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Ignoring the Odds

by Harold Feldheim

One of the mysterious areas of intelligent card play is that a problem must first be defined before it can be solved. Because of this, the success or failure of most hands is determined during the first couple of tricks. Even the most clear-cut line of play may well deserve a second look, and this modus operandi of double-checking is the difference between the good declarer and the expert declarer. The following hand is a simple exercise of technique with a dollop of poison added for surprise-spice.

NORTH

♠ K Q T 8 7
♥ A
♦ A 5 3 2
♣ 7 5 2

SOUTH

♠ A J 9 6 5 4
♥ Q 7 4
♦ 4
♣ A Q 9

Dealer: South
Neither side vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♠	4♦	5♦	Pass
6♣	Pass	6♦	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

Opening Lead: K♦

The Bidding: Over South's one spade opening bid, West tried to skewer the North-South lines of communication with a leap to the 4-level. I agree with North's judgment that this hand was too strong for a mere 4♠ bid, and 5♦ seems an appropriate choice. South gave vent to normal aggression, and despite minimal values, determined that his sixth spade and little wastage gave reason to investigate the possibility of a grand slam. But, they subsided at the six level.

The Play: A superficial glance showed sunny skies ahead. South can play the A♦ and extract trumps while carefully ruffing the red cards from both hands, ending in dummy. A small club towards his hand should render the opponents helpless. If East plays small, declarer would insert the 9-spot, forcing West to either concede a ruff and discard or lead a club into his A-Q. Similarly, if East plays the 10 or Jack, South would insert the Queen and again, West is endplayed. This is a classic strip-and-endplay on page one of any chapter on the subject—100% guaranteed success. So, what's wrong with the picture?

The key is the word *superficial*. Consider the bidding. After West's preempt, coupled with your partnership's diamond

holding, you should recognize a real problem; if West started life with eight diamonds, (he surely has a minimum of seven), East may well be able to ruff away your ace of diamonds. Once you see the problem, the solution becomes transparent. Since West announced a fistful of diamonds without much else, simply duck the first diamond, ruff the second diamond, and after drawing trumps, negotiate a winning club finesse.

The complete hands:

NORTH

♠ K Q T 8 7
♥ A
♦ A 5 3 2
♣ 7 5 2

WEST

♠ 2
♥ 6 2
♦ K Q J T 9 8 7 6
♣ 6 4

EAST

♠ 3
♥ K J T 9 8 5 3
♦ - - -
♣ K J T 8 3

SOUTH

♠ A J 9 6 5 4
♥ Q 7 4
♦ 4
♣ A Q 9

Look for hidden problems before beginning the play; a simple precaution that will avoid many potential bridge tragedies.

The obvious is that which is never seen ... until someone explains it simply.

Christian Morgenstern 

Upcoming Events

AUGUST

1-3 Connecticut Summer Sectional Hamden, CT
11 day Local (Split) Championship
19 eve Unit-Wide Championship
27-Sept 1 New England Fall Regional Nashua, NH

SEPTEMBER

10 day Local (Split) Championship
11 eve ACBL-wide Instant Match Point
12-14 Sid Cohen Sectional Wallingford, CT
25 day Unit-Wide Championship

OCTOBER

10 day Local (Split) Championship
13-19 Danbury Fall Regional (District 3) Danbury, CT

NOVEMBER

1 day Local (Split) Championship
12-18 STaC
20-30 Fall Nationals! Boston, MA
24 eve ACBL-wide Charity Game #2

DECEMBER

3 day Unit-Wide Championship
12-14 Jeff Feldman Sectional Guilford, CT

Bridge at the Lunatic Fringe Number 9 - Declarer's Signals

by Allan Wolf



In this article, I'll address the subject of declarer's signaling; the play of cards by declarer so as to create maximum confusion for the defenders. I'm not talking about false cards of honors, but the play of spot cards. This is an area that most players pay little attention to, and in truth, it seldom makes a difference. But occasionally it does matter, and the general rule is that declarer should follow the defenders' signaling methods when he has a choice of spot cards to play.

If the defenders are playing standard signals, and declarer wants a suit led by them to be continued, he should play a high spot card, an encouraging attitude. If he doesn't want the suit continued, he should play a low spot card, a discouraging attitude.

Conversely, if defenders' signaling is up-side-down, declarer should also play up-side-down in his choice of spot cards.

Here's a hand to illustrate the principle, featuring the Professor as declarer, creating a very difficult dilemma for his nemesis, Cecil Horne.

