

THE DECLARER

September, 2012

President's Message

Kent White

I have just returned from the 78th All Western Regional Bridge Tournament held August 28 to September 3.

The most important item to report is that Joanne Mitchell earned her Life Master Gold Card playing in a knockout event with Bill Witte as her partner. Congratulations, Joanne.

The National Tournament Committee met on Friday, August 31. We were informed that some nights at the Marriott are sold out. If you are planning to attend, now is the time to finalize your plans and make hotel reservations

ACBL has arranged for overflow space at the same nightly rate of \$149.00 at three first class hotels, The Parc 55 Wyndham, The Pickwick and The Powell. Go to ACBL.org and click on the SF Logo and then on housing.

My report was well received at the meeting. I still need friends who are planning to attend the tournament to step forward and volunteer an hour of their time to help with registration. Please contact me at www.helpkentregister.wordpress.com if you can help. Volunteers have access to their own hospitality room where they can have breakfast or lunch on the day they volunteer.

We were given flyers to distribute to our "Under 300" players which lists all the games in which they can participate along with the daily speakers. The list of speakers includes Audrey Grant, Billy Miller, Eddie Kantar and Mike Flader (Ruling the game writer) among others.

The District 21 Board met on Sunday, September 2. We were advised that the 2013 Monterey Regional which is being held at the Portola Hotel at the wharf is receiving heavy bookings. The room rate is only \$109.00 per night with free parking. Parking fees will be charged if you stay elsewhere. Many of our players attend the Monterey tournament each year. Book now. You can always cancel if your plans change.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Pat Lewis

Well, I've been traveling again. Or as I like to think about it: giving my partners a break. So, away from the bridge table, my mind does

wander. On any trip I am entertained by people-watching, observing regional differences, and drawing my own conclusions about fellow humanity.

My latest observations give you an idea of the lengths my mind goes to try to see the trip through new eyes. First, the younger generation does not care how they dress for plane flights. Do they know nylon gym shorts will disintegrate if they exit via the slide in an emergency?

I stop to admire a multitasking mom with two children. Her generation has large biceps thanks to hauling infant seats and huge, yet safe, carseats. My arms were weak, but then all I had to do was yell, "Get in the car!" How my two survived is still a mystery.

My eyes turn to the fast walking, pin-striped, yuppies walking purposefully, intent on their I phones. They are always hauling computers and the Wall Street Journal. You can almost sense their pride, their importance to get to some meeting on time. I hope they are not the men who use the Alibi website to have someone document faux travel while they actually have a tryst.

I sit in front of two pre-teens who are restless (ie. kicking my seat). They have traveled to see their Dad this summer, and now are on their way home to mom and the start of school. I endure the kicking, knowing they are bored and growing longer legs as we fly.

Then there are the many couples of our age. They find strength in holding hands and staying together, through this large airport, as they have for about 50 years. I hope there will always be many of these peers. It means travel is accessible even late in life. And it means there is enjoyment in the comfort of being with someone you long have loved.

So here we all come together, encased in the metal tube, all of us part of the cargo of Flight 789. What do we share on this common journey? For me it is the wish for an undramatic, safe landing, so I might return to the bridge table.

Ode to Elmer

Pat Lewis

We bridge players know our opponents,
That's why each Wednesday we found,
Jean and Elmer with extra card sense,
Players with minds very sound.

Alas, they bid soundly, we reach four and go down,
You never can sell them short,
Propping his cane in a corner, he never will frown,
He smiles, as he wins at his sport.

Elmer's smile, though sly, lights the room,
His gentle ways, we always see.
And yet in his nineties he'd win,
Thus is his bridge legacy!

You can play bridge til you're ninety plus,
You can win, among friends whom you trust.
If you play bridge, though some may tease,
It can help you live long in ease.

So here's to Elmer, our friend,
Who came to the table to win.
A winner by far, no director's call,
His legacy lives, beyond him, for all!

Interference over 1NT Openings

Jim McElfresh

Last month's article outlined methods of coping with interference over 1NT opening bids. Although those techniques are often successful they do not negate the potential positives of such interference. So how do you determine whether you should interfere and, if so, how do you do it?

Should I interfere?

