

January 2023 ACBL Bulletin Notes

Jeff Kroll
Sam Khayatt

These are the articles that we believe will benefit our readers the most.

- “Ruling the Game” by Matt Koltnow (p. 38). The new convention card has an error. “The box for Gerber after suits ought to be red, because Gerber, when not within a notrump sequence (opening notrump or opener’s rebid of notrump), or immediately after a notrump bid, is Alertable.”
- “The Bidding Box” moderated by Josh Donn, Problem 8 (Lair/Passell) (p. 43). After a 3♣ response to his 2♣ opening bid, Lair bids 3NT despite holding five spades to the AK. This was an intelligent bid, as it gave Passell room to make a good bid. If Lair had bid spades, Passell could be in an awkward position. The 3♣ bid shows a long, strong club suit; Passell is unlikely to hold the stoppers to bid 3NT if he cannot support spades.
- “It’s Your Call” by Sue Munday and Karen Walker, Deal 2 (p.42). In the uncontested auction 1♦ – 1♥ | 3♦ – 3♠, it is important to know what 3♠ means. Most panelists play it as asking for a spade stop.
- “Card Play 101” by Phillip Alder (p. 48). Sometimes it is necessary to trump your partner’s winner to ensure that you set the contract.
- “Parrish the Thought: Leading after preempting” by Adam Parrish (p. 49). “Don’t preempt and then lead a doubleton.” This is a good general agreement to have with partner. That way, when a preemptor leads a suit other than his/her own, partner knows what to do.
- “Reasoning with Robert: Overcalls opposite a passed hand” by Robert S. Todd (p. 50). Overcall more aggressively when partner is a passed hand, particularly if your suit is spades. A 1♠ bid can be very obstructive. And a passing partner is unlikely to bid too high.
- “Challenge of the Month” (p. 54). Use the auction to determine the best line of play. When an opponent makes a first-position weak-two bid, he almost always has six cards in his suit.
- “Chalk Talk” by Eddie Kantar (p 57).
 - Deal 1: Playing IMPS, if you need an opponent to hold a specific card (the ♥K in this case), play the hand as if he holds it.
 - Deal 2: Making this hand requires a strip and end play.
- “Test Your Play” by Eddie Kantar (P. 63).
 - Deal 1: Play for split honors.
 - Deal 2: All the losers are in the trump suit. Run the long diamond suit to limit the defense to just three spades.

Our Favorites

“Challenge of the Month” (p. 54)

		♠ K Q J 4 3		
		♥ 4 3		
		♦ 7 4 3		
		♣ A 10 9		
♠ A 10 8 7 2			♠ 9 6 5	
♥ 9 7 2	N W—+—E S		♥ 8	
♦ 6			♦ K Q J 10 9 8	
♣ 7 6 5 4			♣ J 3 2	
		♠ —		
		♥ A K Q J 10 6 5		
		♦ A 5 2		
		♣ K Q 8		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
		2♦	4♥	
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♥	
All Pass				

When an opponent opens the bidding, he almost always has six cards in his suit.

West leads the ♦6. Since East preempted 2♦ and we hold six diamonds, the ♦6 is almost guaranteed to be a singleton.

We win the ace and pull three rounds of trump. West started with three trump and East started with one. This is usually the case. Four cards typically split 3-1 and the opponent with the long suit is likely to have fewer cards in other suits.

To make this hand we need to discard a diamond on a spade. Our best chance of making this contract is to play West for the ♠A – which is likely as East has preempted diamonds. We assume that at this point West holds only black cards: the diamond was a singleton and all the trump have been drawn.

We play the ♣K and overtake it with the ace. Then we play the ♠K, pitching a diamond. West wins and has to play a spade or a club.

- If West plays a spade, we get to pitch the last diamond on the ♠Q.
- If West plays a club, we will play the ♣T. East will cover with the ♣J. We will win the ♣Q, establishing the ♣9 as an entry to the ♠Q.

“Test Your Play” by Eddie Kantar, Deal 2 (p. 63)

		♠ A 5 4 3		
		♥ A 8 6 3 2		
		♦ Q 4		
		♣ K J		
♠ K Q 10 2			♠ 9	
♥ Q J 10 9	N		♥ K 7 5	
♦ 7 2	W - † E		♦ 8 6 5	
♣ 10 5 4	S		♣ Q 9 8 7 6 2	
		♠ J 8 7 6		
		♥ 4		
		♦ A K J 10 9 3		
		♣ A 3		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
			1♦	
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	
Pass	4♠	All Pass		

We start with only three losers – all in the trump suit – and need lose only those tricks.

West leads the ♥Q.

We need to protect ourselves against losing control of the hand if spades are 4-1.

We win the ♥A and cash the ♠A. When both follow, we are home. There are now three outstanding spades – the three losers we counted when we made our plan. We cash our winners, letting the opponents take their three spades whenever they want to.

Maybe this deal did not need to be in the advanced player section?