

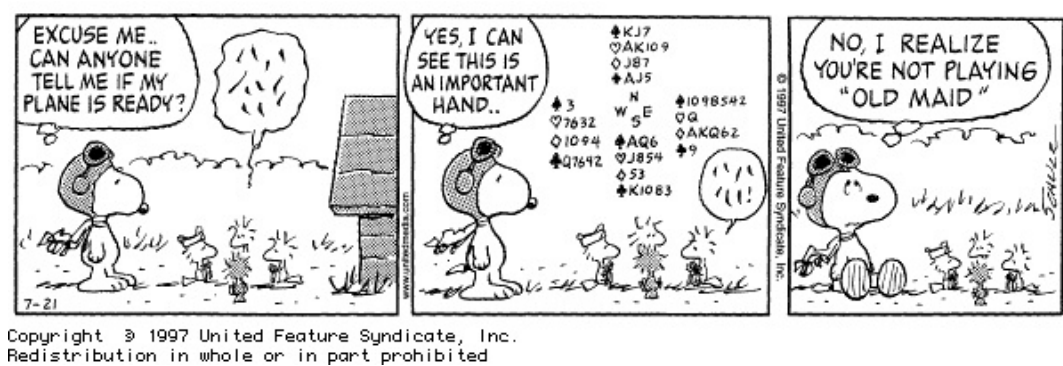
# District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

## Volume 11 Issue 5 - May 2025



### From the Editor

Charles Schulz was a bridge player for many years and, from time to time, he included it in his famous *Peanuts* comic strip:



In the late 1950s, he started a new comic strip just about bridge and the people who played it. The strip (called “It’s Only a Game”) eventually expanded to include other games and leisure activities, but Schulz still made sure to include at least one cartoon each week about bridge. These cartoons have been published in the collection *Bridge Mix: The Bridge Cartoons of Charles M. Schulz*. An example:



Carol Jewett, Editor



### Upcoming Tournaments and Events

- Regionals
- San Antonio June 30-July 6 [Info](#)
- Sectionals
- Fort Worth May 16-18 [Info](#)

Austin 0-50 May 17-18 [Info](#)  
Houston June 6-8 [Info](#)  
Midland June 6-8 [Info](#)  
Georgetown [NLM 0-750] June 7-8 [Info](#)  
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  
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](#).

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣



Bridge Math

Let’s look at how duplicate bridge match point scoring operates to get to the percentages that rank the players in a game. The simplest approach is described by the ACBL in its *Mechanics for Duplicate Clubs with Small Games* at pages 4-6:

“The principle of match point scoring is this: considering only scores made by other pairs on the same board in the same direction, each score is awarded 1/2 match point for each score identical with it and 1 match point for each lower score.” For example (neither side vulnerable):

| N/S Pair | Contract | Made | N/S Score | N/S Match Points |
|----------|----------|------|-----------|------------------|
| 1        | 3D N     | 4    | 130       | 3.5              |
| 2        | 4S S     | -1   | -50       | 1                |
| 3        | 4S S     | 5    | 450       | 6                |
| 4        | 3H E     | 3    | -140      | 0                |
| 5        | 3S S     | 4    | 170       | 5                |
| 6        | 4H E     | -2   | 100       | 2                |
| 7        | 4D N     | 4    | 130       | 3.5              |

The best of the seven N/S scores was made by N/S 3, 4♠ making five for a total of 450. There are six lower N/S scores on the board, so N/S 3 receives 6 match points. The second N/S score is 3♠ making four for a total of 170. There are five lower scores, so 170 earns 5 match points. Next, we find two 130 scores. Each of these receives 1/2 match point for the other 130 with which it is tied and 1 point for each of the three lower scores or a total of 3.5 match points each. Others are rated accordingly until the lowest score obviously gets 0 match points. To check the accuracy of the match pointing, the points are added up and compared against a predetermined check-total. The check-total is always the sum of the digits from one to the highest possible score on that board. In a seven table game, it would be the sum of all the digits from 1 to 6 or 21, and it is noted that the N/S match points in the example do add to 21. The check-total is not changed by the presence of half matchpoints in the column for there must always be an even number of halves. The E/W scores will be the complements of the scores made by their N/S opponents and their respective matchpoints will be determined in the same way as demonstrated above."

