



# Quarterly Newsletter



**Cincinnati**  
Bridge Association



**UNIT 124**

**April 2013 XXXVIII Number 2**

2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45241 (513) 563 2218

## From the President's Desk

by A J Stephani

I recently came across the quote on the right from Thomas Merton, the great Trappist monk and mystic. When you put it this way, bridge is a kind of meditation. I'm not sure about the confusion and sorrow part, but think about it . . . . Have you ever wondered why time

"The real purpose of meditation is this - to teach a man how to work himself free of created things and temporal concerns, in which he finds only confusion and sorrow."  
- **Thomas Merton**

moves so slowly when you're kibitzing? I've found myself kibitzing games under many different circumstances, but they all have one thing in common: the game goes MUCH quicker when you're actually playing (just ask a director!). Now, sometimes this is actually true (try watching the world-class players on Bridge Base Online Vugraph sometime – they take a LONG time), but mostly it's a function of our perception of time.

Similarly, playing bridge provides us with an escape from the daily hassles of life. We all know that bridge keeps our minds sharp, and I'd be willing to bet that, for example, our blood pressure goes lower when we're at the table. We all lose ourselves—if only for a while—in the game, and the experience provides a kind of protective barrier from every day worry and anxiety. At our CBA Board retreat in January, I asked a simple question, "Why do you play bridge?" At the risk of misstating her eloquent response, Susan Wisner said something like, "Playing bridge forces me to focus wholly and intensely on a single thing for a few hours,

### Upcoming 2013 Tournaments

May 17 – 19	Lexington, KY	S
May 18 – 19	Cincinnati OH, NLM	S
May 21 – 27	Independence OH	R
Jun 4 – 9	Cincinnati, OH	R
June 21 – 23	Indianapolis, IN	S
June 21 – 23	Columbus OH	S

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### Unit 124 Club Games

	Morn	Aft	Eve
Mon	CBC*11:00 Inv BCB 10:00	MIDM 1:00	CBC 7:00 L OXF 7:00
Tue	NKY 10:00 BCB 10:00 CBC 11:00 MIDS 11:00 AND 11:30		CBC 7:00* & 99er
Wed	CBC* 11:00 SCC* 10:00 AND 11:30	MIDL 12:00	NKY 6:30
Thu	CBC 11:00 INT* 9:00 BCB 10:00	WHC* 12:00 EAB 12:30	CBC 7:00
Fri	NKY 10:00 CBC 11:00		BCB 6:30
Sat	BCB 11:30	CBC 1:00 & 0-40*	

\*=standby provided. Inv=Invitation only L=Limited game.  
Check the CBA website for details. [www.cincybridge.com](http://www.cincybridge.com)

and doing that makes me centered and brings me a kind of peace.”

There certainly was a whole lot of meditating going on by CBA players at the St. Louis NABC just completed. I managed to snap some pictures, which are up on our newly-designed website (My CBA/Past Event Photos), and many apologies to those I missed.

Congrats to Top 20 finishes in prominent events:

- ❖ **Larry Newman** and **Denny Schultz** 6<sup>th</sup> NAP Flt C ,
- ❖ **Diane Travis** 19<sup>th</sup> - Rockwell Mixed Pairs,
- ❖ **Pam Granovetter**
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> - 0-10K Swiss, 9<sup>th</sup> - Silver Ribbon Pairs,
  - 8<sup>th</sup> - Whitehead Women’s Pairs, and
  - 6<sup>th</sup> - Machlin Women’s Swiss.
- ❖ **John Meinking** and **Norm Coombs** 15<sup>th</sup> - Silver Ribbon Pairs , and
- ❖ **Matt Granovetter** 7<sup>th</sup> - Jacoby Open Swiss.

**We’ve got a full plate of activities coming up!** We’re introducing a NLM sectional this year on May 18-19 at the CBC. It’s a great chance to win your first silver points! Look for NAP qualifying games at your local club during the months of June, July, and August – for an extra buck, they award sectional rated 50/50 red and black points. It’s a great deal! And this year, the District NAP finals will be held across two different days, October 19-20, which means you can compete in multiple flights, but only if you get those “Q”s next to your name during an NAP qualifying game for each flight in which you wish to compete.

And finally, don’t forget about **our annual Flying Pig Regional at the Sharonville Convention Center**. We’ve moved the Flying Pig into the first week of June to avoid conflicts with Mother’s Day and some other area Regionals, and we’re the only Regional in the nation this year during the **week of June 4-9**. We’ve also revamped the daily schedule, with main events at 10:00 and 2:30, so get your games lined up now!



Peace at the Bridge Table,

A.J. Stephani  
CBA Board President

**Check out the wealth of BRIDGE information on our [www.cincybridge.com](http://www.cincybridge.com) website!**



## Letters to the Editor

*We encourage your input and feedback for all to share. E-mail your thoughts to the Alert Editor at [alert@cincybridge.com](mailto:alert@cincybridge.com)*

**John Burpee** writes:

Hey Editor:

What great news!! Here’s to an ALERT that gets better and better.

Having said that, I have a concern about the publication: specifically DISTRIBUTION. Recently, I saw that a new issue was out and went looking for a printed copy at the CBC. There were none on the Directors’ desk, and was told to look in the Directors room where I found a stack of them. On the same subject, since we stopped mailing the ALERT I’ve wondered how many members (let’s face it, mostly of the pre-computer generation) read it on-line or download 20 pages? I know mailing is more costly, but what the heck it’s just money.

*Hi John. Thanks for writing! Sure miss our Pasteboard games. Since the question you raise has budget consequences I brought it to our President for an answer. Here is AJ’s reply. Regards, Steve*

Hi John,

Sorry you didn't find a copy of the ALERT right away, but I'm glad to hear that you located one without too much of a problem. We put print copies out near the director's desk at the CBC, and it appears that no one had restocked the supply. You were definitely on the right track by drawing this to the attention of a director or Board member.

As for mailing copies, you are correct we stopped doing that because of the cost. With almost 1,000 members in the Unit, and a cost around \$1.50/issue for printing and mailing, we're not talking about chump change. And actually, we get a surprisingly few number of requests for print copies. The great majority of our membership admits to using email, and it appears that those who don't manage to pick up a print copy at one of the clubs around Greater Cincinnati (we make sure that Northern Kentucky and Anderson also get 40-50 print copies). Of course, the ALERT is always available on our website at [cincybridge.com](http://cincybridge.com), so I think we've got almost everyone covered one way or another.

A.J. Stephani

## Hope Springs by Steve Moese, Editor

e-mail: [alert@cincybirdge.com](mailto:alert@cincybirdge.com)

Discard winter's despair, welcome back our snowbirds, watch nature bloom, and let the sun bring smiles to our hearts. Opening Day! Spring cleaning, spring planting, spring holidays, and spring break ... the joy of new beginnings.

On the topic of new beginnings, why not take the time to volunteer in some way to strengthen the CBA? The more you make your voice heard, the more likely the CBA and ALERT will meet your needs. The more you volunteer and commit to action, the more we accomplish as a Unit.

**Want bigger games?** Play more often! Invite friends!

**Want more social news and fun articles in the ALERT?**

Write an article! Ask a question!

**Want a more friendly club?** Be friendly at the table. Make people feel comfortable around you! Model friendly behavior –make it infectious!

**Want better results?** Choose to learn. Ask questions! Take lessons. Read books. Join the CBA Mentoring Program.

**Gotten a lot from the CBA?** Give back - mentor a new player. Encourage curiosity.

**Enjoyed bridge for a lifetime?** Recruit friends to our game.

What we say shapes attitudes. What we do shapes our future. What do YOU want our future to be?

There's no better opportunity than to participate in the **CBA Mentoring Program**. Have you volunteered yet? If not, please do! The CBA Mentoring Program is an annual favorite and serves hundreds of aspiring players.

