



THE KIBITZER

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CONNECTICUT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

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GOOD. BETTER. BEST.

When you find your line of play - explore some more.

by Harold Feldheim

A world chess champion once pointed out, “When I think I’ve found a good move, I sit on my hands and look for a better move.” This winning maxim can be easily applied to bridge.

Consider the following hand.

NORTH

♠ A Q 10 2

♥ 9 7 6 3

♦ 6 5 2

♣ 9 4

SOUTH

♠ K 8 7 6 5 3

♥ A 4

♦ A K J

♣ K 2

Dealer: West

Vulnerability: Both

West	North	East	South
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1 ♦	Pass	Pass	2 ♠
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Pass	4♣	(All Pass)	
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Lead: ♥K

The Auction:

After two passes, South’s jump signaled a strong hand. With excellent support and a useful doubleton, North leapt to game, ending the auction.

The Play:

With nine tricks in view, (six spades, one heart and the A-K of diamonds), South must hunt for a tenth trick. Given West’s opening bid, finessing either minor seemed unlikely to succeed. The answer would be an end-play.

Looking ahead, South began by carefully ducking the opening lead. This was good technique since it precluded the possibility of East gaining the lead with a spot-card and leading through his vulnerable club holding. South won the heart continuation and led a trump to dummy’s ace, East pitching a small club. At trick four, a heart was led, South carefully ruffing with the king, West pitching a club. (Note: two pairs were set by carelessly ruffing low and getting over-ruffed). Continuing to prepare the endplay, he finessed the ♠10 and pulled the last trump. After ruffing dummy’s last heart, he led the A-K of diamonds arriving at the following four-card ending:

NORTH

♠ 2

♥ ---

♦ 6

♣ 9 4

SOUTH

♠ 8

♥ ---

♦ J

♣ K 2

Triumphantly, he exited the ♦J to give West the nasty choice of providing a ruff-sluff or leading a club, either of which would provide the tenth trick. But disaster struck as East, not West, won the ♦Q. A club lead then provided the defense with the setting trick.

Continued on page 2

What’s Inside

Good. Better. Best.	1
<i>Harold Feldheim</i>	
2017-2018 Calendar.	2
The Gadget Master Lebensohl <i>Barry Bragin</i>	3
Being in Heat 1	4
<i>Brett Adler</i>	
Larry’s Little Lessons	5
<i>Larry Lau</i>	
Exclusion Blackwood or Not.	6
<i>Paul Burnham</i>	
Bridge is a Sport.	7
<i>Esther Watstein</i>	
Club News	8
In My Opinion	10
Ask The Expert	10
Achievements, Milestones	12

What’s New

Bridge Matters	11
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Upcoming Events

NYC Regional Dec. 20-26.	2
Tarrytown Regional Jan. 22-28	2
Cromwell Regional Feb 14-19.	2
Winter Sectional March 2-4.	2
199er Sectional May 5	2



GOOD. BETTER.

BEST. *Continued from page 1*

The complete hands:

NORTH

♠ A Q 10 2

♥ 9 7 6 3

6 5 2

♣ 9 4

WEST

♠ J 9 4

♥ K Q

10 8 4 3

♣ A Q 10 8

EAST

♠ ---

♥ J 10 8 5 2

♦ Q 9 7

♣ J 7 6 5 3

SOUTH

♠ K 8 7 6 5 3

♥ A 4

A K J

♣ K 2

South bemoaned his misfortune, "I played the hand just right. To think that a simple diamond finesse would have worked."

"You were unlucky" sympathized partner, "and your technique was great, but you still should have made it."

Do you see it?

Declarer was perfect through trick seven, arriving at the following position.

NORTH

♠ 2

♥ -

6 5 2

♣ 9 4

SOUTH

♠ 8

♥ ---

A K J

♣ K 2

While it was unlikely that East held the ♦Q, it was virtually impossible for him to hold the ♣A since West would need it for opening points. Now South can simply exit a small club. East can win and try a diamond, but master of the situation, South rises with the ace and leads his last club. Now West is well and truly endplayed.

Axiom: When you see a good line of play, look for a better one. As with this hand, a bit of extra of care can reap dividends.



2017 UNIT 126 CALENDAR

Month	Date	Day	Time	Event	Location
December	8	Fri.	Daytime	Unit-wide Championship	Local Clubs
December	13	Wed.	Daytime	Unit-wide Championship	Local Clubs
December	20	Wed.	Evening	ACBL Int'l Fund Game #3	Local Clubs
December	26-30	Mon.-Fri.		New York City Regional	New York, NY

2018 UNIT 126 CALENDAR

Month	Date	Day	Time	Event	Location
January	11	Thurs	Daytime	Unit-wide Championship	Local clubs
January	16	Tues.	Daytime	Unit-wide Championship	Local Clubs
January	22-28	Mon.-Sun.		D3 Tarrytown Regional	Tarrytown
January	23	Tues.	Afternoon	ACBL Junior Fund Game	
January	30	Tues.	Evening	Unit-wide Championship	Local Clubs
February	3	Sat.	Afternoon	ACBL Int'l Fund Game #1	Local Clubs
February	5	Mon.	Daytime	Unit-wide Championship	Local Clubs
February	14-19	Wed.-Mon.		New England Presidential Regional	Cromwell
February	21	Wed.	Afternoon	ACBL wide Charity Game	
March	2-4	Fri.-Sun.		Connecticut Winter Sectional	Orange
March	7-18			ACBL Spring Nationals	Philadelphia
March	19	Mon.	Afternoon	ACBL-wide Senior Game	Local Clubs
March	20-26	Tues.-Mon.		STaC with North Jersey (U106)	Local Clubs
March	28	Wed.	Daytime	Unit-wide Championship	Local Clubs