Once match points have been allocated for a given board, It is a simple matter of percentage calculations to get to per board percentages for the pairs that played that board and, from there, to their overall game percentages based upon all the boards that they played.

More Commandments From The King

Here is an abridged and edited version of the second set of bridge commandments that Gary King presented at the ACBL District 16 Lone Star Regional Tournament in 2022:

The 10 Commandments  
of Bridge Play  
By  
Gary King

1 - Work the Plan - Before playing a single card from dummy work the plan and decide what your task list includes. In your mind’s voice ask yourself these questions.

No-trump Contract:  
How many winners do I need?  
How many winners do I already have?  
Which suits offer potential to develop new winners? Select the suit/suits to work on and how to play each.

Trump Contract:  
How many losers can I afford?  
How many losers do I have?  
Which losers can be eliminated and how?  
Select the suit/suits to work on and how to play each.

2 - Develop Winners or Eliminate Losers First - Do not mindlessly cash winners. Instead work the plan. Develop your winners or work to dispose of losers as the first priority. Cashing tricks is for the point in the hand when the contract is assured.

3 - Take the Safe Path - Pull trump as early as possible. The longer trumps are left in the defenders' hands the greater the risk. Some hands require a delay until a task, such as trumping in the short-hand, is completed. If so, then back to pulling trump when the task is finished.

4 - Count and Recount Your Tricks - Things change and facts become apparent as the play progresses. At least at the end of each task stop and count winners/losers again. It may provide a fresh perspective. Ask yourself if the current facts and situation require an alteration to the original plan? Perhaps the trump suit or key suit has proven to be very favorable. Does that change the plan? I have seen on many occasions, players take a finesse and go down when they had enough sure winners to make the contract. The game is difficult enough without going down on hands you have already made.

5 - All Focus is Making the Contract - While overtricks are fun they are a distant second in terms of priority. Make the contract first and then go in search of extra tricks if you wish.

6 - Lead Towards Honors - It is much superior to lead towards an honor in the opposite hand then to lead an honor. Often the opponent’s higher honor can be forced without surrendering an honor. Similarly only lead an honor if you want the defense to cover it with a higher honor. This would occur if you had a suit topped by a sequence.

7 - Trump in the Short-Hand - Trumping in the short-hand turns a loser into a winner. Trumping in the long-hand will win the trick but it is not an extra trick. Do you need to use the trumps in the dummy to trump losers? If so, pulling trump might not be a great idea. Do not pull trump and then make a plan. Make a plan first.

8 - Avoid Blocking Suits - Look carefully at the cards in both hands before playing a suit. Get the equal honors played from the short-side first to keep the path clear for all the winners. This includes the trump suit and when working to trap honors by a combination of promotion and finesse.

9 - Consider All the Opportunities - When making a plan for the play do not stop at the first opportunity. Consider all the suits before choosing the one or combination that will give you the best chance. Sometimes two lesser chances taking together is better than a different single chance.

10 - Do Not Win a Trick Until You Know What You Intend to do Next - Many contracts are scuttled because declarer won the first trick in the wrong hand. One way to avoid this is to avoid winning a trick until you know exactly what you intend to play to the next trick. This will assure that whenever possible you are in the right hand to do what you need to do.