We've expanded the **Club Corner** with contributions from Deschappelles, Newcomers Game/LBIAD, and Northern Kentucky. Our **tournament calendar** shows plenty of local opportunities to play in the next 3 months – take advantage! **Patti English and Gerri Mirus** remind us the Flying Pig is coming and our commitment to act will make this one of the best Regionals ever! **Bob Fisk** and **Barb Levinson** call our attention to the CBA Mentoring Program. **Do volunteer!** **Dean Congbalay** parses the Bridge / Not Bridge stereotype. **Potter Orr** shares what's expected of alerts, announcements, and explanations. **Joe Fisher** reveals the secrets behind LR + 6 = G (it works! It works!). John Altman (Sr.) shares a special appreciation. You've thought about declarer play,

defensive play, card combination play, end play and squeeze play, but you are not ready for **Amit Raturi's** take on word play – you will be belly-laughing with New Conventions. (Maybe comedy is a writer's relief from winter?) **Steve Felson** ponders the intergalactic consequences of a rarely bid slam. **Robert Brown** laments the lack of style common in old letters and offers lexicographical challenges for us. Both **Pat Dutson and Yauheni Siutsau** bring challenging problems to sharpen our skills. **Otto Walter** reminds us about thoughtful opening leads against Notrump. **Andrew Gumperz**, a noted bridge professional from the San Francisco Bay area and guest contributor, discusses a modern view of preempts in the first of a multi-part series. **Yauheni Siutsau** brings satire to new heights with 7 Ways to Improve your Game (or how to get to 35% more often). **Rob W.** shows how the ole Blockhead unblocks. Thanks to all our contributors whose labor created this issue. The ALERT, like much of what the CBA does, depends on your commitment, involvement, and support.



You know it's spring when the Robins are reading the ALERT! I hope you enjoy this edition. See you at the Table!

*Steve*

Editor, The ALERT

## Get Ready for the Flying Pig!

by Gerry Mirus and Patti English

**"And what is so rare as a day in June?"**

- James Russell Lowell

A TOURNAMENT! That's right....our Regional has moved to the 1<sup>st</sup> week of June and we are the only tournament in the nation! [That week!](#)

We are so excited to see how a new week will revitalize our tournament. Further away from mega tournament Gatlinburg....not Derby week....not Mother's day...and not Father's day!!! What more could we ask for? Your help, of course.

1. We are asking that you eat lunch at the Convention Center since you will be there for the 10:00 and 2:30 sessions. We know what you are thinking...but wait. The SCC has a new caterer...one that is actually going to work with us to have great items for lunch, and will stay open to serve coffee and snacks at other times.

So help us with that \$500 minimum per day and EAT MOR CHIKIN.

2. Instead of Prizes we are going to have a Registration gift this year. Fun accessories for your convention card...not telling what yet! Come and get them...or better yet, help us man the Registration desk for 45 minutes and it will be easy to pick yours up.

The times we need help are:

Tuesday – Saturday 9:00 – 9:45 and 1:30 to 2:15

Tuesday and Thursday nights 6:30 to 7:15

3. We desperately need help getting supplies to the SCC on Monday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> and then readying the convention center for the tournament. We have to transport all the bidding boxes, duplimates, bridge supplies, card, pencils, etc. A group of people can knock this out in no time.

4. We need volunteers to help us bring all the supplies back to the Bridge center after the tournament is over on June 9<sup>th</sup>. We will have the center ready to host the Deschappelle game at 11:00 on Monday...if we have your help.

Lastly, our Hospitality hour has changed. With the evening session starting later and thus ending later, it seemed more logical to have a Wine and Cheese Chat after the second session of bridge and before dinner. So come to the Lvinn next door ...see your friends...go over your scores and relax. **NOTICE:** we did not ask you to bring anything for Hospitality this year. Therefore you are free to **volunteer for numbers 1 – 4 above.**


**"Flying Pig Update:** Robert Hartman, new CEO of the ACBL, will be attending the Flying Pig Regional on Friday-Saturday. He's told us he would love to meet our members, so make sure to say hello and give him a proper welcome! Also, immediate past ACBL President Sharon Anderson and her husband Roger had such a great time last year at our Regional they're coming back this year for the entire week! Make sure to welcome them back sometime during the week as well."



**Anderson, Northern Kentucky and Boone County News** Al Fultz, reporting.

Anderson Bridge Club reports sad news. We lost two delightful players, **Joanne Jester** and **Louise Adams**. **Dick Day** Continues his winter respite at home under the orders of his MD and doctor Ann. **Jack Boyd** wintered in Florida and has colon cancer. His return is doubtful. Jack has been a Mr. nice guy of the club, happily driving others to games, defying the interstate system and the gloom of night when we seniors stay at home. A very mechanically able man, he would put on car plates for others or replace burned out lights, all with a smile on his face. Where do we get such men. We have a couple of mentors for our Tuesday game. If interested, contact **Helen Ogle**.

## Deschappelles News by Sandy Orr

Monday April 15 is the 66th birthday party for Deschappelles Club (and incidentally tax day). The club was founded in 1947 and named after a 19th-century French chess and whist player  Alexandre Louis Honore Lebreton Deschappelles (aka Guillaume le Breton - born Mar 7, 1780; died Oct 27, 1847). He became an internationally respected expert in the games of Whist and Chess. Our club is not the only thing named after him. The **Deschappelles Coup** is the lead of an unsupported honor to create an entry in partner's hand (often confused with the [Merrimac coup](#), the lead of an unsupported honor to kill an entry in an opponent's hand).



In a 1998 tournament. [Geir Helgemo](#) executed this **Deschappelles Coup**. Helgemo was East against South's 4♦. West led a small spade, Helgemo put up

the ♠Q and South won the ♠A. South then returned a spade to Helgemo's ♠K. Helgemo cashed the ♠5432 and switched to the ♥K (the coup). Dummy won the ♥A and played the ♦Q to the ♦K, ♦A and ♦J.

East Deals	♠ J6
N-S Vul	♥ AJ1083
	♦ Q62
	♣ KJ8
♠ 5432	♠ KQ1087
♥ Q5	♥ K962
♦ J	♦ K97
♣ 1097532	♣ A

	♠ A9
	♥ 74
	♦ A108543
	♣ Q64

Now declarer tried to enter dummy with the ♠K, but Helgemo ruffed, put West in with the ♥Q, and ruffed the club return for down two. It would not have helped South to duck the ♥K because Helgemo would

simply have continued ♥s, winding up with a trick in each suit. And it would not have helped Helgemo to switch to a *low* heart at trick four. South wins West's ♥Q with the ♥A, leads the ♦Q, covered and won, and then leads another heart to endplay Helgemo.

In addition to our birthday, the club is celebrating the return to action of a new and improved Pat Newman as director. Pat had a new knee added and then was forced to balance that addition with the removal of a gallbladder. She is now slimmer and in much better health than in some time. Welcome back, Pat!

## Newcomers News - Opening Day for the CBA

By Mike Purcell

Spring in Cincinnati means Opening Day and the return of baseball. It is both a new start and a chance to build on the progress from the year before. Expectations are high this year as they should be. I see what we are doing to build our CBA membership in a similar light. Successful programs from last year like our Newcomer Saturday Game are getting even better this year with teachers sending students to this game as well as players beginning to take lessons for the first time. Our members showed amazing support for our recent Spring Learn Bridge In A Day (LBIAD) Event by volunteering their time and most importantly in promoting the event to friends and family.

This year we hope to build on last year successes by improving and promoting the Saturday Newcomer Game even more. If you have friends who play rubber bridge and want to try duplicate, you can recommend this game. With relaxed rules, more time per hand, bidding help on request and standby partners, this game is ideal to welcome new duplicate bridge players. For more information, please contact me at [mikpur@cinci.rr.com](mailto:mikpur@cinci.rr.com) or 513 702 4007.



For those of you who haven't been able to locate a Mentor/Mentee on your own, please don't hesitate to still fill out a form. We'll try and match you up with someone who is as compatible as possible. Pairings will hopefully be completed by the middle of May with games starting at the end of the month.

For information about the program, click here: <http://www.cincybridge.com/CBAMentoringProgram.html>

To go directly to the sign-up page click here: <http://www.cincybridge.com/forms/mm2013.php>

## Cincinnati Youth Bridge News

by A. J. Stephani

If you're playing in the Flying Pig Regional on Friday night, you'll see a different kind of event -- the Cincinnati Youth Bridge Championship! It's open to anyone still in high school or younger, and it will be conducted as a pairs event, with bragging rights (and a pretty nice perpetual trophy for display at the winners' home school) for a full year. It's free, and guaranteed to be a great time! If you know of anyone interested but needing a partner, please let me know ([513-313-0488](tel:513-313-0488)) and we'll get them hooked up. Even if they're just learning the game, encourage them to attend -- they'll have a great time! We'll start at 7:30 p.m. on June 7th, but show up a few minutes early if you can.

Would you believe that we added 21 new Youth/Junior ACBL members this month? Thanks to the many friends of Howard Ringel, who made a significant contribution to assist the Cincinnati Youth Bridge Program in his honor, we've been able to pay for the first year of ACBL membership for anyone in the Unit ages 20 and under. We'd love to add to that list, so if you know of anyone interested in bridge who would like to join the ACBL, please contact us for a Youth/Junior membership application. The ACBL recently consolidated its Youth (U21) and Junior (U26) memberships into a single membership tier; for \$15/year, you get the Bridge Bulletin, discounted entries at NABC tournaments, free entries to the Youth NABC, and more. It's a great deal!