In deciding for or against interference you have to remember that one of your opponents has announced a hand of at least 15 HCP. If the remaining 25 HCP are divided roughly equally then you are facing opponents with somewhere around 22-24 HCP, clearly a majority of the available values. To interfere you are going to have, beyond your own HCP, a hand with shape - distributional values.

Rule of 2 - to determine whether interference should be attempted

1. You must hold 6+ HCP.
2. You subtract your Losing Trick Count (LTC) from the total number of cards contained in your two longest suits. To determine LTC you add the number of Aces, Kings and Queens you are missing in each suit (e.g. AKx=1, KQxx=1, Kxx=2, Qxx=2, AKQx=0, xxx=3).
3. If the result is 2 or more, consider interference. If the results is less than 2, pass.

If the Rule of 2 suggests interference, then what?

There are two conventions which are most often used in our club. The use of either convention is based on shape - A long (minimum 6-card) suit or two 5-card suits.

DONT

1. Double with a single-suited hand.
2. 2C, 2D or 2H shows a hand with the suit bid and a higher ranking suit.
3. 2S shows a hand with 6 spades. You will note that such a hand could be shown by either bidding 2S or 2C. This situation provides the opportunity to differentiate between two hands each with 6-card spade suits with different attributes (solidity, for instance). The partnership should agree on how to handle such a hand.
4. In the event of a pass by opener's partner, the intervener's partner has the following options (your bids are in red):
 - a. Pass with a willingness to play in the suit bid (1N-2D-P-P).
 - b. Bid the next cheapest suit asking partner to bid his other long suit or pass if the suit bid is that suit (1N-2D-P-2H).
 - c. Bid a new suit that is not the cheapest suit showing his own 6-card or strong 5-card suit (1N-2C-P-2H).
 - d. Raise partner's 2C or 2D overcall tends to be preemptive, making it more difficult for opener to re-enter the auction (1N-2H-P-3H).

Hamilton

Hamilton has the same shape requirements (6-card or 2 5-card suits)

1. 2C shows a one-suited hand.
2. 2D shows the majors.
3. 2H shows hearts and a minor
4. 2S shows spades and a minor.
5. 2NT shows both minors.
6. Double is for penalties if the intervener was not a passed hand.

Clearly these 2 conventions are very similar but DONT has the advantage of being able to play in 2C and therefore can be used in both the direct and balancing seat. Because the direct seat has already passed, using Hamilton in the balancing seat has the additional jeopardy being forced play in a suit for which there is no fit or to bid to a higher level than is prudent to find a fit.

Thanks To Our Faithful Volunteers

This month we honor Dick Mensing and Ann Ulrich who lead others who aid them in setting up the room before our games and pack it all up after. We appreciate that they always are there early to get out the table number cards, bidding boxes, and pencils. They pass out the bridge scoring machines, and travelers as needed.

Things just do not appear, and games start on time, automatically. It takes many fellow players to make a smooth start possible. Jim McElfresh and Margaret Riegert assign tables and collect money. Bob

and Caryn Bryans make coffee along with a host of others who do one month each. The boards are all made up via duplimate by John Guyett's committee of people who each spent a Tuesday afternoon each month to duplicate boards for each game day. Then there are those who run the computer on game day to make sure you get your scores in a timely way. These include Bob Koedel, and Jim Prosser.

The Operators, and Directors are always at the game early and leave late giving endlessly of their time for the enjoyment of all. So the next time you see some of these people in the middle of their selfless volunteer work, give them a thank you. And if you wish join them in their efforts to keep this the best club ever.

Special Games

Sep 22 Club Championship
Oct 3 Club Appreciation Game
Oct 17 Club Championship
Oct 19 Club Appreciation Game
Oct 27 Club Appreciation Swiss

The Evolution of a Bridge Player

Pat Lewis

Each month we feature a member or couple from the club. This month we learn about the bridge journey of Ralph and Martha Chatoian. It truly was one journey that they made together, as they have been married for 51 years.

Ralph met Martha on the last day of her one semester at Junior College in Sacramento. His best friend was going with her friend, so they fell into a dating pattern of house parties that summer. Then Martha went off to Cal, and Ralph having completed Junior College went off to San Jose State. Each summer over the next few years, they continued in a comfortable dating pattern.

