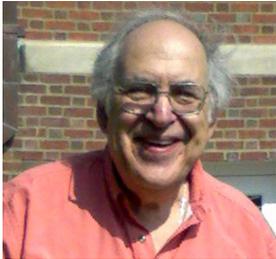




THE KIBITZER

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CONNECTICUT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Volume 20 • Number 1 • February 2016



The Human Factor

by Harold Feldheim

In the ancient days of bridge, when players like Ely and Josephine Culbertson ruled the land, there were many pretenders to the throne. Of these, none were more famous than P. (Philip) Hal Sims. His table presence, along with his tremendous flair for all competitive sport, made him the most dangerous of opponents. The following hand from a very high-stakes rubber bridge game was described by the great Howard Schenken as “the most unforgettable hand I’ve ever seen.” At the end of this article, after examining the consternation of an acknowledged expert (East), ask yourself honestly if you wouldn’t have had the same awful problem.

North	
♠ AKQ	
♥ K92	
♦ KQJ	
♣ A863	
West	East
♠ 94	♠ J865
♥ 8765	♥ QJ10
♦ 9875	♦ 10432
♣ 1075	♣ J9
South (Sims)	
♠ 10732	
♥ A43	
♦ A6	
♣ KQ42	

Neither side vulnerable

N	E	S	W
1♣	Pass	2NT	Pass
7NT	All Pass		
Lead: ♠9			

The Auction: primitive, but succinct. North started with a quiet 1♣. When South bid a game-forcing 2NT, North, holding 23 points, decided on slam. With no perceived advantages in shape, he decided on a direct leap to the grand slam.

The Play: P. Hal surveyed his chances. As must be obvious, (barring a 5-0 club split), 7♣ is icy. But then there would be no story. Despite holding 35 HCPs, it appeared that only 12 tricks were to be had. The culprit is the hideous diamond duplication. There were good possibilities in the spade suit (either a 3-3 split or a doubleton ♠J), but not much beyond that. Unwilling to put all his hopes on such a frail reed, Sims devised a devilish extra chance.

Winning the spade lead, he cashed three rounds of diamonds (discarding a heart), and followed with three rounds of clubs and the remaining two spades. With nine cards played, Declarer cashed two rounds of hearts ending in dummy and arriving at the following endgame.

North		East	
♠ -		♠ J	
♥ 9		♥ Q	
♦ -		♦ -	
♣ 3		♣ -	
West		South	
♠ -		♠ 10	
♥ 87		♥ -	
♦ -		♦ -	
♣ -		♣ ?	

P. Hal led the last club off dummy and East suddenly realized he was the victim of his own inattention to spot cards. He realized that he had to protect against dummy’s ♥9. What was South’s last club? If it was the deuce, pitching a spade was correct. But a higher club in the South hand would allow him to enjoy his ♠10. After a long huddle and a few appeals to the goddess of luck, he pitched his heart. When South produced the ♣2, the ♥9 became the 13th trick.

Postmortem: As is true today, expert repertoire requires both technical and tactical knowledge. East’s position at trick 12 was most embarrassing, but in all honesty, how many of us would have known which card to play?





From the CBA President

Bridge received a lot of attention during the November Nationals in Denver, with full-page coverage in the December 5 issue of *The New York Times*. The article was illustrated with photos of intensely focused bridge players.

The *Times*' article focused on the value of such games as bridge and chess to keep the mind active and sharp. We've heard all this before and, even though we occasionally forget exactly when the jack of hearts was played and from which direction, we all know that the game requires a good deal of mental dexterity. If this activity helps keep our brains functioning well in spite of bodily aches and complaints, well...what could be better?

I found it especially interesting that the feature was in the business section, which I assume means they think the game is related to work, makes use of business-type transactions and applications, or that having a sharp mind is more related

to business activities than to any other personal endeavor. Wherever it appears, spreading the word will hopefully peak the interest of "social" bridge players and other gamers to get down to business and join the duplicate family.

And "family" is the key word and one of the best benefits of bridge. Those in the bridge world are a family. Disagreements with partners happen, opponents can be argumentative, we embarrass ourselves with really awful lapses of judgment...but it's all in the family. We come to rely on this circle for support and solace and a few good laughs when we need them most.