Warren

♠ K 6 4 3
♥ K 8 5 2
♦ K 4 2
♣ 9 2

Cecil Horne

♠ Q 5
♥ A T 9
♦ Q 9 6 3
♣ K Q T 8

Mariska

♠ J T 9 8 2
♥ 7 6
♦ T 8 5
♣ 6 5 4

Professor

♠ A 7
♥ Q J 4 3
♦ A J 7
♣ A J 7 3

The bidding was straightforward. The professor opened 1NT, and the Stayman convention revealed the heart fit. Warren's game invitation was happily accepted by the professor who had a maximum 17 points for his NT opening.

Cecil led the K♣, and his partner for the evening was Mariska, a cousin of Minna visiting from Hvar, a scenic resort island on Croatia's Adriatic coast. She followed with the 4♣, her lowest card. Cecil and his new partner had just barely time to discuss carding before the start of the game, and they had agreed to standard

carding, contrary to Cecil's usual preference for up-side-down signals which he used with his regular partners.

This was the first round of the evening, and the professor had been at the table as Cecil and partner filled out their convention card. So, fortunately, the professor was aware of their carding methods. If the professor had needed to inquire or look at their convention card after the lead was made, the ever-leery Cecil would have suspected some chicanery.

With this knowledge, the professor followed smoothly with the seven -- a high card "signal" by declarer, hoping to encourage a continuation into his remaining AJ tenace. The hold-up of the Ace in this situation is, of course, a standard play.

Similarly, if the defenders had been playing up-side-down signals, the East hand would try to discourage by playing the six, and declarer should encourage by playing the three. If declarer mistakenly plays the seven, it will be absolutely clear to West that the six is discouraging, while playing the three creates possible ambiguity.

As it was, Cecil studied this trick for some time before playing to the next trick. Partner's four seemed to be a discouraging low card, the more so with the deuce appearing in dummy. Still, the three was missing, so it was possible that partner was trying to encourage with a holding like J 4 3.

Furthermore, Cecil knew that partner could not have much... a Jack or Queen at most, accounting for declarer's known 16 or 17 points, 9 in dummy, and his own 13. No continuation looked attractive, and any continuation could cost a trick, depending on where partner's meager resources were located. The right decision was by no means obvious, and in the end, Cecil persevered with clubs.

Whether this was the right choice is certainly debatable, but the point is that if the professor had routinely played the three, there would have been no doubt that the four was discouraging, and Cecil would have switched, likely to a trump.

The remaining play proved rather interesting, with expert tactics and counter-tactics. The professor won the club continuation in hand with the Jack, and

cached the Ace of clubs for a diamond pitch from dummy. Then the K♦ and A♦, and a diamond ruff in dummy, both defenders following.

The professor then returned to hand with the A♠, and led the 4th round of clubs. He judged well by ruffing with the eight, and was prepared to lose to an overruff. Based on Cecil's earlier play, the professor was convinced that Cecil held the A♥, in which case roughing the club high would surely set up a second trump trick for the defense. Luckily for the professor, Mariska had no trump card higher than the eight, and she discarded the J♠. Now an overtrick seemed likely.

Winning in dummy with the 8♥, the professor led the K♥, beginning finally to take out trumps. At this point, Cecil saw a chance to make an extra trump trick by ducking the K♥, and winning the presumed heart continuation. Then he could put declarer back in dummy with the K♠, and with nothing but spades left in dummy, Cecil would surely make a trick with his remaining ten of trumps, perhaps salvaging something on the board after his unfortunate club play at trick 2.

After the K♥ held, the professor realized just in the nick of time what Cecil was up to, and found the antidote... cashing the K♠ before continuing hearts. Now he could not be locked in dummy, and after losing the A♥, was able to claim the remainder. In all, he lost only a club and a trump trick — making an all-important overtrick, and a tie for top on the board.

Cecil was humiliated even further when Mariska pointed out in the post-mortem that he could have promoted an extra trump trick by winning the A♥ immediately and continuing with the 4th round of diamonds. Mariska could ruff with the 7, and that would promote a 2nd trump trick for the defense.

And so the hand further enhanced Cecil's reputation for making the "expert" play at the wrong time.



Bridge is a Humbling Game

by Brett Adler



Bob Hamman says that no one plays perfect bridge, but I know that my mistakes are a lot worse, and more frequent, than his. The following two hands come from the Knockout teams at the Sturbridge Regional – the first hand is an example of my “non-perfect” bridge, and the second is an amusing hand that I thought worth including.

For those who like play problems, don't look past the auction below and see if you can come up with a better plan than I did to make 4♠. I received the lead of the 2♦ (3rd and 5th) to East's 9♦ and my Q♦.

