



ScoreCard

Volume III Issue 6
December 2020



FINAL ISSUE!

NEWS

WINNERS

LEARN



John's Journal

Goodbye to ScoreCard

By John Grossmann, District 17 President



This is the final issue of the D17 ScoreCard, our digital bridge magazine.

Three years ago, this online version of *ScoreCard* replaced the six page insert (also called *ScoreCard*) in *The Contract Bridge Forum*. The *Forum*, a paper tabloid, was a joint production of D17 and two districts in California. Each year D17 spent over \$80,000 to print and mail 9,000 copies to players.

District 17 did not want to jack up regional entry fees to cover the rising cost of the *Forum*.



The print version of *ScoreCard* still available at contractbridgeforum.com/past.html

We moved to digital publication for many reasons. The bi-monthly *ScoreCard* cost about \$18,000 per year, a huge savings over traditional paper publications. The online magazine was portable, it could be read on smart phones, tablets, and laptops. We liked the ability to “hot link” to the ACBL calendar, hotels, tourney flyers, and results. Readability was very good because the NxtBook software automatically sensed the device being used and reformatted each article. It was

regional ads for no placement charge.

But, and there is always a but, two factors forced a change. First, the pandemic meant that tournaments were cancelled. STaCs were also cancelled as face to face bridge hibernated. This wiped out the primary sources of D17 revenue and forced belt tightening. The second factor was that *ScoreCard* readership never met our expectations. Perhaps this was an unfair criticism, as we never collected readership data with the *Contract Bridge Forum*. The Nxtbook software kept track of how many seconds were spent on each web image, and what hot links were used. We collected many favorable comments, but measured readership never climbed above 20 percent of our members.



Back issues of the online ScoreCard are available from any issue's [Archives page](#).

It is time to say goodbye to *ScoreCard*. The District will continue to use the *Bridge Buzz* newsletter, email notices, and our website – D17acbl.org - for communications.

Our website is ten years old. We have hired a vendor to replace the current website. Cindy Shoemaker is supervising this project. We hope it will be finished by January 2021. Many of the education articles from *ScoreCard* will move to the new website.

I want to thank Kitty and Steve Cooper for outstanding work as our *ScoreCard* editors. For a decade, they brought their passion for bridge to the Forum, and then to our digital *ScoreCard*. It takes a lot of work to coordinate with ten authors each month, find photographs, edit raw articles, and update the calendar of events. Bravo to Kitty and Steve.

our last issue.

John Grossmann, Blackstone.co@comcast.net



District 17 News

New website in 2021

Keep your eyes on the district web site at [d17acbl.org](https://read.nxtbook.com/acbl_district_17/scorecard/d17_scorecard_dec...) as it will be redone in early 2021. Send an email to [Cindy Shoemaker](mailto:Cindy.Shoemaker@acbl.org) with your thoughts and ideas on what you would like to see there.

Coming Soon: Online Swiss Teams with video!

By John Grossmann

Once upon a time a bridge player found a magical lamp, rubbed it carefully, and asked for three wishes. **He wished to attend an online Swiss Team game, chat with folks at the table, and see live stream video of his friends.**



Abracadabra 1430 Poof! All three wishes were granted. I got a chance to see one vision of the future of online bridge.

The Common Game and Shark are now testing software that will combine Swiss Teams, video images of the players, and real time audio. Milen Milkovski (milen@thesharkbridgecompany.com) is working with Jay Whipple (jay3@ospreypartners.com) on the Swiss event project this fall. Milen and Jay are known for their innovative and creative approaches to bridge.

Sharon Smith, Keith Schwols, Ruth Warner, Bruce Preston, Kathy O'Neil, and I formed a team to beta test this new system. We played a limited number of boards over four mornings to provide feedback on the software.



Each of us got an email with a link that took us directly to our table. The layout was similar to BBO, but included an area for video connections to other players. You could greet your opponents and learn about their local virtual clubs. You could click on an alert button and type in a short explanation. Because of the audio connection, opponents could ask your partner other questions about your partnership agreements or style.

The interface is a bit different from BBO, but folks quickly adjusted. At the end of a round, the computer software did an automatic tabulation, posted results, and determined where everyone would sit for the next round. What was not available in this release was the team huddle to discuss how the opponents set your 3NT contract or how you bid a slam. On the positive side, letting a computer run a Swiss session means there is a record of all the deals and how the hands were played and the scoring comparisons are calculated instantly.



Wow! This was fun. Sure, there were glitches and some parts of the software are still in development. But the overall first impression is that the future of bridge looks bright. Adding faces and conversation does a lot to personalize the game. In this demo, we spent some time getting to know our opponents. In a club game, you will be greeting old friends. **The social side of bridge, which many people miss in virtual games, comes back to the table.**

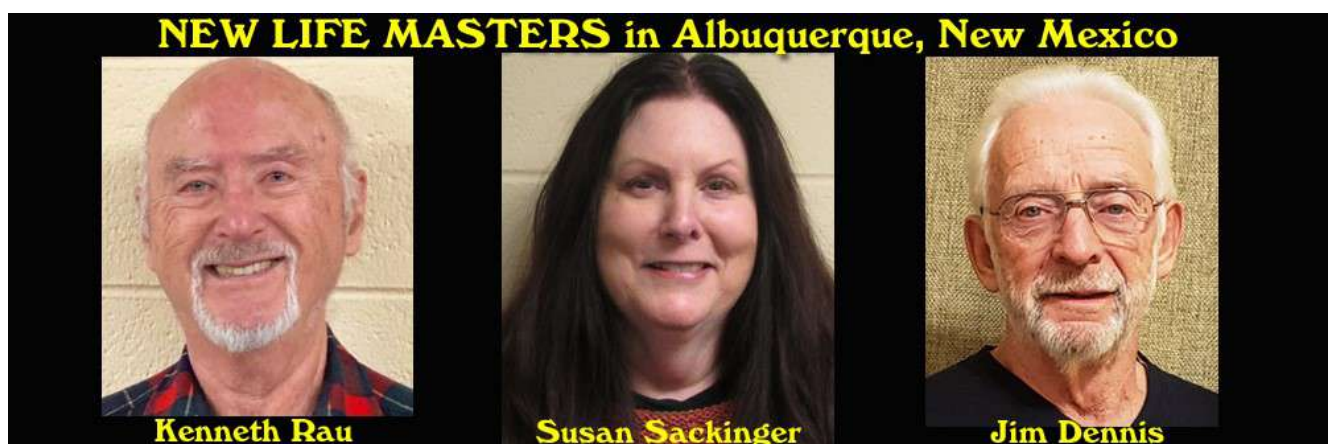
This might be called a beta test of the software. The team behind the development did not say when they would release the package. Perhaps sometime in 2021.

