

District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 10 Issue 4 - April 2024



From the Editor

Greetings.

Attending the recent Louisville NABC was a lot of fun. During my short stay, I especially enjoyed attending "Bridge Mania" game night (a story for another time), visiting with several of our Intermediate/Newcomers, and listening to a few of the scheduled celebrity speakers.

Frank Stewart happened to be one of the speakers. A frequent contributor to the ACBL Bridge Bulletin, NABC Daily Bulletin, and syndicated bridge columnist for over 30 years, he has graciously given permission to reproduce his bulletin material. An article regarding declarer play from his "Tips for New Players" follows.

Also included in this issue is material by "two of District 16's own" - past D16 president and ABTA Master Teacher, Betty Starzec, and Grand Life Master, Bob Morris.

Your continued feedback, stories, and suggestions for content are appreciated.

Lauri Laufman
Editor

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Upcoming Intermediate/Newcomer (IN) Tournaments

IN Sectionals

Apr 18 - Apr 21 Bridge Club of Houston 499er Sectional

Apr 20 - Apr 21 Austin Spring 0-200 Sectional

May 10 - May 11 Austin Spring 0-50 Sectional

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Flyer: [Click Here](#)

Regionals

May 13 - May 19 Fort Western Regional Flyer: [Click Here](#)
(Gold Rush Pairs Tues-Sat, Bracketed Team Games Daily)

GNT (Grand National Teams)

May 25-26 District 16 Flight C Qualifier and Finals Flyer: [Click Here](#)
Pre-registration required. See flyer for more information.
(Flight C - non-life master with under 500 MP, as of Aug 6, 2023)
*This event takes place during the Richardson Sectional, flyer [click here](#)

Upcoming Tournaments in General

For District 16, [click here](#).

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

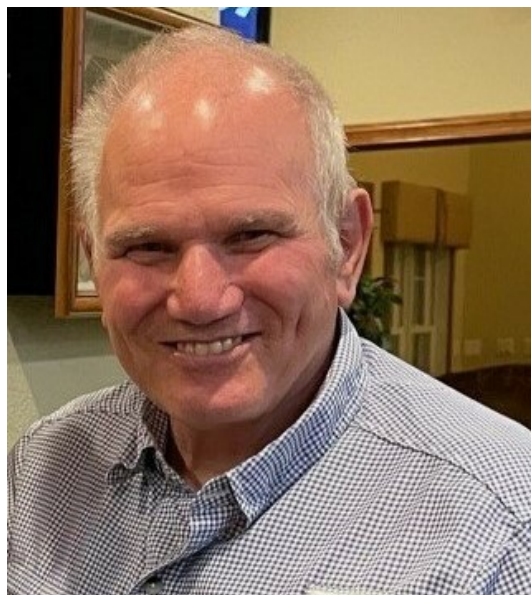
Weekly Online Game for 0-50 Players

District 16 provides a 12-board game on BBO just for players having 0-50 masterpoints for \$4.50 on Monday afternoons at 4:00. A director and assistants will be on hand to offer guidance during the game.

For more information, check out our Frequently Asked Questions [D16 0-50 Game Frequently Asked Questions](#) or email Beginner20Bridge@gmail.com.



Highlighted Player - Mark Reynolds (Unit 225)



A Passion for Bridge: The Story of a Retiree's Success

Written by ChatGPT & edited by Gay Roach

Retirement often opens up new avenues for pursuing hobbies and passions. For one man, retiring from B.F. Goodrich meant diving headfirst into the world of duplicate bridge, where he found not only enjoyment but also remarkable success.

After a fulfilling career, Mark Reynolds decided it was time to explore his love for bridge more deeply. He joined the Nacogdoches Duplicate Bridge Club, a vibrant community of bridge enthusiasts, and began participating in duplicate bridge tournaments regularly.

Despite being relatively new to competitive duplicate bridge, Mark quickly made a name for himself within the club. His strategic acumen and passion for the game were evident in his gameplay, and he soon started achieving impressive results at the club and in tournaments.

Mark's success can be attributed not only to his skill but also to his dedication to honing his craft. He attends bridge workshops, reads books on bridge strategy, and practices regularly with fellow club members. His commitment to improvement has paid off, as he continues to climb the ranks in the ACBL.

