

Steel City Bridge

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 8

~ EDITED BY CRAIG BIDDLE ~

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PITTSBURGH BRIDGE NEWS

LORRAINE HANNA

Roni Regional at the Masonic September 2-4

Mark your calendar for the return of a shortened version of our District's Regional Tournament. Hospitality All Sessions. For more information, here is the link <http://www.pittsburghbridge.org/2209RONI.pdf>

As I write this, the Providence NABC is still ongoing. All our best wishes to our players from the Burgh. We will report on results as soon as possible.

The Importance of Mentors

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RONI REGIONAL, SEPT 2-4 - BACK

I read an article entitled “With Gratitude to a Mentor” on ACBL’s website.

In essence, the article's writer says "learning bridge takes four elements: desire, a great teacher; a welcoming place; a fabulous club that supports new players and perhaps most importantly the generosity of mentors the real part of the game”

I don't know who the writer is, but says he watched his grandparents play. His grandfather was very stern and the writer thought this was a really serious game.

The writer spent years in limbo wanting to learn the game and didn't know how to start. He didn't know how to find a partner, didn't know where the games were; didn't know how fun and rewarding bridge can be.

One of the writer’s favorite mentors was always kind and gave **positive reinforcements**. The writer at one time put partner in a slam in partner's void suit. (my note...I'm sure we can all relate to disasters at the table)

Warren Wertheimer was one of his favorite mentors who passed away several years ago. One of Wertheimer's quotes, “It's just a damned game“. Wertheimer said when an opponent is unkind they are “crying out for love”.

I encourage all of us, whether you're formally mentoring or not, to encourage newer players to continue on their journey in this Wonderful World of Bridge.

Survey Results: In last month's SCB Craig summarized the results of our Survey in my column. Several people asked me if I went back to work...NO, Craig is the one who went back to work. Here are, more in depth, Survey Results,

The PBA is listening to you and we share your concerns. It's been difficult to contact players without a Directory. The Board is meeting on August 13 and we have been addressing a way to have an online Directory of our

Members and a Possible Partnership link. **We stopped printing a Directory of our Members some years ago because of a directive from the ACBL.**

Here's one short paragraph from Terms of Use:

"Those using member information in a way that violates these Terms may be subject to civil lawsuit and further ACBL disciplinary action in accordance with ACBL's Code of Disciplinary Regulations ..." For more information go to the ACBL website.

Here are some other comments: Fear of Covid, Lift Vaccination Requirements, Out of Habit of playing, Lack of number of tables at games, Favorite game not started up yet, Can't find partner, Behavior, More convenient and cheaper to play online, Trouble traveling to games, Desire to have games at other locations, Incentives, Too many special games offering too many points.

Several of our survey respondents expressed homage for the outstanding job done by **Kitty Jo Hellman**. Kitty has contributed immensely in keeping games and classes on track during these difficult times. Kudos to Kitty. **One of our finest directors.**

Our Directors are our lifeline to F2F bridge. The PBA has no control over the Directors and their requirements when running their games. For the most part, Directors pay rent for their space and have to pay the ACBL for each table they have in their games in addition to buying supplies.

The PBA runs Sectionals and Special Events. The Sectionals rules are governed by the ACBL.

We understand playing online is more affordable, but the costs in running F2F games are higher.

While our Spring Sectional was a phenomenal success in terms of attendance, we still lost about \$500. Rental of Masonic, Fees to ACBL, and purchase of food, etc cost our Unit in excess of \$6,000 Overall, we still feel as though it was a success. Our attendance, thanks to you, was higher than any Sectional in the Country. We instituted the 50/50 several years ago since our Sectionals usually lose money. Prior to Covid, we did make a slight profit.

There is a Directory of Games and locations in the Burgh on our website.

Novice games are listed under Classes and Lessons and Club Results page.

Our Mentoring Program participants and 0-5 point players have been offered incentives for free play; info on links on the front page of our website.

If you have any other concerns or questions and didn't get them in by the time the Survey closed, please send an email to me via PBA page.

We lost one of our well respected and gem of a person and Director, Sue Golier. Sue's obituary is impressive. In her lifetime, Sue accomplished a wealth of achievements. We will always remember her good spirits and easy laugh.

Gus Costanzo and Karl Sokalski are temporarily directing Sue's games.

We thank all our Directors for keeping us together to enjoy the joy and socialization of seeing one another.

ByLaws & Election of Directors

Our ByLaws indicates "If a vacancy occurs on the Board of Directors, the board may elect, by majority vote of those present, a PBA member to fill the vacancy for the balance of the **unexpired term**".

Election of Directors in part: Directors serve for 2 years and shall be eligible for re-election. Number of directors shall not exceed 15. Terms expire in November and those being replaced are sworn in. The President appoints a Vice President who will then become President. My term as President expires this November and June Threlkeld will become your new President.

Elections are held during a PBA Sectional tournament during September, October or November. (This year that will be in October).

Meetings are generally held in February, April, June, August and November. Minutes of Approved meetings can be found on our website on the PBA page.