No word about how bridge pretzels can be included.



District 17 Member Achievements

NEW LIFE MASTERS



Some Stories from our New Life Masters

Thank you for your congratulations on my achievement of Life Master Status. My inspiration has always been my late husband Maultin Mathias with all his encouragement over the years to keep earning my points. He was a Bronze Life Master. Tragically he was killed when I was just a few points away from Life Master. I am pleased that I was able to accomplish this goal.

[from the editors: Hugs Carole, so sorry for your loss. He would be so proud of you.]

By Gordon Diss, Oro Valley, Arizona

My parents liked to play various card games after dinner every evening. I have fond memories of my mother saying “Boys! Take your dirty plates to the kitchen so we can clear the table and play cards.” My brother and I would then be roped in to play a few rounds of bridge or cribbage at the dining room table.

While attending the University of Cape Town, I played in the school’s duplicate bridge club. I played Precision in those days. ACOL was an option but I didn’t learn about Two Over One until I immigrated to the United States.

After graduating from Cape Town, I obtained a Fellowship to study post graduate Mathematics at Stanford University. I stopped playing bridge and took up chess instead! It wasn’t until I moved to Tucson that I took up bridge again. I met John Antliff, a retired Actuary and Life Master. John taught me Cue Bid limit raises, Lavinthal signals and several other popular conventions. It was an eye opener and a great learning experience.

I began teaching my wife Harriet’s small group to play party bridge. It turned out that Harriet has an aptitude for bridge and she has blossomed into a fine player. I am very proud that Harriet recently achieved NABC Master. Bridge is a great game to play with her, once I learned that a spouse can never make a mistake!

I enjoy bridge for both the competitive and social aspects. I have made many lifelong friends whom I would never have known otherwise.

platinum life masters after that. It's never ending. I am so happy to have finally made it to the first step and feel like I can say "Points/Schmoints!" now and really mean it.

By Howard Friedman, Albuquerque, New Mexico

About five years ago as I was planning for my retirement, I decided that I needed to pursue a new hobby and thought that I should consider bridge. I went to the Duke City Bridge Club in Albuquerque and asked if they had a partner for a beginner. They matched me with a very nice lady and we scored a 50% game. What luck!

After that I started taking all of the classes that the club offered. I also read the monthly ACBL magazine and focused on all of the columns that the experts wrote. I started playing once a week and didn't really improve very much. When I increased to playing two to three times a week, I finally noticed some progress.

In the beginning of 2017, I made a New Year's resolution to start playing in the A Section with the better players with the hope of learning more and learning quicker. I played with more experienced players who helped me and showed me my mistakes. Then I started taking a monthly lesson and playing with Joe Harris, one of the best players in the state. After each game we would go over the hands and reviewed what went right and wrong. He also taught me many new and advanced conventions. Joe continued to encourage me and said that I had potential to be a good bridge player.

After having a few good games in a row, I thought that I was finally getting it. And then I would have several very poor games in a row and I thought that I was a lousy player and would never get it. Bridge is a very humbling game. But this is important...I stuck with it and my master points continued to increase. So, there is no secret sauce or get better quick ideas with my story. I just studied regularly and played three to four times a week and gradually improved. I finally reached my goal of Life Master status on October 10, 2020. I have enjoyed the game and the people that I have met at the bridge table and hope to continue playing for many...

By Susan Dugas, Las Vegas, Nevada

My journey has been full of fun, laughs, heartache, and camaraderie. I have wonderful friends that I've met through bridge and I couldn't have gotten where I am without them! As with most players, I've been building up to Life Master for a while; slowly accumulating gold points as I've gone along. As I got closer to the prize, my focus increased...

Two and a half years ago six of us rented a Suburban and headed eight hours north to Jackpot, Nevada, for a Regional Tournament. We were all sure I was going to accomplish my goal playing team games there! Alas, it was not to be. Who knew that a nine of clubs finesse could be so disappointing. Well, I didn't get Life Master then, but I had too many laughs to count and fond memories that will last a lifetime.

Next up were the Nationals in Las Vegas. Our team actually won the bracketed Swiss on the last day, and I had accomplished my goal! But, it was not to be...we were in the lowest bracket so our points were divided between gold and red! Drats!! Foiled again...

The next stop was San Francisco last December. I did pick up some gold but not enough for Life Master. We did, however, stay in a great hotel and have fabulous food in a beautiful city 🇺🇸 And, as always...lots of laughs and fun stories.

The chant was now 1.22!! I needed those gold points!

The plan was to go to the Talking Stick Casino, near Phoenix, Arizona in August for that Regional, but COVID had other ideas. However, ACBL started online Regionals on BBO and in October with the help of a great partner I was lucky enough to get the remaining gold I needed.

Little did I know that my friends had made a name tag for me with my name, city and the Life Master designation before we headed to Jackpot in 2017. Since then, they have carried it, along with a relatively bedraggled congratulatory card to all

My goal had been in reach, but I couldn't have done it without my friends. They never lost faith in me!

[*Editor's note:* Susan achieved Bronze Life Master and Life Master simultaneously!]

Goodbye from Your Editors

By Steve and Kitty Cooper, *ScoreCard* editors



It has been a pleasure being your *D17 ScoreCard* editors. We hope you have enjoyed our efforts, and perhaps found some help improving your game. When we started in 2010, we were editing material for Ken Monzingo who gave us a style sheet and a few pointers. We also had the loyal support and aid of Bonnie Bagley.

In 2018, we moved to the current slick online magazine version, the brainchild of John Grossmann. The savings D17 accrued were substantial, but we are not sure our readers were really ready for an online only vehicle, as we never seemed to get much more than 1000 unique visitors out of a membership of 9000.

Kitty rediscovered her love of graphic design and layout. Steve continued to edit and sometimes rewrite submitted articles.

Bridge Teaching by Kitty Cooper
 Learn to play Bridge, materials for teaching Bridge

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My Basics Articles for District 17

Kitty Cooper
 February 25, 2017
 1 Comment

If you live in District 17, you may be getting a copy of [their newsletter by email or read it online](#). It includes several useful series of articles for improving your game.