NORTH

♠ 9 6 5 3 2
♥ A J 5 4
♦ 6 4
♣ 4 2

SOUTH

♠ K 8 7 4
♥ K 3
♦ A Q J
♣ K Q 7 5

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♥ ⁽¹⁾	1♣	1NT
Pass	4♥ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2NT ⁽²⁾
All Pass		Pass	4♠

- (1) Transfer to spades
- (2) Maximum hand with 4 spades

Double dummy the hand can always be beaten, but after the diamond lead the hand is cold. The best line, if you found it, is to cash the A♦ then ruff your last diamond in dummy before leading a spade to your King, then exit a spade. East who can cash two spade winners, is now end played to lead a heart into dummy's AJ or to lead a club providing an extra entry to finesse against their A♣. Even a diamond return, if the 2♦ was not a true card on the opening lead, allows you to ruff in dummy and with the extra entry, lead towards your KQ♣

twice. All this line needs is for East to have A♠ and A♣ which is a practical certainty after the opening lead and the auction.

Instead I elected a lesser line when I won the Q♦, crossed to dummy's A♥, and successfully led a spade to my King (East playing J♠ and West playing the Q♠). At this stage I exited a spade to East who also cashed the 10♠ and then exited a diamond which I won with the Ace. I now had to decide whether East was a 3-4-3-3 shape and I could ruff out the A♣, or whether East was a 3-3-3-4 shape and I could ruff out the Q♥ in the endgame. Of course I got it wrong and I was left wondering why trumps weren't 2-2 so that even I couldn't have screwed it up. At the other table they were only in 2♠ and made an overtrick for 140 so our loss on the board was 6 imps.

This is a hand where I could have actually recovered from starting down an inferior line after leading a heart to dummy's Ace at trick two and then leading a spade to my King. West is marked with a 5 card suit and K♦ because if East had the King he would probably play it (he could easily think his partner has the Q♦ and he doesn't want to give me a free trick). Also, after West plays Q♠ (and I give him the K♦), I am only missing 12 points so East has everything else for his opening bid.

Therefore, after my K♠ wins I should continue by cashing K♥, then A♦, then ruff my J♦, then lead a club to my Q♣ (East has to duck or he gives me the contract). Now I can exit a trump and after cashing his second trump trick (he started with A J T), East is end-played essentially recovering a similar position that I should have achieved by eliminating the diamonds to start with.

The position would now be:

NORTH

♠ 2
♥ J 5
♦
♣ 4

SOUTH

♠ 4
♥
♦
♣ K 7 5

East now has a choice of bad options and, irrespective of his distribution, he can't win more than one of the last four tricks. East can lead Q♥ which I can ruff, a small heart which I can duck to the J♥, or a club that either gives me, or sets up, the K♣. Even if I have misread the diamond position and East has a diamond left, I can pitch a club from my hand and ruff on the board – then a club towards the King would also have scored +620. For the record, East's hand was: AJT, Qxx, 9xx, AJTx.

The next hand is memorable in terms of the bidding. How often do any of us see solid 9 card suits.

NORTH

♠ T x x x
♥ K J 9 x x
♦ x
♣ x x x

WEST

♠ J
♥ Q T x x x
♦ T x x
♣ K x x x

EAST

♠ A K Q 9 x x x
♥ x
♦ - - -
♣ A Q J T x

SOUTH

♠ x
♥ A x
♦ A K Q J 9 8 x x x
♣ x

Dealer: South
North/South Vulnerable

At our table I liked the South action:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Dbl	1♦
Pass	5♣ ⁽²⁾	Dbl	5♦
Pass?	Pass	5♠	6♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

- (1) RKC Blackwood for hearts
- (2) One Key Card (K♥)

I was West and regretted my pass over 5♦ as soon as I made it. We are white against red and it is clear that I should have bid 6♣ as partner is marked with a lot of black cards, and King fourth of clubs along with a stiff J♠ make this a phenomenal 4 count (the Q♥ obviously is worth nothing). Partner then has an easy 6♠ bid over 6♦ to score +980, or we will let the opponents sacrifice in 7♦ Dbl to achieve what should be the par score of 500 to East-West.

When You Feel Like Criticising Somebody, Just Remember That All the People in the World Have Not Had the Same Advantages That You've Had

by Bernard Schneider



I am playing in the Sunday Swiss team event at the Rye Town Hilton Regional. My partner is a very strong player. I will call him Bob, which may, or may not, be his real name.

An important point about Bob, he truly sees very deeply into the game, and his bidding and play are meticulous and imaginative. I always have to be on my toes. For example, when following suit in trumps with three little, Bob will always play them in a particular order to signify suit strength in the side suits. Playing the spade seven first from 7-4-3 when declarer is drawing trumps tends to indicate strength in hearts. That is, unless it is “obvious” that he doesn’t have an interest in hearts, in which case, the order of cards reflect an even finer nuance, which I have to work out, such as that the seven followed by the four indicates that his values are in diamonds, while the seven followed by the three may mean clubs. All this requires working out what the four followed by the three would mean, or perhaps on this hand he assumes that I know or should know what he is holding, in which case he is trying to misdirect declarer. You get the picture; life isn’t always easy — even assuming that I have been focused enough to notice the order of his trumps.

