



The Future Life Master



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Adventure--It's in the Cards



By Juanita Painter & David Myers

this article played their first bridge game as partners at the BCA!

Juanita had played rubber bridge for years. After the death of her beloved husband of 41 years, Frank, in May 2007, she decided to give competitive bridge a try. David had played duplicate bridge in the 1970s and early 1980s with his father, Ralph. During the summer of 2007, David played bridge on a Nintendo DS as partner with his sons Shannon and Patrick. This re-interested him in the game.

Results from local games and tournaments were up and down, but up enough to keep Juanita and David working to improve their game. In March 2010 they decided to give the "big time" a try, and headed out to Reno, Nevada, to play in the Nationals.

David - "It was our first national tourney. We were both working toward reaching Regional Master, so we decided to concentrate on winning red points. We played in seven 299-er games."

Juanita - "We placed in five out of the seven games, so it was a positive experience for us. The Grand Sierra was a nice location. The surrounding area was beautiful, but we didn't sightsee as we were playing all the time. Personally I was dazzled

August 2007, like any other month, is known for certain historical happenings. One of these is that a Russian expedition reached the North Pole.

Far, far away from this icy world, another historical happening occurred...historical at least from a certain point

of view. The authors of

Making Bricks with Straw

In graduate school I read a book by Albion Tourgee about the post-war period of reconstruction in the South. Writing from first-hand experience as a Reconstruction Carpetbagger, Tourgee offered his accounts/witness in an historical novel entitled Bricks Without Straw. Though the book was an interesting read, it was the title (borrowed from Exodus 5) that captured my lasting intrigue. More than suggestive...in simplest terms it depicts a fruitless undertaking.

In bridge, both declarer and defenders are subject to Bricks Without Straw. Declarers often find themselves in contracts that are hopeless. The same is true for defenders when they lack the resources to thwart declarer. Bridge players accept this fact, but, at the same time, never lose sight of the thrill, whether as declarer or defender, of experiencing a "bridge moment". Chatter around the room of "that was a remarkable squeeze play" or "that surround play was unforgiving" brings players back to the table time and again. Unique and rare...a bridge moment...making bricks with straw.

Consider this hand from the Encyclopedia of Card Play...**YOU** are South playing 4♥. West leads the ♣ Ace, then the ♣ King, followed by a third club.

North's holding:

♠ A K 5 3 ♥ A Q 10 8 ♦ 9 4 ♣ Q 6 3

South's holding:

♠ 8 6 4 2 ♥ K J 6 3 2 ♦ A Q ♣ J

What is the best line of play? It is time for you to make a discard. Will it be Bricks with or without Straw?



(con't on p. 2)

(con't on p. 2)

Adventure (con't)

dazzled by the huge number of bridge players, folks from all over the United States and Mexico. They were mostly all very friendly and even helpful at times. I cannot imagine how anyone plans and organizes an event like this, especially as no one has to register ahead of time. They even publish a newspaper everyday and we felt so special finding our names in the sessions where we placed.”

Juanita's luck extended to her play at the penny slots where she won more than \$625 playing them in Reno.

The positive Reno experience led the partners to try it again at the Regionals in Richardson, Texas, in September 2010.

Juanita – “We won our first gold points in a 0 – 750 game at the Regionals. It was a lot of fun.”

David – “The thing about ‘big’ tournaments is to remember there's still 52 cards in the deck, and you are still sitting at tables, playing regular people. It serves to remember this, as otherwise one could become intimidated by the level of competition.”

Juanita – “If you have an opportunity to attend a National Bridge Tournament, or even an out-of-town Regional, take it. It will be a memorable experience.”

The partners continue to play in regular games at the BCA.

David – “I went through the doors of the BCA the first time not knowing what to expect. I've gained many new friends from playing bridge, especially my favorite bridge partner, Juanita. Bridge in Austin has been a really good experience for me.”

New Game!

The BCA will have a new, limited game on Mondays at 11:30, beginning **January 24**. There will be no masterpoint limit for the game, but no two Life Masters may partner together. A free mini-lesson will precede the game.



Bricks with Straw (con't)

A common gut reaction at trick three is to discard the Q. Then, any 3-2 spade break will bring home the contract...losing two clubs and a spade. But, what if spades divide poorly? Too late. You are going down. The correct play at trick three is to discard a spade rather than the Q. This provides you options. You will still make the contract if spades break 3-2 and trumps behave (neither opponent is void) by drawing trump, giving up a spade, winning the Ace if necessary, entering dummy with a trump, **NOW** discard the Q on the good spade. Making four.

The correct discard at trick three, however, provides you a chance to make the contract even when spades break poorly. After finding out spades are not coming home, you can take a finesse for the K. If it works...making four.

Forgive me. It seems I left out a critical piece of straw for making your brick. The Bidding!

North	East	South	West
	P	1H	2NT*
3C*	P	3H*	P
4H*	P	P	P

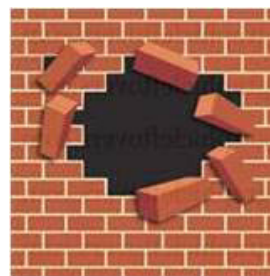
*...2NT...unusual for the minors.

*...3C...limit raise or better in hearts.

*...3H...minimum opener (would not accept an invitation to game).

*...4H...better than a limit raise...we belong in game.