Key:	Sect/StaC	Regional	Nationals
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Pigment:	Silver	Red, Gold	Red, Gold, Platinum
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Note: GNT and NAOP qualifying rounds pay red points (not gold)

Unit 126 Masterpoint Race After Three Sectionals

September 2, 2017

1	87.11	Richard DeMartino	12	30.04	Ann Hudson
2	64.47	Larry Bausher	13	29.78	Steve Becker
3	39.61	Harold Feldheim	14	29.05	Lloyd Arvedon
4	37.79	Lawrence Lau	15	28.66	Frank Blachowski
5	36.31	Jill Fouad	16	28.60	Paul Miller
6	35.01	Victor King	17	27.56	Jonathan Jankus
7	34.02	Frances Schneider	18	27.27	Bob Gwartzman
8	32.99	Sonja Smith	19	26.24	Glenn Robbins
9	32.17	Steven Huhman	20	24.72	Geoffrey Brod
10	32.17	Joel Goren	Total Masterpoints reported: 714.81		
11	31.24	Michael Wavada	Players selected: 20 out of 653		



THE GADGET MASTER INVOKES LEBENSOL DEFENSE AGAIN



Now you can deal with opponents pesky Weak Twos. by Barry Bragin

“Grandpa wake up.” The kids were tired of playing with their X-Box and wanted to hear more about bridge history. “Grandma said you’ve napped long enough. Last time you told us how 2NT was used to help with constructive auctions after your partner opened 1NT and the opponents overcalled at the 2-level. What about Lebensohl over weak twos?”

“Well kids, you probably don’t remember that weak two bids were popularized by the famous Al Roth when he published his Roth-Stone System in 1953. In the years that followed, everyone moved away from strong two bids to these ‘revolutionary’ preempts. Part of the reason for their popularity was that no one knew how to compete effectively after your opponent opened with a weak two. After your partner doubles opener’s 2♠ bid, how do you distinguish between these two hands you might hold:

♠ x x	or	♠ x x
♥ Q x x x x		♥ A Q x x x
♦ J x x		♦ Q x x
♣ x x x		♣ x x

If you bid 3♥ with both hands, partner better be a good guesser when he has 17 HCP. Finally, someone got the bright idea that by giving up the natural meaning of responder’s 2NT, you could distinguish between the weak (0-7 HCP) and invitational (8-10 HCP) responses.”

Lebensohl Over Weak Two’s

After an opponent opens a weak two-bid and your partner makes a takeout

double, your bid of 2NT is Lebensohl. It says nothing about notrump. It asks partner to bid 3♣. You can then pass, sign off in another suit or make another descriptive bid.

Weak hands (0-7 HCP)

The Lebensohl 2NT is most useful when you have a very weak hand and want to sign off in a suit that is lower in rank than the preemptor’s suit. If your suit is higher in rank than the preemptor’s suit (i.e., LHO opens 2♥ and you have spades), you make your “normal” minimum bid at the 2-level. But, if you would have to go to the 3-level to make a minimum bid in your suit, you start with 2NT to relay partner to 3♣. You can now pass if clubs is your suit, or bid another suit. The auction will go:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
2♠	DBL	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	Pass (or 3♦ or 3♥)

The doubler will accept your relay with any hand of up to about 18 HCP, but he can refuse it if he has a very powerful hand. With a hand that will make game opposite an average of about 4-5 HCP in your hand, he should refuse the relay and make another descriptive bid. If he bids higher than 3♣, it is forcing; you must bid again, even if you are very weak.

Medium-strength hands (8-10 pts.)

If you bid a suit at the 3-level (instead of using the 2NT sequence), it is encouraging, but not forcing. It shows a hand with constructive values, but not enough to jump to game. Doubler can pass with a minimum or bid on with extra values.

You can also use the Lebensohl 2NT

to invite when your suit is higher in rank than the preemptor’s suit. If LHO opens 2♥ and you have spades, you can sign off in 2♠ if you’re weak. If you instead use the Lebensohl 2NT sequence to get to 3♠, it shows invitational values (8-10 HCP). This full auction would be:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
2♥	DBL	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠

If LHO opened 2♦, you can use the sequence to invite in hearts or spades.

Forcing hands (11+ pts.)

The Lebensohl 2NT sequences above all show limited values. If you have forcing-to-game strength, you must either:

- Jump respond at the 3-level
- Cue bid
- Bid 3NT or higher.

Advanced uses of Lebensohl

Lebensohl can be a beneficial addition to your system if you limit it to just the standard treatments above. If you want to adopt some more advanced uses of the convention, you can add special sequences to distinguish between different types of game forcing and slam invitational hands. More information regarding advanced uses of Lebensohl and weak twos may be found at www.bridgebum.com* as well as other sources.

**Editor’s note: “Lebensohl was originally attributed to a successful bridge player in the ’70s named Ken Lebensold. He denied any responsibility though, possibly foreseeing the thousands of Lebensohl bidding accidents to come. The true origin of the strange appellation is therefore unknown.”*





BEING IN HEAT 1

by Brett Adler

Some days it seems you can do nothing wrong.

