

# District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

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## From the Editor

ACBL District 16 provides all sorts of learning and playing opportunities for just-learned-the-game players, new to duplicate bridge players and developing bridge players of all types. Here are some of the things that are available:

- A 0-50 masterpoint game on BBO every Monday at 4:00 PM
- A 0-100 masterpoint game on BBO every day at 6:00 PM
- A 0-200 masterpoint game on BBO every day at 6:05 PM
- Monthly zoom lessons that are tailored to beginning and intermediate players (in English and in Spanish).

You can find more information about these opportunities and how to take advantage of them at the District 16 website by [clicking here](#).

Carol Jewett, Editor

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## Upcoming Tournaments and Events

### Sectionals

August 3-4	Austin (0-200 MP)	Flyer: <a href="#">Click Here</a>
August 8-11	Houston	Flyer: <a href="#">Click Here</a>
August 15-17	Beaumont (NLM 0-500 MP)	Flyer: <a href="#">Click Here</a>
August 22-24	Tyler	Flyer: <a href="#">Click Here</a>

### Regionals

August 22-24	Tyler (NLM 0-750 MP Regional)	Flyer: <a href="#">Click Here</a>
August 27-Sep 1	Allen(Dallas)	Flyer: <a href="#">Click Here</a>

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



# Bridge Math

## Card Splits and Card Combinations

We all know that the two most common trump suit configurations are eight cards divided either 4/4 or 5/3 between the declarer's hand and the dummy. Did you ever think about the math behind what that likely tells you about the defender's trump holding or how it is best to play your trump suit depending upon how the honor cards which are in the declarer and dummy hands are divided? Here are some things to think about as discussed in Vinh Tran's book [A Quick Guide To Suit Combinations](#):

When the declarer and the dummy have a combined total of eight cards, the opponents have a combined total of five cards. The probabilities for the different splits of those five cards as between the two opponents are:

- For a 0-5 split, the probability is 4%
- For a 1-4 split, the probability is 28%
- For a 3-2 split, the probability is 68%

While it is nice when, as declarer, you are holding all four of the top honor cards in your trump suit, it does not happen that way most of the time. Here are some ways to approach handling different combinations when you are working with an eight card trump suit that is divided 4/4 between the declarer and the dummy.

A Q x x  
x x x x

The main chance of making three tricks is that West has the King and the suit divides 3/2 as the 68% probability suggests. Cashing the Ace and later leading toward the Queen or leading from the South and ducking are both sensible plays.

But the expert play is to lead low from the North planning to finesse the Queen later. East will be tempted to play the King from King - x or even King - x - x. An immediate finesse of the Queen is wrong, losing to a singleton King unnecessarily.

A x x x  
Q J x x

Play the Ace and then lead towards the Queen. You will make three tricks unless West has K x x x or K x x x x. Leading the Queen is an error. If it loses to East king or if West covers, the ten is going to win the third round.

K x x x  
J T x x

You are hoping that the five cards held by the defense will split 3-2 as the probability says they will. So you lead low from the South towards the King in the North, hoping that West has an Ace/Queen doubleton.

# Tournament Talks

## Learning at Tournaments

In addition to giving you an opportunity to play some great bridge and visit fun places, bridge tournaments offer the opportunity to learn from presentations and lectures given by leading players and teachers. In the next few months, this newsletter will feature materials from presentations and lectures given at the 2024 Regional in Houston, Texas so that you those of you who were unable to attend that tournament will be able to share them with both of us who were lucky enough to be in Houston at that tournament.. Here are the materials from Betty Starzec's presentation on "Deception in Declarer Play."

DECEPTION IN DECLARER PLAY  
with  
Betty Starzec

Here are my top five tips which will help you play a hand more deceptively. If you follow these tips, your declarer play should improve and you have the potential to become a feared opponent!

1. PLAY THE CARDS YOU ARE KNOWN TO HOLD.

North

♠ 75  
 West                      East  
 ♠ J983.                      ♠ Q1042  
 South (you)  
 ♠ AK6

Vs. a suit contract, assume West leads ♠3 and East plays the ♠Q, win the trick with the ACE. West may think East has the King and East might think West has the King. If you win the trick with the King, both opponents will know you have the Ace!

Strangely enough, vs. notrump you should win the first trick with the King. At notrump, winning the first trick with the Ace is usually a giveaway that you have at least one more stopper. After all, if your only stopper was the Ace, why didn't you hold up? (Please don't call me if someone plays the Ace and doesn't have another stopper - that was probably a desperation play trying to fool you into thinking they have another stopper!)

North  
 ♠ 543  
 West                      East  
 ♠ Q                      ♠ A1098762  
 South (you)  
 ♠ KJ

East has preempted in spades and West leads the ♠Q against your heart contract. When you see the lead of the Queen, you know that East knows you have the King. However, East does not know you have the Jack. Therefore, when East wins the ♠A, play the KING - the card you are known to hold.