Does the bidding change your thinking? Can you still make four with a bad spade break and the finesse for the K losing? Turn to page three for the entire hand...



Bricks with Straw (con't)

North

♠ A K 5 3

♥ A Q 10 8

♦ 9 4

♣ Q 6 3

West

♠ J

♥ 7 4

♦ K 10 8 6 3

♣ AK 9 7 4

East

♠ Q 10 9 7

♥ 9 5

♦ J 7 5 2

♣ 10 8 2

South

♠ 8 6 4 2

♥ K J 6 3 2

♦ A Q

♣ J 5

The answer is yes, the bidding does change your plan. Your trick three discard combined with the bidding gives you the (probable) information essential to making this hand. At trick three the correct play is still discarding a spade. As noted above, if spades are 3-2 you will make four. But, you quickly find out spades are not performing. You now know from the bidding the ♦ K is likely a loser. But the bidding and play also tells you something else...Straw Material for Your Brick...the West hand has ten cards in the minors, one spade and two hearts. A "bridge moment" is yours for the making. Because it is likely the ♦ K finesse will lose...do not take it. Play the ♦A then the ♦Q. Both you and dummy are now out of diamonds. Assuming West wins the ♦ K (based on the bidding)...making four! Why? Because West must give you a sluff (discarding the last spade from your hand) and a ruff (trumping in the dummy). Your spade loser disappeared!

Article by Tom Clark, BCA Club Manager



Congratulations to these First Overall Winners in recent Austin-area events:

Unit 207 NLM Sectional, November 13 - 14

Robert Caldwell and Bill Kalmbach (Saturday afternoon)

Stephen and Arlene Daigle (Saturday evening)

Ed and Judy Parken (Sunday afternoon)

BCA 199er Team Game, November 20

Annette Ruth, Jane Collins, Gwyneth Peterson, and Geneva Berg

Bridge Classes

Bridge Basics I (Beginning Bridge) Saturdays, January 20 - March 26, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Jan Clark, \$90

Play of the Hand (Diamond Series) Tuesdays, February 1 - March 29, 7:00-9:00 pm
Jan Clark, \$90

Defense (Heart Series) Mondays, January 10 - March 7, 9:00 - 11:00 am. Jack Lacy, \$90

More Commonly Used Conventions (NT Series) Thursdays, January 13 - March 3, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Laura Delfeld, \$90

Thinking Bridge II (For experienced players) Tuesdays, January 25 - March 7, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Scott Humphrey, \$65 includes material.

All of these classes are held at the Bridge Center of Austin and the text is included in the tuition. Call 300-BRIDgE (2743) or go to www.bridgecenteraustin.com to register.

Additionally, the BCA offers free pre-game mini-lessons : **Sundays, 1:30 pm** (0-50 pts.), **Mondays, 6:30 pm** (0-200), **Tuesdays, 10:30 am** (0-200), and **Saturdays, 1:00 pm** (0-500 NLM)

Fun Questions by Mike Lawrence

- Which has the highest percentage chance of happening?
 - A finesse for a queen
 - Six cards dividing three - three
 - Taking two tricks with 432 opposite the AJ10
- Which of the following holdings represents ONE QUICK TRICK?
 - QJ10
 - AQ7
 - KJ7
 - KQ6
- In first seat, partner opens 4H with nobody vulnerable. How many high card points should he have?
 - 8-12
 - 13-15
 - 16-18
- If you are allowed to arrange the cards any way you want, what is the fewest number of high card points you need to make a grand slam (All thirteen tricks) in a suit contract?
 - Sixteen
 - Five
 - Thirty three
 - Eleven
- The opponents end up in 4S. Your side hasn't bid. You have the A974 of hearts. How often will a good player lead the ace of hearts?
 - 2% of the time
 - 15% of the time
 - 35% of the time
- In bridge parlance, what is a "Hook"?
 - A finesse
 - Rescuing partner from a doubled contract
 - Dropping a singleton king offside
- How often might it be right to lead from the king of an unbid suit against, say, 6S?
 - 2% of the time
 - 10% of the time
 - More than 20 % of the time
- The opponents bid 1NT - 3NT. What card should you lead from the KJ1074 of spades if using normal leads?
 - The jack
 - The ten
 - The seven
- You open 1H, your LHO doubles for takeout, and your partner jumps to 3H. How many high card points does your partner have?
 - 3-7
 - 8-11
 - 12-15

January Sectional

Doubletree Hotel

Thursday, January 6 - Sunday, January 9

199er games at 10:00, 2:30, and 7:30

Answers to Fun Questions:

1. **C.** Taking two tricks with 432 opposite the AJ10. 75% 2. **D.** KQ6 3. **A.** 8-12 4. **B.** Five. (You have eleven trumps to the AJ in your combined hands and can set up a long suit after drawing the top missing trumps. The King and Queen are both singleton and drop when you play the Ace. 5. **A.** 2% of the time. If you read these questions and remember only one thing, it should be that leading aces against a suit contract is a very bad tendency. It may work out now and then, but in the long run, it is a horrible choice. 6. **A.** A finesse 7. **C.** More than 20% of the time. 8. **A.** The Jack. Lead the top of your interior sequence. 9. **A.** 3-7 This is a weak bid. In practice, it will usually be in the lower range. Oh, yes. Your partner better have four or more trumps too, never just three.

"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