I recently played in a team event in Warwick, RI and I was on my game all day. Not to say that I played every hand perfectly, but I had one of those rare days when I wasn't haunted by doing anything stupid. Even where I made some minor mistakes, my opponents didn't punish me effectively. There was one hand where I overbid and we got doubled for -500. However, my teammates bid their cold, vulnerable 3NT for +600; so, we still picked up points on the hand. During the day, three hands particularly interested/amused me. I've arranged the seating so that I am sitting South.

Dealer: South

Vulnerability: North - South

Me	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3NT	(All Pass)

Opening lead: ♥Q

NORTH	
♠	K Q 10 5
♥	6 4 2
♦	Q 8 7
♣	K 10 9
SOUTH	
♠	A 6 4
♥	K
♦	A J 5 3 2
♣	A 7 6 4

After a simple Stayman auction where I denied a 4-card major, I had to find nine tricks. I mentioned in the article heading that I was in Heat 1 (as described by Zia Mahmood when everything works). So, of course I won trick one with my singleton K♥.

I immediately led a spade to K♠ to give the opponents every chance to signal their count in the suit. When I led the 10♣ towards my hand, East played the J♣ and I won the A♣. Then I led a club to the K♣ in case there was a miracle and the Q♣J♣ were doubleton.

West showed out on the second club, so now I needed at least 2 diamond tricks and successfully finessed the J♦. The good news is that the finesse worked, but the K♦ didn't drop under the A♦ when both opponents followed to the second round of diamonds. I now needed four spade tricks and, based on East having three diamonds and five clubs, I played West for a four-card spade holding (plus both opponents showed an even number of spades *if their carding could be trusted*). I cashed the A♠ and finessed the 10♠ for +600.

I liked this hand because I was able to try the club and diamond suits and, only when neither suit generated more than two tricks, was I able to correctly play the spade suit. This was a good pickup as they sanely played in a diamond partial at the other table.

The next hand had me thinking about teams versus pairs and how to maximize my chances of making my contract:

Dealer: East

Vulnerability: North-South

Me	West	North	East
			3♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	(All Pass)

Opening lead: ♦3

NORTH	
♠	A J 10 7
♥	A Q 2
♦	6
♣	A K J 10 9
SOUTH	
♠	K Q 4
♥	J 10 8 5
♦	10 5 4
♣	8 5 3

To partner's takeout double, I responded 3♥ and was pleased to be raised to 4♥ as my hand could easily have been worse. East won the K♦ at trick one and continued with the A♦ at trick two.

As East had pre-empted and had at least the top two diamond honors, I thought it likely West had the K♥. Also, on the second diamond, West had played the 7♦; so I knew he had another diamond in his hand. If I ruffed this trick, and ultimately lost a trick to West's K♥, I might go down if West had a four-card heart suit. Therefore, I ducked the second diamond, pitching my lowest club from dummy.

East continued with a third round of diamonds to West's Q♦. I ruffed with the 2♥ in dummy. Now I led the Q♥ from dummy and was surprised to see East win this trick with the K♥ so he or she could lead a fourth round of diamonds.

I ruffed with the A♥ in dummy and crossed to my hand with a top spade to play out my top hearts. I am making my contract if the hearts are 3-3 or they are 4-2 (as long as the 9♥ drops in two rounds). As the hearts were 3-3, we scored up +620.

The next hand was the last board in a late match where all the other results looked to be fairly flat:

Dealer: East

Vulnerability: North-South

Me	West	North	East
			Pass
Pass	Pass	1♦	1♥
1♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♣	(All Pass)		

Opening lead: ♥4

NORTH		EAST	
♠	A J 5	♠	3
♥	10 6	♥	K J 9 8 2
♦	A Q 4 2	♦	K J 10
♣	A K 7 6	♣	J 9 5 4
WEST		SOUTH	
♠	Q 9 7 4	♠	K 10 8 6 2
♥	7 5 4	♥	A Q 3
♦	8 6 3	♦	9 7 5
♣	10 8 2	♣	Q 3

As a passed hand, I was a little aggressive in pushing to slam, but I thought we had at least a nine-card trump fit. For partner to jump to game after East had overcalled in hearts, I envisaged North having a long, running diamond suit.

I'm only missing eleven High Card Points; so I can assume that East has most of them. After a heart lead, I took my two heart tricks and then ruffed a heart in dummy. I now led the A♠, then J♠, hoping East would play the Q♠ giving me an easy path to twelve tricks. Unfortunately, East showed out on the second trump and I let the J♠ run to West's Q♠.

West now led the 3♦ through dummy. In desperation, I played the A♦ thinking East must have the K♦ for his overcall. I crossed to the Q♣ and cashed all my spades, pitching all the diamonds from dummy. For the club/diamond squeeze to work, I need the opponent who has the 4-card (or longer) club suit to also hold the K♦, J♦ and 10♦. Clearly, I must have been in Heat 1 since that was the case. East couldn't protect both clubs and diamonds in the 3-card ending. +1430 was a nice score to bring back to the score-up when our teammates had scored up -650 and assumed this would be a flat board.

I thought this hand interesting, not just because I had executed a Vienna Coup (cashing dummy's A♦ so that the threat card was transferred to my 9♦), but because I needed West to lead a heart or a trump at trick one or I would have had no chance to make the contract. Also, when West wins the Q♣, I can't make the hand if they return a club (it destroys my timing for the Vienna coup). I'm also in trouble if they duck the J♠ and leave me in dummy. Oh well – some days Heat 1 is like that. Although I can't pretend that is my norm. In my next article, I'll be back to my standard Heat 3 style of play and lots of regrets.