For more news on the Cincinnati Youth Bridge Program, check out the webpage:

<http://www.cincybridge.com/youth/index.html>

Our latest newsletter is available under "MyCBA/Newsletters" on [cincybridge.com](http://www.cincybridge.com).



## CBA Mentoring Program

by Bob Fisk and Barbara Levinson.

CBA Mentor/Mentee season is fast approaching. Don't forget to go online and fill out your 2013 Mentor Program Signup form. If you prefer, you can pick up a paper form at the club, fill it out, and leave it in the drop box near the directors' desk.

### SATURDAY NEWCOMER GAME

We all know Saturdays are crazy, but if you've got a spare afternoon and liked your first taste of duplicate bridge at the Cincinnati Bridge Center, come out and give the Saturday Newcomer game a try!

The game starts at 1:00 PM, with a free lesson covering bidding or play starting at 12:30. The game is limited to newer players, so the game is informal, relaxed, and you can get advice if you need it. A partner is always provided if you don't have one, so that's no excuse. We've had Youth players play regularly on Saturdays, so you should see some familiar faces!

### NON LIFE MASTER SECTIONAL



The Cincinnati NLM Tournament at the Cincinnati Bridge Center is a great opportunity for newer bridge players to get their feet wet in a tournament-style atmosphere. Half price entry fees for youth! Silver points! Game times are Saturday at 10AM and 3PM and Sunday at 10AM (Swiss Teams). Form a Team of 4 from your school and join us for your first Swiss!

### CINCINNATI YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP

Make sure to save June 7 on your calendar – this is the event you don't want to miss! The Greater Cincinnati Youth Championship is scheduled for 7:00 PM at the Sharonville Convention Center. It will

be run as a pairs event, with awards going to the winners. It's free, fun and comes with bragging rights for a full year!

### SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS

May 18-19: Cincinnati Non Life Master Tournament

June 7: Cincinnati Youth Championship

August 1-3: 2013 ACBL Youth National Championship (Atlanta)

August 4-11: 2013 World Open Youth Bridge Championships (Atlanta)

If you're interested in attending the National or World Youth Bridge Championships in Atlanta, please let us know – we'll put together details if there's sufficient interest. This is a tremendous opportunity and a great time!



### SCHOOL BRIDGE CLUBS IN

### GREATER CINCINNATI

These clubs may be open to students in other schools – please contact the person below for more information:

Indian Hill (Mondays, 2:45-4:30): Susan Wisner (513.561.3156) or Cliff Pleatman (513.543.1423)

St. Xavier (Mondays, 3:15-5:15): A.J. Stephani (513.313.0488)

Lakota West (Mondays, 2:50-4:00): Peter Rice (513.677.6606)

## Awards Night 2013

What a night to celebrate Unit 124 accomplishments for 2012! Unit 124 had more new life masters (26) in one year than ever before. We must be doing something right! Congratulations to our 2012 Life Masters:

Stephen R Felson; Michael L Remondino; Bren Blaine; Susan D Wisner; Robert L Prorise; Jayant S Sudame; Susan B Manne; John M Altman; John Altman; Imogene Enzweiler; Cathy M Feldmann; J L Glendening; Sharon Kreitzer; Susan Moskowitz; Marlene G Pierce; Dennis D Schultz; Robert S Brown; Bruce Abel; Todd W Barker; Helen C Mess; Mary Raispis; Edith H Harding; Gerri Heineman; Diane L Thaller; Sandy Johnson; Jagmohan K Malhotra

### Mini-McKenny (MM) and Ace of Clubs(AoC):

- 0-5 - Gail Zimmer (AoC & MM)
- 20 – 50 - Howard Schumacher (AoC & MM)
- 50 – 100 - Larry Newman (AoC & MM)
- 100 – 200 - Chris Hastie (AoC & MM)
- 200 – 300 - Dennis Schultz (AoC & MM)
- 300 – 500 - Bob Fisk (AoC & MM)/**2<sup>nd</sup> National MM**
- 500 – 1000 Dave Britt (AoC & MM)
- 1000 – 2500 Rick O'Connor (AoC)
- 1000 – 2500 Al Fultz (MM)
- 2500 – 5000 Lorna Davis (AoC)
- 2500 – 5000 Tim Crank (MM)/**Diamond Life Master**
- 5000 – 7500 Bill Higgins (AoC & MM)
- 7500 – 10000 Nancy Sachs (AoC)
- 7500 – 10000 Pamela Granovetter (MM)
- 10000+ Norm Coombs (AoC)
- 10000+ Matthew Granovetter



Rookie of the Year – Howard Schumaker



Manny Isralski Award – Norm Coombs



Jane Weyant Award – Yauheni Siutsau & Bill Higgins



Jane Ward Memorial Award - Bob Fisk



Don Walker Award - Bill Higgins



Ace of Clubs and Mini-McKinney Award Winners



Tim Crank - Diamond Life Master

See more CBA Awards Night photos at:

<http://www.cincybridge.com/gallery/awards2013/index.html>

## Bridge or Not Bridge – That is the Question! By Dean Congbalay

We were taking a Burger King break during the Sarasota Regional when I started playing my second-favorite game: Who is a bridge player, and who is not?

"See that dude over there?" I uttered to my teammates, motioning to a guy wearing shorts and dark socks. "He's bridge -- and if I ever start dressing like that, just shoot me!" (Surely enough, just before the afternoon session began, I spotted him back at the convention center checking out scores from a morning pairs game...)

Then I looked at a woman sporting a light blue sweater decorated with the queen of hearts. "She's bridge, too!" I said confidently. When she turned toward us, I noticed that she wore a badge -- beside her name was a big black club!

With a smile on my face, I peered around the room. "Bridge, bridge, non-bridge, non-bridge, bridge!" I said.

Ken, one of my teammates, was eager to test me. He asked if the two senior citizens in the booth behind us were bridge players.

I turned around and quickly declared, "Nope!" Of course, I had to confirm that my assessment was correct, so I asked them.

"Oh, we don't play cards," the woman said after putting down her cheeseburger. We all chuckled. "How could you tell?" asked Ken's wife, Carol.

"That's easy," I replied. "They're not arguing!"

### Bidding Alerts and Announcements by Potter Orr

Bridge is not a game of secret messages, the information contained in bids belongs to everyone at the table and the opponents are entitled to know the agreed meaning of every call. There are 3 primary components that are used to facilitate this transfer of knowledge.

1st, every player should have available on the table a completed convention card showing the agreements they are using with their current partner. In addition



to or instead of asking the meaning of a bid, the opponents are entitled to examine your convention card.

2nd, some bids require an affirmative action on your part during the auction. The actions required are called "announcements" and "alerts". The ACBL provides a pretty comprehensive description of the policies and procedures for announcements and alerts in the form of a 10 page writeup. This document is now on our website if you go to the drop-down choices under "My CBA" then policies and procedures. Below is a summary of the more common issues involved with announcements and alerts.

It is the obligation of the partner of the person who makes a bid to announce or to alert. You are never allowed to announce or alert your own bid. Once the opponents have been put on notice by your announcement or alert, they are permitted at their next turn to bid to ask for a further explanation. If asked, you are obliged to provide a satisfactory explanation. Simply giving the name of the convention that you are using is not necessarily sufficient. If you are playing Bergen raises you should probably know what they mean, but if your opponents do not use that convention they may not know. If they do not know, they should simply ask you to "please explain" and it is your obligation to cheerfully describe what the bid actually means.

Announcements: the ACBL has decided in the interest of speeding play that certain very common conventional bids can be handled by the partner of the bidder announcing what convention was just used. Since most players will understand the meaning from the announcement alone, the longer alert procedure is not necessary. If you have played any amount of duplicate bridge, I'm sure you are familiar with these announcements:

"15 – 17" after an opening of 1 NT

"Transfer" after a response of either 2 diamonds or 2 hearts to 1 NT opening

"Forcing" after a 1 NT response to an opening bid of 1 in a major suit

"Could be short" after an opening bid of 1 club

Alerts: bids that do not mean what they say (because they are a convention) need to be alerted by the partner of the person who made the bid. The proper procedure is to immediately say alert and/or pull the alert card from the bidding box and display it briefly on the table. If the room is noisy or you are aware that



one of your opponents has hearing difficulties, the alert card should be used. If you make a bid that should be alerted and your partner fails to do so, you may not point out either verbally or by facial expression the fact that the alert was missed. If your side ends up with the bid, you must notify the opponents of the missed alert before the opening lead is made. If your side ends up defending, you must wait until after play is complete before you alert the opponents to the alert failure.