You can contact a Board Member from that page as well. We no longer have a direct link to the Board's contact information because of scammers who have tried to extort money from our Unit using Board Members information and posing as Board Members themselves.

Website

www.pittsburghbridge.org

Have you wandered through our website lately? Bill Holt does an incredible job keeping our Bridge Community informed of everything bridge related. I have been asked a number of times for information that can be found on our web page. Take a moment or two and scroll through this Directory of Bridge in the Burgh. You will find which games are open, where they are located, results from the games, classes and lessons, tournament schedules and so much more.

Bridge 'n' Bites

Mark your calendars for August 11, at 6:45 PM for a Swiss Team event at the Thursday night game at Glenshaw Valley Church. It's a pot-luck, bring food if you'd like. Serving will begin at 6 P.M. We are providing the main course and already 5 teams have signed up. Please email Craig at crb1164@verizon.net to register your team. If you decide to come at the last minute, please make sure to bring food.

Last, but not least..

Moving Up The Ranks. Congratulations to all who have moved up the ranks. Paul Caplan has accomplished prestigious status as Diamond Life Master. Ruby Life Master Status has been achieved by Ildiko Baxer and Amy Lowenstein. William Neal became a Life Master.

PROVIDENCE BRIDGE NEWS

CRAIG BIDDLE

I played 11 of the 12 days at the Providence NABC. For the first four days, I partnered Ron Franck, with Dian Petrov and Davis Huessler from Buffalo as teammates, in the GNT Flight A. We lost in the semifinals. We were very lucky that day, we drew a very good team who played better than we did. See Biddle Bits, v2 No.3 for the best hand I saw from that event.

Fred Schenker, partnering Bernie Greenspan with Don and Kathy Sulgrove at the other table, represented the District in the Championship flight, qualifying for the Knockout round by making a part score at one table and

collecting a 2800 penalty at the other table on the decisive board in their last round match. Alas, they lost to a team featuring Jeff Meckstroth in the first KO round.

Dave Collura and Jim Gump, playing with Bob Flynn and Kitty Jo Hellman, represented the District in the Flight B event. They unfortunately lost a 12 IMP lead in the 4th quarter of the first KO round. And Pat Rambasek and Richard Laird were on the Flight C representatives from the District, playing with a married couple from Cleveland, I think. They also lost in the first round. But I talked with Pat and Richard after the event and they said they had learned a lot from the experience.

On the 5th day of the Nationals, Dian, Davis, Ron, and I played in the Regional Swiss and scratched in Flight X. We lost to all three teams we faced that were prepping for the Spingold the next day, and beat all three of the other teams we played. But our wins were bigger than our losses, so we ended up with 67 VP's on a 60 average.

I played in the Senior Swiss on days 6 and 7 with the Sulgroves at one table and Fred Schenker, Frank Cymerman, and myself rotating at the other table. Bernie Greenspan was supposed to be on the team, but he contracted COVID and had to retire from the tournament. Frank and I conspired to lose the last match by overbidding, or misbidding, this pair of hands. After a 1♣ opening on his right, Frank overcalled 1♦ on ♠AQ10♥QJx♦AKJxxx♣x. After his LHO passed, I bid 1♠, which Frank raised to game.

Unfortunately, I had bid 1♠ on ♠K65x♥10xx♦109x♣Axx. I would have made the hand if I had held the ♠7 instead of the 6, but instead went down. If I had made one of the two sensible calls (1NT or 2♦), Frank would surely have tried for 3NT, which was cold on any lead with diamonds 2-2. Had we done that, we would have finished in the mid-20's in the event overalls instead of settling for our match win awards.

On days 8 and 9, Fred and I played in the Wehrner Open Pairs. We scratched in our section the first three sessions, but faded in the 4th session and once again narrowly missed making the overalls.

On day 10, I played with Fred in the Roth Swiss with a pair from California. We barely qualified for the 2nd day, thanks to one of our teammates going down in 7♥ on this pair of hands.

Dummy: ♠AK♥98x♦AQ♣AKJ10xx

Declarer: ♠xxx♥AKQJxx♦xxx♣x

On the ♠Q lead, declarer counted 11 winners, with possible extra tricks coming from a spade ruff in dummy, a diamond finesse, or the club. How would you play it?

Thinking to combine all of his chances, our teammate won the spade lead in dummy, played a trump to hand, led a spade to dummy as LHO played the ♠J, and played another trump to hand. RHO showed out on this trick, discarding a spade. So declarer led a spade. Alas, LHO had been dealt the ♠QJ doubleton and the ten of hearts tripleton.

At our table, declarer took the (much better) line of drawing all the trumps and playing a club to the ace, followed by the ♣K and a low club. When Fred followed with the Queen to the third round, declarer claimed.