You also may occasionally attend my talks on these same or more advanced subjects at Regionals. Did you know there are more detailed handouts in my downloads section which include problems to solve? The answers have been missing for a while but they are being uploaded again tonight, finally.

The Bidding Basics series is available also at the District 17 website under the Rising Players tab at

OUR PURPOSE

The mission of this site is to assist other bridge teachers by providing free materials, tips, and discussions, as well as to help beginning and intermediate players learn the game of bridge.

As an Amazon Associate I earn from qualifying purchases.

Ways to thank me for this site ...

Kitty's Bridge Blog – bridgeteaching.com

For your reading pleasure we have made the following clickable index to all the articles. The online magazine will be available for at least another year. At some point, some of the educational articles may appear on the new District 17 website. Meanwhile the Cooper articles will get republished on Kitty's Bridge Blog – bridgeteaching.com - and maybe even as an Ebook.

So hail and farewell. Stay safe and healthy. Hopefully we'll all be back to playing live bridge with our friends soon.

Index to the Online Articles:

Key to levels an article is suitable for:

B =Beginner, I =Intermediate, A =Advanced, E =Expert

December 2020 cover photo of gifts by [freestocks](#) on [Unsplash](#)

April 2018

[Doubles and Redoubles](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[What Are the Odds](#) by Rod Bias (BI)

[Revokes](#) by Bill Michael (all)

[Inverted Minors, Part 1](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Think About It \(a suit combination\)](#) by Larry Matheny (IAE)

[The SemiForcing NoTrump](#) by Robert Todd (AI)

June 2018

[Basic Concepts](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[Never Repeat Yourself](#) by Rod Bias (BI)

[When You Pull the Wrong Bidding Card](#) by Bill Michael (all)

[Inverted Minors, Part II](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Ensure Your Contract at Teams](#) by Larry Matheny (BIA)

[Competive Doubles](#) by Robert Todd (AI)

August 2018

[Initial Hand Evaluation](#) by Chris Hasney (B)

[Value Your Aces](#) by Rod Bias (BI)

[When to Alert](#) by Bill Michael (all)

[Inverted Minors, Part III](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Overtricks](#) by Larry Matheny (BI)

[After Partner's Negative Double](#) by Robert Todd (IA)

[Always Drury](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (IA)

October 2018

[Hand Evaluation](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (BI)

[New Convention Charts](#), part 1 by Bill Michael (all)

[Inverted Minors, Part IV](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Lady Luck](#) by Larry Matheny (IAE)

[Responding to a Responsive Double](#) by Robert Todd (IA)

[Bidding over the Opponents Preempts](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (BIA)

[2/1 as a Convention](#) by William Rawlings (AE)

December 2018

[Count Everything](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[Tips for Defense](#) by Rod Bias (BI)

[Two Club Openings, Part I](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Consider Vulnerability](#) by Larry Matheny (IAE)

[Support Doubles and Responses](#) by Robert Todd (IA)

[Bridge Books for Christmas](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (all)

[The Mighty 2D as Jacoby](#) by William Rawlings (AE)

February 2019

[Train your Memory to Count Better](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[The Three Cornered Hat](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[Losing Trick Count](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (BIA)

[New Convention Charts, part 3](#) by Bill Michael (all)

[Two Club Openings, Part II](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[The Minor Suit Game](#) by Larry Matheny (IAE)

[Responding to a Take Out Double](#) by Robert Todd (IA)

[Transfers over One Notrump](#) by William Rawlings (IA)

April 2019

[File the Count](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[Opening Lead](#) by Rod Bias (BI)

[Leads Against NoTrump](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (BI)

[Two Club Openings, Part III](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Minor Suit Slams](#) by Larry Matheny (IAE)

[When the Opponents Make a Take Out Double](#) by Robert Todd (IA)

[The 2♦ Trump Asking Bid \(TAB\)](#) by William Rawlings (IA)

June 2019

[Use the Count](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[Rosenkranz Control Points](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[The Singleton Test](#) by Dennis Dawson (IA)

[Two Club Openings, Part IV](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Doubles in NT auctions](#) by Robert Todd (IA)

[Finding the Missing High Cards](#) by Larry Matheny (IAE)

[Why Bother? Planning](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[The Void – a Powerful Problem](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[Leads versus Suit Contracts](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (BI)

[Don't Overthink Things](#) by Dennis Dawson (IA)

[Major Suit Raises, Part I](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Maximal Doubles](#) by Robert Todd (IA)

[Think Before You Lead](#) by Larry Matheny (IAE)

October 2019

[Triple Ts: Timing, Transportation, Trumps](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[The Three Cornered Hat and Slam Bidding](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[Resnik's Rule](#) by Dennis Dawson (BIA)

[Eight Ever, Nine Never](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (BI)

[Major Suit Raises, Part II](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Balancing Doubles](#) by Robert Todd (IA)

[It's Matchpoints](#) by Larry Matheny (IAE)

December 2019

[Should You Open or Pass?](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[Dangerous Overcall](#) by Larry Matheny (BIA)

[Bridge Themed Presents for Christmas](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (all)

[Overcalling at the One Level](#) by Robert Todd (BI)

[Throw in Plays](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[Don't Torture Partner](#) by Dennis Dawson (IA)

[Major Suit Raises, Part III](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

February 2020

[LTC Points the Way to Slam](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[Modern Non-Penalty Doubles](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[Know When to Hold 'Em](#) by Dennis Dawson (BI)

[Responding to Overcalls](#) by Robert Todd (BI)

[Don't Forget the Auction](#) by Larry Matheny (BIA)

[Major Suit Raises - Splinters](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

April 2020

[Doubles What and When](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[Using the Three Cornered Hat](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[More Thinking Less Rote](#) by Dennis Dawson (IA)

[Cue Bidding](#) by Larry Matheny (IA)

[Slam Bidding in Suit Auctions](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (IA)

[Major Suit Raises, More Splinters](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

June 2020

[Underbidders Anonymous](#) by Dennis Dawson (BI)

[The Take Out Double](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[Remember the Auction](#) by Larry Matheny (BIA)

[Rebids After We Overcall](#) by Robert Todd (BI)

[Three Cornered Hat in Partnership](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[Major Suit Raises, Jacoby 2NT](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

August 2020

[Two Level Overcalls](#) by Robert Todd (BI)