LARRY'S LITTLE TIPS

That make a BIG difference.

by Larry Lau

Eddie Kantar, with two world championships and scores of popular bridge books to his credit has given me permission to reprint tips that he uses for his students. In each issue, I will share one tip for bidding, defense and declarer play.

BIDDING

- 1) It is dangerous to count extra points for short suits or long suits before the bidding starts. If partner bids your short suit, that reduces, not increases, the value of your hand. If one of your opponents bids your long suit, that also decreases the value of your hand.

For example, your partner opens 1♥

You hold:

♠ Q 10 9 8

♥ 4

♦ A 9 8

♣ K J 9 8 5

Originally when you looked at your hand, you had 10 HCP, the possibility of extra values in clubs and shortness.

When your partner, bids 1♥, you respond 1♠. If partner then bids 1NT showing 13-14 points, you pass. But if your partner opens 1♠, you have a fit. With 10 HCP and heart shortness giving you 3 points, you can bid game.

Hands that have eight card fits or longer add extra distributional points (5 points for a void, 3 for a singleton and 1 for a doubleton); however, until a fit has been uncovered, distributional points should not be added. It makes sense. Hands that are misfits should be subtracting points, not adding them!

DEFENSE

- 2) When signaling encouragement with equal spot cards, signal with the higher or highest equal. With A 8 5 2, signal with the 8, the highest spot card you hold. With

A 9 8 7, even though the 9 8 7 are equals, signal encouragement with the 9 *denying* the 10. In the second example, if you lazily signal with the 8, you deny the 9. Strong partners watch signals like this and defend accordingly.

DECLARER

- 3) When declaring a notrump hand, count your sure tricks *outside of the suit you plan to establish*. **This tells you how many** tricks you need in your key suit and then play that suit accordingly.

For example:

(a) You	Partner
♠ K 6	♠ Q 8 7 5 4
♥ A J 10 8	♥ Q 3
♦ A K J	♦ Q 10 8 7
♣ 7 4 3 2	♣ A 10

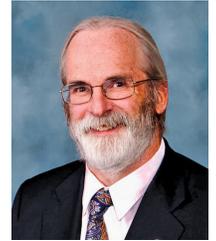
You can count 6 sure tricks - 1 heart, 4 diamonds and 1 club. You need to establish 3 more. ♠3 is led and you win with the ♠K. Which suit is the best suit to try to establish? It might appear to be the spades, but you must lose at least another spade trick to establish the suit and that is risky because the opponents might switch to a club, knocking out your only stopper in clubs. Your best bet is to immediately play the A-K♦ and use your J♦ to get to the Q♦ in the dummy; play the 10♦, discarding a small club. Now lead the ♥Q from dummy. If ♥K doesn't appear, play the ♥8 in your hand. Even if your left-hand opponent covers your ♥Q with the ♥K, you will win with the ♥A. You have established the ♥J and ♥10 as winners. If your ♥Q finesse wins, finesse again. Play the ♥3 from the dummy to the ♥10 and then play the ♥A giving you your 9th trick. If you are lucky, the ♥K might fall under your ♥A, giving you a 10th trick!





EXCLUSION BLACKWOOD OR NOT

When to *include* it and when to *exclude* it.



by Paul Burnham

Blackwood is a great convention. It helps you find makeable slams or, even more important, helps you avoid bad ones. But, Blackwood has one great flaw. It is a “quantitative” asking bid. Partner’s answer tells you the number of aces (or key cards, if you’re playing Roman Blackwood) he or she holds, *but not which ones*. Sometimes that doesn’t matter. But, if you hold a void, it often becomes crucially important to know that partner does not hold a “wasted” ace. Ergo, Exclusion Blackwood, is a “qualitative” bid that requests responder *not* to count an ace in your void. Here’s how it works:

Suppose you deal yourself this hand:

- ♠ A K Q T 4 2
- ♥ Q
- ♦ K Q J T 9 2
- ♣ Void

No doubt you want to declare at least 4♠; 6♠ if your partner has spade support and one red ace, 7♠ if she has spade support and both red aces. How do you find your level?

First, does partner have spade support?

Many of us would open the bidding 2♣, and over partner’s 2♦ waiting bid, bid 2♠. Now if partner shows support by bidding 3♠, you might consider employing Exclusion Blackwood (EB). Since you couldn’t care less what partner’s club holding is, normal Blackwood, or even a common variant of Key Card Blackwood, is not going to help if partner shows one or two aces since you won’t know which ace(s) partner holds. With EB you bid 5♣ - the suit you are *not* interested in. This asks either for aces or keycards (as you and your partner may agree) *in suits other than clubs*. Partner tells you how many such aces (or key cards) she holds, and now you know which of five, six and seven spades is the right contract.

Exclusion Blackwood is triggered by a jump above game in the agreed-upon trump suit in a suit which has not previously been bid naturally. In our example auction 2♣-2♦-2♠-3♠-5♣, then, the agreed-upon trump suit is spades, and the 5♣ bid is a jump over responder’s second bid (3♠).

So far, so good. This, I thought, was so universally understood that at the Toronto Nationals my pickup partner and I happily put EB on our convention card with no further discussion. Our pre-session conversation moved quickly to other matters. The hands where EB comes up are so extraordinarily rare that even experienced partnerships may never have bothered to discuss this convention further than to make sure both agree with the above, if even that.

Alas, my partner finds herself with the above hand (almost). She held the ♣Q, not the ♥Q. She was missing the ♦K, not the ♦A. Both critical differences. The bidding proceeded as described except that her third bid was 5♥, not 5♣, of course.