But disaster struck for our team. Fred came down with COVID and was forced to withdraw from the tournament. After checking with the directors, we were told we could add a substitute "as long as it didn't strengthen our team appreciably." Fred should be honored, we found Emma Kolesnik, a 23 year old woman from California who has already represented the US in the Women's World Championship. She was a dream to play with. But we only won a few matches on the day. On one of them, Emma and I faced off against Zia and David Gold. The swing hand that decided the match was:

Emma: ♠Jx ♥Q9x ♦Axxx ♣A8xx

Craig: ♠A108x ♥K10xx ♦KJ ♣Q109

I opened 1♣ and Emma responded 2♥, which we played as 11-12 balanced with no major. With both majors well stopped, and a solid 13, I jumped to 3NT to lead the lead come up to my hand. Zia led a low diamond to my KJ, and David played a middle spot, I won the Jack and decided to play on clubs by leading the Queen. Zia covered, and I won. I continued clubs and everyone followed to two more rounds as Zia won the Jack. Now he shifted to a spade, to the King and Ace. I played a spade back and Zia won the Queen. At this point, I'm sure that Zia knew that I had 4 spades and 3 clubs, but I don't think he could tell whether I had 3 or 4 hearts to go with 3 or two diamonds. In any case, his spade into my 108 was a welcome sight and I cashed them, pitching a heart and a diamond from dummy. Now I was up to 3 spades, two clubs, and a diamond. With both defenders down to nothing but red cards. the position was:

Dummy: ♠♥Q9 ♦Ax ♣8

Declarer: ♠♥K10xx ♦K ♣

I needed 3 tricks, and I had them, in a way, with the good club in dummy and the ♦AK, but how to cash them. I found the safest solution; I led the ♥K from hand. They ducked this, of course, but I simply overtook the ♦K with the ace to cash the long club. The pro and sponsor (Steve Garner and Jeff Wolfson, two of my good friends from my days in Chicago) decided they didn't need to bid this game to beat us. But they paid the price.

SECTIONAL NEWS

CRAIG BIDDLE

Dick Katz was in fine form, winning every event that he entered. He won the Friday morning pairs with a 70% game playing with his wife Pat, Saturday morning he had a 65% playing with Gus, and Sunday he won the Swiss partnering Dan Roseberry, with Reanette Frobouck and Pat at the other table. He skipped the Friday and Saturday afternoon pairs games, to give others a chance. Ron Carter and Thomas Black, a couple of Flight C players from the Youngstown area, took full advantage of the opportunity, winning both of those pair games with impressive scores of 65 and 66% for those two events. I don't think it was a fluke, either – I played against them Friday morning and they had 95% on one board and we could only manage 60% on the other.

Winners in the 499er events were: Marlene Wandrisco and Isabella Wagner on Friday morning, Paul and Celine O'Neill Friday afternoon, Alice Hand and Mary Taylor Saturday morning, and Paul and Celine O'Neill again Saturday afternoon. Flight C winners in the 499er events were Linda Silberman and Derek Schofield, Donna Blaine and Virginia Evanko, Lois Quinn and Donald Wyke, and Linda Silberman and Derek Schofield again. And Dennis Kriek and Caryle Glosser won the B Flight on Saturday afternoon.

Rich Finberg, Connie Hoechstetter, Bob Zimmermann, and Martin Greenberg won the Friday afternoon Swiss; Jan Phillips, Marcella Retetagos, Judi Sonon, and Cecelia Powell won Flight B, and Sandy McCall, Bud McElhaney, Bob Flynn, and June Threlkeld won Flight C. Phil Becker, Fleur Howard, Ron Franck, and I won the Compact KO on Saturday.

Flight B winners in the main events: Jay Rajgopal and Bharat Shah, Friday morning pairs, Ildiko Baxter and Martin Greenberg Saturday morning pairs; and Bharat Shah, Mahendra Patel, Joe Secka Sr., and Joe Bernot in the Sunday Swiss.

Flight C winners in the main events: Ron Carter and Thomas Black, Friday morning pairs; Russell Orkin and William Neal Saturday morning pairs; and Alice Hand, Mary Taylor, Marlene Wandrisco, and Isabella Wagner in the Sunday Swiss.

I missed the chance for a pretty play on this deal from the Friday morning pairs game.

Dummy: ♠AQ9xxx ♥AQ7x ♦K ♣xx

Declarer: ♠KJ10xxx ♥10xx ♦-- ♣AKxx

I opened 1♠, Bernie Fudor responded 2NT (Jacoby), I bid 3♦, showing my shortness and doubtless shocking Bernie a bit. But he cue-bid 3♥, and I cue-bid 4♣, showing the club ace and continued slam interest. Now he bid 4NT, I showed two key cards without the Q with my 5♥ bid, and he bid the spade slam.

Plan the play on the ♣Q lead.

I played as nearly everyone would – I won the club, cashed a high spade from hand, played King and ruffed a club, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a club, trump to hand, and a heart to the Queen. This is a good line of play, winning whenever LHO has the ♥K or RHO has the ♥J because if RHO has the ♥KJ, he will either have to lead away from the ♥J (I'm putting up the 10, of course) or give me a ruff-sluff to dispose of a heart from my hand.

But there's a better chance. Do you see it? Win the club, play a trump, Play the other high club, ruff a club, play a spade to hand, ruff a club, and lead the ♦K. If RHO has the ♦A, he will surely play it (I never showed my void.) and I can pitch a heart, endplaying RHO and winning no matter where any of the heart honors are. So this line makes 87.5% of the time instead of the 75% for the straight endplay.

