



# The Future Life Master



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Austin, Texas ACBL Unit 207

August - September 2009

## Enjoying the Ride



by Posy Stielow

*This is the first in a series of articles written by newer players, kindly detailing some of their experiences learning bridge.*

Let me begin by stating that I started out as a party-playing bridge dummy...afraid to venture into the duplicate world. And now, fifty years later, my husband wanted to learn bridge, and wanted to play competitively, which meant DUPLICATE. I was scared but my husband, Jurgen, is German so I do what he says (do you believe that?) He investigated and found the Bridge Center of Austin and with some friends we started to take some lessons.

We began with Laura's classes on the Club series, passing that and going on to the Diamond, Heart and Spade series. Having graduated from those four, we even took "post-graduate" work in the "More Commonly Played Conventions" course; I think we got C's in that one. Along with this year-long process, we played in the Bridge Plus game at the BCA (the very best way for a beginner to learn and play at the same time). We love it and still attend every Tuesday. The new people we have met have become our family which was something we did not expect.

Next, we participated in the Unit's mentor program. This is where newer players are paired up with Life Masters, with whom they play up to twice a month. We were very fortunate to have Diana and Richard Frankeny as our mentors. The Frankenys taught us how to play in the "Big Room" and did so with much patience, humor, and grace.

Our confidence growing, we started to play some tournaments - Regionals in Austin and Houston. Then, with tickets in hand we boarded a plane for a week of bridge at the Las Vegas Regional. Seven sessions of three hours each, taught us a lot about the life of a "real" bridge player. We loved it and even earned about eight master points. Bottoms sore and bellies full, we left tired but very excited

about reaching the Club level in the ACBL (30 points).

After all of our lessons, practicing and playing, Jurgen still considers himself a bridge "DUMMY" since his native language is German, but watch out for me as I SPEAK THE ENGLISH! Oh, and P.S., we are looking forward to playing in the Rockport and Ruidoso tournaments in October...this time with cushions and Slim Fast in our luggage!



## Timidity Costs Matchpoints

More than 2000 years ago, Virgil, considered by many to be the best Roman poet ever, wrote "fortune sides with him who dares." Over time, this philosophy has become one of the cornerstones upon which a foundation for success has been built. It is a clever way of saying good fortune does not come to us; we go to it by taking risks. Certainly the same principle, within reason/limits, can be applied to bridge.

One of the most overlooked aspects in partnership communication for less experienced players is failing to take advantage of sound technique by opposing players. How so? Bridge is chock-full of artificial bids...conventions...with specialized meaning. Stayman, Jacoby transfers, splinters, Gerber, Blackwood, etc. barely scratch the list of artificial calls with conventional meaning. When opponents employ these bids during an auction, **if the conditions are right**, use this artificiality to your gain!

What is your gadget to put to effective use? **DOUBLE THE ARTIFICIAL BID**. But...only do so with this thought in mind...**BE PRUDENT IN YOUR ACTION**. What then does a double of opponent's artificial bid communicate to your partner? It says you have length and strength in the suit doubled and it is for penalty. More specifically, it dictates to partner...if you are on lead against opponents final contract, lead the suit I doubled. It is a free bid at the expense of your opponents action in the auction.

(con't on page 2)

### Timidity costs matchpoints (con't)

Consider these two holdings...

♠ 43 ♥ 52 ♦ K86 ♣ J108764

♠ 74 ♥ 64 ♦ A52 ♣ KQ10986

<i>Opponent</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Opponent</i>	<i>You</i>
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<b>1NT</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>2C</b>	<b>???</b>
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With the first hand you should pass...you have the length, but no strength. A double with the first holding is asking for trouble. With the second hand you should double for a club lead. Prudence says you have BOTH length and strength, and are likely to defeat two clubs if opponents actually played it there. Please note, had the responder/opponent bid any suit other than clubs you would pass.

With the second hand showed, had the auction been as follows...

<i>Opponent</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Opponent</i>	<i>You</i>
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<b>1NT</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>2D</b>	<b>???</b>
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You would pass because you do not want a diamond lead! The timing/artificiality is not right for you to double for a club lead if you held the second hand.

By now, in your bridge development, you may well realize there are many "exceptions to the rule in bridge." This "exception rule" is true for doubling opponent's artificial bid at the FOUR LEVEL AND HIGHER. **The exception is the length requirement.**

Consider...

♠ 75 ♥ 8642 ♦ KQJ ♣ 9432

<i>Opponent</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Opponent</i>	<i>You</i>
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<b>1S</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>3S</b>	<b>Pass</b>
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<b>4NT</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>5D</b>	<b>???</b>
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The opponents are headed for a spade slam and the Blackwood auction has presented you with the perfect opportunity to double for a diamond lead. You do not have the length, but you have the strength. It is very unlikely opponents would stop to play five diamonds doubled. More likely is the scenario of a diamond lead defeating a spade contract. If not...you have lost nothing in attempting to gain something.

A large element in bridge is "what you do not hear" in the bidding. You hold in this auction...