Note that I did not mention how to tell partner how many key cards you hold. The best approach is that the cheapest rebid means none, the next, means one, the next, two, and so forth. Since I had no ace, nor the king of spades, I bid 5♣ showing no relevant aces or key cards. (I would have made the same bid had I held the ace of hearts.) Alas, my partner and I had not taken the time to make sure this was our agreement, and so she, assuming a 1430 response structure, “knew” that I held the ace of clubs – the only relevant ace (or key card) that was not in her hand.

At this point my partner “tanked,” as she tried to figure out a way to ask if I had the king of diamonds (which I didn’t), so that 7♠ would be cold (assuming no 4-0 trump suit break or an unlikely ruff at trick one). She

eventually bid 6♦, I bid 6♠ and she passed, thankfully.

My hand was:	Partner’s hand:
♠ 7 6 3	♠ A K Q T 4 2
♥ Q J T 5 3	♥ Void
♦ 5 4	♦ A Q J T 9 2
♣ K J 6	♣ Q

Our Bidding:
 2♣ - P - 2♦ - P
 2♠ - P - 3♠ - p
 5♥ - P - 5♠ - P
 6♦ - P - 6♠ - All Pass

Trumps broke evenly. So, my partner did have one entry to my hand to try the diamond hook – which failed.

My partner had not stopped to think. She needed to know if I had the ace of clubs and the king of diamonds. By bidding 5♥, and with the response structure she assumed (erroneously) we had agreed to, she committed us to 6♠ whether I held the ace of clubs or not. We had no tools to find out at the six level whether I held the king of diamonds, the other card she needed to know about, before placing the contract. If she had started a standard cue-bidding sequence with a third bid of 4♦, announcing slam interest, first round control of diamonds, and no first- round control of clubs, we would have landed on our feet with the hand I did hold. Almost assuredly, we would have found the appropriate slam if I had held one or both of the cards she needed to know about.

Think before you use a conventional bid. More importantly, don’t wait until you have passed the point-of-no-return before starting to think. EB can be a valuable addition to your arsenal. It is simple, easily recognized, and does not get in the way of natural bidding. But, it doesn’t always work. You shouldn’t use it, or any other convention for that matter, if you can’t be sure you know what your partner’s response means.





BRIDGE IS A COMPETITIVE SPORT

Training Tips and Opportunities to Make You a Better Player

by Esther Watstein

Bridge is a competitive sport, though the activity is not the sort usually associated with “sport.” Sport is defined in the enormous Unabridged Random House Dictionary as, first, “an athletic activity requiring skill or physical prowess.”

Considering the athletic part, walking to the coffee urn or trash bin is useful, but cardio is what’s really important and nothing gets the heart rate going like making a difficult contract or defeating a cocky opponent’s sure-thing slam.

Most of the physical prowess required by bridge is about memory, logic, reasoning and stamina. Duplicate bridge players recognize these requirements and, with time and play (or, training) can develop and improve these attributes. To continue the sport analogy, I have a partner who re-writes his convention card at the table right before each game to jog his memory regarding the agreements and conventions played with today’s partner.

Another training opportunity is being a really, good dummy. Practice counting and be attentive to all aspects of the play without worrying about your next move. You might be the first, or only one, to note opponent’s renege. Don’t say a word. Dummy must be silent during the play of the hand. Place the card played to that trick slightly above the others in your down-faced played sequence so that when the hand is finished, you can call the director for the appropriate ruling.

The Random House Dictionary continues that sport is “often of a competitive nature.” That certainly applies to bridge. If a player doesn’t want to win or score, he or she doesn’t

belong at the duplicate table. Starting at club games, players should seize the opportunity to play with partners who are better, a terrific way to learn and improve. Players can also keenly observe really good opponents, noting how they engineer a defense or maneuver to make a difficult contract.

The club is a very comfortable environment. It’s nicely social. It’s cozy. But bridge is competitive and tournaments offer a bigger venue in which to learn, test your skills and earn points to advance your rank. The Connecticut Bridge Association runs four yearly Sectionals in different parts of the state. Sectional award silver points. Most Sectionals games are stratified and you’ll play and score against players in your own point range. Most Sectionals offer single-session pairs events and two-session teams events where your score will be the result of both sessions.

This brings us back to stamina. Two sessions, broken by a small break, can be wearing. You can play in only one session, but the fun is putting the two games together. Stamina is an important strength and, as in all sport, it can be developed. Make that walk to the trash bin every so often. Change your field of vision between boards. Don’t talk bridge during the break. Building stamina serves beyond the game and is well the effort.

Our Regional tournaments are run by the New England Bridge Conference, District 25, and are held throughout New England. The next Regional is The New England Presidential in Cromwell, CT. February 14-19.

Usually Regionals run for five days and you’ll earn gold and red points.

National tournaments feature bigger, longer events and are held in interesting cities. You have the opportunity to see thousands of people playing bridge, the top players as well as beginners. You’ll play within your own rank, and when you win, it’s lots of points of various colors with platinum points awarded in those events classified as “National.”

The third part of the Dictionary definition is that sport is “a diverse, recreational, pleasant pastime.” We’re in big trouble if we forget that one. If it isn’t pleasant, beside the satisfaction of developing skill and enjoying the competition, then eventually it’s just not worth it. Bridge needs to be pleasant for everyone. Being a “good sport” is as important as being a “good player.” A smile, or a “well done,” means as much as a successful finesse. It is, ultimately, the enjoyment that keeps you, your partners, and others at the table, coming to the club and going to the tournaments.