KANTAR ON DEFENSE

EDDIE KANTAR

This is a toughie. Don't answer it too quickly, I suspect that even some of our higher ranked players will get it wrong.

North: ♠K109 ♥A4 ♦A6 ♣QJ10952

East (You): ♠AQJ7 ♥J10982 ♦K104 ♣4

| W | N | E | S |
|------|------|----------|------|
| 1♣ | Dbl | Rdbl | Pass |
| 1♦ | Pass | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

First, a word (mine, not Eddie's) on the bidding. When your partner makes a strength-showing redouble, you CANNOT let the opponents play undoubled below 2NT. So North was able to pass to see what South had to say. South's 1NT showed about 10-11 points with a balanced hand and a diamond stopper. North hoped that the club suit would provide enough tricks for game.

Partner leads the (4th best) ♦3, and declarer plays small. You play the King, of course. (There are positions where it's right to play the 10 here, but they are rare). What do you think of your chances of beating 3NT?

I know, it's from a book on defense, so of course you can beat 3NT. So you have to figure out how you're going to do that. Take your time.

You're obviously not going to beat 3NT if declarer has the ♣AKx, since you know from the lead that partner has at most 5 diamonds and declarer surely has at least 3 to the ♦Q. So assume that partner has a club stopper. Do you see how to beat it now?

Play the ♠7. Partner will eventually win his high club and lead a spade through the remaining K10 to your AQJ. One diamond, one club, and three spades will do the trick.

There is a similar position when you have ♠AQJxx, dummy on your right has ♠Kx, declarer has shown 4 spades, and partner (don't they always?) leads their own suit rather than yours. But you have the ace of partner's suit, and you decide to break spades. By analogy from this deal, you should lead a low spade; when partner gets in a spade through will give you four spade tricks.

In fact, if partner leads a spade through dummy's Kx in this layout, it's right for you to duck the first trick (but remember to play an encouraging spot!). Then if partner gets in a spade through will give you four tricks, and if you get in you can just drop the ♠K. If you play the J on the first trick, declarer's 4th spade will be a stopper that prevents you from cashing your 5th spade. But by ducking, you force declarer to use his 4th round winner while you can later obliterate the spade king and draw all of his remaining spades with your AQJ.

BIDS FROM THE OUTER LIMITS

JACK HAWTHORNE

(We welcome a new contributor. Jack is interested in exploring new pathways in the universe of bidding. Here's his first new gadget. Just remember, if you decide to adopt any gadget, you need to make sure you and your partner will remember it. Phil and I have had numerous accidents along the way to building our system. And now... Here's Jack!)

Volume 1 – Artificial Notrump Bids

If you have ever played bridge against me, you know that I try to avoid bids that don't require an ALERT. Well, I am from Mars, so my bidding can be "other worldly." This is the first in a series of other worldly approaches to the 1NT bid.

Once upon a time, a 1NT opening bid promised 16-18 HCP and a balanced hand. At that time, you were also instructed to avoid bidding 1NT with a "worthless doubleton" as well. But the benefits provided by the knowledge of a tight high card range and strict distributional rules, quickly eliminated the "worthless doubleton" rule. Gradually the high card requirements were relaxed too.

Commonly recognized as the "standard in British tournament play" the ACOL system employed a "weak" notrump of 12-14 HCP. And the Kaplan-Sheinwold system demonstrated to American bridge players the value of preempting the entire one level with 12-14 HCP. If that wasn't enough, in the 70s, John Kierein published "You Ought to Bid an Average Hand – Featuring the Kamikaze Notrump," wherein he introduced opening 1NT with 9-12 HCP, referred to as the "mini-notrump." Influenced by ACBL regulations, the range was tightened to be 10-12 HCP. Of course, any weak notrump bid is susceptible to penalty doubles; hence, the "kamikaze" aspect of the mini-notrump. Anyone using a weak notrump opening bid was forced to develop counter-measures to avoid severe penalties.

Over the years, practically any high card range was considered for a 1NT opening bid. Currently, the most common choice is 15-17 HCP, forcing the partnership to jump rebid with 18 HCP. And most pairs hold a similar strength hand when then overcall 1NT.

But why must a 1NT opening bid – or a direct overcall for that matter – express a balanced hand? Neglecting the influence of history, the ACBL rules regarding notrump bids is the only reason. And even the ACBL has relaxed the rules to allow you to bid 1NT with a singleton honor.

Your chosen range for opening 1NT is your partnership decision – I’ll address them in future discussions, but today’s article is concerned with the 1NT overcall.

Part 1 – Artificial Notrump Overcalls

When someone brings up artificial notrump overcalls, most bridge players would assume that you are referring to the “Unusual 2NT” overcall, showing at least five cards in the two lower unbid suits – usually both minor suits. This convention has been widely accepted for the simple reason that once that opposition has opened the bidding the probability of meeting the requirements for a “natural” 2NT overcall is virtually impossible. But what about the 1NT overcall? It’s not unusual to hold sufficient high cards and distribution to overcall 1NT.

