



The Future Life Master



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Austin, Texas ACBL Unit 207, Laura Delfeld, editor

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Enjoying the Journey



by Cathy Supple

My bridge story starts in high school when one of my girlfriend's mother would let us have a slumber party at their house every Friday night, but the big requirement was we had to be there by 6 pm,

have dinner and let her teach us bridge. We all liked it, but we never played other than with her.

University days in Berkeley, California didn't conjure up any bridge until I moved into a flat where downstairs were three male chemistry PhD students who played guitars and banjos as did I. They invited me down to share songs and one Sunday they said, "Do you play bridge by any chance?" That started our Sunday night games for a year and I married one of those guys.

In 1964 my husband, Jerry, and I moved to a State University on the shores of Lake Erie where there was no duplicate, but I met a group of women who really loved to challenge themselves at bridge. We each bought a set of duplicate boards (in my storage area I still have those old metal boards with green felt on the bottom) and we devised a method to play against ourselves, essentially. We would play 24 boards in an evening. North would keep the bidding, scoring, and results on a little piece of paper which was placed in her slot at the end of the hand. I think we played every other week and each time we would play 24 different boards doing the same secretarial exercise. By about week six or so, we could play those first 24 boards and if we sat N/S before, we now sat E/W and we could see how we did compared to our first go-round.

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He Sets Contracts by Thinking!

by Mark McAllister

The legendary physicist Richard Feynman wrote a wonderful autobiography entitled *Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman*, an early chapter of which is called "He Fixes Radios by Thinking!" It tells of Feynman's experience as a young boy in which neighbors brought him their non-working radios. By understanding how radios worked, and observing the symptoms, he was usually able to diagnose the problems and fix them. When one of the neighbors observed him pacing the room as he pondered a problem, he became known as the kid who fixes radios by thinking.

Bridge is not mentioned in the Feynman biographies so we can assume he wasn't a player, but it is not hard to visualize the kind of player he would have been. Let's go back in time and imagine a late-night bridge game at Los Alamos in which Feynman and Theoretical Group leader Robert Oppenheimer are paired opposite mathematicians John Von Neumann and Stan Ulam.

Von Neumann and have bid the hands below to a spade slam:

♠ A 10 8 6 4 2
♥ A Q 5 3
♦ 2
♣ A Q

♠ K Q J 3
♥ K 9 8
♦ K J 4
♣ J 8 7

(con't on page 2)

Enjoying the Journey (con't)

In 1974 my husband was sent to central administration in Albany NY for a year and a half and one day I noticed a calendar item showing a duplicate game. I talked him into going. It was the days when they could still smoke at the table, egads, and even more disconcerting was the general attitude at the tables. People were unfriendly, cantankerous sometimes and mostly just unwelcoming. I didn't really mind that so much, but one evening when we got home my husband said, "Cathy, I love bridge and love you, but life is too short to be spending time with mean-spirited people. You can go, but I resign."

Then in 1978 we moved to the shores of Lake Champlain to another SUNY university and I met a woman in our folk music circles who asked one day if I played bridge and said we could go to a duplicate game at the Air Force base in that town. So for almost 10 years Kathy and I played a weekly game with only 3 or 4 tables. We joined the ACBL but rarely won any points because some of our fellow players had been serious duplicate players elsewhere. Still, there was no smoking and the players were nice. They were especially pleased that the two of us were so young (in our thirties then) and interested in their game.

In 1989 we moved to San Marcos, Texas and due to the fact that our lives were busy with so many professional obligations and still raising kids, I didn't make much of an effort to find duplicate games. Twenty-one years later, Linda Banks contacted me because she had taken up duplicate and someone mentioned my name as a possible partner. By then my husband had passed away and I was traveling extensively seeing the world, but I was definitely interested in duplicate again. Linda and I went to tournaments and since we were in that beginning category we started winning points and even the elusive gold. It took me about six months or so to discover how attractive the Austin games were in terms of friendliness and people who sought me out as a partner.

I've been gung-ho ever since. Love the classes, the instruction, the directors, my partners; this is a serious hobby now and I'm glad I found BCA and the other Austin games, as well as games in New Braunfels, San Antonio and San Marcos.

I am, however, one of those people who let my ACBL membership lapse and didn't rejoin until summer of 2010. Thus I have to achieve 500 points and advanced points in gold and other colors to become a Life Master. My colors are done though (yay) and I have but 170 points to go. Since it took three years to get where I am, this may take a while, but I'm in no hurry. The ride getting there is so much fun.