North  
 ♠ 1065  
 West.                      East  
 ♠ 94                      ♠ AK873  
 South (you)  
 ♠ QJ2

East has bid spades and West leads ♠9. This time you are known to hold the Jack and the Queen. When East plays the King and the Ace, you must throw the Jack and Queen. East may now have a problem deciding who has the deuce. There's a saying in bridge - it's all in the small - good players watch the small cards just as carefully as the big ones!

2. WITHHOLD THE LOW SPOT CARDS TO BOTH CONFUSE THE COUNT AND  
 MAKE IT APPEAR THAT THE OPPONENTS ARE SIGNALLING ONE ANOTHER  
 ENCOURAGEMENT, WHEN, IN FACT, THEY ARE NOT.

North  
 ♠ 1053  
 West.                      East  
 ♠ AKJ6                      ♠ 984  
 South (you)  
 ♠ Q72

West leads the ♠A vs. a suit contract. East discourages with the ♠4. (Opponents are playing standard signals.) Sitting South, you KNOW that East is making a discouraging signal since you can see both the deuce and the trey. However, West cannot see the deuce if you don't play it! Play the ♠7 to conceal the deuce! For all West knows, East may be starting a high-low with either the ♠4-♠2 doubleton or ♠Q42.

3. WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, PLAY THE HIGHER OR HIGHEST OF EQUAL CARDS  
 WHEN EITHER TAKING A TRICK, BEING LED THROUGH BY YOUR RIGHT  
 HAND OPPONENT, OR LEADING THE SUIT FROM THE DUMMY TOWARD  
 YOUR HAND.

North  
 ♠ 32  
 West                      East  
 ♠ A10754                      ♠ J98  
 South (you)

♠ KQ6

Vs. notrump, West leads ♠5 and East plays ♠J. Assuming you plan to take the trick, take it with the King. Why? Because when West sees East play the Jack, he knows you have the King, but he doesn't know who has the Queen (East would play the Jack holding both the Queen and the Jack). (This is also an example of play the card you are known to hold.).

North  
♠ 82

West                      East  
♠ 9754.                      ♠ K1083

South (you)  
♠ AQJ

If EAST leads a spade, play the Queen. If you play the Jack and it holds, East will know that you remain with the Ace and the Queen. If you play the Queen, East will not know who has the Jack.

If YOU lead a spade from DUMMY, insert the Queen from you hand, not the Jack, for the same reason.

North  
♠ 72

West.                      East  
♠ A43                      ♠ KJ65

South (you)  
♠ Q1098

This principle extends to lower cards as well. If either you lead the suit from dummy or East leads low, insert the 10 not the 9 or 8. Either of those cards gives away too much information to your opponents. Don't be so kind!

#### 4. MAKE YOUR PLAYS BELIEVABLE.

North  
♠ 43

West.                      East  
S 852                      ♠ 1096

South (you)  
♠ AKQJ7

West leads a low spade against your spade or notrump contract, East playing ♠9. If you win the ♠9 with the Ace, everyone at the table will know you have a solid suit. How could the ♠9 force the Ace? Better to win the trick with the Queen. At least East will think that his partner has led from some honor.

North  
♠ 932

West                      East  
♠ J5                      ♠ A8764

South (you)  
♠ KQ10

West leads the ♠J and East plays the ♠A and returns the suit. Your first play should be the Queen, a card you are known to hold; your second play should be the King. East may wonder who has the ♠10, a card West may still hold. If you show the ♠10, East will know that West started with a doubleton.

North  
♠ K762

West                      East  
♠ 3                      ♠ A9854

South (you)  
♠ QJ10

Vs. a suit contract, West leads an obvious singleton after East has opened the bidding with 1♠. You play low from dummy and East plays the ♠A. Which spade should you play? You must project a spade holding in the West hand where the proper lead is the 3. You should play the Jack - East may be fooled because West would lead the 3 from the ♠Q103. In general, with three equal cards, it is almost always right to play the middle equal when the opponents take the trick.

#### 5. WITH EQUAL SPOT CARDS IN BOTH YOUR HAND AND DUMMY AND EQUAL LENGTH IN BOTH HANDS, PLAY ONE OF THE EQUALS FROM DUMMY - BUT

ONLY IF IT CANNOT COST A TRICK IF THE EQUAL IS COVERED.

North  
♠ 1032  
West East  
♠ Q874 ♠ J65  
South (you)  
♠ AK9

West leads a low spade vs. your notrump contract. You should play the ♠10 from the dummy. Vs. a suit contract when East plays the ♠J, you should win the ♠A. Vs. a notrump contract with East plays the ♠J, win the King.  
The reason you play the ♠10 is to conceal the presence of the 9 in your hand. When West later gets the lead, he will not know who has the ♠9. If you play low from dummy, East will play the Jack, and West will know that you have ♠AK9 from East's failure to play the ♠9, a card he would surely play holding ♠9 with the ♠10 in dummy.

Material from this lesson should be credited in part to Eddie Kantar.

## Eddie Kantar's Tip

When responding to an opening bid with two four-card majors, respond 1H giving partner a chance to bid 1S. If partner doesn't bid 1S, assume partner does not have four spades and bid accordingly.