While most conventional bids must be alerted, there are a number of conventional bids that are so common that alert is not required. For example: Stayman asking for majors over no Trump, 4 level ace asking bids, cue bids of the opponents suit, takeout doubles, weak 2 bids and the strong 2 club opener do not require an alert.

Announcements and alerts are a required part of duplicate bridge. While the director may assess penalties or make score adjustments if these procedures are not followed, the adjustment is not automatic. The misinformation or failure to provide information would have to be the direct cause of harm to the injured side for an adjustment to be made. In addition, if the injured side did know or strongly suspected what the bid actually meant, no adjustment would be appropriate. For example, if a responder bids 2 hearts after partners opening bid of 1 NT and the required announcement of "transfer" is not made, the director is very unlikely to make any adjustment if the injured side are experienced players and knew what the bid meant. If it alert is made, every player has an obligation to ask for an explanation if they are not sure of the meaning. If a bid was alerted and you assume you knew what it meant, did not ask and were harmed because of a different meaning, you're out of luck. When in doubt, ask.

## LR + 6 = G

By Joe W. Fisher



Mathematicians love equations! So it is natural for me to introduce this bridge equation:  $LR + 6 = G$  to my class on Friday (March 29) and guess what? It popped up at the CBA game Tuesday evening (March 26, Deal #17). This deal is almost exactly the same as one of Phillip Alder's that I was planning to use to illustrate the

application of this equation in class. This must be an omen for me to do this article.

We hold this hand and see partner open 1♠.

♠ T84
♥ A84
♦ KQ76
♣ K64

It's a balanced 3-card limit raise (as dummy for partner, subtract one for the flat distribution in evaluating this 8-loser hand). Whatever your system, after responding 1NT forcing, or 2♦'s ten plus, your partner rebids 2♠ showing 6<sup>+</sup> spades. What do we do?

Time for the equation!  $LR + 6 = G$ . We have a Limit Raise for partner's major. She has shown a 6<sup>+</sup>-card spade suit. Voila! Limit Raise + 6-card major opener = Game! So jump to 4♠!

Now the good student asks of the Prof, why? It is all about your fit for partner's 6<sup>+</sup>-card spade suit. *Opener, with a 6-card suit, adds 3 evaluation points to her hand when she knows about partner's fit.* Here, though, she doesn't know about the fit. So as responder, add the 3 extra evaluation points to your hand and make the value bid of 4♠!

This was partner's hand. Game is a reasonable opposite this minimal opener which I would open 1♠ rather than 2♠'s. It is an offensive hand with 2 defensive tricks and an easy rebid.

♠ KQJ973
♥ J9
♦ 432
♣ A7

For those quantitative readers, I would assign the number 14 to evaluate this deal, where 13 is required to open. For you Colchamiro junkies, this meets his 22 criterion to open. Would your partner open this hand and then accept if you only raised to 3♠'s?

*References: See my article 'Tips from the Master—Charles Goren', **The Alert**, August 2010 (on our CBA website) and Eddie Kantar, 'Just the Facts, #9', **Bridge Bulletin**, January 2013.*

## The Portrait of a Bridge Player as a Young Man – A Father's View

By John M. Altman



Snap! I could see John's heart pounding amongst the sound of snapping cards. It was the first time he ever played duplicate bridge. He hesitantly played his first card, and then, in a flash, the hand was over. He played the next hand without realizing what he was doing. By the

end of that night, after playing 24 hands, we finished last, but what could one expect? John was an elementary school student who had stumbled into a room of doctors, lawyers, professors, and engineers who had been playing duplicate bridge for longer than he had been on the planet. Now he could have gone home and never gone back, but he didn't. Early on, John had a knack for cards. At age 4, he played countless hours of blackjack with his grandmother, who introduced him to many card games. Blackjack was his favorite, because he could win money at it. Well occasionally the "house" would let him see the hole card before taking a hit, so sometimes it wasn't too hard to win. In early 2007, his grandmother paid for bridge lessons. It all started on a beautiful spring day at the CBC, when we walked into Nancy Sachs' beginner class. At age 12, John was the youngest player in the room. Nancy was a great teacher, and he became hooked.

After a few lessons, we started playing in the Tuesday novice game, directed by Tom Deddens. As a new player, John could not have asked for a better person to encourage him to play. We were thrilled when we earned our first fractional master point, in Tom's game, only to learn that we had 299.81 more points to go. At that pace, it would take 20 years for him to achieve life master. As he developed confidence, John loved playing-up to avoid sit-outs in the open and novice games. "Come on Dad!", he would say, when the director asked for volunteers, and reluctantly I would acquiesce. We set realistic goals in the open game—to have at least a 40 percent game and not finish last. Usually we succeeded, and every now and then, we surprised ourselves. When we finished first overall in a Saturday open game, Tom sent an email to all the beginning bridge players and labeled us the "dragon slayers."

John became passionate about bridge. He diligently studied the game, reading books, discussing hands, and playing on the computer. He learned from his mentors, Marshall Tully and Bill Higgins. Even, I taught him a few things, but those roles have now reversed. He learned by playing-up, and the open players (the "pros") were so welcoming, kind, and helpful. When John entered junior high school, we played twice a week, staying out to 11:00 p.m on school nights! I knew better than to ask if his homework was done, especially in front of his mother. We played on Saturdays too! Over the years we had many laughs, especially with our Swiss partners, Ron Neal and Carol Vradelis. Just ask Carol about the time, after a

successful team game, while dining at a Big Boy, how Ron unknowingly recreated the famous Jack Nicholson "chicken salad sandwich scene" from the movie Five Easy Pieces. Thinking of that moment still makes us laugh today.

Passion, hard work, and determination paid off for John. At age 14, in 2008, John won the Ace of Clubs, Mini-McKenney, and Rookie of the Year awards. He is believed to be the CBC's youngest winner of these awards. Together we qualified for 5 Nationals—NAP in 2009 2011, and 2012; GNT 2011 and 2012. At age 16, with the encouragement of Mike Lipp, John became the youngest director at the CBC. And, in 2012 at the Philadelphia Nationals, we realized every bridge player's dream. At the Nationals, together we become life masters by winning a 2-day knock-out with our teammates Nalin Mehta and Arun Gupta. How fitting that this happened, at the Nationals, in John's high school senior year, and that we accomplished it together.

Where did the time go? From elementary school to graduating with honors from Walnut Hills High School, we've played thousands of bridge hands together. During this time, John fit in friends, girlfriends, 11 AP courses, and played the piano for the WHHS Jazz Ensemble. John played on the WHHS tennis team for one year, and he was actively involved in the WHHS bridge club. He became a National Merit Commended student. I can't help but well-up a few tears, knowing that this Fall John will be an honors student at The Ohio State University, and that our partnership will be taking a break. As I look back, the time just flew by, but I am the luckiest bridge player in the world to have spent so much time with my son playing a game that we both love and enjoy. John, only when you sit across the bridge table with your own son or daughter someday (many, many years from now), will you know just what this time has meant to me. Congratulations son, you should be proud of what you have accomplished, and you should be excited about what the future holds.

*The CBA serves Youth Bridge and encourages young people to play duplicate bridge in the Cincinnati area. John is a CBA Youth Life Master with extensive National Tournament experience, who serves the CBA as a Director. John, thank you for your contributions to the CBA. Keep playing!— Ed.*

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## Some New Conventions by Amit Raturi

I arrived at the game without a partner but the partnership desk was populated with many singles. Piece of cake, this bridge! You can walk in and play any time. 30 minutes to game time so I hunted down my new victim....time to go over the convention card. He wanted to play the Supercollusion system.



What is that, I asked?

*"Well, the essence is that we collude on the auction without anyone finding out. The key bids in the auction are 2 NT and 3 NT opening bids. They are both psyches."*



Why psyche with a good hand I asked?

*"They don't know how to defend then. Plus no one will believe a 2 NT psyche"*

But how do we know what to bid next, and what if we land up playing like 3 C\* for -1100...oh well, that's fine. What about 1 NT?

*"Well, I play that weak in the club game, intermediate at a Sectional and strong at a Regional"*

But we are playing in a national event.

*"Well, I guess then its game forcing. And all transfers are either balance transfers or wire transfers – in the latter you have what you said you have but in the former, you may just be moving your balance from one account to another. So with 5 hearts you transfer to spades and then bid hearts cancelling the earlier transfer"*



What about opening preempts? Does that promise a solid suit? *"Most of the time, but sometimes its pinstripe, with no more than one pair of pants outside"*



Huh? *"Well, the suit can be shaded or broken, and you have at most one K or J outside"*



Isn't that a sexist system? I mean what if I have a queen outside. Can I not preempt?