♠ 843 ♥ 542 ♦ 975 ♣ 9853

<i>Opponent</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Opponent</i>	<i>You</i>
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<b>1C</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>1S</b>	<b>Pass</b>
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<b>3S</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>4NT</b>	<b>Pass</b>
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<b>5H</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>6S</b>	<b>Pass</b>
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You find yourself on lead with two unbid suits...diamonds and hearts. Things look remote in defeating the contract based on your hand. However, you have the one thing going for you essential to what you did not hear...partner did not double the artificial heart bid in the auction. In bridge lingo this is called "negative inference." Try a diamond lead. It's a guess, but one reasoned correctly.

We can all agree that bridge is a complex game. Use your mentors/teachers to the fullest. When you are playing...taking advantage when the opportunity is there is key to growth/success. Be prudent in your actions and if the timing is right a good adage to adopt is...**timidity costs matchpoints**

*Article by Tom Clark, BCA club manager*

## Novice Game Schedule

Novice or limited games refer to those games in which players holding more than a certain number of master points may not play. Novices are welcome to play in **all** games throughout the Unit, however those games catering specifically to the newer player are:

**Monday, 7:00 p.m.\*** BCA 0-200 points

**Tuesday, 11:30 a.m.\*** BCA 0-50 points

**Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.** BCA 0-300 points

**Thursday, 11:30 a.m.** BCA 0-750 points

\* Free 20 minute lesson held before these games

A complete schedule of games in Unit 207 may be found at: <http://www.d16acbl.org/U207/>

## Bridge Riddle

Why do people who have gone to school like duplicate bridge?

**Answer:** In school, if you make 60% on a test, you get a bad grade. In bridge, if you make 60% on a game, you are given an award and your partner goes home happy!

*Riddle by Mark McAllister*



These players toted home trophies in the **May BCA Sectional: Julie Valentine and Steven Hollahan** (Thursday afternoon), **Jurgen and Posy Stielow, Kathleen Monahan and Fred Moore** (Thursday evening), **Marcia and Allan Kohm** (Friday afternoon), **Ed and Judy Parken** (Friday evening), **Robert Penska and Carol Thibodeaux** (Saturday morning and afternoon.)

First overall winners in the **July Non-Life Master Tournament: Adrienne Watt and Immie Pamplin** (Saturday afternoon), **Mark and BJ Sanders** (Saturday evening), **Robert Penska and Carol Thibodeaux** (Sunday afternoon.)

## Summer/Fall Lessons



**Bridge Basics I (Beginning Bridge)** Sunday, August 23--November 15. 1:30-3:30 p.m. Rosemary Kelley, \$100

**Beginning Bridge Defense (Heart Series)** Tuesday, September 8--October 27. 7:00-9:00 p.m. Scott Humphrey, \$90

**Beginning Bridge (Club series)** Thursday, September 24--November 12. 7:00-9:00 p.m. Laura Delfeld, \$90.

**BCA Sunday Workshops** on a variety of topics August 9 and 30, September 13, October 4, November 1 and 22. 11:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Rosemary Kelley, \$12 per workshop or \$65 for the entire series.

Please see the website for additional details on these classes: <http://www.d16acbl.org/U207/>

**All classes are held at the Bridge Center of Austin and all materials are included in the tuition. Call 300-BRIDGE (2743) to register.**

## Three Common Bridge Errors and Solutions to Avoid Them

*Excerpted from Bridge Bulletin, July 2007, "Fault Signs" by Mary Smith*

### 1. Playing too fast.

Many errors, such as winning the opening lead in your hand when you should have won it in the dummy, can be prevented by just slowing down. If you are the declarer, make a plan. So if you're planning to take an immediate finesse for the king off trumps by leading the queen from dummy, try to win the first trick in dummy!

### 2. Cashing tricks, especially aces, too early.

Planning ahead is good for defenders, too. Aces should capture kings and queens, not 2s and 3s. When the dummy, on your left, tables a suit such as K-J-5-4, decide ahead of time that when declarer leads toward that suit, you will duck smoothly. You will lose your ace once in a while, but when your partner has the queen, she will score it most of the time. Try to establish extra tricks, not just cash the ones you were dealt.

### 3. Trump mismanagement.

a) Getting your winners ruffed because you didn't pull trumps. Solution: If your hand or the dummy is going to be full of good tricks after you knock out one of the opponent's high cards, then you should usually pull trumps so your winners won't be ruffed.

b) Pulling too many trumps. Solution: When you're planning a crossruff, or simply need to ruff losers in your hand or dummy, don't pull trumps, or at least not enough to thwart your plan.

## Tourney Calendar

**August 15-16** Unit 207 0-100 Sectional at the BCA--Sessions on **Saturday and Sunday 1:30 p.m.** Partnership chair is Mark McAllister, [Markmc9@austin.rr.com](mailto:Markmc9@austin.rr.com) 512-587-8524

**September 17-20** Unit 207 Fall Sectional at the BCA--199er sessions **Thursday through Saturday, 2:30 and 7:00 p.m.** Partnership chairs are Barbara Hollahan (512-560-8627) and Harriette Bowles ([harriette.bowles@yahoo.com](mailto:harriette.bowles@yahoo.com))

**"The Future Life Master"** is a bi-monthly publication of ACBL Unit 207. Laura Delfeld, editor. Please forward information regarding Novice games or lessons to: [delhan@swbell.net](mailto:delhan@swbell.net)