Bridge is more than just a game for Mark; it's a source of joy, camaraderie, and intellectual stimulation. Through bridge, he has found a community of like-minded individuals who share his passion, and he looks forward to many more years of playing and competing.

Editor's note: Congrats goes to Mark for having recently surpassed 300 masterpoints.

Better Bridge Habits

On Keeping Score

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. For people new to the game, scoring can be a bit of a mystery. ACBL has a

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/duplicatelite/DuplicateScoringHandout.pdf>

<https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/bridge-scoring-explained-because-you-oughta-know>

<https://www.acbl.org/learn/#scoring>

No matter whether scoring is done with travelers, pick-up slips or electronic devices, each side should verify that the contract and score are entered correctly. A very important part of scoring is to know the vulnerability of the declaring side for the board. A good habit to develop is to note that vulnerability as you place your cards back in the board so you will not have to ask.

Eddie Kantar's Tip

Eddie Kantar is known for his many humorous bridge stories. Here is one that surely emphasizes the fact that even the pros have their "moments".

I have been involved in more than my share of card combination mix-ups.

Here are two of my finest:

North (dummy)
S 10976

West (moi)
S K32

East (Mike Lawrence)
S Q84

South
S AJ5

Defending notrump with declarer having denied a four card major, I elected to lead the deuce of spades. Dummy played low and Mike stuck in the eight losing to declarer's jack. Later, on lead, I decided that declarer might have started with AJ doubleton so I led a second low spade. When declarer played the ten from dummy, Mike played low thinking that I had led from Kxxx and that declarer had AJ doubleton.

Guess what? We didn't take a single spade trick and declarer took four!

North (dummy)
C. K764

West (Paul Soloway)
C QJ2

East (moi)
C A98

South
C 1053

After a convoluted sequence where dummy showed a strong 4-4-4-1 hand, the opponents wound up in 4C. Paul elected to lead the deuce of clubs! Dummy played low and I stuck in the eight losing to the ten. Later on lead, I decided to clear trump and played the ace and another. The end result of this defense was that we were able to take one trump trick with a combined holding of AQJ982 of trump! (At least we didn't have the AQJ987).

www.kantarbridge.com

Declarer Play

Avoiding a problem

Written by Frank Stewart, published in the NABC Daily Bulletin, Vol 64 No 4, March 2024

In some dummy-play problems, one defender will be “dangerous”: if he gains the lead, bad things will happen to declarer. The other defender is “safe”: If he gets in, declarer doesn’t mind. Avoidance is the technique by which declarer tries not to lose a trick to the threatening defender.

Dlr: South	♠ K 6 3
Vul: N-S	♥ 7 5
IMPs	♦ A J 7 4 2
	♣ K 6 4
	♠ A 5 2
	♥ K J 6
	♦ K 5 3
	♣ A 8 7 2

You open 1NT as South, and North raises to 3NT.

West leads the H4, East plays the 10 and your jack wins. West clearly has the HA Q, and because the 3 and 2 are missing, it looks like he led from a five-card suit. If East gets in and returns a heart, you are a favorite to go down.

Your best percentage play in diamonds is a finesse with dummy’s jack. If West held Q-x-x, you could make an overtrick, and at matchpoints, there would be a reason to adopt that play. But you only need nine tricks to make 3NT, so at IMPs, you should avoid the finesse that would lose the contract if it failed. Plan to take the top diamonds. Best is to start with a diamond toward the ace. If West happens to have the singleton queen, you can let it win. (If West is good enough to play the queen from Q-x, more power to him.)

Dlr: North	♠ A Q 10 5 4		
Vul: N-S	♥ 7 6		
IMPs	♦ A K 4		
	♣ 7 6 4		
	♠ K 9		
	♥ K Q 5		
	♦ Q 7 3		
	♣ A J 10 5 3		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

West leads the H4: 6, jack, king. Again, East is dangerous. You are sure of eight tricks: three spades, three diamonds, one heart and one club. Because you need only one extra spade to assure the contract, lead a diamond to dummy and a spade to your 9. To attack the clubs wouldn’t be entirely safe because East might have both the king and queen for a sure entry.

At matchpoints, you would adopt a more aggressive line of play. The contract is “normal” – everybody will be at 3NT – so taking calculated risks for overtricks would be correct.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Frank Stewart's daily column available through Baron Barclay.