Bob tries very hard to be partner-friendly and his explanations after the hand, when I can repent at leisure and actually see all four hands in front of me, reveal a nuanced intelligence that I truly admire. But, at the table, it is not so easy to figure things out on the run. And, did I mention that he is looking at my trump discards?

As for bidding, playing with him involves me in auctions that I do not typically encounter with other people; he always has the hand that, in the light of day, must be the only possible hand he could hold. But, at the table, not nearly

so easy. Before we play, I always offer a prayer that the hands will be simple.

The problem with such bidding misunderstandings is that they do not lead to a swing of a few IMP’s (such as by pushing to a game down one), but to massive gut-wrenching swings, inevitably in competitive auctions. For example, he is a passed hand, and in a competitive auction where we have put some pressure on the opponents, they have stopped at three spades. Inevitably, when you and I bid such hands, we are content to let the opponents play. But, Bob, in the pass out position, will now double.

In theory that could be -
Scenario I: A unilateral penalty double, and the opponents are going for minus 800; an opponent under pressure has raised his partner’s four card suit on a doubleton, and my partner has an undisclosed five trumps (“What else could I have?”). In this scenario, if I pull the double, *we* will go for 800.

Scenario II: He has a hand rich in high cards, short in spades, and primarily interested in bidding on, unless I have trump tricks. If you are telling me that you can always tell which hand he has based on the number of trumps you hold in your hand, think again. It is not a happy situation when you pass with a singleton, and wind up defending 3 spades when the opponents have eleven trumps between them. When dummy hits, you immediately realize that you are cold for game, which means that 11 IMP’s have already gone away; to say nothing of the stomach-curdling panic, which you must overcome to concentrate on the order of partner’s trump spots, which will lead you to the only way to assemble 5 tricks and defeat 3 spades, to avoid a 17 IMP loss.

Getting back to Rye, we have won our first match, and our second is against a

Westchester team we know well. They are capable, but we should be considered the favorites.

On the first board I pick up:

♠ A K 7 4 3
♥ 7
♦ Q J T 9 7
♣ T 5

Bob opens two clubs, *and here comes trouble, with a capital T*. All I want is a plus score—grand slam be damned. I respond 2♠, and Bob bids 3♥. I’m liking this less and less, and think briefly about 3 no trump to slow down the auction. But I must go with the flow. Who’s to say partner doesn’t have a secondary three or four card diamond suit; so I bid 4♦. Double on my left, and my partner goes into a long long long think and emerges with 5♠.

I knew it. My moment of truth; my goose is cooked. I am being asked to nail my coffin shut. My default rule with Bob is always always to assume the most normal interpretation, which is: What would the bid mean if made by a reasonable, but not expert player — perhaps someone like me who has a deep and abiding concern to make life as easy as I possibly can for my partner.

I assume that he is asking me to focus on my spade and diamond holdings. Thinking in what I assume is a logical manner, there is nothing particularly good about my holdings in those suits. No diamond control, only 5 spades, no spade spots, and the two spade honors being pretty much what I promised with my initial response. Besides, aren’t we the better team; so why should I bet my life on one hand?

Pass, I say. I hope for:

♠ Q J		♠ J T x
♥ A K Q J x x x	or	♥ K Q J x x
♦ x x		♦ x
♣ A K		♣ A K Q J

Dummy hits, the full hand being:

NORTH
 ♠ - - -
 ♥ A K Q J 9 8 7 6
 ♦ 5
 ♣ A K 8 7

SOUTH
 ♠ A K 7 4 3
 ♥ 7
 ♦ Q J T 9 7
 ♣ T 5

I am not exactly sure what has happened. The very first thought that crosses my mind is the following anecdote. As dummy hits the table, declarer takes out a flashlight. When his partner asks what he was doing, he replies that he was looking for the hand that partner told him he had in the auction.

I know Bob will have a logical and obvious explanation for his bid. He is, please God, placid—no words, no faces, no gestures—for which I am most thankful. He later explains he intended his bid as Exclusion Blackwood—asking for my aces not including the spade ace. But, for the moment, the play’s the thing.