[Defensive Signals](#) by Paul Zatulove (BI)

[Negative Doubles](#) by Chris Hasney (BI)

[A Short Suit](#) by Larry Matheny (IA)

[More on Jacoby 2NT](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[Preempts Work](#) by Dennis Dawson (IA)

[My First Squeeze](#) by Dan McGuire (A)

October 2020

[Two Chances Are Better Than One](#) by Dennis Dawson (BI)

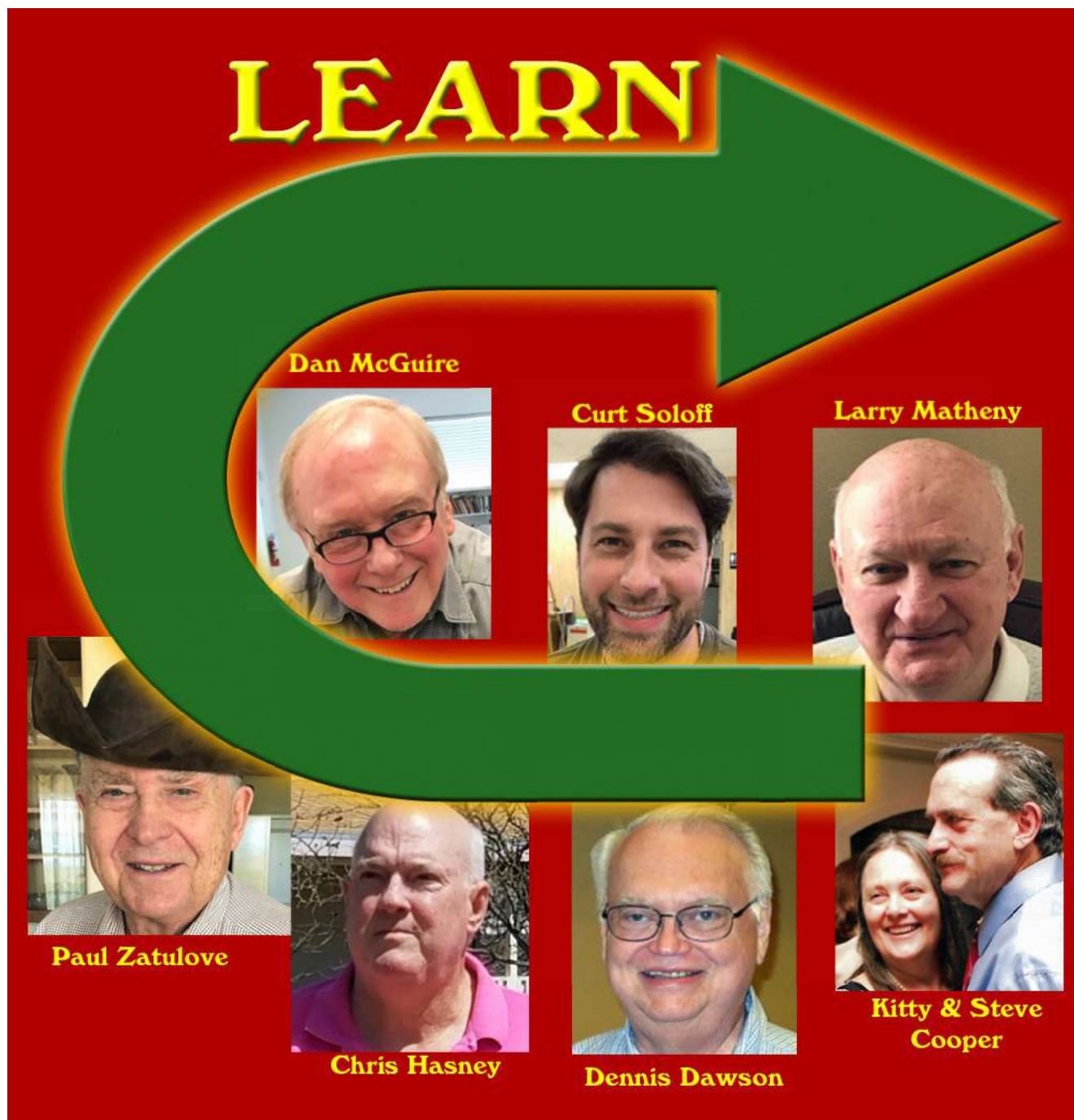
[How We Lose at Online Bridge](#) by Kitty & Steve Cooper (all)

[Listen and Learn](#) by Larry Matheny (BIA)

[Maximal Doubles](#) by Chris Hasney (I)

[Major Suit Raises by Passed Hands: Drury](#) by Curt Soloff (IA)

[How to Love Lebensohl](#) by Dan McGuire (A)



On the following pages we have articles from our regular columnists.



I/N Tips:

By Paul Zatulove

The Three Cornered Hat in summary

Each bridge hand is a 'singularity', one of a kind. The Colonial Three Cornered Hat tries to give you numeric parameters to work with, so that when a similar hand comes up, you will enjoy the excitement that goes with it. These are numbers developed by recognized bridge experts.



Hat image courtesy of the [National Museum of American History, Behring Center](#)

The three cornered hat concept is to use those numbers to check and balance each other in order to simplify evaluating a bridge hand. It emphasizes the importance of three facets of a bridge hand, not one, when evaluating a hand's strength or weakness. A simple 'by the numbers' discipline should help a novice/intermediate smooth out the rough edges of decision making and communicating with partner.

This is a mental exercise for every hand from either side of the table!

The numbers the experts have given us for over half a century are as follows:

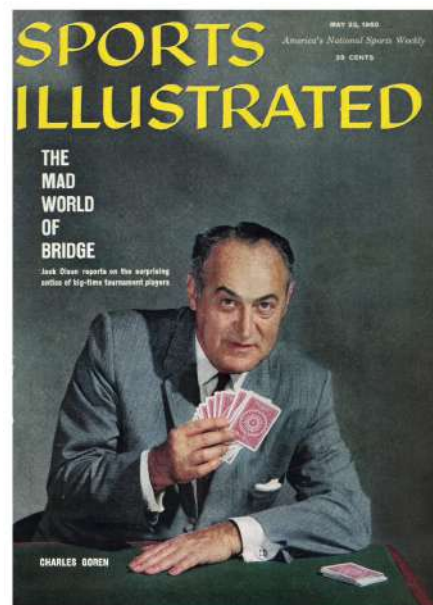
Losing Trick Count (LTC): Seven for an opening hand; six implying extras; five slam territory. The combined sum of both hands subtracted from 24 suggests the total tricks the partnership can take—e.g., seven plus seven equals 14, subtracted from 24 suggests 10 tricks can be taken. All else being equal, an opening hand opposite an opening hand should make a major suit game.