You hold: S. AJxx H. KQxx D. Jx C. xxx

Here is the bidding:

Partner	You
1D	1H
2C	?

Bid 2NT and limit your hand to 11-12 HCP. Do not bid 2S. Partner does not have four spades and bidding the 'fourth suit' has a special meaning. It is frequently used as an artificial force when no other rebid describes the hand.

[www.kantarbridge.com](http://www.kantarbridge.com)

## ACBL Puzzle Hand

Here is a Puzzle Hand from the Staff of the ACBL Bridge Bulletin

North  
♠ A 10 4  
♥ 10 8 5  
♦ A 7 5  
♣ A 8 7 6  
South (You)  
♠ K Q J 9 3  
♥ A K  
♦ 8 6 4 3

West leads the ♠2 against your four spade contract.. How do you plan to make 10 tricks?

Solution

You have four potential losers in your hand - three diamonds and a club. West's trump lead is the only one that gives you a problem. On any other lead, you would win the ♠9 and play the ♦A and another diamond. On winning the trump return you would play a third diamond. If the suit broke 3-3, your problems would be over. If not, you would ruff your fourth diamond in dummy. However, suppose the full deal is:

	North	
	♠ A 10 4	
	♥ 10 8 5	
	♦ A 7 5	
	♣ A 8 7 6	
West.		East
♠ 8 7 5 2		♠ 6

♥ J 9 6  
♦ Q 9  
♣ K J 10 2

♥ Q 7 4 3 2  
♦ K J 10 2  
♣ Q 5 3

South  
♠ K Q J 9 3  
♥ A K  
♦ 8 6 4 3  
♣ 9 4

You could still try to ruff the fourth diamond in dummy whenever the suit does not split 3-3. You win the spade lead with the nine and continue with ace and another diamond. West wins with the queen and plays a second round of trumps. When you concede a third round of diamonds, East can win with the 10 but will then have no trump to play. Does this mean that you will be able to ruff the fourth diamond after all? No! West will ruff the third round of diamonds and defeat four spades by playing his last trump.

Is there another plan? Yes indeed there is! Instead of trying to ruff one diamond in dummy, you should aim to ruff three of dummy's losers in your own hand. Your first move must be to cash the ace-king of hearts, cross to the ace of clubs and ruff dummy's remaining heart. Next you give up a club trick and win the trump return in dummy and ruff a club in hand. After crossing back to dummy with the ace of diamonds, you ruff dummy's last club. You will now have nine tricks, and dummy's ace of trumps is your 10th trick. You will make four side-suit winners, three trump tricks (the 9, ace and 10) and three high ruffs in the South hand.

## It's The Law

### What Does That Call Mean?

It happens. We make a bid that does not at all reflect what is in our hand. Or we explain partner's bid incorrectly. Or, we explain our agreement as to the meaning of partner's bid, but partner did not really mean what he bid.

These sorts of miscommunications are governed by Law 75. Note that we are not discussing a mechanical error, when we know what we want to bid and inadvertently pull the wrong card.

#### LAW 75 MISTAKEN EXPLANATION OR MISTAKEN CALL

*After a misleading explanation has been given to opponents the responsibilities of the players (and the Director) are as follows:*

##### A. Mistake Causing Unauthorized Information

*Irrespective of whether or not an explanation is a correct statement of partnership agreement, a player, having heard his partner's explanation, knows that his own call has been misinterpreted. This knowledge is unauthorized information (see Law 16A) and the player must carefully avoid taking any advantage from it (see Law 73C); otherwise the Director shall award an adjusted score.*

Sometimes our mistake gives us unauthorized information and we must take care not to use it in any way. Suppose, for example, our RHO opens 1N. We double for penalties, per our system agreement, but partner alerts our bid. When asked, partner explains that we have a long suit. We cannot react to this explanation in any way; we need to carry on as if we had not heard the alert and explanation.

Further assume that LHO passes and partner bids 2♣. We must treat that bid as if partner is choosing to pull our penalty double. Assume that, according to our system, in the auction (1N) - X - (P) - 2♣ the 2♣ bid is natural. If we are on lead, we cannot "know" that partner's 2♣ is actually artificial and that partner might not have any clubs at all. We must play as if we think partner has a club suit.

##### B. Mistaken Explanation

*When the partnership agreement is different from the explanation given, the explanation is an infraction of Law. When this infraction results in damage to the non-offending side, the Director shall award an adjusted score.*

*If a player becomes aware of his own mistake, he must summon the Director before the opening lead is faced (or during the play, if discovered later), and then provide a correction. The player is also permitted to call the Director before the auction ends, but he is under no obligation to do so (see Law 20F4).*

*The player's partner must do nothing to correct the mistaken explanation while the auction continues and if he subsequently becomes a defender, he must call the Director and correct the explanation only after play ends. If the player's partner is to be declarer or dummy, he must, after the final pass, call the Director and then provide a correction.*

