

September ACBL Bulletin Notes

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These are the articles that we believe will benefit our readers the most.

1. “The Bidding Box” moderated by Josh Donn, Problem 7 (p. 42). The *Bridge Bulletin* auction shows how to right-side the 6NT contract so that the doubleton ♠K is protected. One pair did not get it right and risked the slam on the position of the ♠K for an average score. The other pair protected the ♠K for a top.
2. “It’s Your Call” by Sue Munday and Karen Walker, Deal 1 (p.44). Most of the expert panel chose a Roman Key Card 4NT for the top score. However, because South’s previous bid was 3NT, Colchamiro, Boehm and Donn are not sure that partner would take it as Blackwood in that situation. It’s a good hand to discuss with a regular partner to see if you agree.
3. “Card Play 101” by Phillip Alder, Deal 2 (p. 48). It is not always best to cash an AK right away. On this deal you will set up the ♥Q, giving declarer a valuable discard.
4. “Mike’s Bridge Lesson: A complete balancing auction” by Mike Lawrence (p. 56) presents a nice discussion of when to overcall (and when not to) and when to balance (and when not to).
5. “Chalk Talk” by Eddie Kantar (p 57). (The article subtitle appears to have been left over from last month and we have omitted it). Both deals exemplify the need to plan before playing to the first trick.
 1. The ♠K lead strongly suggests that West holds the ♠Q. Duck the first trick and play the ♠J, unblocking the suit. Later, finesse the ♠T against West’s ♠Q. Pitch a loser on dummy’s ♠A.
 2. Defense has attacked the only suit that will allow you to reach dummy. Win the ♠A in the closed hand, preserving the ♠QJ as a guaranteed entry to the club suit.
6. “Challenge of the Month” (p. 58). After drawing trump and eliminating all your clubs, play diamonds, forcing East on lead. East must either give you a ruff and a sluff or play into dummy’s red-suit holdings.

7. "Better Bridge with Bergen: Improve your bidding judgement – part 16" by Marty Bergen (p. 61). When the defense derails your original plan, you must make another one. In this case, the defense removes two trumps from dummy, preventing you from trumping clubs. Therefore, you need to set up the five-card diamond suit. Duck the first round of diamonds; give up the lead sooner rather than later.
8. "Mike's Advice: A difficult decision in the auction" by Mike Lawrence (p. 64) describes a situation where a weak jump shift could be used to accurately describe responder's hand and may prevent subsequent bids by the opponents and by the opener.

Our Favorites

"Card Play 101" by Phillip Alder, Deal 2 (p. 48)

②

	♠ QJ109		
	♥ QJ10		
	♦ KQ		
	♣ 6543		
♠ K2	N	♠ 3	
♥ AK876	W — † — E	♥ 932	
♦ 987	S	♦ 65432	
♣ 872		♣ KQ109	
	♠ A87654		
	♥ 54		
	♦ AJ10		
	♣ AJ		

West	North	East	South
	3♠		1♠
Pass		Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Sitting West, you lead the ♥A: T, 2 4. What would you do next?

The "automatic" play of the ♥K would be a disaster. Playing the ♥K sets up dummy's ♥Q on which declarer can pitch his losing club.

Giving it a little more thought, West should lead a club at trick two as there is little to lose by not leading a club. It is highly unlikely that West's heart trick will disappear and now the defense gets a club trick that would disappear if declarer can pitch on the ♥Q.

Now, the defense takes two hearts, one club and the ♠K, setting the contract. If the ♥K is cashed at trick two, the defense's club trick disappears and the contract makes.

“Chalk Talk” by Eddie Kantar (p 57)

①

	♠ A 10 2		
	♥ 8 3		
	♦ 7 5 4		
	♣ 9 8 7 6 3		
♠ K Q 9 8 5	N	♠ 7 6 3	
♥ 6 4	W † E	♥ 9 2	
♦ K J 6	S	♦ 10 9 8 2	
♣ K 4 2		♣ A Q J 10	
	♠ J 4		
	♥ A K Q J 10 7 5		
	♦ A Q 3		
	♣ 5		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♠	Pass	2♠	4♥
All Pass			

West leads the ♠K. Plan the play.

If you carelessly win the ♠A, you will get only the one spade trick. When you play the ♠J, West will win the ♠Q. The good ♠10 will be stranded in dummy.

So, duck the ♠K. West is most likely leading from the ♠KQ, as that is the normal lead. When you get in, pull defenders’ trumps and then finesse against the ♠Q in West. You will make your contract taking two spades, seven hearts, and a diamond.

If you win the ♠A at trick one, you will have to depends on the losing diamond finesse. Most of the time, when an opponent opens, he holds the missing major honor. That’s the case on this hand. So, it’ll be down one.

“Mike’s Advice: A difficult decision in the auction” by Mike Lawrence (p. 64)

				♠ Q10				
				♥ 3				
				♦ A872				
				♣ AKJ853				
♠ K84	N W — E		♠ A5					
♥ Q2	S		♥ AK9875					
♦ KQJ105			♦ 3					
♣ 1064			♣ Q972					
				♠ J97632				
				♥ J1064				
				♦ 964				
				♣ —				
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>					
	1♣	1♥	Pass					
2♦	3♣	Dbl	?					

North’s 1♣ bid is routine.

East’s 1♥ bid is routine. (2♥ would be preemptive; this is an opener with a strong suit.)

South has an easy 2♠ bid *if* North South are playing weak jump shifts in competition. This is a common treatment. 2♠ is likely to win the auction and it lets North know that South has 2-5 points, and six spades. If N/S are not playing weak jump shifts in competition, then South must pass.

West’s 2♦ bid is routine

North’s 3♣ bid is aggressive. Maybe too aggressive.

East had a good double: three quick tricks, decent clubs behind the club bidder, and a partner who has shown a good diamond suit.

Down 4 for -800. North found the worst possible dummy. South could have bid 3♠ but that was also a high-risk bid, that could have been even worse.

This hand is an advertisement for weak jump shifts in competition.

Lawrence goes on to suggest an Ogust-like treatment if opener has a huge hand in support of partner’s weak jump shift. Opener bids 2N and responder describes his hand (within the context of 2-5 HCP and six of his suit):

- 3♣ = bad hand, bad suit
- 3♦ = bad hand, good suit (course here a good suit would have about 3 points)
- 3H = good hand (close to 5 points), bad suit
- 3S = good hand, good suit

It’s a good idea to discuss this with your partner before trying it at the table.