Rosenkranz Control Points (RCP): two points for an Ace and one point for a King. Four control points are usually present in a hand with 13 Goren points. Five

usually found in an 18-19 Goren point count. Seven control points are usually found in a 2NT opening bid. Eight control points are usually found in a strong 2♣ opener.

High card Points: Publicized by Charles Goren, this “by the numbers” hand evaluation did more to promote the game of bridge world-wide, than any other innovation. Incorporate it on an equal basis with LTC and RCP when evaluating a bridge hand.

Using the concept of the Colonial Three Cornered Hat can help you to reach the best contracts. Plus it will be far more enjoyable and exciting than using high card point count alone. Sometimes it will expose the flaws in a hand that looks strong in high cards. Experts have the card sense to make appropriate adjustments to evaluation without counting points. The three corners of the hat try to bridge the gap between experts and average players with a simple set of numbers.



Charles Goren on Sports Illustrated cover May 23, 1960

I have pointed out when I have goofed so you don't goof, too. I hope you have enjoyed these columns as much as I have writing for you. Kitty Cooper always had my back covered, a necessity at my stage of the game. It assured the credibility of the column for you. A kind comment about an article was all the encouragement I needed to continue. That was most appreciated.

The thoughts I leave with you are as follows:

- Always think about whether your target is a partial, game, slam, or to defend.
- Three sides of the hat are equally important to make the hat fit: High Card Points, Distribution, and Controls.
- Never overlook a void, a potentially powerful holding. Try to communicate this to your partner as soon as possible, to better judge its usefulness.

do something better, not what partner did wrong.

- Put on your Colonial Three Cornered Hat and prepare to do battle!



Paul Zatulove is a recent LM who believes everyone should be exposed to bridge and improve the quality of their life. He organized a group of men to improve their bridge and play duplicate. 14 joined the ACBL, one became a director, two won the Ace of Clubs award and one is touring regional tournaments with three lovely ladies.



Advice for the New Player

By Chris Hasney, Hereford, Arizona

Responsive and Extended Responsive Doubles

Basic Responsive Doubles are commonplace in today's contract bridge bidding methods. They are so normalized that they are not even alertable any more, and while folks who play some form of standard American bidding such as Standard American Yellow Card (SAYC) may forget to use them, they certainly recognize them. (No one plays pure SAYC these days—responsive doubles are an automatic silent add on.)

The basic responsive double (played through 2♠ by the way, unless you and partner have a prior agreement otherwise), could look like the following example:

W	N	E	S
1♥	X	2♥	X

Advancer's responsive double (responding to intervenor's double in this situation) says: "Hey pard, I've got some stuff over here, enough to want to compete since you have some stuff too. If I had four spades I'd have bid 2♠, but I don't. I do, however, probably have three spades and support (likely 4-4) for the minors. Your turn; do what you think is right."

Of course, if opener chirps again then intervenor is off the hook, and will most likely do so quietly if his takeout double was minimum. Note that responsive doubles

[*Editor's note:* Since the opponents have bid a suit that doubler has promised, it makes sense to play this double as penalties. In the old days when players psyched more than they do now, it was quite common to bid 1♠ on three small when partner's one of a minor got doubled; this was an attempt to steal the opponents suit as shown below]

<div> <div>D</div> <div>8</div> </div>		<div>N North</div> <div> <div>♠ AQJ9</div> <div>♥ A1083</div> <div>♦ 2</div> <div>♣ 8643</div> </div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div> <div>1♦</div> <div>X</div> <div>1♠!!</div> <div>???</div> </div>
<div>W West</div> <div> <div>♠ 85</div> <div>♥ Q942</div> <div>♦ AK76</div> <div>♣ KQ9</div> </div>		<div>E East</div> <div> <div>♠ 632</div> <div>♥ 76</div> <div>♦ QJ1098</div> <div>♣ J102</div> </div>	
	<div>S South</div> <div> <div>♠ K1074</div> <div>♥ KJ5</div> <div>♦ 543</div> </div>		

An example of the attempt to steal when your double is responsive

Case 2: We can decide to play responsive doubles higher, just as we did with other doubles, perhaps through 4♥. (This is also a common add on agreement.) This might look like (1♥)-Dbl-(3♥, preemptive)-Dbl or (2♥)-Dbl -(3♥)-Dbl.

Snapdragon Double

One other unusual responsive type double is the “Snapdragon Double”. This can only be made by advancer, following partner’s (here known as intervenor) overcall after his RHO bids a suit at the one level to open the bidding and responder’s bid of a new suit. Thus, three suits have been bid. Now advancer can double to show some values (about 8+ HCP) with five or more cards in the fourth suit and tolerance (usually honor doubleton) for overcaller’s suit. In other words, the hand is not strong enough to bid the fourth suit freely, plus it has some safety in overcaller's suit.

A typical auction might be (1♣)-1♦-(1♠)-Dbl, showing 5+ hearts at a safe level.



Chris Hasney is an accredited bridge teacher from Hereford, Arizona. He supports the college bridge and rubber bridge revival movement. He is the author of *Simplicity Bridge* published as an e-book through [Lybrary.com](https://www.lybrary.com)