*"Boy, you are adventurous!! Does your wife know you have a queen on the*

*side? If you do, then don't show weakness or open a weak two."*

What about 1 C and 1 D?

*"Well, 1 C is the Rotary club so it means an opening hand with 2, 3, 4 or 5 clubs depending on your seat position. So 1<sup>st</sup> seat 1 Club promises 2, second seat it promises 3 etc."*



So what do I do if I am in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat with 3 clubs? *"Then you open 1 D. I call it the Hope Diamond bid. You open the hand and hope that partner will figure out what you have."*

What about 1♥ and 1♠?

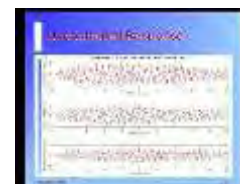
*I play that standard. But I play that all responses are start of a relay system.*

Huh?

*Well, the next suit bid begins a relay sequence. The first relay asks for number of cards in the next higher color. The second asks for HCP in the next higher color. The third asks for any remaining tens and nines. In that suit!*

That's impressive.

*Yes. The best part of this (or any) relay system is that you never hand the baton to your partner. And 1 NT over 1♥ or 1♠ asks for controls in that suit. 2♣ is the uncontrolled response to it...you know like when you are angry and stuff!*



Are doubles conventional takeout?

*No, my conventional takeout is cheeseburger and French fries, but singles only...double cheeseburger is too much for me. How about we play that applies only in the evening session when I am likely to be hungrier.*

So what does a cue bid mean after a takeout double?

*Well, it's an asking bid, so I must be asking for the time so I can decide whether it's a single or a double.*

Should we play Michaels overalls as showing two suits?

*I can go with two suits as long as they are a bikini or grey flannel. Otherwise I would prefer a 3 piece suit, so typically a 3-3-3-3 hand – 3 pieces in each suit, and four suits.*



But that's twelve cards.

*Yes. The last one sometimes gets stuck in the pocket of Michael's overalls. Trust me on that one. It cost us the first place in a team event once.*

What about Gerber? Do you play that a jump shows Gerber?

*Yes, but only if the baby is very hungry and its strained peas. But recently I have been thinking about organic bidding systems and changing the brand to Tasty Baby.*



How about overcalls to 1 NT?



*Don't even go there!! I started playing Astro but our contracts got to astronomical levels. Brozel, Landy, Cappelletti, nothing worked. So we decided that all calls after 1 NT are long distance. That means*

*Modified Landy on weekdays between 8 and 5 PM, Pinstripe Astro between 5 and 11 PM and transfers in the non-peak times between 11 PM and 8 AM. And please be careful about your calling zone! After this last Vanderbilt, calling Denmark and Netherlands is very expensive. They take you for a number!*

What are your responses to the 1 NT overcall?



*Well, typically my responses are "Fine thank you, and you?", or sometime, "Nice weather we are having". Will that work?*

Sure, but do you play support doubles?

*Oh yes, I do -- but with two caveats -- a slow support double shows 2 card support and a loud one is more penalty oriented. I play non-responsive doubles as well.*

*That shows a hand where my highest card is the seven. Very useful convention -- since I have a pretty dead hand.*



What about ace asking bids?

*Keycard!! Always Keycard!!! Last time I got locked out of my room because I did not Keycard on the way to a slam. So now I always play that it asks for 2 keycards (I know most people ask for 5 but that's totally silly and wasteful)!!*



Well, then, let's play!!

**EPISODE 7: THE ALBATROSS DRONES ON**

by Steve Felson



The Harvard School of Intergalactic Ornithology (Remulak Campus) calls me the other day. Seems an assistant prof heard we had an albatross on board that pulled people up instead of down. She goes on and on about *Diomedea exulans*, the wandering albatross, giant wingspan, mates for life, lives to 50, female lays a single egg every two years. Wants to know what we have.

I explain to her that the only bird on this ship, *Robertus Brunetus*, is even more interesting – he lays an egg every three or four deals, looks close to 200, flies all over the Universe despite the lack of any visible wingspan, and, unfortunately for me, also appears to mate for life. There is a long pause. She says she'll get back to me.

Yes, *Robertus B.* mates for life whether I like it or not, and here I sit with multiple offers from some pretty good players to come over to the light side. What to do?

To put off the decision I plug a few of our recent games into Raturi and Moese's new web site, "Who's\_the\_Idiot\_You\_or\_Your\_Partner.com", and guess what – It Ain't Me, Babe ("Another Side of Bob Dylan," Columbia 1964). I reflect on how Brown scores 28-35% with other partners and either 60% or 40% with me (oddly, nothing in between). This says he needs me – I'm his Muse – I'm pulling him up, not down. That was a good enough reason for Giulietta Masina to stay with the abusive circus strong man (Anthony Quinn) in Fellini's *La Strada* (1954) – shouldn't it be good enough for me? While I'm struggling we're dealt this beauty in a regional held on a wobbly rock halfway between Melmac, home planet

East Deals **Bob**  
NS Vul ♠ Q875  
♥ QJ  
♦ QJ63  
♣ AKQ

of Alf (NBC, 1986-1990), and The Twelfth of Never ("Johnny Mathis," Columbia, 1957):

♠ K643	N W S E	♠ A1092
♥ K985		♥ 743
♦ 1075		♦ 842
♣ J4		♣ 953

After P-1♣-P, Bob's in pain. He pauses so long – motionless – I'm thinking stroke. I also hear quacking in the background and we're light years

**Me**  
♠ J  
♥ A1062  
♦ AK9  
♣ 108762

from the nearest pond. I'm praying: "Please, oh god of space bridge, let his bid be something I've seen before."

Finally he hits the 4NT button – nothing freaky about that as long as he's prepared for my weak ♣ suit. I show two key cards without the ♣Q and he jumps to six. No disaster yet – maybe he's really loaded.

West, the one with the gills, gulps for air, sprays something slimy on its ugly puss, fisheyes his cards and leads a trump. As dummy hits, the quacking get louder, but no matter how hard I squint at our two hands I don't see the losers. In fact, unless the jack of trumps is heavily protected, only a ♠ lead plus an off-side ♥K beats us.

Yes, once again I have lifted *Robertus Brunetus* to the highest level of play. Of the 18,000 N-S pairs, 99% were in 3NT usually making 4 and the rest went off the proton beam early and never recovered. 6♣ vulnerable, plus 1370, beating everybody.

So, I ask you – is Brown a man being pulled down by some obscure bird or have I got him flapping where no bird-man has flapped before? Could anyone reject such a partner? Onward and upward! Batten down the hatches! Clear the decks! We're loaded to the gunwales! All hands to the pumps! On three: jettison the metaphors!

## RUMINATIONS

By Robert S. Brown

Long ago, when grace of expression was universally admired, style and form manuals providing guidance in epistolary composition were common. In this tradition and with a focus on quotidian bridge situations, the Ruminator offers the examples below drawn from his vast personal experience.



### Cold Command – Advice to a Partner Apologizing for Poor Play.

Pat\* - You Sniveling Wimp:

To quote John Wayne: "Never apologize and never explain; it only makes you look weak".<sup>1</sup> For your

\*Actual names inadvertently included; please disregard.

<sup>1</sup> As Captain Nathan Cutting Brittles in *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (John Ford, Director, 1949).

information, all my bad games are intentional – either to punish my partner or reward my opponents – the latter humanitarian gesture has not been adequately recognized but I remain selfless and

*Your Infallible and Unflappable Leader*

### Submission – Transmission of Funds to a Cause<sup>2</sup> You Don't Support.

Mistress Gerry\*:

Yesterday Sonya\* threatened me with a visit from two of her friends she colloquially referred to as "the Knife and Bonecrusher" unless I immediately dispatched the enclosed bank draft in your favor. Given that I am a natural (as opposed to an artificially sweetened) coward, I am complying with her extortionate exaction and continue to be

*Your Most Abject and Timorous Servant*

### Gratitude – A Thank You Note for Gifts Received at the Table

Dearest \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>:

The Albatross and I were well *en route* to a mediocre performance before you arrived. Your inept defense, preposterous overbidding, and misguided doubling gave us three top boards and we finished the evening respectably. It is a sad commentary on our times that most players receive these presents without comment. We, however, acknowledge our indebtedness for your timely meltdown and hope the flowers accompanying this note are well received from us

*Your Deeply Grateful & Highly Appreciative Opponents*

### Schadenfreude – Insincere Consolation of a Falling Icon

Lord Norman\*:

I was shocked by the abysmal performance you recorded yesterday. I've seen higher percentages labeled as the alcohol content of a decent Bordeaux. I know we each sidle to senility at our own pace but you seem to have broken into a sprint. If indeed you've lost your game and now must compete as a

<sup>2</sup> The eleemosynary distribution of name and ACBL number labels to Flying Pig players who apparently can't spell the former or remember the latter.