Demon Defense

Rules of Signaling

As presented by Robert (Bob) Morris during the 2020 Lone Star Regional

I. Trick 1 signals in suit contracts

- With attitude not clearly known, 1st signal should be attitude.
- With Queen in dummy, encourage if you can ruff 3rd round.
- With xx in dummy, encourage only if you can overruff 3rd round.
- Suit preference situations

1. Dummy has a singleton.
 2. Dummy has all winners in suit led.
 3. Partner may be leading a singleton looking for a ruff.
- E. Count situations
1. Dummy has long suit of partner's lead.
 2. Dummy has 3 small of bid and raised suit.
 3. 5+ level contracts partner leads the King and dummy has the Queen.

II. Trick 1 at notrump contracts

- A. If dummy wins Ace or King, play attitude.
- B. Partner leads Ace, play honor or count.
- C. If dummy wins the Queen or lower, giving count is rarely wrong, i.e. partner leads from Kxxx and you have the J.
- D. Be careful to unblock if necessary.

III. Making accurate signals while following suit

- A. With a long suit in the dummy, always give count to help partner take winner at the appropriate time.
- B. Give count in the side suit if it will help partner defend correctly.
- C. Do not give count if it could help declarer play a key suit correctly.

IV. First discard is most critical signal of the hand

- A. With a clear, appropriate card in the only suit you can help, make an encouraging discard in this suit.
- B. Do not encourage by pitching a possible winner.
- C. When there are only 2 logical suits to play, you can get across your message by discouraging in the suit that you don't like.
- D. With equal holdings in 2 suits, it is often right to discard a discouraging card in the 3rd suit.
- E. Encourage equally with Ace or Queen behind KJ(x) holding in dummy.

IV. Suit preference

- A. When giving partner a ruff, play the card that indicates which suit you want returned. Low card = low suit, high card = high suit.
- B. When partner knows your attitude in a suit and count is not needed, use the opportunity to signal your suit preference in remaining key suits.
- C. With equal spot cards, play suit preference when following suit - even in the trump suit.

Better Bidding

The Match Game

As presented by Betty Starzec during the 2018 Lone Star Regional

Bidding describes two features of your hand to your partner: Strength & Shape.

Every bid you make should tell your partner something about your hand they don't already know and something that is useful for them to know. When you hold a strong hand, it becomes very important for partner to know your shape. Shapely hands are those that are two-suited ...5-6, 6-4, 6-5 and 6-6 are unusual and need to be expressed to partner and even some three-suited hands should be fully described IF your hand is strong.

On the following hands match the hand on the right with Opener's (North) bidding in the auctions on the left.

Note: Answers can be found by scrolling down to the bottom of this newsletter.

	<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>		
1.	1♠ 2♥ 3♠	1NT 2NT	A.	♠AQJ7 ♥J5 ♦QJ103 ♣K93
2.	1♠ 2♥ 3♣	2♣ 2NT	B.	♠AKQx ♥J5 ♦AQ85 ♣K63
3.	1♦ 2NT	1♥	C.	♠AK52 ♥KQ953 ♦5 ♣AQJ
4.	1♦ 1♠	1♥	D.	♠AQ9432 ♥J1073 ♦— ♣AK6
5.	1♥ 3♣	2♦	E.	♠Q43 ♥AKQ107 ♦6 ♣KQJ10
6.	1♥ 2♠ 3♣	2♣ 2NT	F.	♠AQ943 ♥J1073 ♦8 ♣AK6



It's The Law

Tempo, Partner

Law 73 COMMUNICATION, TEMPO AND DECEPTION defines appropriate and inappropriate ways in which partners exchange information. It is divided into five subsections. While most of us understand explicit signals (winking at partner as we bid or play a card, for example), we must also keep in mind subtle and unintentional ways in which we might communicate information.