Left hand opponent leads the ace, king and a third diamond. I win the trick, and play ace, king and another spade, both opponents following, left hand opponent wining. He shifts to a club; the moment of truth has arrived. I am down to two trumps and there are two high trumps out against me. I can run the hearts from dummy, allowing each of the opponents to score their trump separately, guaranteeing down three, or I could ruff a heart back to my hand and play my last trump, hoping the defendants’ trumps are evenly split, in which case I will be down exactly two. If one opponent has both trumps, however, I will go down at least four.

I decide to play the hand wide open; heart ruff back to my hand to draw the opponents’ trumps, which were originally 4-4. Down two. Why am

I even bothering with the play of the hand? As Bob enters our score, he offers me salvation. He points out that the normal six hearts is also down two. Diamond lead... obvious trump shift... two more clubs to lose. It isn’t easy to stay out of slam. We mark our card: 6♥, minus 100, and expect a pushed board. All that remains is for Bob to construct a plausible auction for us to get us to six hearts. We are home free.

We finish the match and look for our partners. Otherwise, the match was uneventful, and we expect a small win or a small loss. No big deal for a round two match. What is that I hear approaching our table? It is a crescendo of sound and motion, with two scoops of acrimony, and a dollop of throbbing veins and a sputtering of unintelligible phrases. It is our teammates. We compare. Board 1, “6 hearts down two, minus 100” I say; “minus 1430” say they. We finish comparing and lose the match 15-5. The crescendo of sound and motion is concerned only with itself and, like a tornado, spins away.

Bob pulls one of our teammates aside privately and asks what had happened? And why is each of them mad at the other for having lost the board? How did the defense go? Was a diamond led? Yes; check. Was a trump returned to stop the club ruff and kill the entry to dummy? Yes; double check. Somebody revoked? No. So what happened?

To solve the mystery, one must remember Sherlock Holmes who said: Once you eliminate the impossible, the only explanation must be the improbable. Inexplicably, on the run of the hearts, both our teammates pitched all of their clubs, and each held onto all of their spades.

The remaining three afternoon matches pass by without meaning. Our teammates drop off their score card at the end of each match and walk away. Bob calculates the results, and turns it over to the director. At the end of the fifth match we withdraw. 

Humbling Game from page 3

Against 6♦Dbl, we scored our two black cards and for a mere 200. But, the interesting action comes from the “twilight zone” auction at the other table.

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Dbl	Pass!!! ⁽¹⁾
2♣	Pass	2♥ ⁽²⁾	3♣ ⁽³⁾
Pass	Pass ⁽⁴⁾	Dbl ⁽⁶⁾	5♦
Pass	Pass	6♣	All Pass

1. South liked his hand and wanted to show this by cue bidding the opponent’s suit. To do this, he decided to pass and let the opponents bid a suit first. Considering this hand has plenty of offence and almost no defense this is not a pass I would have found.
2. I’m not sure of their system, but this is some sort of cue bid (maybe showing better spades than clubs).
3. South’s “master plan” seems to work out as he can now cue bid the opponent’s suit.
4. North and South are clearly on different wavelengths as North thinks South has both minors and shows his preference by passing – after all he thinks, partner couldn’t have a strong hand and be cue bidding as they passed on the previous round.
5. Not content with passing and earning a zero risk +700 or +800, depending on who has the K♣, East goes for the slam and is, unfortunately, unpunished in that South didn’t have the guarded K♣ or sacrifice in 6♦ or 7♦. 

Milestones and Congratulations

New Life Masters

Joan Carter
 Bernard Cope
 Joan Danoff
 Stuart Danoff
 Gordon Kiernan
 Vivian Wu

Gold Life Master

(2500 MPs)
 Doris Greenwald

Silver Life Master

(1000 MPs)
 Vera Gerard

Bronze Life Masters

(500 MPs)

Carol Amaio	Gordon Kiernan
Bernard Cope	Jean Mazo
Linda Green	Mary Richardson
Stanley Kaplan	William Rose
Desmond Kearney	

Can't Cost – Chapter 16

by John Stiefel



The “can’t cost” theme occurred twice in the same hand from a recent Regional Knockout.

NORTH

♠ 9 5 4
♥ A Q 8 7
♦ Q 3 2
♣ Q 5 4

SOUTH

♠ A J 8 7 6
♥ - - -
♦ A K 9 8 7 6
♣ A 3

Dealer: South
E/W vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♦	2♣	Pass	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Opening Lead: 4♥ (3rd and 5th best)

North had no clear choice over 2♣. His pass was conservative but reasonable and, at any rate, the partnership got to the best contract after South showed 6-5 distribution in diamonds and spades. Note that South was correct in opening 1♦ and, as a result, was able to paint a very good picture of his hand.

Trick 1 – A♥ wins, East plays the J, 3♣ discarded.

Trick 2 – 9♠ led to the 2, 6 and Q

Trick 3 – low ♣ led, A wins.