## Eddie Kantar Hand

### Bidding with Lousy Hands By Eddie Kantar

One doesn't always pick up good hands. Sometimes one has to make do with one like this:

♠76  
♥K54  
♦J765  
♣10876

You are sitting *South* playing IMPs with both sides vulnerable.  
How would you handle this lovely hand given the following 6 sequences?

|          |       |       |       |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. West  | North | East  | South |
| 1♠       | Dbl   | Pass  | ?     |
| 2. West  | North | East  | South |
| 1♠       | Dbl   | Rdbl  | ?     |
| 3. North | East  | South | West  |
| 1♠       | Dbl   | Pass  | 2♣    |
| Dbl      | Pass  | ?     |       |

|    |                    |         |       |        |
|----|--------------------|---------|-------|--------|
| 4. | North              | East    | South | West   |
|    | 1♣                 | 1♥      | Pass  | 3♥ (1) |
|    | 3♠                 | Pass    | ?     |        |
|    | (1) Preemptive     |         |       |        |
| 5. | North              | East    | South | West   |
|    | 1♥                 | Pass    | Pass  | 1♠     |
|    | 3♦                 | Pass    | ?     |        |
| 6. | West               | North   | East  | South  |
|    | 1NT                | Dbl (1) | Pass  | ?      |
|    | (1) Penalty double |         |       |        |

ANSWERS

- 1. 2♣. It's not for you to reason why, it's for you to do or die. Bid your cheaper four card suit and hope for the best.
- 2. Pass. You are off the hook after the redouble. It is up to partner to rescue himself. Bidding a minor suit at the two level after a redouble suggests a 5 card suit, exceptionally a strong four carder.
- 3. 2♦. Partner's double is for takeout and you are taking it out. Bridge is a simple game.
- 4. 4♣. The other choice is 5♣, a bid you might make if your king were in another suit, any other suit. Partner figures to have 10 or 11 black cards with more clubs than spades (possibly 5-5) and there are no words to describe a "pass" at this point.
- 5. 4♥. Having passed partner's 1♥ opening bid, you could hardly have more. Besides, there is a double fit - always good for taking mucho tricks offensively. Go for it!
- 6. Pass. Your partner has announced a hand as strong or stronger than the opening bidder. Believe it or not, you have nothing to be ashamed of. Your side probably has as many or HCP than they do and partner is on lead. If you remove partner's penalty double of one notrump, you announce a weak hand with a five or six card suit.

ACBL Lesson on Overalls

What Is the Purpose of an Overcall?

The main purpose of an overcall is lead-directing, promising in first and second seats at least two of the top three honors. In third seat anything goes! Secondly, overcalls take away the opponent’s bidding space, making it harder for them to communicate. Hopefully, we can buy the contract, intending, either to make it, or to effectively sacrifice, getting a better score than just letting them play their contract.

What Do You Need to Overcall?

An overcall indicates a good suit, two of the top three or three of the top five honors (e.g., AQjxx or KJ109x), and 6-17 high card points (HCP). You must have suit quality! There are many different overcalls:

- Weak Jump Overcalls (Weak Two or Weak Three overcall)
- Strong Jump which is Invitational over a weak opening
- Two-suited overcalls such as Unusual 2NT or Michaels cuebid

Determining How High You Can Overcall

It’s all about the *suit quality*! Add up the length of the suit you wish to bid, plus the number of honors in the suit. If it adds up to 7, you have enough to overcall at the one-level. If it adds up to 8, you have enough to overcall at the two-level. If it adds up to 9, you can bid at the three-level, etc.

How to Overcall with a Stronger Hand

With 18+ points, start with a Takeout Double. Then override whatever partner’s advance by bidding your own suit. This shows a long, strong suit and a hand that badly wants to be in game! If you have 19 or more, no long suit, and no stopper in opener’s suit, and want to be in game after the double, cue-bid the opener’s suit asking for a stopper in that suit for 3NT.