<sup>3</sup> Name omitted at the insistence of the Albatross, fearful of a defamation suit despite truth and opinion defenses.

mere mortal<sup>4</sup>, take heart that your newfound peers still regard you with the admiration and respect to which your former ability entitled you and that we welcome you into our circle of

*Most Respectful, but Pedestrian, Players*

### High Dudgeon – Addressing the Perfidy of an Albatross

Stephen\* - You Philandering @\$%^&! You begged off the Tuesday night game pleading the pressures of work. I went anyway accepting the indignity of a standby player *du noir*. Then, you waltz in with that floozy – Ron\* – on your arm. I will not take this public humiliation passively; I know where you live; I shall “cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war”<sup>5</sup>; and become

Your Worst Nightmare<sup>6</sup>

[Shakespeare Coriolanus, 1607, Act III, Scene 1, Line 2082 Menenius: "**Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt with modest warrant.**" – Ed.]

### New Bridge Lessons!

Nancy Sachs Supervised Play  
May 8 Wed 4 - 6 pm

Linda Wolber Bridge Fundamentals I Wed time 7-9  
Beginning April 24, 2013  
Friday 12:30 - 2:30 beginning April 26, 2013

Intermediate Mon 7-9 PM  
Beginning April 22, 2013

#### Potter Orr

ACBL [Club Series for Beginners Sat 9-12 AM](#)  
[8 weeks Beginning April 27](#)

#### Basic Conventions

Fri 8:45 - 10:45, 4 wks beginning April 26

Contact the teachers directly. See [cincybridge.com](http://cincybridge.com) for details (Learn/Improve/Bridge Class Schedule).

<sup>4</sup> Confer Tennyson, *MORTE D' ARTHUR*: "Authority forgets a dying king".

<sup>5</sup> Shakespeare, *JULIUS CAESAR* Act III, Scene 1, line 273 (1601).

<sup>6</sup> Ate, *idem* at line 271.

### Nancy's Nasties by Pat Dutson

Examine the hand and then decide how you will play to make your contract. This hand was taught by Nancy Sachs in her Advanced Two Over One Classes.



West	North	East	South
		1♥	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			
South	♠ Q8		
Deals	♥ J 3		
Both Vul	♦ AK5		
	♣ J76543		
♠ J74		♠ A2	
♥ 98765		♥ KQT4	
♦ J986		♦ 743	
♣ K		♣ QT98	
	♠ KT9653		
	♥ A2	West Leads	
	♦ QT2	the 9♥	
	♣ A2		

Answer → see page  
16

### Can Cincinnatians do Better?

By Yauheni Siutsau

All problems are from Polish Bridge Magazine

**NORTH**  
♠ Axxx  
♥ xxx  
♦ xxx  
♣ xxx

**Problem 1** - IMPs, Both vul, W Deals  
4♥ by S. Opening lead ♣K.  
W plays ♣Q and ♣J. You ruff 3<sup>rd</sup> ♣ and cash ♥AK; E has ♥J1098, W discards a ♣. Plan your play.

SOUTH	West	North	East	South
♠ Kx	Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣
♥ AKQxx	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
♦ AKQx	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
♣ xx	All Pass			

**Problem 2** - IMPs, none vul, E

4♠ by S. Opening lead ♥7.  
E plays ♥J. Plan your play.

West	North	East	South
		1♥	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

**NORTH**  
♠ 65  
♥ 5432  
♦ AKQ  
♣ AJ87

**SOUTH**  
♠ KQJ1043  
♥ A106  
♦ J87  
♣ 2

**Solution Problem 1:**

♠ Axxx		♠ Q10x
♥ xxx		♥ J1098
♦ xxx		♦ xx
♣ xxx		♣ Axxx
♠ J9xx		♠ Kx
♥ x		♥ AKQxx
♦ J109x		♦ AKQx
♣ KQJx		♣ xx



Since E has a ♥ trick we cannot afford to lose a ♦. If ♦s are 3-3 we have no problems. What if they are not? Look at the full deal:

If you try to cash ♦AKQ in order to ruff last ♦ in dummy, E will trump ♦Q and you'll be down. You should cash only two top diamonds, play

small spade to the ace and **small ♦ from dummy**. If E will ruff you will pitch small, if E will discard you will play ♦Q and ruff last ♦ using last trump in dummy. Notice that this line would work also if E has 4 or 5 ♦s.

**Solution Problem 2:**

♠ 65		♠ A
♥ 5432		♥ KQJ98
♦ AKQ		♦ 6542
♣ AJ87		♣ K109
♠ 9872		♠ KQJ1043
♥ 7		♥ A106
♦ 1093		♦ J87
♣ Q6543		♣ 2



We have two ♥ losers and ♠A. However, if you start trumps from your hand opponents will be able to get 2<sup>nd</sup> trump trick if the full deal looks like this:

E will win 1<sup>st</sup> ♠, will cash 2 more ♥s and play

another ♥ promoting his partner ♠9. In order to prevent such unfortunate turn of events you should play ♣ to the ace and **small ♠ from dummy**. Now you can ruff 4<sup>th</sup> round of ♥s high (10) and use KQJ to draw remaining trumps. Notice that it's better to use ♣A as an entry. If you use a ♦ honor W will be able to discard his two remaining diamonds on ♥QJ and defense will get a ♦ ruff.

natural winners so that we can create winners of several of our cards in this suit. This happens when partner can play a high card forcing declarer to win with his own high card and thus promoting our own high card to a winning position. It can also happen when partner gets in the lead later in the hand and leads this suit through declarer's holding. And, we hope declarer runs out of the suit before we do so that our last one or two small cards are also winners.

If our long suit is especially strong, now we not only want to develop our winners, we also want to prevent declarer from scoring low card in this suit. One special holding in this category is KQ109(x). If we start by leading the fourth best, it may allow declarer to score his Jack. Many players have an agreement that, from this specific holding, they will lead the Queen and it asks partner to play the Jack if he holds it or to show attitude about this suit. This prevents declarer from being successful in holding up winning the first trick when he holds AJx which might entice us into leading this suit again at trick two. (This play by declarer is known as the Bath Coup.)

Another strong holding for not leading fourth best is when we have a top three card sequence or first, second and fourth cards in our top sequence. An example would be KQJ7(x). Declarer deserves to win the Ace but not necessarily the ten. Lead the King. Partner should show attitude. If declarer ducks, we will continue with the Queen and hopefully know enough about the suit to know if declarer's Ace will drop on a third lead. If our original holding is KQ107(x), again lead the King. Partner should signal a positive attitude with either the Ace or Jack in this suit and discourage when not holding either of those cards. Some other holdings in this category are QJ107(x) and QJ97(x). With all of these holdings, start by leading your top card.

A final example of not leading fourth best is when we have an expectation of winning all of the tricks in this suit. Our suit will be either AKJ10(x) or AKQ10(x) or perhaps AKJxx (but with this last holding extra care is necessary so as to not set up the 10 in declarer's hand). We would expect the No Trump bidder to hold the missing honor card most of the time. It may drop or we may need to finesse it away from declarer. Of course, the missing honor card might be in dummy or it might be in partner's hand. Many partners have an agreement that, from these specific holdings, they lead the Ace and it asks partner to play an honor if he holds one (either the Queen or the Jack but not the

## Leads vs. NT Contracts By Otto Walter,


[owalter@fuse.net](mailto:owalter@fuse.net)

"Fourth from the top of our longest and strongest suit" is the lead we will most often make against an opponents No Trump contract. We do this in the hope that partner can help us exhaust declarer of his

10), otherwise give count in this suit. Using standard signals, partner will play his highest card to show an even number of cards and his lowest card to show an odd number of cards. If we can work it out that declarer's high card will drop, we simply continue cashing out this suit. (Declarer will need to have started with Qx or no longer than Jxx in our second example.) If declarer's honor will not drop, we will lead some other suit at trick two, hope partner can get on lead later in the hand and then lead our original suit through declarer.

Here's a possible hand of this type.