One Notrump

This article involves *artificial* 1NT overcalls. I can hear the uproar now as so many of you have lost your favorite bid. But when you overcall 1NT to show a strong (15-18 or a similar range) balanced hand, you are frequently helping the opposition. Why should you tell the opposition how to play the hand? Remember: your opponents have struck the first blow in the auction. They are in a much better position to decide whether to defend or bid on. And now that you have told them where all the outstanding high cards are located, you have influenced their competitive bidding, and you have provided a roadmap to direct the declaration of the hand.

This article involves *artificial* 1NT overcalls, only from the direct seat; balancing notrump bids remain unaffected. If you can’t live without the natural 1NT overcall, you can stop reading this article.

One option for an artificial 1NT overcall is known as Raptor. Raptor – generally used for preemption – is an artificial 1NT overcall that shows a two-suited hand. Over a minor suit opening bid, Raptor shows a hand with an *unspecified* four-card Major and at least five cards in the *unbid* minor. Alternately, over a Major suit opening bid, the Raptor 1NT shows four cards in the *unbid* Major and at least five cards in an *unspecified* minor suit.

During a competitive auction, not specifying two suits gives Raptor some flexibility, but with one suit “unspecified,” competitive bidding can be more difficult. I recommend a similar treatment where the two suits are clearly exposed with a single bid. I call this the Top and Bottom (T/B) 1NT overcall.

The Top and Bottom 1NT shows a two-suited hand with the highest (Top) and lowest (Bottom) unbid suits. Over all one-level opening bids (except 1♣), 1NT promises at least five clubs and at least **four** spades. Of course, it promises at least five or more *diamonds* over a 1♣ opening bid, and it shows four (or more) *hearts* if the opening bid was 1♠. Being two-suited, you might expect at least five cards in both suits. The T/B 1NT distribution **can be** off-shape, with only a four-card Major and a longer, possibly much longer, minor suit. Top and bottom overcalls (1NT) can be 4-7! This approach allows you to “keep the unbid major suit (usually spades) alive” when simply overcalling at the two-level in your minor suit could potentially “lose the (unbid Major) suit” forever.

From the ACBL Open Chart, a *direct* 1NT overcall must show:

- A strong hand, or
- At least 3 cards in all unbid suits, or
- At least 4-4 in two known suits, or
- At least 5-4 in two suits, at least one of which is known.

The final option above makes Raptor permissible in Open Chart events. But the first option allows the T/B 1NT overcall to be expanded to include a strong hand with only one known suit. Therefore, the T/B 1NT shows *either* a two-suited hand with the top and bottom unbid suits *or* a strong hand with *only* the unbid minor suit.

When you are responding to the 1NT overcall, the potential for the minor suit to be longer dictates that you should take a “false preference” to the unbid minor. Always choose to bid 2♣ (2♦ over 1♣-1NT) with only two clubs (diamonds) and three-cards in the implied Major suit. If you bid the implied Major suit, you suggest a **significant** preference for that suit, *virtually* promising four-card support. Without four-card support, it is permissible to bid the Major only with at least two-card disparity (e.g., 3 vs 1) between the suits.

If the overcaller subsequently returns to his minor, you can rest assured that he has a solid (15 HCP or five losers) single-suited overcall. So, when you adopt this treatment, you haven’t lost the ability to overcall in clubs, you just need to have a better than average hand when you do so, and frankly, that is a benefit: too many light two-level overcalls get hammered for a juicy penalty. And when you have taken the false preference, the overcaller is free to rebid his Major when he holds a five-card major suit, without promising extra values. However, raising partner’s preferred suit **must** show additional values.

Of course, there is another – perhaps less obvious – advantage of the Top/Bottom 1NT overcall: you won’t be overcalling 1NT naturally, making it easier for the opponents to bid and declare, knowing the location of all the outstanding high cards. At a recent ACBL game conducted on BBO, I held the West cards shown in the diagram on the right.

East passed as the dealer, and South opened with a perfectly reasonable 1♣ bid. Virtually every other West overcalled 1NT. At nearly every table, North-South took the first five tricks in diamonds and later won a trick in each Major suit for down one.

But, since I was using the Top and Bottom 1NT overcall, I passed 1♣ with the West cards. After North passed, East knew that I would not overcall 1NT with a good balanced hand, so he needed to “protect” my Pass by dutifully reopening the bidding with a takeout double.

I considered bidding 3NT, but at this vulnerability, we would probably score better playing 1♣ doubled, so I passed. North might have tried to escape to 1♦, but he chose not to do that. South was only able to collect four tricks for -500 and 0% of the match-points, giving East-West 100%.