After college graduation, they planned an April wedding. But just days before the big day, Martha and her mother were in a terrible car accident which left her hospitalized and in arm traction. Ralph rushed to the hospital and Martha's doctor said, "So, you're the groom? You better get yourself another chickie!". Not wanting to do that, the wedding was postponed until August.

And that's where bridge helped pass the healing time. Martha had played with sorority sisters, so she taught Ralph the game. They continued to play bridge after having their children Rick and Darcy. They even played some duplicate bridge in San Rafael, transferring some old points to SCLH when they joined duplicate again. Meanwhile,

it was social bridge at couple's houses while raising kids. Ralph says, "We played a lot of *bad bridge*, but had fun doing it.

They lived in Marin County for 41 years while Ralph worked for the newspaper, the Marin Independent. He wrote a sports column for most of those years. Martha finished her credential and started teaching after the children were in school. She found that Kindergarten was her favorite, probably because of the art involved. Martha is a painter and continues to work on this hobby. After moving to Lincoln they got serious about bridge. Jay and Mona Stryker introduce them to the duplicate club here and helped them learn the new Standard American bidding. Always enjoying their game, they bring smiles to others. Once, as Martha laid down her hand, Ralph remarked that she didn't have enough points to use Stayman. She quipped, "This is Sun City, Mr. Stayman goes out at seven."

They have met a whole circle of friends through bridge. They also share travel, RV camping, and hobbies with some. Ralph plays in a band called "Box-o-Rox" with Jay Stryker on guitar and Vic Albertazzi on accordian.

Ralph plays bongos, washboard, and various percussion instruments. Ask him about his clickers.

You can ask them about travels to Italy, Greece, Armenia, and Alaska. They also travel to Hawaii each Spring because they love to swim. They are often seen swimming laps at the fitness center. It is their favorite form of exercise, besides playing East/West. So greet this happy couple when next they come to your table.

BRIDGE QUOTABLE QUOTES

One advantage of bad bidding is that you get practice at playing atrocious contracts. - Alfred Sheinwold

The sum of all technical knowledge cannot make a master bridge player. - Ely Culbertson

The difference between genius and stupidity at the bridge table is that genius has its limits. - S.J. Simon

Regardless of what sadistic impulses we may harbor, winning bridge means helping partner avoid mistakes. - Frank Stewart

Judy Beck and Kent White Win Close Summer Friday Championship!

Eighteen partnerships competed for the SCLH Duplicate Bridge Club's

2012 summer quarter Friday Championship which was played August 17. Finishes were close as 0.7 percent separated the "A" first and second placers, and a 0.2 percent difference decided the "B" stratum Championship.

The Champions are Judy Beck and Kent White playing East-West. Their winning percentage was 56.94. Barbara Dorf and Alice Brown placed second winning North-South with 56.25%, only 1.5 points behind the Champs.

Finishing in overall third place, and winning the Championships of the "B" and "C" strata, were Wally and Jean Hobson at 53.24% narrowly ahead of fourth placers Margaret Riegert and Dan Scafe at 53.01%.

Results for Friday, August 17, follow:

North-South

A

- 1st Alice Brown-Barbara Dorf
- 2nd Wally & Jean Hobson
- 3rd Margaret Riegert-Rob Scafe

B

- 1st Wally & Jean Hobson
- 2nd Margaret Riegert-Rob Scafe

C

- 1st Wally & Jean Hobson
- 2nd Margaret Riegert-Rob Scafe

East-West

A

- 1st Kent White-Judy Beck—**Summer Friday Club Champions**
- 2nd Squeak Conner-Bob Koedel
- 3rd June Kennedy-Barbara Wheeler

B

- 1st June Kennedy-Barbara Wheeler
- 2nd Dan Rogers-Vince Marek
- 3rd Trudy Harstad-Lynn Puri

C

- 1st Dan Rogers-Vince Marek
- 2nd Trudy Harstad-Lynn Puri

Bridge Trivia Answers

1. A 7-trump suit split 4-3.
2. If the ages of your opponents add to over 160, do not make a mistake of underestimating their abilities.
3. Harold Vanderbilt