He Sets Contracts by Thinking (con't)

(Hands repeated for convenience)

♠ A 10 8 6 4 2

♥ A Q 5 3

♦ 2

♣ A Q

♠ K Q J 3

♥ K 9 8

♦ K J 4

♣ J 8 7

Von Neumann, South, opened 1S (this was the era of four-card major openings) and Ulam jumped right to 6S, figuring John had the mind, and maybe even the cards, to make it work.

Oppenheimer, West, led a trump, won in dummy, with Feynman following low. Declarer led a top trump, then played three rounds of hearts, ending in dummy, Oppenheimer discarding a diamond on the third heart. Declarer then led dummy's singleton diamond and Feynman played the seven. Von Neumann paused briefly but then played the diamond jack from hand, losing to Oppenheimer's queen. Eventually the club finesse was taken, losing to Feynman's king. Down one.

"So you had both the diamond ace and queen, Oppie?" Von Neumann asked.

"Nope."

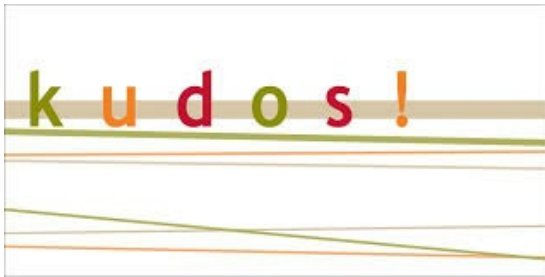
Ulam shook his head. "Johnny, Dick had the ace. All you had to do was play the king and you make six."

Von Neumann sighed. "Yes, partner, of course you are right. But when Dick played low, I had to assume he didn't have the ace, since no sane player would duck an ace against a slam when a singleton is led off the board. However, Dick could well have had the *queen* of diamonds, in which case my jack would have knocked out Oppie's ace, leaving my king good for a club pitch from dummy."

Ulam nodded. "Great play, Dick. How did you figure it out?"

"Not that hard," replied Feynman. "If my partner has the king of diamonds, I don't need to rise with the ace. So I assume Johnny has the king. Johnny is marked with six cards in the minors and he didn't open the bidding one diamond, so he has at least two clubs.

(con't on page 3)



First overall in the August 199er Sectional:

Anu Chhabra - Sheila Milner (Sat. pm)

Linda Gurasich - John Gurasich (Sun. pm)

First overall in the September Sectional, 299er games:

Pamela Barksdale - Gail Wood (Thurs. am)

Ann Jay - James Jay (Thurs. pm)

Brett Bidwell - Lisa Holzgrafe (Fri. am)

Gail Wood - Pamela Barksdale (Fri. am)

Carolyn Olivent - Preston Olivent (Sat. am)

James Jay - Truman Powers (Sat. pm)

It's the Law!

Bidding out of turn

Q. Someone bids (not a pass) when it's not their turn. What do we do?

A. If the next player bids, nothing. Otherwise the bid is canceled and:

1. If it was RHO's turn to bid, and they pass, you must repeat your bid and nothing happens. If RHO bids, and you repeat your bid again, partner must pass once (no lead penalty). If you change your bid to another bid, partner must pass every time, and if your side defends they can be required or prohibited from leading your first suit at their first lead (and if they retain the lead). If your first bid was pass, NT or double, Declarer may choose a suit for the penalty lead.

2. If it was partner's turn to bid, partner must now pass at each turn and the lead penalty above can be applied if your side defends.

3. If it was LHO's turn to bid, partner must now pass at each turn and the lead penalty above can be applied if your side defends.

He Sets Contracts by Thinking (con't)

If I play the ace, Johnny has a club pitch in dummy coming later, so he makes six for sure. If I duck, yes, he can play the king, which would win, but he still loses a club, making six. Ducking the ace gives him a chance to go wrong. So, you might say the duck is 'obligatory,' since it can't lose and might gain, as Johnny found out."

"I'll remember that, Dick," said Von Neumann with a smile. "Next time I'll play the king."

"Next time I'll have just the queen, Johnny. By the way Oppie, if you had led a club to begin with I wouldn't have had to do all that thinking!"

Tourney Calendar

Non-Life Master Sectional, BCA--Saturday, November 9 and Sunday, November 10.

199er Sectional, BCA--Saturday, December 7 and Sunday, December 8.

Winter Sectional , Doubletree Hotel –Thursday, January 2 –Sunday, January 5, 2014.

More information on these tournaments may be found on the Unit 207 website: www.austinbridge.org

TACKY OPPONENT #64



That's the only lead that lets me make it!"