At this point, declarer had visions of taking all the rest of the tricks, as West could easily have started with KQ doubleton of spades. So, he laid down the A♠ at trick 4. West followed with the 3 and East showed out! Yes, West had made a “can’t cost” play to trick 2 by winning the Q♣ instead of the T♠.

All still seemed well, as declarer planned to run his diamonds and hold his losers to 3 trump tricks. When he laid down the ace of diamonds at trick 5, however, West ruffed with the T♠. Then he led the Q♠ to trick 6, removing dummy’s last trump, and East had to score the setting trick with one of his minor diamond honors.

At the other table, the play was the same to the first 2 tricks and West won trick 2 with the T♠ instead of the Q♠. At trick 4, however, declarer came up with a “can’t cost” play of his own and led the A♦ instead of the A♠. West ruffed this with the 3♣ and returned the K♠ to declarer’s A♠. The defense could only score the Q♣. Declarer led to dummy’s Q♦, a diamond back to his K and ruffed his fourth round diamond loser in the dummy. West didn’t ruff in with his queen of trump to any of these tricks, but it wouldn’t have helped if he had.

The complete deal was:

WEST

♠ K Q T 3
♥ K 6 4
♦ - - -
♣ K J T x x x

EAST

♠ 2
♥ J T 9 5 3 2
♦ J T 5 4
♣ x x

NORTH

♠ 9 5 4
♥ A Q 8 7
♦ Q 3 2
♣ Q 5 4

SOUTH

♠ A J 8 7 6
♥ - - -
♦ A K 9 8 7 6
♣ A 3

So the team that made the “can’t cost” play at each table gained 10 IMPs.

Note that South’s “can’t cost” A♦ play would have cost a trick if West had started with Qx of trump in addition to his diamond void. South, however, was willing to lose an unnecessary trump trick to make sure of his game against any distribution and defense. So South’s “can’t cost” play can more simply be described as a “safety play.”



Boston Fall Nationals - Check out the ACBL Web Site

The 2008 Boston Fall Nationals are now prominently featured on the ACBL web site as next in line. A wealth of information is available which includes the tournament schedule, making hotel reservations, transportation tips to facilitate your travel, tours in and near Boston during the tournament, and much more. District 25, which is hosting these New England Nationals, is finishing up preparations to make this a most memorable event for all who attend.

Each day has a special designation for our State Days theme. In Connecticut we have the distinction of 2 separate days set aside within our state. On Tuesday, 11/25, we have CT State Day to recognize all of our Unit 126 members. On Sunday, 11/23, the Hartford Bridge Club located in West Hartford, CT will be recognized for its unique designation as the oldest, continuously running bridge club in North America (77 years and counting), as well as the largest bridge club in New

England. Check out the ‘Other Events’ section on the web site to learn more about each day and some of the surprises for those who stop by the daily display tables.

Many of the members within our unit have worked hard on the Nationals Committee over the last 2+ years. They have dedicated numerous hours and done a stellar job. As we approach the final stretch we look to all of you to help us cross the finish line and make this the best National tournament to date. Two very important things you can do:

- **Volunteer an hour or two to help out at the tournament**
- **Make your plans and join us in Boston at the Nationals**

For those who are in Boston on CT Day on 11/25, please stop by our state display table to pick up your name tag. We would like to recognize all Unit 126 members on their designated day.

Don’t miss out on the challenge and excitement of this major bridge event being held in your own District 25. There are games for all levels from novice to the most experienced. The Senior events and I/N (Intermediate/Novice) games will be held in their own designated areas with special hospitality planned. Game times are scheduled throughout the day to accommodate all schedules starting at 9 am and ending with midnite KOs. Come with a team, a partner, or on your own. The Partnership Desk is available to help you find a partner for any type of event.

Thanks to all for your support and the Nationals Committee looks forward to seeing you at the game tables as we all — **MAKE HISTORY IN BOSTON!**

For any questions about the Boston Nationals or how you can help, please contact Ausra Geaski via email at ausrag@aol.com or by phone at 860-533-7271.

BRIDGE FORUM (HAMDEN)

Second Quarter News
TUESDAY

Player of the Year: At the halfway point, Robert Klopp and Tadeusz Karnkowski will have to come back to the field a little with some inconsistent results if anyone else is to make a run. They are both in the top six of all three categories, with no one else in the top sixteen. Robert has a small lead over Tad, with Billie Hecker a distant third, followed by Harold Miller-Rita Brieger (neither of whom has played with a second partner yet this year), Louise Wood, Muriel Romero and Bob Hawes.