Bridge in the Real World

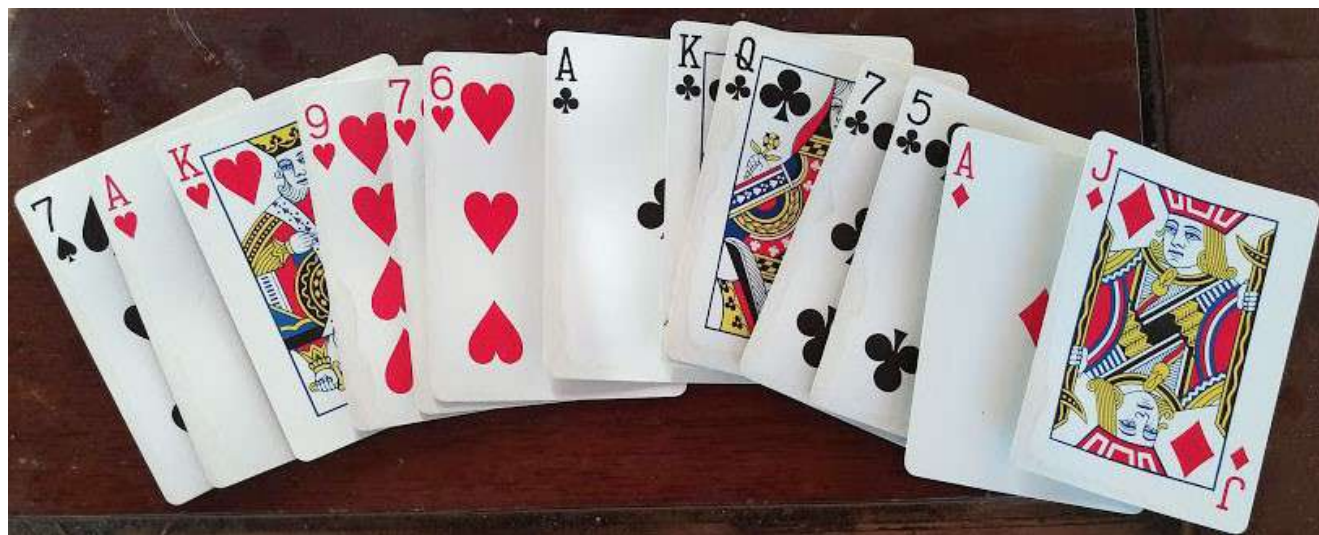
By Dennis Dawson, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Who Robbed Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid?

Butch and Sundance were outlaws of the American West in the 1890s made famous by Paul Newman and Robert Redford in the movie of the same name. When an elite posse relentlessly pursues them, Butch famously asks Sundance, "Who are those guys?"

South, perhaps a great-grandson of Butch, might have wondered the same thing after playing against two retired gentlemen in the top bracket of a Regional Swiss Teams. The opponents' manner and attire suggest they were Solid Citizens, perhaps retired bankers.

South held this hand:



He had to choose a bid after this auction:

W	N	E	S
2♠	P	3♠	?

Your choice?

At the table, South bid 4♥. Dummy appeared. Here is the full hand:

<div> <div>D</div> <div>8</div> </div>	<div>N</div> <div> ♠ AK10 ♥ 8 ♦ KQ876 ♣ J983 </div>	<div>W</div> <div> 2♠ P </div>	<div>N</div> <div> P P </div>	<div>E</div> <div> 3♠ P </div>	<div>S</div> <div> 4♥ </div>
	<div>W</div> <div> ♠ 986432 ♥ J1053 ♦ 43 ♣ 10 </div>			<div>E</div> <div> ♠ QJ5 ♥ Q42 ♦ 10952 ♣ 642 </div>	
<div>S</div> <div> ♠ 7 ♥ AK976 ♦ AJ ♣ AKQ75 </div>		<div>Play this hand out at tinyurl.com/y4ahmaur</div>			
<div>BBO</div>		<div>4♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>			

South made his contract with an overtrick, losing only two trump tricks.

Unfortunately, 7NT was cold!

How should this hand be bid?

Without West's preempt, North would have opened the bidding with 1♦, and South

deck. Reaching a grand slam should be routine.

Had South been the dealer, South would have opened 2♣, and again the grand slam should be reached, although perhaps not quite so easily.

In the real world, what should South bid over 3♠? 4♥ hardly does the hand justice. How about 4♠?

4♠ is a Monster Michaels Cue Bid if there ever was one, with at least five hearts and at least five of one of the minors. It shows enough strength to be willing to play at the five-level even though your partner could have a complete yarborough.

What would have happened then? It's hard to say, but no doubt North-South would have reached at least a small slam in notrump, clubs, or maybe even diamonds.

That would have been good enough to win the event. Playing 4♥ making five was not good enough, as South's team lost the event by two Victory Points to the team that stole them blind.

Full marks to East-West for creating this problem for North-South, especially to West for bidding 2♠. It was as non-classic as it could be—a bad suit, a side four-card major, and one HCP! But maybe West understood that it's all about the risk-reward ratio and about timing.

Maybe West ran a hedge fund instead of a bank. West certainly had the streak of a riverboat gambler in him. Butch and Sundance would have appreciated that IMPs stolen are twice as sweet as IMPs earned.



Dennis Dawson is a National Champion, a Bronze Medalist in the Senior World Championship, and an ACBL Grand Life Master. He has won more than 250 regionals. He has taught people throughout the country to play better and enjoy the game more. He currently resides in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Currently he offers lessons online for individuals or groups. You can contact him at dennis@bridgevacations.com



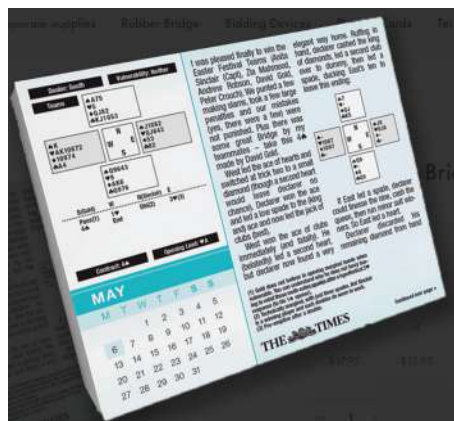
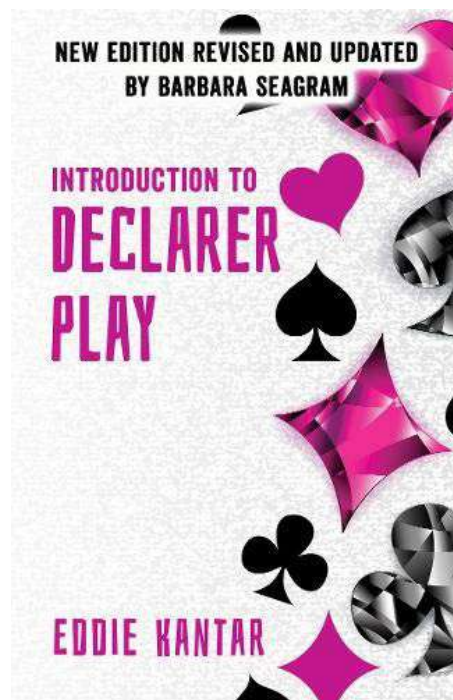
CONSULT THE COOPERS

By Kitty and Steve Cooper, editors *D17 ScoreCard*

Bridge Themed Presents for Christmas

Every year we give you our recommendations for bridge gifts, mainly those books from the year's new releases that we think are suitable holiday presents for your bridge playing friends. So here are our recommendations, one last time...