|          |        |          |       |
|----------|--------|----------|-------|
|          |        | ♠ AQ1075 |       |
|          |        | ♥ J86    |       |
|          |        | ♦ 85     |       |
|          |        | ♣ KJ8    |       |
| ♠ 43     |        | ♠ J96    |       |
| ♥ Q107   |        | ♥ 953    |       |
| ♦ AK1092 |        | ♦ QJ4    |       |
| ♣ A95    |        | ♣ 10642  |       |
|          |        | ♠ K82    |       |
|          |        | ♥ AK42   |       |
|          |        | ♦ 763    |       |
|          |        | ♣ Q73    |       |
| West     | North. | East     | South |
| 1♦       | 1♠     | Pass     | 2♦    |
| Pass     | 2♠     | Pass     | Pass  |
| Pass     |        |          |       |

Opening Lead: ♦ Q (partner’s suit)



**Auction Commentary:** Responder does not have enough in HCP to speak. The advancer has too much for a simple raise to 2♠, and a jump to 3♠ would be preemptive with 4-card support. Therefore, when holding two or more defensive tricks we cue-bid\* the opener’s suit. This is an artificial bid that promises at least 3-card support for partner, and at least a “limit raise” in value. It asks about the strength of the overcall, offering up the possibility of game if finding a fit means *North* overcalled with the equivalent of around 15 points. Overcaller rebids the suit to show a minimum hand. It’s up to the advancer now, in case there is more than a limit raise, because *North* is now done bidding.

\*This cuebid is standard treatment, and is not alertable.

**Planning the Play:** In a suit contract, declarer must first count the losers. The contract is 2♠, so declarer can afford to lose five tricks. Losers are 1 heart trick, 2 diamond tricks, and a club. To avoid a trump loser, they must break 3-2 in the opponents’ hands. To avoid losing to ♠Jxxx, or to avoid an overruff by *East* with the ♠J (if *West* had six diamonds), when a third diamond is played declarer must discard a heart from his hand. It’s going to be a loser anyway. Now *West* can’t lead still another diamond lest he give declarer a “ruff and a sluff,” which usually gives declarer an extra trick! Exchanging a “loser on a loser” is great!

**Takeaway:** A “loser on loser” is a declarer play made typically in a trump contract. It’s made where instead of ruffing, the declarer discards a loser card, (one that is bound to be given up anyway), on an opponent’s winner. It substitutes one loser for another, to keep trump control.

Material From ACBL Community Games Bridge Lessons, September 26, 2023.

# It's The Law

Someone dropped or played a card before or during the bidding auction. What now? It seems like such a simple question and the reason it creates a problem is such a simple concept: the exposed card provides unauthorized information. But look at all the variables that can be applicable to affect the situation one way or the other:

- who dropped the card?
- at what point did it happen?
- how did it come to be dropped/exposed?
- who saw it
- does it matter if the person who exposed or dropped the card becomes the declarer as opposed to a defender?

A card can be exposed and therefore create unauthorized information before the bidding auction begins as might happen if it drops from a board when the board is being passed to the table or as when a player accidentally drops a card while removing his or her hand from the board or while sorting his hand. When this happens, ACBL law 16 D applies such that no one at the table may choose a call or play that is demonstrably suggested over another by the unauthorized information provided by the exposed card if an alternative call or play is a logical alternative. The exposed card will not, however, become a penalty card for anyone.

If, however, the bidding auction has begun and during the auction a card is exposed because of player error during the auction, the director will require that the card be placed face up on the table until the auction ends. The information disclosed by the exposed card is authorized for the non-offending side but unauthorized for the offending side and:

- If it is a single card below the rank of an honor and was simply dropped as opposed to prematurely led, there is no further corrective action
- If it is a single card of honor, rank, or was prematurely led, the offending player's partner must pass at his next call in the auction
- If it is two or more cards of any nature, the offending player's partner must pass at his next call in the auction
- If at the conclusion of the auction, the offending player is to become a defender, every exposed card becomes a penalty card for purposes of play of the hand

ACBL Laws 16 and 24; ACBL, *A Club Director's Guide for Ruling at the Table*, September 2020 at pages 64 and 65.