Leading Pairs: Not only are Robert and Tad the top pair so far this year with a good lead over Harold and Rita, but Robert and Brenda Harvey are currently third, ahead of former Pair-of-the-Year Jatin Mehta-Hasmukh Shah. Amidst many of the usual suspects, the relatively new pair of Billie Hecker-Joe Pagerino has made it into the top ten.

Leonora Stein Memorial Cup: The final four for this cup contained three former champions (Billie Hecker, Louise Wood and Bob Hawes) and first-timer Sara Ann Auerbach, who survived the maximum six elimination matches to reach the finals, just as Judy Pieper had done in 2004 en route to her only championship. Sara Ann even managed to take the lead while defeating Bob in both of the first two weeks, while every other head-to-head matchup was tied 1-1. In the final week, it gradually slipped away, despite superb slam bidding throughout the three-week finals from Sara Ann and her regular partner Helen Selmon. Billie was able to claim victory over Louise by approximately .3% in the end, with Sara Ann third and Bob fourth. This was Billie's third cup win, and her first since the Van Dyke Cup in 2000. The gap of 7½ years between cup victories easily breaks the record of four years set by Florence Schannon in 2002.

FRIDAY

Player-of-the-Year: A strong second quarter has put Shirley Fruchter in front with a fair lead over Gert Pedersen and Billie Hecker. Marge Simson, Fredda Kelly, Louise Wood and leading man Larry Stern make up the chasing pack.

Leading Pairs: Larry Stern-Hill Auerbach, who usually contend for this distinction, have a small lead over Sylvia Alpert-Lois Flesche. Marshall and Teresita Holley made a late return

from their world travels, but quickly moved into a close third place. The trio of Shirley, Gert and Arlene Leshine are in the top ten in all three combinations—Arlene-Gert fourth, Shirley-Arlene fifth, and Gherley ninth.

Aldyth Claiborn Memorial Cup: For the first time, two players made the final four of both this and the Stein Cup. While the Claiborn tends to produce the most surprise finalists, this year was an affair of all cup winners, with Louise Wood and Billie Hecker being joined by Helen Molloy and Fredda Kelly. Fredda entered the last week considerably behind, with the others virtually tied. In the end, it came down to a slam auction involving Stayman and a void. Billie and her partner might have bid the slam had they played the uncontested auction 1NT-2C-2H-3S or even 4S as a splinter. Helen and her partner had opponents who interfered over Stayman and competed to 4S, producing the auction 1NT-P-2C-2S; 3H-4S-5H-P; 6H. Finishing with the top on this board, Helen pulled into a tie with Billie, resulting in their match being tied 1½-1½. They both defeated Fredda head-to-head, but Billie's result against Louise was another tie while Helen defeated Louise 2-1. Helen, who won the Helen Frank Cup in 2005, became our ninth multiple champion. She and Florence Schannon are the only two among the nine whose second cup win came more than a year after the first.

TUESDAY/FRIDAY COMBINED

Helen Frank Cup: This year featured lead exchanges between Tuesday-only players and Friday-only players, as well as strong performances by regular partnerships. Billie Hecker, Hill Auerbach and Teresita Holley all led early in this Swiss-style competition. By late May, a leading trio had emerged of Robert Klopp, Tadeusz Karnkowski and Arlene Leshine. They took turns leapfrogging each other back and forth, pulling well ahead of the field until a strong run was made by Carrie and Charlie Schnee. Robert once managed a good lead, only to have the bad luck to be matched against Carrie when she scored 80% on the number. With the last game on a Friday, it appeared that it would be a question of whether Tad's lead of about 1½-2 top boards over the Schnees would hold up (Tad does not play on Fridays). The Schnees were unable to attend, but Robert, who trailed Tad by less than 1½ matchpoints, put in a rare appearance, only for the game to start before his partner arrived. With the score staying close all game, Robert needed an above average last round to win the cup, only

to come up less than one point short, brought down by an untimely -1400. Tad thus became our twenty-fifth different cup champion, and matched Jon Ingersoll's achievement in 2002 of winning a Tuesday-Friday combined cup without playing any Fridays.

NEWTOWN

The Newtown Bridge Club will add a Wednesday morning session (10AM) to its weekly schedule effective July 2nd. For more information, contact Ed Finlay @ 203-264-4758.

WEE BURN NEWS

The following pairs did well in the Spring Series which ended June 12:

1. Linda Cleveland-Karen Barrett
2. Joan Hoben-Penny Glassmeyer
3. Marilyn Tjader-Gail Schulze
4. Lois Berry-Jan Moller
5. Ed Meyer-Betsy Philips
6. Janet Soskin-Betty Hodgman

Congratulations to players who placed well in the June STaC games:

June 9

4th in flight A: Joan Hoben - Kathie Rowland.....this gave Kathie enough silver points to become a Life Master... bravo! **6th in flight A:** Penny Glassmeyer - Susan Mayo

June 12

2nd in flight A: Linda Cleveland - Karen Barrett **4th in flight A:** Marilyn Tjader - Gail Schulze **6th in flight B:** Joan Hoben - Penny Glassmeyer **5th in flight C:** Belinda Metzger - Audrey Cadwallader **6th in flight C:** Betty Pascal - Carol Davidson

West Hartford

How ironic is this?

