking to see if you had five spades not five hearts and we will play a 3NT contract"
3♠ artificial bid by Responder: "We have a fit in hearts and I am interested in whether we have a slam"
4♣ bid by Responder: "We do not have a fit in hearts, I have five clubs and I am interested in whether we have a slam"
4♦ bid by Responder: "We do not have a fit in hearts, I have five diamonds and I am interested in whether we have a slam"
4NT Quantitative Bid by Responder: "We do not have a fit in hearts and I am interested in a NT slam"

(3)

	Opener	Responder
	1NT	3♣
	3♠	

4♠ bid by Responder: "We have a 5/3 fit in spades and will play a 4S contract"
3NT bid by Responder: "I was looking to see if you had five hearts not five spades and we will play a 3NT contract"
3♥ artificial bid by Responder: "We have a fit in spades and I am interested in whether we have a slam"
4♣ bid by Responder: "We do not have a fit in spades, I have five clubs and I am interested in whether we have a

slam"
 4 ♦ bid by Responder: "We do not have a fit in spades, I have five diamonds and I am interested in whether we have a slam"
 4NT Quantitative Bid by Responder: "We do not have a fit in spades and I am interested in a

You can use Puppet Stayman over 2NT but would need to adjust the bidding to accommodate the higher bidding levels. If you use Puppet Stayman over 2NT, you cannot use Smolen when the Responder holds 5/4 in the majors. Discuss this with your partner before agreeing to play Puppet Stayman over 2NT.

Doubles Q & A

Test your Bidding

By Eddie Kantar @
<http://kantarbridge.com/>

What is the meaning of the last double in each of the following sequences? Penalty, or takeout?

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	2 ♣	Dbl (?)

Answer: Penalty. Doubles of artificial bids are both penalty and lead directing.

West	North	East	South
1NT	Dbl (?)		

Answer: Penalty. The double of an opening 1NT bid announces a hand that is as good as the opener's hand.

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Dbl	2 ♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl (?)		

Answer: Takeout. North made a takeout double of 1 ♠ on the first round, so his hand couldn't change, but it should show extra values given the level of the second double.

West	North	East	South
4 ♦	Dbl (?)		

Answer: Takeout.

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	Pass	3 ♦	Dbl (?)

Answer: Takeout, showing both majors with at least opening hand strength.

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Dbl	Rdbl	2 ♣
Dbl (?)			

Answer: Penalty. All doubles by the redoubling side are for penalty.

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	Dbl	2 ♥	Dbl (?)

Answer: Takeout. After partner makes a takeout double and responder raises, a double by the fourth hand is called a Responsive Double and it shows two places to play. It is an effort to land in the right suit. South doesn't figure to have spades and should have both minors.

Reprinted from ACBL *Bridge Bulletin* October 2017 p. 53.

Hand of the Month from the ACBL *Bridge Bulletin*
Spade Management

North
♠ AJ83
♥ 86
♦ AQ6
♣ J872

South
♠ Q54
♥ A52
♦ KJ107
♣ A43

Play South, you are in a 3NT contract. West, who was the dealer, opened the bidding with 1♥. Given that hearts are 5-3, how will you make nine tricks after West leads the ♥K?

North
♠ AJ83
♥ 86
♦ AQ6
♣ J872

West
♠ K106
♥ KQJ93
♦ 92
♣ K65

East
♠ 972
♥ 1074
♦ 8543
♣ Q109

South
♠ Q54
♥ A52
♦ KJ107
♣ A43

Dealer: West
Vul: None
Opening Lead: ♥K

Solution: As only 14 high-card points are missing, West is certain to hold the ♠K. Thus, a finesse of dummy's ♠J will give you eight tricks. So, assuming West holds the ♠K, the problem reduces to looking for a ninth trick. One chance is that West holds a singleton or doubleton ♠K. In both cases you will make nine tricks as long as you do not have your ♠Q covered by the king. So what can you do on the layout shown? Well, after holding up the heart ace until the third round and discarding a club from dummy, you make the avoidance play of leading a low spade from hand and covering West's card. When West follows with the ♠6, East takes the ♠8 with the 9. East has no heart to return, so he will surely exit with a low club. After you rise with the ♣A, you will play a second low spade. If West had started with a doubleton ♠K, it would appear and you would have the three spade tricks you need, despite your early finesse of the ♠8. The benefit of the deft play of the ♠8 on the first round of the suit comes about when West began with a tripleton ♠K. Here, after you successfully finesse dummy's ♠J, the ♠K will fall under the ace and dummy's ♠3 will be your ninth trick. This approach gives roughly a 60% chance of making 3NT. No other plan approaches those odds.

It's The Law

The Law Regarding Claims

A claim is made by a player who announces or demonstrates in some manner that he or she will take all or a specified number of the tricks of a hand that remain unplayed at the time the claim is made,. A claim can be made in any of the following ways:

1. A player intentionally shows his or her cards to the three other players' cards without any additional statement.
2. A declarer states that he or she is going to make a specified number of the remaining tricks in a hand without exposing his or her cards.
3. A player exposes his or her cards to the other three players with a statement specifying what line of play he or she will follow from then on. This is the preferred method for claiming.

If there is an immediate concession of the claim, the board is scored and the players move on to the next board. If, however, there is an objection to the claim either the director must be called or play must continue, subject to a number of criteria and including agreement by all players to continue the play. If the Director is summoned after a claim is contested, play immediately ceases and the director must decide who wins the remaining tricks. In ruling on a contested claim or concession, the director adjudicates the result of the board as equitably as possible to both sides, but any doubtful point as to a claim is to be resolved against the claimer.

ACBL Duplicate Decisions, A Club Directors Guide for Rooting at the Table, revised September 2020 at pages 152 and 158.

Common Sense Guides

Here are some common sense guides regarding how to make claims. Although written as if it is the declarer making the claim, remember that the defense is also entitled to make a claim and that the rules would be generally applicable to that situation as well:

- When exposing your hand to make a claim, fan the cards so that they can all be seen and expose the fan well in front of you all at once - do not "play" the cards in the fan or touch them - just place the fan in front of you for all players to see.
- Use this preferred method for claiming, and state your line of play as you expose your cards.
- When claiming a suit contract, you should almost always start with one of two simple declarative sentences: "Trump are all in," or, "I am pulling trump immediately."
- When claiming a notrump contract, be patient. As declarer, you were keeping track of all four suits, but the defenders probably were not and may need a little extra time to satisfy themselves that your cards are all good.
- When claiming a notrump contract, be sure to address transportation if your claim involves taking tricks in both your hand and the dummy.
- As declarer you generally will wait until it is your turn to play to make a claim, but it is permissible to make a claim when the defense is on lead. If you do so, however, your stated line of play needs to address the defense's lead alternatives and how they will be handled in the context of your claim.
- It is permissible to make a claim that includes acknowledging loss of a trick, but if you do so, not only should you acknowledge the loss of the trick, but you should explain clearly why it cannot result in the loss of any other tricks.