The top and bottom overcall can produce another subtle advantage: it can aid the defense if the opposition is able to out-bid you in the auction. Sitting South with no one vulnerable, after a 1♥ opening bid on my right, I overcalled 1NT showing four (or more) spades with longer clubs or a good hand (15 HCP or five losers) with a long club suit. I held the following hand:

♠A9654 ♥75 ♦4 ♣KJT73

Many would choose to bid 2♥ (Michaels) with this hand. This is perfectly acceptable and, I expect this call to be a common choice among most tournament players, but that call would not specify the minor suit included in

| | | |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Dealer: E | | Vul: NS |
| | North | |
| | ♠ 952 | |
| | ♥ T83 | |
| | ♦ | |
| | KT973 | |
| | ♣ 62 | |
| | West | East |
| | ♠ A86 | ♠ J73 |
| | ♥ 964 | ♥ AQJ5 |
| | ♦ QJ | ♦ 6542 |
| | ♣ AKQ54 | ♣ 73 |
| | South | |
| | ♠ KQT4 | |
| | ♥ K72 | |
| | ♦ A8 | |

that two-suited hand. How would you know if you can profitably sacrifice in your partner's minor suit if the auction proceeds 1♥-(2♥)-4♥ as it often does?

After Michaels, I would expect every player holding the following West hand, to bid 3NT. But after a "normal" 1♠ overcall, West might still bid notrump (how many is debatable) with:

♠KT83 ♥6 ♦KQJT5 ♣A54

But after my 1NT overcall, West chose to bid 2♦, which was forcing in their methods. This auction allowed my partner to compete in clubs to the four-level holding:

♠Q ♥QT942 ♦832 ♣Q986

The competitive bidding forced West to choose between doubling 4♣ or bidding 5♦. Double dummy play allows North-South to make 4♣ or go down at most one. While 5♦ did succeed to collect 11 tricks, after a spade lead against 3NT, many East-West pairs were able to collect 10 (or more) tricks to garner significantly more matchpoints.

Without the knowledge of South's club suit, North has a logical lead of the ♠Q – his partner's suit – against a notrump contract. A club lead will hold 3NT to a maximum of nine tricks if, and only if, West is willing to gamble his contract on the heart finesse. If your partner overcalled 1♠, what would you lead against 3NT?

Oh yeah! Once more point needs to be made. Let's say, sitting West with no one vulnerable, you hold ...

♠T632 ♥Q4 ♦QJ32 ♣A86

And the bidding proceeds 1♠-(2♠)-4♠, to you. If you know that partner's 2♠ bid ***promised long diamonds*** along with long hearts, you should be *comfortable* bidding 5♦. You must love your hand: both red Queens, length in the opposition suit (partner must be short) and a side Ace! But would you be *as confident* bidding 5♣? You might try 4NT, hoping your partner will get the message ("Pick a minor."), but will you be happy if partner rebids 5♣? Confident in the knowledge that partner's minor suit is diamonds, your decision is greatly simplified.

Holding the same hand, what if the bidding proceeds 1♥-(2♥)-4♥, to you? While the heart Queen is probably worthless in this case, you are certain that you have a double-fit in the pointed suits, along with a side Ace! It should be child's play to bid 4♠. You might even try 5♦, intending to carry on to 5♠ if the opponents compete to 5♥.

Including the Top and Bottom notrump, in your competitive bidding arsenal, is responsible for identifying precisely which two suits your partner holds when he overcalls 1NT, 2NT or cue-bids (Michaels) the opponents' suit.

UNSAFE SAFETY PLAYS

RICHARD FINBERG

Players often think they are playing safe, when in fact, they are squandering their chances. Let us play dummy's ♣AJ32 opposite our ♣K954.

The first question to ask is "how many tricks do I need?" If you need all four tricks, or as many as possible, many players first play the King and then finesse the Jack. Playing the King first is an old habit to avoid losing the Jack

to a stiff Queen. But here, dummy lacks the 8, so you can never make 4 tricks if RHO holds a bare Queen. But if *LHO* has a bare Queen, by playing a low club first you can make 4 tricks by finessing your K9 against RHO's original holding of 10xxx.

If you only need 3 tricks, the odd-looking play of first cashing dummy's Ace gives you a 100% lock. When you continue with the ♣2, if RHO follows low, you put in the 9. If the 9 loses, the suit has broken 3-2 and you are

home. And if RHO shows out on the second club, you rise with the King and lead up to the Jack for 3 tricks. Whether you need 3 tricks or 4, leading the King first is the *worst* choice. You will make only 2 tricks when RHO has QTxx.

Another common holding that good players often misplay is ♣AKJ10xx opposite ♣xx. Many players cash the Ace or King first, "in case there is a stiff Queen." But if fourth hand has a singleton, it is 4 to 1 that the singleton will be a small card – in which case, you must finesse twice. Of course, if the suit is 5-3 instead of 6-2, you can afford to try the Ace or King first, assuming you have adequate safe entries to the opposite hand.

So, when the contact depends on how you play a key suit, do not rely on generalized 'safety' plays. Think it through.

DRURY

CRAIG BIDDLE

For many years I was a sound opener and had no use for the Drury convention. I remember suggesting playing Drury to Phil's older brother Barry. Barry looked at me pityingly and asked, "Why do you want to tell the opponents you don't have your bid?" So we used 1NT forcing as a Drury substitute, as did many people who played 1NT forcing after a major suit opening. We rarely got in trouble.

But bridge was different then. People rarely stepped out of line, since many pairs, especially the inexperienced ones, hadn't adopted negative doubles. It was the kiss of death to go for -700 (yes, that was a common score back then, down 4 doubled not vul) against a lesser pair, or -200 on a part-score deal.

