



The Future Life Master



Volume 6 Issue 3

Austin, Texas ACBL Unit 207, Laura Delfeld, editor

June-July 2014

Bridge—The Game for a Lifetime



by Julie Johnson

taught my friends. After meeting my husband, we played bridge together for the next 35 years. We did try to play Duplicate in a sanctioned game once but I had the director called on me within five minutes after I sat down for leading out of turn. That was so discouraging that I never went back. In the following years I played Duplicate in an unsanctioned game which was a good learning experience and warm up for sanctioned games.

When I started going to Michigan in the summers a few years ago, I became friends with a woman who was already a Life Master. She kept encouraging me to play and playing with me. My sister kept pointing out that I wasn't going to be able to play tennis forever and I needed to find something else to satisfy my competitive streak. All in all, thank you everyone for being so encouraging and supportive in this new endeavor.

After my husband died, a woman who I knew to be a fine player with many masterpoints took me under her wing and brought me to the Bridge Center a few times.

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Opening Preempts—When and How High?

by Mark McAllister

Preemptive bids probably seem a bit strange to bridge newcomers. Why would you bid higher with a weak hand than with a strong hand? Once you know the reasoning behind preempts, all you need is a bit of judgment to know “when” and “how high.” In this column we discuss opening preempts only – not preemptive overcalls or “sacrifices” late in the bidding. Let’s start with “when?”

In first chair, with a long suit and an otherwise weak hand, you should feel okay about preempting. Your hand is weak, which means three other hands could be strong. Two of those hands belong to the opponents. Most of the time, they will have more points than your side. So, make it hard for them to find the right fit and level.

In second chair, you should be *reluctant* to preempt unless you have a “sound” preempt (three of top four honors.) If your right-hand opponent (RHO) has passed, only two hands at the table could be strong. One belongs to your partner. So, it’s 50-50 which side is stronger. Don’t get in your partner’s way with a marginal hand.

In third chair, you should be *delighted* to preempt. Your LHO has an opening hand for sure. Don’t let him make an easy descriptive bid. Get in the way.

In fourth chair, you should NOT preempt. If three players have passed and you have a weak hand, chances are the hand belongs to the opponents. Pass! A score of zero beats the minus score you stand a good chance of getting if you preempt. Following this logic, you can now use 4th-seat two-bids to show *good* hands ... sound openers with six-card suits. This is “standard bridge” but make sure your partners are aware of it.

(con't on page 2)

The Game for a Lifetime (con't)

Everyone at the Bridge Center was so welcoming and I felt so at home that I signed up for a series of classes, began to play in the 0-50 game, and began to play in the Tuesday 10:30 game. That was probably the biggest turning point because everyone I met was extremely welcoming and encouraging and made the game so much fun.

The entire point I'd like to make is that bridge clubs in Austin are doing a fantastic job of providing the right atmosphere for new players to learn and improve their game, meet wonderful new friends, and, of course, make mistakes. All of the people whom I have met and played with have been wonderful additions to my life and I am extremely grateful for their encouragement and support and for welcoming me into the fold.



Tourney Calendar

**NLM Sectional, BCA--Saturday,
June 14 and Sunday, June 15**

**Austin Regional, Doubletree Hotel--June 30-
(evening) -Sunday, July 6.** *Features many special events for our novice and intermediate players. Free lectures at 2 pm, Tuesday-Saturday, prizes, and a special dinner/reception.*

Austin hosts a Regional only every other year. Don't miss this opportunity for lots of goodies, points, and fun!

More information on Unit 207 tournaments may be found at : www.austinbridge.org

Opening Preempts (con't)

Now let's look at "how high?" The general rule is: bid such that if you are doubled, the penalty will be less than the value of an opponent's game. Assume your partner's hand will provide one trick. (Not always the case, but a reasonable and useful assumption.)

Vulnerability is the main issue here, and there are three situations:

1. You are vulnerable and they are not. Their game is worth less than 500 points. Do not preempt if you would go down two doubled and lose 500 points.
2. The vulnerability is equal. In this case do not preempt if you would go down three doubled and lose more than the value of their game.
3. They are vulnerable and you are not. This is "favorable" vulnerability. Since their game is worth 600 points or more, you can afford to go down three doubled, losing only 500. (But don't bid to go down four doubled.)

So, look at your hand, count your losers and assume your partner's hand will cover one of them. Preempt, or don't preempt, using the above guidelines. (Practice counting losers so you don't end up taking forever to decide.)

In closing, here are a couple of other tips:

Don't preempt with a near-opening hand. Sometimes folks open a weak two with an 11-count, later saying something like "I was not strong enough to open a one-bid so I opened a two-bid." This is usually unwise. Introduce such a suit later in the auction...you will almost always have that opportunity. Save your weak 2 openers for true weak 2's.

Don't get locked into suit lengths. Yes, normally you will have a six-card suit to open a weak 2, seven cards for a 3-bid, and eight cards for a 4-bid. But with favorable position and vulnerability, don't box yourself in. In third seat, not vulnerable vs. vulnerable, happily open 3C holding x, xx, xxxx, QJ1098x. You might even justify a bid of 5C with that hand! (If you end up -1100 and opponents have no slam, just tell partner you had three or four spades mixed in with your clubs...)





First overall in the April 199er Sectional:

Alan Wakefield - Harold Tweeden (Sat.)

Dyanne Kerr- Leilani Rose (Sun.)

First overall in the Austin May Sectional, 299er games

Harvey Malyn - Lazaro Brener (Thurs. am)

Jay and Joyce Leiserson tied with Gary and Elizabeth Walker (Thurs. afternoon)

Sheila Milner - David Goodwin, (Thurs. pm)

George Miller - Barbara Cernikovsky (Fri. am)

Wayne Tindall - Joe Ramirez (Fri. afternoon)

June Mattila - Sally Hillis (Sat. am)

Julie Johnson - Marjorie Butler (Sat. pm)

Bridge Lingo

Telephone number–

A penalty in the four digits. "I went for a telephone number" means you got caught for minus 1100 or 1400.

Striped-tail ape double–

The strategy of doubling opponents who are thinking about bidding slam while they are only at the four or five level, as to make game doubled is less than getting the slam bonus. This is called the striped-tail ape double because if the opponents are aware of this ploy they will RE-DOUBLE and you have to run like a striped-tail ape to your own suit!

It's the Law!

Bridge Rules You Should Know

- After the final pass, either defender may ask it is his lead.
- Declarer or either defender may request a review at his FIRST turn to play.
- Only an opponent can respond when a review of the bidding is requested.
- During the bidding, you may request explanations of the bidding when it is your turn.
- When the bidding is over, during play you can ask for explanations at your turn to play.
- If partner has given a mistaken explanation, you may not correct it during the bidding.
- If you end up **defending**, you must wait until play ends to correct partner's explanation.
- If you end up **declaring**, correct the explanation before the opening lead is made.
- A card is ruled played by a defender if it is held in a manner that partner could have seen it.
- A card is ruled played by declarer if it is held face up touching or nearly touching the table.
- Declarer may change an inadvertent designation if he does so without pause for thought.
- Dummy doesn't reach for a card until declarer calls for it.
- No player should turn his card face down until all four players have played to the trick.
- Play stops when a claim is made. The claimer states his line of play.
- If you think a claim is invalid, call the Director but say nothing until he arrives at the table.