

I hope no one wants to see my hand afterwards

You make a bid that is not justified by your hand or your system card, not a little way off but way off. This can happen either unintentionally or on purpose

Accidents that commonly happen

1. You have muddled up your Diamonds in your Hearts and open 3H then realise you only have 5 Hearts with 2 diamonds/
2. There is an Ace hiding behind another card so with the 9pts you can see, you pass
3. You are in a hurry and bid from the curtain card 1 Spade but when you look at your hand, it does not match, it said you were void in Clubs but you are actually void in Spades

In these cases you just made a mistake and you generally have to live with it, as your partner is highly unlikely to guess what is going on, whatever you do.

The other case is where you have made this bid quite intentionally to stop the opposition from finding their optimum contract. This is known as a Psych short for Psychic and pronounced as “syke” to rhyme with spike. These are not outlawed in bridge but since you are deceiving your partner as well as the opposition, things can go badly wrong as well as right.

For example you hold ♠ 3 2 ♥ 8 6 4 2 ♦ 9 3 2 ♣ J 9 6 4 and partner was dealer. After 2 passes it is your turn, so you think what if I bid 3S, that will stop them from finding the right contract. Sometimes you will succeed but other times you will be going 7 off in 3 Spades doubled for 1700!

As long as your partner is unaware of what is going on, there is not a problem but if you do this regularly and your partner guesses that this is one of those bids then there can be trouble.

Your partner cannot respond as if it anything other than what it says on your system card, This would be known as “**fielding a psych**”. So in the case of the 3S above, if your partner has a legitimate raise to 4S then he must make it, he cannot just pass because he knows it is not real bid. Your partner could psych as well in the same auction which is even worse.

Fielding a psych is very serious and viewed very poorly. If you bid a psych then you end up in the Psych Book and if you arrive in that tome, 3 times then that is considered to be part of your system card and partnership and must be on your card and your opponents must be made aware of it. This is a form of cheating if you and your partner are colluding and deceiving your opponents.

Psyches come in three colours, just like traffic lights, green, amber and red.

Red is where the partners have effectively a secret understanding and the psych was fielded.

Amber is where it looks like the partnership may have this type of agreement but it is not certain

Green is where the partner of the “Psych-er” is unaware of the situation and acts accordingly.

Technically an accident like the first examples are green psyches but would not be viewed that way once a reasonable explanation is provided.