But times change. As opening bids have gotten lighter, Drury has become very common. And variants have sprung up. There's reverse Drury, two-way Drury, and reverse two-way Drury. Two-Way Drury is based on the assumption that it's important to know whether responder has 3 or 4 trumps. If you play Reverse Drury, you can just use opener's 2♦ reply to ask; returning to 2 of the major says no and the rest say yes and show a feature.

Also, after a 1♠ opening, what does a 2♥ reply by opener show? It should show 4 hearts and less than a game force. Responder can pass with a minimum and 4 hearts, or bid 2♠ with anything but a really good maximum when he doesn't have 4 hearts. With more than a minimum responder can raise hearts with 4 or with a really good hand he can bid 3 of a minor to show a feature (which he would also do with a really good hand without a heart fit).

What should opener do with enough to force to game opposite a Drury response? Probably 80% of the time, opener will just bid game. When opener has 4 hearts and enough to force to game, he jumps to 3♥. Opener's 3 of a minor rebids are similar; slam interest and natural. Jumps above 3 of the major are splinter slam tries. And a jump to 3 of the major shows a one-suited slam try with no singleton or void.

How much do you need to bid Drury? Probably you should have a hand that would have opened the bidding with another King. This leaves you with a sensible 3-4 point range for the Drury response.

STREAKS AND BIG GAMES

CHRIS WANG

Big Games

Jack Hawthorne & Robert Zimmermann 70.74 Glenshaw Sat

Kenneth Bergman & Patricia Anders 70.00 Glenshaw Wed

Streaks

3 in a row:

Patricia Cunkelman Greensburg Wed

Kenneth Eichler Export Mon

Kenneth Eichler Greensburg Fri

Ernest Collins Greensburg Wed

Evelyn Sobol Rodef Thurs

Erin Gonzalez Steel City Thurs

Richard Katz Glenshaw Mon

Patricia Katz Glenshaw Mon

Hugh McMaster Allegheny Wed

Jenny Janitor Export Mon

Dorothy Murray Export Mon

Kenneth Bergman Glenshaw Wed

Patricia Anders Glenshaw Wed

Kenneth Eichler Greensburg Wed

Peggy Shivetts Greensburg Wed

2 in a row:

Patricia Cunkelman Greensburg Fri

Leroy Hackenberg II Greensburg Fri

Debbie Mihalov Beth El NLM Tues

Jane Polick Beth El NLM Tues

Sarah Wozniak Greensburg Wed

OUR PEOPLE

MARILYN PAINTER

I'm starting out with one bit of fun news: The gang at Greensburg put on their party hats and celebrated Kitty Jo Hellermann's 90th. Happy Birthday, Kitty!

Good news: Greensburg player, Gen Novak, is back to the bridge table after recovering from hip replacement surgery.

And another bit of good news as Cecilia Powell is back at the bridge table after a nasty fall resulting in a broken shoulder.

But oh my, we're losing too many players. It is just so sad:

Lois Marietti died June 24 at age 93. Lois was from Lower Burrell and played in the Greensburg area games. For many years she owned a design and custom upholstery business.

Ron Berkman, husband of player Carol Berkman, died July 6. Ron was an ophthalmologist for over 50 years.

Delores Ikach-Lefcort died July 19. She was 90. Delores was a Gold Life Master and used her bridge knowledge to travel the world—playing, directing and teaching. In her late 70's she became an accomplished artist.

Naomi Sogoloff died July 12. Many of our South Hills players knew her. Naomi was 90.

Sue Golier died July 11. She was 79. She was an outstanding member of our bridge community, directing 2 weekly games including the Tuesday game at Lauri West. But she was also an amazing member of the Fox Chapel community.....selfless in the support of the needs of others. There will be a memorial service Friday, August 19 at the Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church at 11 AM. The notice says, 'Festive Attire'. She'd love it.

Please send any news to me at marilynlpainter@yahoo.com. Text: 412 708-7433

Especially good news!!!

Lastly, I thank the folks that sent in updates to their information (address, etc.). However, the board is looking into a better (legal) way to communicate such.

BRIDGE 'N' BITES

Don't forget our pot-luck dinner followed by a Swiss Team Club Championship on Thursday Evening, August 11th. I plan to make this a monthly event with the club. We already have 7 teams registered, if you register after you see this newsletter, please call or text me at 303-720-4164 so we can make sure you won't go home hungry. And if you want to bring something, please let me know so I can forward the news to June, Ruthie, and Lonnie.

Dinner will start at 6, bridge at 6:45. We all hope to see you there.

LEARN BRIDGE IN A DAY

Returns Saturday October 1st from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm at the Wilkins Twp. Municipal Building. Here is the chance for someone who has always wanted to learn Bridge but never had a convenient way. We try to get them from Zero to School Zone Speed in a fun, informative and entertaining fashion.

BRIDGE PLAYERS: IF YOU WANT TO SAVE OUR GAME IN THE AREA YOU NEED TO PROMOTE THIS CLASS TO FAMILY, FRIENDS, THE GUY IN FRONT OF THE STATE STORE, ANYBODY.