For the improving player, or friend who has recently learned to play bridge, there is no better author to read than Eddie Kantar. Teacher extraordinaire Barbara Seagram has updated two of Kantar's basic books, [*Introduction to Basic Declarer Play*](#), [*2nd edition*](#), and [*Introduction to Defense*](#), [*2nd edition*](#).



Calendar image courtesy of [Baron Barclay](#).

A bridge calendar is always a thoughtful gift for your intermediate or more advanced friend. Click here to get the [Baron Barclays 2021 Calendar](#), based on the London Times column by Andrew Robson. Every day has a new hand to enjoy.

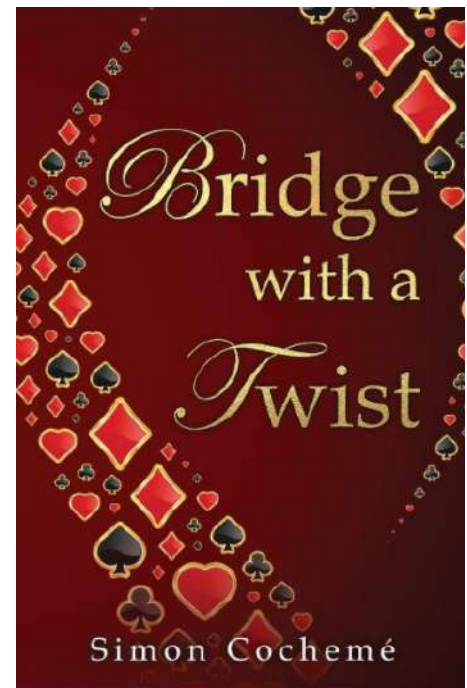
For your friend who enjoys books laid out as a series of problems to solve there is a new contender by two of our favorite authors, Larry Cohen and David Bird, [*Defense on the Other Hand*](#).

This deservedly won the 2020 [American Bridge Teachers' Association](#) award in the

Do you have a friend who thinks there is no math involved in Bridge? [Useful Probability for Bridge Players](#) by Julian Laderman is the perfect gift for any experience level. Julian's previous delightful books include the Bumblepuppy series but since he is a retired Math professor you might have guessed he would eventually write about numbers. His ability to explain difficult concepts finally got me to understand the three door problem as a form of restricted choice.

And in the humor department, your expert and near expert friends might find [Bridge with a Twist](#) by Simon Cochemé quite enjoyable. Did you know that in Thailand going for 1100 is called a Fiat? But in Italy so is 500, 800 and 1400. This book is an amusing romp through history of bridge superstitions, terminology, and “laws” from a British point of view.

For more in the expert humor department, those of you who enjoyed Dave Caprera's [Sleeping on the Couch](#) columns in the print form of this publication will be pleased to know that they are now available in a book.



Full Disclosure: Book titles are hotlinked in this article using the [Coopers' Amazon affiliate link](#), so if you buy via any of those links we get a very small percentage.



Kitty and Steve were both born and raised in New York City, where they knew each other from the local bridge scene.

Unfortunately, they foolishly married other people. In 2000, both were again single when they re-met at the Las Vegas Regional.

Soon after, they married, and Kitty moved to Albuquerque, where Steve was living. They moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, in 2008 and left there for 'the warmer clime' of San Diego County in 2012.

They are both Grand Life Masters and have won two National Championships together. Kitty has five others and a World Woman's title. They have been your D17 ScoreCard editors since 2010.

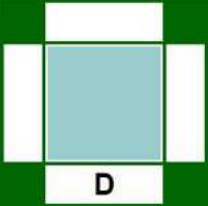



IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

By Larry Matheny, Fort Collins, Colorado

Suit Preference Signals

There are three types of signals: Attitude, Count, and Suit Preference. Good defenders understand when each needs to be employed. The usual signal to partner's opening lead is attitude. This advises partner if you want the suit continued or want him to shift to another suit. However, there are occasions where a suit preference signal is used instead.

		N North ♠ AK74 ♥ KQ874 ♦ J5 ♣ 104	<table> <tr> <th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♠</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♥</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td>4♠</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr> <td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S				1♠	P	2♥	P	3♥	P	4♠	P	P	P			
W	N	E	S																				
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W West ♠ 1086 ♥ A ♦ 10982 ♣ Q8632		E East ♠ 3 ♥ J1095 ♦ AK743 ♣ J97																					
	S South ♠ QJ952 ♥ 632 ♦ Q6 ♣ AK5	Play this hand out at tinyurl.com/wlvp8na																					
		4♠ S	NS: 0 EW: 0																				

Bidding: West led his ace of hearts and the auction convinced East that the lead was a singleton. East followed with the jack to show an entry in diamonds. the

East won the king. He returned the ten of hearts for West to ruff. West then played another diamond to East's ace and got another heart ruff for a two-trick set.

Note that if East does not give a suit preference signal, West would have to guess which suit to lead at trick two. If he chose a black card, declarer would lose only one heart and two diamonds and thus would make his contract.



Born and raised in Illinois, Larry worked at a major insurance company for 33 years, retiring as a director in the systems department. In 2003, he moved to Loveland, Colorado, the home state of his wife, Linda, and soon got involved in the local Bridge scene. Larry served as Unit president for ten years. He has written a weekly column for his unit webpage since 2004 and is a frequent lecturer at the monthly unit games.

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

By Curt Soloff, Denver, Colorado

Major Suit Raises, Part IX: Major Suit Raises by Passed Hands

Last time, we introduced the Reverse Drury convention as a valuable tool for passed hands when your partner opens a major in third or fourth seat. To review, a $2\clubsuit$ bid by the hand that previously passed is an artificial inquiry bid that asks, “Partner, how good is your opener?” The convention allows us to invite game in partner’s major without going past the two level on the occasions that partner has opened light and would not accept a game try.

As you might suspect, Drury has multiple variations. No particular flavor of Drury is “standard”, and partnerships may add bells and whistles as they choose. Many partnerships like to distinguish between the three card and four card limit raise of partner’s major. Throughout this ongoing series on major suit raises of all kinds, we have emphasized the importance of knowing when you have a nine card major fit rather than just an eight-card fit, as playing strength and comfort increase significantly.