Art Noll's Partner didn't show up and Harry Sacks' partner didn't show up so I matched them up as partners and they came in first place Thursday, July 3. They just edged out Jeanne Walker and Tina Hrycyna. The best place to live in the world, America.

WOODWAY CC

Woodway Country Club just finished its Spring Series. The results were: **First:** Mary Richardson and Martha Hathaway **Second:** Barbara Munson and Ellie Allen **Third:** Joan Hoben and Linda Cleveland

We also have a new Life Master - Kathy Rowland. Kathy went over big in the STaC. 

Results

Edith Keohane Senior Regional (April 30-May 1) – Connecticut First Place Finishers

Thursday Afternoon Senior Side Game
Stanley Kaplan - Natalie Kaplan

Thursday Morning 299er Pairs
Karen Largay - Priscilla Hostetter,

Thursday Afternoon 299ers
Betty Pratt - Betty Payton

Bracketed KO II – B

Carole Greene, Rochelle Shapiro, Judith Hess, Nicholas France

Saturday Evening 299ers
Harry Jancis - George Smedes

Sunday Senior Swiss-1

Melvin Marcus, Sheila Gabay, Luke Gillespie, Alan Applebaum, Richard De Martino, John Stiefel

Sunday Senior Swiss-2

Robert Casey, Harris Jacobs, Burton Gischner, Janet Gischner

299er Swiss Teams

Margaret Mahland, Margery Gussak, Norma Healy, Edith Gottlieb

Unit 126 Charity pairs Monday Morn Session (May 12, 2008)

FLIGHT A EVENT LEADERS

- 1 Jim Cleary - Larry Wallowitz
- 2 J Michael Carmiggelt - Robert Lahey

- 3 Helen Kobernusz - Sarah Corning

FLIGHT B EVENT LEADERS

- 1 J Michael Carmiggelt - Robert Lahey
- 2 David Strong - Mary Jane Strong
- 3 John Podkowsky - Al Hageman

FLIGHT C EVENT LEADERS

- 1 David Strong - Mary Jane Strong
- 2 John Podkowsky - Al Hageman
- 3 Ginny Grayson - Barbara Dempsey

New England Summer Regional (June 18-22) – Connecticut First Place Finishers

Wednesday Eve 299er Pairs
Sheila Gillin, Karen Largay

Thursday Afternoon Side
Doris Greenwald, Betty MacInnis,

Thursday Morn 299er Pairs
Susan Schmerl, James Schmerl

Bracketed KO I – B

Lynn Condon, Jennifer Williams, Al Roberts, Solomon Field

Bracketed KO I – C

Robert Klopp, Brenda Harvey, Michael Wavada, Richard Benedict

Thursday Swiss Teams

Geoffrey Brod, Mel Colchamiro, Pat McDevitt, Richard De Martino

Friday Compact 3

Eugene Coppa, William Watson, Jerry Hirsch, David Margolin

Friday Compact 5

Robert Klopp, Brenda Harvey, Richard Benedict, Michael Wavada

Friday Eve 299er Pairs

Daniel Finn, Michael Dworetsky

Saturday Morn 299er Pairs

Harry Jancis, Maruta Jancis

Saturday Compact KO 1

Paul Pearson, Laurie Robbins, Reginald Harvey, Thomas Lorch

Saturday Compact KO 2

Paul Miller, William Selden, Linda Green, David Blackburn

Sunday RR Teams, Bkt 2

Steven Groag, Arnold Berman, Ann Baum, Maeve Lucey

Sunday RR Teams, Bkt 3

Jonna Robinson, Ausra Geaski, Kathleen Frangione, Bunny Kliman

Sunday RR Teams, Bkt 6

Paul Miller, Linda Green, Vivian Wu, Victor Mazmanian

Flight A Knockout

Neil Montague, Bob Gorse, Lawrence Lau, Brett Adler

THE KIBITZER

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All comments, news, items (including cartoons) related to the bridge world and of interest to our readers are welcome. Please send all items for the next *Kibitzer* by October 15, 2008.

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You can see *The Kibitzer* in blazing color at the CT bridge site:

<http://www.ctbridge.org>

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If you have something to say, suggest, or complain about, tell your representative, who is a Board member and your link to being heard.

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