South	♠ KJ753	<b>South</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>
Deals	♥ 106	1N	Pass	2♥	Pass
	♦ AJ4	2♠	Pass	3N	AP
	♣ J76				

♠ 92		♠ Q1054
♥ AKJ92		♥ 843
♦ 1098		♦ K532
♣ 432		♣ 65
		♠ A8
		♥ Q75
		♦ Q76
		♣ AKQ108

Correct defense will set this hand; while a fourth best lead will allow declarer to make this contract.

## Better Preempts



by Andrew Gumperz Sept. 19, 2012  
[www.bridgewinners.com](http://www.bridgewinners.com)

Andrew Gumperz is a part-time bridge professional based in the SF bay area. This article is

reprinted with the author's permission from the Gump's Tips series on Bridgewinners.com. See Andrews articles on BridgeWinners!



Every preempt has a chance to score a big victory and a chance to suffer a big defeat. Defeats occur when the preempt earns a large minus score. However, not all numbers are equally costly *when measured in IMPs*. Suppose you are my teammate in a KO match. After playing, I come back beaming and proudly announce +800 on the first board. Is that a good or a bad result? It all depends:

- If you scored -1440 defending 6NT, then my +800 loses 12 IMPs
- If you scored -140 defending 3S, then my +800 wins 12 IMPs

The value of a raw score when measured in IMPs depends on what other scores are possible on that board. +800 was terrible when my alternative was to make a vulnerable 6NT. It was great when my alternative was a small plus in a partial.

The notion that the value of a score is relative has an important implication when you are preempting/sacrificing (i.e., bidding for a minus score). *Do not intentionally bid for a minus with significant side-suit defense.*

The more defense the preempter holds, the less likely the opponents can bid and score a big number on their own.

♠ x
♥ KQJ10xxx
♦ xx
♣ xxx

Your hand is probably worth zero tricks on defense. Chances are excellent the opponents can make a game since partner is unlikely to hold four defensive tricks. If the opponents double your 3♥ preempt, even if you go -800, the IMP loss will be small.

♠ x
♥ AJ10xxxx
♦ Kx
♣ xxx

Your ♥s are at least 1 sure trick and your diamond will take a trick around half the time. While you would still preempt, this hand is far more likely to defeat a game contract.

♠ x
♥ A109xxxx
♦ Kx
♣ Qxx

Your ♥s have a sure trick and both minors are worth 1/2 a defensive trick. With 2 likely defensive tricks in your hand, it won't take much from partner to defeat a game.

♠ x
♥ AKxxxxx
♦ Qx
♣ xxx

Your ♥s are 1-2 defensive tricks and your diamond is half a defensive trick as well. The opponents often will not have a biddable game. If partner has a scattered 9-count, the opponents only have 2 HCP between them. If the opponents double your 3♥ contract, you could lose a lot of IMPs.

### My First Tip

Evaluate your *defense* before making any preemptive jump opening, overcall, or raise. When you have defensive values, the opponents often will not have the combined strength to bid to a game. In these cases, a minus score in a doubled contract will normally IMP poorly. The ace of your suit is bad for preemption because it is almost certainly a defensive



trick, and may lead to more (for example: giving partner a ruff, or providing a quick entry to lead towards partner's tenaces). Side-suit high cards are also bad. On the other hand, secondary honors (QJ10) in your long suit(s) are good for preemption because they protect you from going down too much while having little to no defensive value.

### My Second Tip

♠	x
♥	QJ10987
♦	J10xxx
♣	x

At the other extreme, preempt aggressively with a weak hand, good shape, and no defense. For example:

This hand has *negative* defense. Your partner's ♦AKxxx which look great on defense will take one or even zero tricks. The opponents are a favorite to make anything they bid.

What should you bid to stop them? Some players would pass this weak hand. Others would step out with 2♥, or even 3♥. I would open it 4♥. Crazy? Some people think so. But they are viewing this hand with blinders on. 4♥ will give the opponents a terrible headache, will win more often than it loses, and when it loses, the cost will almost always be cheap because we have no defense.

### Conclusion

Players have argued for years about whether conservative or aggressive preempts are "better". That argument is misguided. Neither style is better. In some situations, it pays to be aggressive, in others conservative. The biggest determining factor is your defense.

- When your hand has defense *preempt conservatively*. The cost of being wrong is high!
- When your hand has no defense *preempt hyper-aggressively*. The cost of being wrong is low!

My next article looks at more factors that affect how costly a preempt may be if it goes wrong.

## 7 ways to improve your game or how to get 35% more often by Yauheni Siutsau

**Foreword** - This guide is intended primarily for non-regular partnerships. Permanent partners, who constantly gain 35%, typically use specific and highly individual methods. This article is for advanced level players, that's why it doesn't consider the basic techniques such as *revoke*, *pass after a long pause* or "Sorry, partner, I did not notice your bid". In general, we should understand that in order to achieve a stable

result, it's enough to learn and use regularly only three or four favorite methods. The other techniques you can use from time to time, which certainly will diversify records in travel and will give vitality to your postmortem discussions with a partner.

### Technique 1 - Add as many complicated conventions as you can.

Force your partner to learn your favorite tricky convention (Lebensohl, scrambling 2NT, Baron etc.) and then FORGET IT. As an option – in a situation ideally suited to use it make another bid. Now partner can make negative inferences from the non-use of the convention.

*Expected result:* usually good for opponents.

*Postmortem:* "Well, I wasn't sure if you remember it, you said you've never played this convention before."

*Timing:* first round of the first session. Partner will be confident about your bidding methods for the rest of the day.

### Technique 2 - Compete very aggressively.

You open 1 of the major, partner raises to level 2 and opponents bid 3 of the minor. If you have exactly five cards in your suit ALWAYS BID IT one more time. This method works most effectively when you are vulnerable but you can use it all the time.

*Expected result:* -200 (down two undoubled) or -500 (down two doubled – it was 800 but you played it very well)

*Postmortem:* "Well, I didn't think they would double, besides, everything was wrong."

*Timing:* The sooner the better. In general it's good to use it regularly throughout the session.

### Technique 3 - Don't lead your partner's suit.

Partner has made a preemptive overcall and opponents have stopped in 3NT. If you have only one or two cards in partner's suit DO NOT LEAD it. It's better to underlead your own Jxxxx because you can draw conclusions from the bidding and know what to do.

*Expected result:* Declarer takes two more tricks than the whole room.

*Postmortem:* "Well, I didn't expect such a strong suit after a preempt."

*Timing:* At any point of the session.

### Technique 4 - Bid you hand twice.

You open weak 2♥ with AQJ10xx, LHO overcalls 2♠, partner bids 3♥, RHO bids 3♠. BID 4♥ if you have a singleton spade because your suit is so attractive.

*Expected result:* -300 if you're not vulnerable. Unfortunately partner had four decent spades and opponents couldn't make anything. *Postmortem:* "Well, I didn't have any defensive potential."

*Timing:* At any point of the session.

#### Technique 5 - Use Blackwood more often.

You should use this bidding sequence regularly: 1♥/♠ - 2 of a minor (GF) - 2♥/♠ - 4NT because it's always nice to know how many aces partner has. *Expected result:* It depends on your final contract guessing ability. It's also nice to make two-three minutes pause after partner's response.

*Postmortem:* It depends on your partner's temperament.

*Timing:* At least once per session.

#### Technique 6 - Never use Blackwood.

Make an agreement not to use Blackwood and try to use cue bids or something more advanced in slam zone.

*Expected result:* Slams off two aces or grand slam off ace of trumps. As a bonus – opponents would regularly call a director to your table if somehow you'll end up in a right contract but with huge pauses during the bidding.

*Postmortem:* It depends on the final result but usually it's very rough.

*Timing:* First hand of the round. Usually you will spend so much time than the second board will bring you AV-.

#### Technique 7 - Bluff more often.

In principle, bluff is a tool for beginners, so you need to be creative in using it. The best possible hand for bluff is when you don't have a fit with partner but have some HCP. Typical situation: you have 2245 and 3-5 HCP, partner opens 1♥ and RHO doubles. Natural bid here would be 1♠. *Expected result:* Usually very weird, for example, minus 250 (down five undoubled) when opponents cannot make anything.

*Postmortem:* "Well, this is a standard position for bluff, partner. You had to figure it out."

*Timing:* Middle of the session if you feel that you don't have a good game.

**Conclusion** - Methods described above are very good tools tested by author personally. If you start to use these techniques regularly I promise that you'll get 35% games very often. Sometimes you'll earn 45% or even 50% but it's only because you are very good declarer.

**P.S.** - This article does not contain any hints or desire to offend anybody. If it seems too malicious to you it is probably because of weird author's sense of humor. Good luck at the tables ☺.