More information can be found on the 'Classes and Lessons' page of the website.

GO FORTH AND PROMOTE!

5 Free Lesson Give-away

I am giving away a **FREE** 18-board playing lesson on BBO to the first **5** persons who request them, provided we have never played together before. The session is followed by a review of the boards and some bridge tips. There is no obligation on your part. My benefit is good word-of-mouth.

Contact me **NOW** before the free lessons are gone!

Free Zoom Lesson for everyone! **Monday, August 8 at 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.**

Subject: Suit combinations

Learn the best way to play commonly occurring suit combinations. The best play often varies, depending upon how many tricks you need, how many entries you have to each hand, whether you can afford to lose the lead, whether you need to conceal your hand and other factors.

Each lesson is 1 hour. Both lessons are the same. You can attend either or both.

Here is the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5664734334?pwd=Ui9vc1FBcVpZby9MRfZ6eiswUWR0UT09>

Meeting ID: 566 473 4334 Passcode: 2cY8HZ

How are your opening leads? How are **your partner's** opening leads? I have a five-session course on opening leads in which you get to **sit at your own individual Shark Bridge table**, see the auction and choose your own lead. We then review the leads and you to see what the experts would have done. Practice leads against notrump contracts, suit contracts, games, part-scores and slams. Learn about Lightner doubles. I also highlight a computerized study of what leads are best against various auctions. **I will be re-starting this course as soon as I have a few interested players.** Discount group rate: Five 1+hour sessions for \$50.

Richard Finberg 412-304-9254 (cell) doublemenot@gmail.com



★ **Hospitality All Sessions** ★
September 2-4, 2022
Masonic Center North
3579 Masonic Way
Pittsburgh, PA 15237



American Contract
 Bridge League

Friday September 2

10:30 AM Gold Rush Pairs
 (1st of 2 sessions, 1 session players welcome)
AXY Pairs
 (1st of 2 sessions, 1 session players welcome)
2-day KO 1st of 4 sessions
Lunch on Us! ★

3:00 PM Gold Rush Pairs
 (2nd of 2 sessions, 1 session players welcome)
AXY Pairs
 (2nd of 2 sessions, 1 session players welcome)
2-day KO 2nd of 4 sessions

Saturday September 3

10:00 AM Gold Rush Pairs
 (1st of 2 sessions, 1 session players welcome)
AXY Pairs
 (1st of 2 sessions, 1 session players welcome)
2-day KO 3rd of 4 sessions
Compact KO 1st of 2 sessions
Lunch on Us! ★

2:30 PM Gold Rush Pairs
 (2nd of 2 sessions, 1 session players welcome)
AXY Pairs
 (2nd of 2 sessions, 1 session players welcome)
2-day KO 4th of 4 sessions
Compact KO, 2nd of 2 sessions
1-Session Stratified Swiss Teams

| Pairs Strats | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| <u>A/X/Y</u> | <u>GOLD RUSH</u> |
| A: Unlimited | B: 750 |
| X: 3000+ | C: 500 |
| Y: 1500 | D: 250 |

- ◆ Stratification by average MPs in all events
- ◆ KO teams are random draw within brackets and include 0-500 players
- ◆ KO events with only one bracket may be handicapped
- ◆ No side games. Pairs may play single sessions in Gold Rush or AXY Pairs

**Continental Breakfast
 & Lunch Included!** ★

www.D5Bridge.com

Sunday September 4

10:00 AM Strati-Flighted Swiss Teams
Playthrough *Lunch on Us!* ★
A/X plays alone; B-C-D is Stratified
All players with over 2500 MPs play in A/X

Sunday Swiss Strats

| <u>A/X</u> | <u>BCD</u> |
|------------------|---------------------|
| A: 5000+ | B: 1500-2500 |
| X: 0-5000 | C: 500-1500 |
| | D: 0-500 |

Tournament Chairs: Ron Franck 412-913-1505
 Bill Holt 412-860-2794

Partnership Chair: Barb Belardi
 Call 724-888-PARD (7273), or

Go to www.pittsburghbridge.org/Pards.htm
 And fill out an E-Z form, or send an email to:
RONIPARDS@PittsburghBridge.org

Hotel Information:

Fairfield Inn Pgh North 412-227-9600
 Bridge Rate \$129 reserve by Aug 19
 McKnight Hotel 412-939-3200
 Bridge Rate \$119 reserve by Aug 19

Entries \$12 per person per session
 Team of 4 Games \$48 per session
 Sunday Swiss \$96 per team of 4

Participants must be ACBL members. Lapsed members either renew, or pay \$4 extra per session. Free 120-day memberships available to 1st time members.

Fast Trac your Vax Stat!

**Email a Photo or Copy of your Vax Card
 with your Name and ACBL# to
Vax@Pittsburghbridge.org**

We'll supply you with a wristband good for the whole event. Claim your wristband at the front desk. Those previously registered need not submit again. We will observe the then-current CDC and local guidelines on masks. We are optimistic at this point.

Proof of Vaccination is Required.