Editor’s Note: In 1998, The International Olympic Committee recognized bridge as a competitive sport although it has not yet been played. The World Bridge Federation and ACBL are trying to change that. It was nominated for inclusion at the 2020 Summer Olympics, albeit failing to be nominated for the second shortlist. Across Europe, many countries, including France, Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands and Poland, recognize bridge as a sport raising the game’s visibility, credibility and ability to fund players and educational programs.



BRIDGE FORUM (HAMDEN) SUMMER

TUESDAY

Leading Pairs: 1. Kevin Hart-Jeff Horowitz 2. Rita Brieger-Harold Miller 3. Hill Auerbach-Tracy Selmon 4. Abhi Dutta-Paul Johnson 5. Lin Li-Bob Silverstein

Player of the Year Leaders:

1. Kevin Hart 2. Jeff Horowitz 3. Tracy Selmon 4. Hill Auerbach 5. Harold Miller 6. Paul Johnson 7. Linda Bradford 8. Rita Brieger 9. Abhi Dutta 10. Hara Dobyns

Van Dyke Cup Quarterfinalists:

Jeff, Kevin, Harold, Rita, Tracy, Hara, Lin, Gareth, Alan, Jane.

FRIDAY

Leading Pairs: 1. Joyce Handleman-Bob Silverstein 2. Kevin Hart-Jeff Horowitz 3. Erik Rosenthal-Jim Uebelacker 4. Hank Banach-George Levinson 5. Rita Brieger-Aniko Richheimer

Player of the Year Leaders:

1. Jeff 2. Rita 3. Alan 4. Erik 5. Jim 6. Joyce 7. Kevin 8. Aniko 9. Hank 10. Harold.

Reynolds Cup Quarterfinalists:

Jeff, Rita, Kevin, Erik, Jim, Alan, Bob, Joyce, Celeste Hocs, Ruth Sachs.

TUESDAY / FRIDAY COMBINED

Top players for the summer quarter were Jeff Horowitz, Kevin Hart, Rita Brieger, Hill Auerbach and Tracy Selmon. Jeff, Kevin and Rita maintain the top three positions for overall **Player of the Year**. For the summer quarter, Jim Uebelacker averaged 10.49 HCP per hand,

and Bob Silverstein out-performed Harold Miller on slam hands.

Yearly Statistics through three quarters:

Success rates: Small slams 64.92%, grand slams 58.04%, penalty doubles 73.92%, redoubles 50%, fourth hand passout score 50.09%

Kevin Hart-Jeff Horowitz lead in best defending, most tops, fewest zeroes, and most 70% games; Jeff has eight +1100 scores. Rita Brieger-Harold Miller have won both half-games three times.

Breta Adams-Karlene Wood (our most optimistic bidders) and Hill Auerbach-Tracy Selmon have bid and made six grand slams (Tracy leads individually with ten). Gareth Thomas, Breta Adams and Bob Silverstein lead in pass-outs.

COME PLAY BRIDGE CLUBS OF WESTPORT AND DARIEN

After summer bridge at The Piedmont Club in Darien ended, we couldn't abandon our loyal following. So now our Wednesday game is happily installed at The First Congregational Church of Darien, just off The Post Road at 14 Brookside Road. Our Wednesday game start time has changed to 12:45 PM for the winter to help our players make it home before dark and avoid rush hour traffic. Tom is also directing The Darien Community Association Monday afternoon game, while Pete Nicoletti directs Mondays in Westport.

Congratulations to our clubs' top ten scoring players January through November 2017: 1. Linda Green 2. Jonathan Jankus 3. Janice Dean 4. Evan Dean 5. Pat Hartman 6. David Blackburn 7. Gordon Kiernan 8. Jean Schiaroli 9. Kay Howe 10. Robin Sanders

Plans are underway to host 4 introductory sessions of "*A Taste of Bridge*." *A Taste of Bridge* is a new beginner, quick-start, do-it-yourself (if you want) bridge book by NYC Honors Bridge Club owner, Jeff Bayone. We are eager to incorporate Jeff's time-tested concept into our teaching program. More information regarding Come Play Bridge's full game and teaching schedule may be found at: www.comeplaybridge.com or by calling 203-832-8707.

HARTFORD BRIDGE CLUB NEWS

Bridge, lunch, a book talk about mother-daughter relationships while learning bridge and a chance to meet the author are all interesting opportunities to pursue. As a package, they are an irresistible combination. Thus it was that about 100 women, and a few brave men, came to the Hartford Bridge Club on Sunday, September 24 to meet Betsy Lerner, the author of "*The Bridge Ladies*" and her mother. Ms. Lerner talked about the book, read a few passages and then answered questions. Afterwards lunch was served and then all played bridge. It was a fun afternoon and a nice way for people to socialize while maintaining a bridge theme.



LAKEBRIDGE

LakeBridge is closed for the winter and will reopen in May.

NEWTOWN BRIDGE CLUB

On Saturday and Sunday, September 23 and 24, Audrey Grant presented “Making an Impact on Defense with the Weakest Hand at the Table” and “Entries are Everything” to 40 tables of enthusiastic players during the two-day event. Along with Audrey’s bridge lessons, players enjoyed socializing over continental breakfast and lunch.

Fifty-nine teams participated in Swiss team games October 2-5 during the club’s third annual Team Week.

Newtown Bridge Club plays Monday through Thursday at Edmond Town Hall, [45 Main Street, Newtown CT](#). Directions and information about games and lessons may be found at the club’s website www.newtownbridge.org.