### Nancy's Nasties Answers by Pat Dutson

South ♠ Q8  
Deals ♥ J 3  
Both Vul ♦ AK5  
♣ J76543

♠ J74	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border: 1px solid white; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ A2
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ 98765	♥ KQT4										
♦ J986	♦ 743										
♣ K	♣ QT98										

♠ KT9653

♥ A2

West Leads

♦ QT2

the 9♥

♣ A2

You have three obvious losers: the A♠, a ♥, and a ♣. You also have a fourth potential loser, the J♠ unless the A♠ and J♠ are a doubleton.

One tactic that may work to help you locate the J♠ is a "sucker play". Remember the infamous quote: "There's a sucker born every minute." attributed to P.T. Barnum or perhaps by Joseph (Paper Collar Joe) Bessimer or David Hannum, take your pick. Let's see how we might sucker our opponents.

After winning the A♥ at trick one, immediately play the 2♥. East will win and may think "South wants to ruff a losing ♥ in dummy". He/she may then try to counteract your perceived strategy by cashing the A♠ and leading a second ♠ to your Q♠. Now, the J♠ will fall under your K♠--congratulations, you suckered East. But, let's assume East is a wily veteran and doesn't fall for your sucker play. He/she returns the 8♣. Now what do you do?

You have to take a finesse in ♠'s. Is there any other approach? Get a better count on the hand? West played the K♣ under your A, probably a singleton. 1<sup>st</sup> start with probabilities, my favorite topic. Here are the hand distribution probabilities for the most common hands with a singleton:

Shape	Prob, %
4-4-4-1	2.99
5-4-3-1	12.93
5-5-2-1	3.17
6-4-2-1	4.70
6-5-1-1	0.71
6-6-1-0	0.07
7-3-2-1	1.88
7-4-1-1	0.39
7-5-1-0	0.11

There are also a number of small probabilities for an 8-card or higher suit. But, with an 8-card or longer suit, wouldn't West have made a weak jump-overcall?

We can eliminate all hands that have a void as we already know that West has at least two ♥'s and one

♣. Of the remaining probabilities, a 5-4-3-1 probability is head and shoulders above the rest--almost 3 times the next closest probability. So, let's assume that is West's distribution. Now, let's try to figure out the distribution for the specific suits.

Let's start by leading a small ♦ to the ♦A. Now cash the ♦K and lead a small ♦ to the ♦Q. West followed on all 3 ♦s so our presumed probability is still valid.

Now let's look at the specific trump suit possibilities for the 2 key cards-- A♠ and J♠. If either West or East has a 5-card trump suit, we have no chance of making the hand. **Hand Split.com** says the highest probability distributions are:

West	East
AJX	XX
AXX	JX
AX	JXX
JXX	AX
JX	AXX
XX	AJX

So, you are still left with a 50%-50% probability. Pick one and "may the odds always be in your favor" – Hunger Games..

*[Finesse the J when missing the AJ. If you know which opponent has length, finesse that opponent for the J. The chances of making 5 tricks on this combination are about 43% - Suit Play. Ed]*

## WHEN THE BLOCKHEAD CHANGED

**COURSE** by Rob Weidenfeld

Nothing ever seemed to go his way. He was doomed to be the scapegoat for everyone's woes. He always seemed to take the fall, whether he had any control over it or not. When the red-haired girl ignored him, he was the blockhead. When supper was late for Snoopy, he was the blockhead. When Luci moved the football so he would miss the ball entirely...well, you get the idea. And Luci was the worst detractor of all.



It was even worse when they played bridge. He could never conquer a 2-way finesse anytime Luci was nearby. Unfortunately, she played the game he loved, so yet again he found himself playing against her. Linus was his partner when this hand was dealt. Charlie Brown was South and the dealer.

The auction was too tortured to duplicate, but suffice it to say that after Charlie opened 2♣ and subsequently bid 6NT, Linus though his spots were so good that there would surely be a play for 7. So he bid the grand in notrump! Looking at the West hand Luci declared that even a blockhead could make 7 with what she was holding!

South ♠ QJ1098  
Deals ♥ AKQ  
Both Vul ♦ 2  
♣ J1098

♠ 642  
♥ J1098  
♦ 1098  
♣ 765



♠ 753  
♥  
76543  
♦ KJ  
♣ 432

♠ AK  
♥ 2  
♦ AQ76543  
♣ AKQ

With that she led the ♥J.

Charlie was very excited. He could count 13 top tricks: 5 ♠s, 3 ♥s, 4 ♣s, and 1 ♦. He thought a ♦ finesse could yield a 14th trick!

Then he saw it. He didn't have 13 tricks. He could play off his two remaining hearts

giving him two ♦ pitches. Then, even if the ♣ finesse worked, he could not avoid a ♦ loser. Luci had found the only suit to lead which deprived him of an entry to dummy when he needed it most-later in the play. He was going to be locked out of dummy because of the blockage in 2 suits! Only a blockhead could find himself with 2 suits irrevocably blocked!

Resigning himself to the fate which had already been written in the stars, he played a second heart preparing to discard a diamond loser. Was there any way out of this script?

As he went to discard, the spade ace fell, almost providentially, out of his hand! Luci roared as she followed suit immediately. "Only a blockhead throws away aces," she guffawed! Charlie knew he could still take it back, so to spite her he didn't. "Play the last ♥," he said as he threw the ♠K into the air!

"I guess you can play the good ♠s from dummy" he now said proudly. Whereupon he discarded from his hand the A, K, and Q of ♣s from his hand followed by two small ♦s. Luci was no longer smiling. He then played his 4 good ♣s in dummy throwing four losing ♦s and was left with a singleton ♠A in his hand!

"Well I guess the blockhead just became the unblockhead" he declared in a rare moment of self-indulgence.

**"Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend."**

— Albert Camus

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<b>Tuesday June 4</b>	<b>GOLD RUSH and OPEN PAIRS</b>		Pig in Mud Evening KO (Round 1) Open Pairs Evening Side Series Piglet Single Session Swiss <b>299er Pairs</b>
	Miss Piggy Knockout (Round 1) Open Pairs Side Series I <b>99er Pairs</b>	Miss Piggy Knockout (Round 2) Open Pairs Side Series I Piglet Single Session Swiss <b>99er Pairs</b>	
<b>Wednesday June 5</b>	<b>Pig in a Poke Open Pairs (2 sessions)</b>		Pig in Mud Evening KO (Round 2) Hogwash Evening KO (Round 1) Open Pairs Evening Side Series
	Miss Piggy Knockout (Round 3) Baby Back Knockout (Round 1) Open Pairs Side Series I <b>299er Pairs</b>	Miss Piggy Knockout (Round 4) Baby Back Knockout (Round 2) Open Pairs Side Series I Piglet Single Session Swiss <b>299er Pairs</b>	
<b>Thursday June 6</b>	<b>GOLD RUSH and OPEN SWISS TEAMS</b>		Pig in Mud Evening KO (Round 3) Hogwash Evening KO (Round 2) Squeaky Clean Compact KO (1-2) Open Pairs Evening Side Series <b>299er Pairs</b>
	Baby Back Knockout (Round 3) Open Pairs Side Series I <b>99er Pairs</b>	Baby Back Knockout (Round 4) Open Pairs Side Series I Piglet Single Session Swiss <b>99er Pairs</b>	
<b>Friday June 7</b>	<b>Hog Wild Open Pairs (2 sessions)</b>		Pig in Mud Evening KO (Round 4) Hogwash Evening KO (Round 3) Squeaky Clean Compact KO (3-4) Open Pairs Evening Side Series <b>Second Annual Cincinnati Youth Bridge Championship</b>
	Porky Pig Knockout (Round 1) Open Pairs Side Series II <b>299er Pairs</b>	Porky Pig Knockout (Round 2) Open Pairs Side Series II Piglet Single Session Swiss <b>299er Pairs</b>	
<b>Saturday June 8</b>	<b>GOLD RUSH and OPEN PAIRS</b>		Hogwash Evening KO (Round 4) Open Pairs Evening Side Series <b>299er Pairs</b>
	Porky Pig Knockout (Round 3) Pig Out Compact KO (Rnds 1-2) Open Pairs Side Series II <b>99er Pairs</b>	Porky Pig Knockout (Round 4) Pig Out Compact KO (Rnds 3-4) Open Pairs Side Series II <b>99er Pairs</b>	
	<b>3 Little Pigs Open Swiss (2 sessions)</b>		
<b>Sunday June 9</b>	Flying Pig Stratiflighted Swiss Teams (2 session playthrough)		

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