As a passed hand, how might you implement both a three card and four card limit raise? One popular method is by using Two-Way Reverse Drury. In this variation, both the $2\clubsuit$ and $2\diamondsuit$ bids by the passed hand become artificial; typically the $2\clubsuit$ bid shows three card support for opener’s major and the $2\diamondsuit$ bid promises four card or longer support. This can be highly useful information for opener, but keep in mind what you are giving up: responder can no longer bid $2\diamondsuit$ to show a natural diamond

Another variation you might consider is reverting to using only your 2♣ bid as a catchall Drury, but giving the opener the ability to ask questions to find out more about your hand. Of course, if opener has no game interest at all due to a light opening, she simply signs off in 2M. With hands that do have game (or slam) interest, though, opener can bid an artificial 2♦ to ask for further description, and the passed hand can further detail the nature of the raise according to this schedule:

2♥ Weaker invite with exactly three card support

2♠ Better invite with three card support

2NT Any four or longer card support

Perhaps we are splitting hairs a bit with the 2♥ and 2♠ bids above, but this type of system does allow the passed hand to make fairly aggressive limit raises; you could get away with making a limit raise on that nine point hand that you decided you liked, so long as you could slow partner down if asked about the nature of the raise. You will also note that your side is forced to the three level only when you have a nine-card fit, which is consistent with the Law of Total Tricks.

In fortifying your bidding system by passed hands, you should also consider the meaning of two more types of bids that might be employed on deals when not using Drury

1) What does a jump bid in a new suit show by a passed hand?

2) What does a jump to 2NT by a passed hand show?

To address the first point, envision an auction where you deal and pass, but then jump to 3♣ in response to partner's major suit opening in third seat. What does this show? The two most common choices would likely be (a) natural, since Drury precludes you from showing a real club suit; or (b) a fit jump, showing values in clubs while simultaneously promising support for opener's major.

2NT should NOT be natural and invitational here, as any hand worth inviting game opposite a potentially light opener would have already opened the bidding! Thus, we typically stretch our 1NT response by a passed hand up to about 11 HCP, since we would have opened the bidding with 12 HCP. If 2NT is not natural, then, what should it be? Many experts play it is a club suit so that 3♣ can be fit showing, like other suit jumps.

My preferred treatment is for 2NT to be an undisclosed “mini-splinter” for partner’s major—i.e., four trumps and side shortness. Take this example:



Had partner opened 1♠ in first seat, you would probably have forced to game with this hand with a nicely descriptive 4♦ splinter. But if partner opened light, do you still want to force to game? This is an ideal hand for the undisclosed mini-splinter. If partner has a full opener, he might just jump to 4♠ and keep the location of shortness a secret from the defense until the dummy comes down; however, if opener’s decision to pursue a game or slam rests on where your shortness is, then opener can use an artificial 3♣ bid to ask your short suit (and the 2NT bidder next bids the short suit or retreats to your agreed trump suit at the three level to convey shortness in the suit you do not have room to bid).

memory, and the auctions may not come up for you all that frequently. You and your partner must weigh how much you are willing to take on in the quest to make the most descriptive bids possible. As we have said before, **any convention is only as good as your ability to remember it!**

[*Editors note:* Another extreme way to play is “Always Drury” - [click here for the Coopers' version explained in our June 2012 column.](#)]



Curt Soloff is a sapphire life master with 15 years of bridge directing and teaching experience. He has served as the manager and director of the Castle Rock Bridge Club since its inception in 2009 and can be contacted at castlerockbridge@gmail.com



More Tips – Try Minorwood

Don't Let This Happen To You

By Dan McGuire

So there you are, heading for a slam in clubs as soon as you check on keycards. You bid 4NT and partner responds 5♦ (showing either three or zero keycards). Well, rats, looks like you're missing two keycards and you'll just have to stop at game, so you bid . . . oops, wait a minute, can't go backwards. OK, 6♣ it has to be, down one, bottom board.

The Minorwood convention could have come to your rescue. There are some complex variations out there, but here's how a simple approach would work.



First, actually the hardest part of Minorwood is just remembering the two—well ok, technically three—times when Minorwood is off:

1. When you have found a major suit fit (duh, of course);
2. When there has been ANY competing bids by opponents (slam interest is then unlikely); and
3. When the minor suit of interest has never been naturally bid or clearly implied (e.g., a transfer bid to clubs would count as an implied club bid).

Other than those three situations, **ALL four-level minor suit bids ask for keycards in that minor suit.** 4♣ asks for keycards in clubs and 4♦ asks for

Responses are then in steps and retain your usual 1430 (or 3014) meanings. Assuming a 1430 system, in response to a 4♣ asking bid you would respond:

4♦: One or four.

4♥: Three or zero.

4♠: Two without the Queen.

4NT: Two with the Queen.

Note that the asker can then stop, when needed, at game with a 5♣ rebid. Also, if the asker instead rebids 4NT (when that bid is still available), it says “ok, no slam, and I changed my mind, I’d rather play in 4NT than 5♣” (useful in a pairs event for the extra points from playing NoTrump).

Similar step responses apply to a 4♦ asking bid

4♥: One or four.

4♠: Three or zero.

4NT: Two without the Queen.

5♣: Two with the Queen.

Again the asker can stop at game, when needed, with a 5♦ bid; and likewise, if the asker instead rebids 4NT (when that bid is still available), it says “never mind, I’d rather play 4NT.”

Some partnerships further play that when the asker bids the next side suit up, he wants his partner to bid the cheapest suit in which he, responder, holds a king. For example,

After 4♣-4♥ (three or zero keycards), a 4♠ rebid would ask responder for his cheapest specific King. [*Ed note*: most people play that the next suit step asks

After 4♣-4♠ (two keycards without the Queen), 5♦ would ask responder for his cheapest specific Kings (because 4N and 5♣ would be to play).

Even without the specific King refinement, **the important thing about Minorwood is that it can provide the keycard information without going past game level in the minor suit.** And it's actually just kind of fun once you're comfortable with it.



Dan McGuire is a semi-retired tax lawyer, semi-successful Ruby Life Master, and semi-unsuccessful poker player in Las Vegas, Nevada. He can be reached at danlvnv@aol.com



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