THE SEVEN NO-TRUMP CLUB

Back in October, we had some big winners during STaC week! Congratulations to Jill Fouad and Harold Feldheim for winning the Wednesday afternoon event with a 69.97% game. They earned 15.05 silver points. Congratulations to Mary Scarfi and Mary Albertell for winning the Friday afternoon event. Their 65.90% game earned them a whopping 16.01 silver points. The next scheduled STaC is March 20-

16, 2018. Mark your calendars!

Thanks to everyone who participated in our charity games in October. We raised over \$700 for Americares. This money will help fund relief efforts for the recent hurricanes in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico.

We have added a new game to our calendar. Every Monday afternoon at 12:30 pm, in addition to an open game, we now have a 0-20 Newcomer game. Players in the Newcomer game may ask questions during the bidding and the play. Website: www.7ntgames.com E-mail: Joseph.Grill@7ntgames.com Mobile: 979-218-7428

TOKENEKE

Bridge at the Beach. The Tokeneke Club’s summer bridge series was enjoyable for all, except for the rainy Monday that flooded the roads. Half of the players were stranded outside and the other half trapped inside! The winners of the summer series were:

1. Susan Mayo and Jean Thoma
2. Ru Cole and Ron Kahan
3. Carolyn and Tony Halsey
4. Mary Ellen McGuire and Barbara Johnson.

Congratulations to all.

WEE BURN NEWS

The following pairs did well in the Summer Series:

1. Belinda Metzger and Barbara Johnson.
2. Meredith Dunne and Sue Kipp.
3. Janet Soskin and Susan Mayo.
4. Mary Richardson and Betty Hodgman.
5. Los Karcher and Mary Ellen McGuire.
6. Jean Thoma and Karen Barrett.

Congratulations to Marilyn Tjader and Carol Davidson for doing very well at the Sectional Tournament in Stamford.....and to Kathie Rowland and Mary Ellen McGuire for excelling at the August Unit Game.

Throughout the winter months all games will be held at the Main Club. Players from reciprocal clubs are welcome.



Save-the-Date

NEW 199er Tournament
Saturday, May 5, 2018

IN MY OPINION:

What are the 8 Indispensable Conventions for your bridge toolkit?

Some years ago, the ACBL bridge *Bulletin* introduced a series called *In My Humble Opinion*. In each issue, a famed bridge player was asked for a tip that would help players achieve better results. Famed bridge player and teacher, Larry Cohen led off the series with this advice.

“On any level, players should cut back on the methods, conventions and “science,” and concentrate on basic bridge logic and not making mistakes. Many new players clog their brains with so much memorization that they don’t have any brain power left for the beauty of the game.”

In the interest of keeping bridge more simple and enjoyable, *The Kibitzer* polled twenty of our Unit’s most accomplished players and teachers regarding their recommended must-have 8 conventions for the advancing player. We also went back to the source to see what Larry would choose as his must-have conventions in this issue’s *Ask the Expert* column.

First, what is a bridge convention?

Most calls (or bids) during an auction are *natural* - meaning when we open a spade, we hold spades. A bridge convention is an agreement with partner that a call or bid will be *artificial* in order to convey a special feature about the hand. It is unrelated to the strength of the named denomination. For instance, most partnerships agree that an opening bid of 2♣ (the strong two clubs convention) promises a very strong game-going hand, says nothing about clubs and responder cannot pass the 2♣ bid.

Why should we adopt certain conventions?

1: They help us find the best contract.

- 2: They help us investigate slam.
3: They help us compete in the auction when the opponents open.
4: They help us obstruct the opponents’ bidding, often preemptively.

What do our experts recommend as their must-have 8 conventions?

- 1: Stayman
2: [Jacoby Transfers \(announceable\)](#)
3: Blackwood (preferably Roman Keycard 1430) and Gerber
4: Take-Out Doubles (Some experts do not agree that this is a “convention,” but everyone deems it important.)
5: Cue Bids – i.e. Limit Raise Cue Bids, Michaels Cue Bids (showing 2-suited hands)
6: Negative Doubles
7: [1 NT Forcing \(announceable\)](#)
8: [New Minor Forcing \(alertable\)](#)

What else should we know about conventions?

Many artificial bids are “**alertable**” which means that the partner of the player making the call uses the alert card to disclose the artificial bid to the opponents. All players should have convention cards* marked with their agreed conventions. Some conventions are so widely played and recognized that we do not need to alert them i.e. Stayman and 2♣. Some conventions may be “**announceable**” i.e. [Jacoby Transfers](#). More information about alertable and announceable calls can be found on your convention card.

* Advancing players can print out a “fat free” convention card at: <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/ss4.pdf> and add conventions to their cards as they learn them.



ASK THE EXPERT:

by Larry Cohen

Larry, since your “tip” prompted our discussion regarding must-have conventions, if you had to choose 8 conventions every bridge player should learn and play, what would they be?

I am a staunch advocate of “less is more.” My observation is that at every level of the game, players are using too many conventions. Too often I see players (from beginner to world champion) misusing or forgetting their methods. Everyone would benefit if they would just KISS. (Keep It Simple, Stupid).