Law 73A Appropriate Communication between Partners

1. *Communication between partners during the auction and play shall be effected only by means of calls and plays, except as specifically authorized by these laws.*
2. *Calls and plays should be made without undue emphasis, mannerism or inflection, and without undue hesitation or haste. ...*

What does this mean in real life? Law 73A1 is straightforward: we may communicate only through the calls and plays that we make. We may not say to partner that we have 15-17 points and a balanced hand; we must simply place the 1N bidding card on the table and trust that partner knows what that means. Law 73A2 discusses how the calls and plays must be made. Specifically, we may not call partner's attention to any one call or card played over another; each action must be executed in the same manner. So, when partner opens 1NT and we hold five hearts, we may not place our 2D card on the table in any way different from previous bids we have made. Again, we must trust partner to know what 2D means.

Law 73B Inappropriate Communication between Partners

1. *Partners shall not communicate by means such as the manner in which calls or plays are made, extraneous remarks or gestures, questions asked or not asked, or alerts and explanations given or not given.*
2. *The gravest possible offense is for a partnership to exchange information through prearranged*

methods of communication other than those sanctioned by these Laws.

Law 73B defines inappropriate communication; Law 73B2 is possibly the most strongly-worded of all the Laws. It is very clear. Law 73B1 echoes Law 73A2; it discusses the manner in which calls or plays should be made. Law 73B1 specifically refers to “alerts and explanations...not given.” What this means in practice is that when partner opens 1NT and we bid 2D, we cannot remind partner that he is supposed to announce “hearts.” At this time, we do not know if partner has forgotten our agreement and thinks we have a diamond suit or if partner remembers the agreement but has just forgotten that it must be announced. If we end up declaring the contract, before the opening lead is faced, we must inform the opponents of the failure to announce. If we are on the defending side, we inform the opponents at the end of the hand. In either case the opponents have the option of calling the director if they feel they have been damaged by the failure to announce.

Law 73C Player Receives Unauthorized Information from Partner

The gist of Law 73C is that a player may not take advantage of unauthorized information from his partner. For example, assume X and Y are partners. X has declared all the hands declared by their partnership. On the last board, Y opens 1NT and X responds 4D. Y comments that it is just not his day; even when he opens 1NT, X is going to play the hand. While Y’s righthand opponent (RHO) thinks about what to bid, X begins to look meaningfully at Y, to squirm around in his seat and to generally draw attention to himself. By the time the bid comes around to Y, he remembers they play Texas Transfers. However, because of the machinations by X, it is unethical for Y to now bid 4H. Had X sat quietly in his seat, doing nothing, perhaps Y would have remembered on his own and they could have played 4H.

Law 73D Variations in Tempo or Manner

1. *It is desirable, though not always required, for players to maintain steady tempo and unvarying manner. However, players should be particularly careful when variations may work to the benefit of their side. ...*

Law 73D1 is frequently considered when a player hesitates before passing and his partner bids. For example, assume we and we open a club with our 12-14 balanced hand. LHO passes, partner bids a spade, RHO passes, and we raise to 2S.

LHO now bids 3D and partner thinks for a long while before passing. What information do we have? We know that partner had something to think about. He is probably not on a bare minimum for his bid because he did not pass right away. He did not bid 3S, but may have been considering doing so. So, he probably has a maximum for his pass. We are not allowed bid based on the inferences drawn from partner’s hesitation. If we choose to take another call, it must be based on our holding, not on what we think partner is holding. If we bid at this stage, we must “have our bid.”

Law 73D2 forbids players from attempting to mislead opponents by means of the manner in which they play. For example, hesitating before playing a singleton is prohibited.

Law 73E. Deception

1. *A player may appropriately attempt to deceive an opponent through a call or play (so long as the deception is not emphasized by unwonted haste or hesitancy, nor protected by concealed partnership understanding or experience).*
2. *If the Director determines that an innocent player has drawn a false inference from ... [an action] of an opponent who has no demonstrable bridge reason for the action, and who could have been aware, at the time of the action, that it could work to his benefit, the Director shall award an adjusted score.*

Law 73E allows deceptive techniques, such as false-carding, as long as they are used in the course of regular calls and plays. It is the non-bridge activities which are not permitted.

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Better Bidding - Answers

The Match Game answers:

- D – always show hearts, but rebid spades later to show extras
- F – this shows a fragment – playing 3NT is still in the picture
- B – must show your points – play checkback to find out if there is a spade fit
- A – this hand shows spades without extras
- E – shows extras – can bid 2NT with less
- C – over 2♣ by responder, the 2♠ rebid by opener is not a reverse