If I had to choose just 4 conventions, this would be my list:

A)

1. Negative Doubles
2. [Blackwood](#)
3. Stayman
4. [Jacoby transfers](#)

If you forced me to choose 4 more, this would be the next group:

B)

5. [4th Suit GF](#)
6. Methods (I prefer “**DONT**”) vs. Opponents’ Notrump
7. Weak jumps in competition
8. 2NT Ask (Feature) after our [Weak 2-bids](#)

BRIDGE MATTERS

If you insisted I fill my convention card with 12 conventions, these would be the next four:

- C)
9. Unusual notrump / Michaels bids
 10. [New Minor Checkback](#)
 11. Jacoby 2NT
 12. Support Doubles

And, since people just love to learn/play/teach conventions, these would be on my D-list — choices 13-16:

- D)
13. Lebensohl
 14. Drury
 15. Inverted Minors
 16. Splinter Bids

About Larry Cohen

Larry learned bridge at age 6 from his grandparents. He began playing duplicate at age 14 and was competing in tournaments by 15. By 17 he had earned the title of Life Master and by 22 he had won his first of 25 National Championships. In 2002 ACBL named him Player of the Year and in 2011 named him Honorary Member of the Year. Most recently, he was listed on their Top 10 Living Most Influential People in Bridge. Presently Larry works exclusively in the world of bridge — lecturing in venues on land and sea, writing several best-selling bridge books and hundreds of articles.

Editor's Note: The Kibitzer is honored to have Larry Cohen contribute his time and expertise to our publication. For more valuable information and an opportunity to sign up for Larry's quizzes and e-lessons visit: www.larryco.com



Books

Taste of Bridge

By Jeff Bayonne

Most of us can recall the glut of information thrown at us in beginning bridge courses. It was often enough information to make us reel from the overload and want to flee the table never to return. Jeff Bayonne's *Taste of Bridge* is appetizingly refreshing in its approach to learning bridge. Bayonne is owner of NYC's Honors Bridge Club, the nation's largest bridge club and teaching facility, and he knows a fair amount about serving up a good learning experience. The slim book is organized into 28 short chapters, each designed to be consumed in small bites and it emphasizes play, play and more play. Not until chapter 15 does he even mention points. This book, and a deck of cards, might be a perfect stocking-stuffer for someone you know that "just doesn't have the time" to fit bridge lessons into his or her schedule. Available at Amazon and Masterpoint Press \$19.95.

Internet

CNBC.COM

CNBC recently featured an interview with Warren Buffet done by The Washington Post extoling the many

benefits of bridge, benefits we all know and enjoy.

"You can play a hand every six or seven minutes every day for the rest of your life, and you will never see the same hand," he tells Heath. "It's a game you can enjoy when you are in your 90s, and you are seeing a different intellectual challenge every seven minutes."

For those you know who might be a hard sell, send them this link:

<https://www.cnbc.com/2017/10/24/billionaire-warren-buffett-spends-8-hours-a-week-playing-bridge.html>

Big Screen

Aces & Knaves

Aces & Knaves is a forthcoming documentary "about the millions of people who discover the game of bridge and never let it go. It's a tale about why we're obsessed with points, partners and proving our mettle, told by world champions and mere mortals alike." The team, who also produced the hit *TAP OR DIE*, aims to create a smart and entertaining film - even for people who aren't familiar with the game. For a sneak peak, follow this Facebook link to view their trailer or donate to their fund-raising efforts. www.acesandknavesthefilm.com

Fun Life Master Facts

Youngest Life Master

Zack Garrison, Spring, TX set a goal to be the youngest Life Master and earned his 300th masterpoint at the age of 9 years, 2 months and 7 days.

Fastest Life Master

Iceland native, Jacob Kristinsson arrived for a US visit and a little bridge May 27, 1996, joined ACBL on June 4, and 47 days later, on July 17, became a Life Master at the Grand Rapids, MI Regional.

Never Too Old to be a Life Master

Peggy Kincaid joined ACBL in 2006 at age 85, not really thinking about becoming a Life Master. Last August, 3 weeks short of her 96th birthday, she crossed the finish line winning her last gold points to become a Life Master. Peggy says she's proof that one is never too old to pursue Life Master. "Traveling, making new friends and just playing this game will add such happiness to your life." ⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ BRIDGE FEED news.acbl.org/never-too-old/



Achievements

MILESTONES

LIFE MASTER*

Lou Filippetti
 Eleanor Lorig
 Janice Martinez
 Judith McGrath
 Roger Pikor
 Nancy Ramseyer
 Trevor Reeves
 Sandra Sobel

*300 MP for players who joined ACBL prior to 1/1/2010. Otherwise 500.

BRONZE LIFE MASTER (500 MP)

Joan Bergen
 Janice Martinez
 Elizabeth Shamroth
 Sandra Sobel
 Linda Wyse

SILVER LIFE MASTER (1,000 MP)

Elaine Lowell
 Irene Santa
 Arlene Small

RUBY LIFE MASTER (1,500 MP)

Richard Franklin

GOLD LIFE MASTER (2,500 MP)

George Holland
 Jerry Jacobs
 Nancy Robertson
 Linda Starr
 Vivian Wu

SAPPHIRE LIFE MASTER (3,500 MP)

Marsha Futterman
 Linda Green

DIAMOND LIFE MASTER (5,000 MP)

Sarah Budds



IN MEMORIAM

Jean Bramley
 Michael Lopukhin
 Thomas McMullin
 Sherri Mehler
 Penny Skenderian

THE KIBITZER

The Kibitzer is published quarterly by the Connecticut Bridge Association, Unit 126 of the American Contract Bridge League.

All comments, news, items related to the bridge world and of interest to our readers are welcome. Please send all items for the next Kibitzer by **JANUARY 22, 2018**.

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You can see The Kibitzer in blazing color at the CT bridge site: <http://www.ctbridge.org>

If you would like to receive The Kibitzer via e-mail, let us know. Email Robin Sanders at robin_sanders@verizon.net

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