As in any family, it's important that the senior members help bring along those "younger" or newer members. The Cromwell Regional in February will have a Pro-Am game that offers the "Pros" a terrific opportunity to support those less adept at the table, and the "Ams" the chance to play with, and against, the sometimes

scary "Pros." The "Ams" might even learn that nothing really awful is going to happen, that it's fun, and that it presents a way to get used to playing at different levels of competition. Hopefully, whether you're a "Pro" or an "Am," you'll sign up for this one-session event. You'll find all the details, as well as the definitions of "Pro" and "Am" on the District 25 website at www.nebridge.org.

Finally, a quote from Charles Goren, "Bridge is for fun. You should play the game for no other reason. You should not play bridge to make money, to show how smart you are, to show how stupid your partner is, to prove that you are the greatest teacher since Socrates, to show off the latest fad in bidding, or to prove any of the several hundred other things that bridge players are so often trying to prove."

Amen to that!

Esther Watstein
President, CBA

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2016

10-15 Wed.-Mon. New England KO Team Regional
Cromwell

22-28 Mon.-Sun. STaC with North Jersey (U106)
Local Clubs

MARCH 2016

4-6 Friday-Sunday Connecticut Winter
Sectional Hamden

7 Monday Afternoon ACBL-wide Senior Game
Local Clubs

9-20 Spring Nationals Reno, NV

30 Wednesday Daytime Unit-wide Championship
Local Clubs

APRIL 2016

4 Monday Evening Local (Split) Championship
Local Clubs

9-10 Saturday-Sunday New England GNT Sturbridge, MA

14 Thursday Morning ACBL-wide Charity Game
Local Clubs

19 Tuesday Daytime Unit-wide Championship
Local Clubs

MAY 2016

5 Thurs. Daytime Unit-wide Championship
Local Clubs

11-15 Wed.-Mon. District 24 Regional Hauppauge,
L.I., NY



Two Errors

by Geof Brod

Once again, it's the morning duplicate. You're trundling along with a not-so-hot game when you're dealt ♠J8 ♥Q632 ♦A73 ♣A965. In theory, this hand doesn't rate an opening bid, but here the opponents are red and you are white and the round has been frustrating, so you decide to mix it up with a 1NT opening. Yes, you're playing a weak NT (12-14) so you're only shy by a point. LHO passes and partner says 2♥, a transfer to spades. Double on your right and your frustration is such that you decide to commit your second error of the hand by accepting the transfer.

Yes, that's right. To accept partner's transfer after a double on your right shows three- or four-card support. If you have only two, you're supposed to pass it around to see what partner wants to do. This way, partner knows immediately whether you have an eight-card (or better) fit. Many now play that after the pass, if partner redoubles, that forces you to accept the transfer and the auction proceeds normally.

Anyway, you've taken two offbeat actions. If you get a poor result here, you won't be well placed in the postmortem. Your 2♠ is followed by three passes. The auction has been:

You	LHO	Pard	RHO
1NT	Pass	2♥	Dbl
2♠	All Pass		

You await dummy with some trepidation, anxious to see what you've done to yourself.

♠ K76542
♥ K9
♦ 102
♣ Q42

♠ J8
♥ Q632
♦ A73
♣ A965

Well, it's not as if you have anything to be proud of, but you have succeeded, despite all your machinations, at arriving at a normal contract. Furthermore, the opponents have more than half the deck as well as a diamond fit. Perhaps you've stolen the board.

Interestingly, the opening lead isn't a heart as you expect, but the ♦K. This suggests a solid holding in the suit, as your LHO has ignored, at least temporarily, her partner's lead direction. You duck the king. The ♦Q is continued and you win the ace. What now?

It seems right to start on trumps. Ideally, you'd like to first lead up to the jack and on the second round, lead to the king. That way, if either the ace or the queen of spades is well placed, you'll lose only two tricks in the suit as long as spades are 3-2. To lead immediately to the king will mean that you'll lose three tricks whenever the ace is wrong. The problem is that entries are such that to play spades in the "approved" manner is awkward.

Rightly or wrongly, you decide to try to give yourself the best chance in trump and, in order to gain an early entry to dummy, at trick 3, you lead a low club from your hand up to dummy's queen. Clearly, this is not without risk. Even if the ♣K is right, you may still encounter a club ruff. LHO puts up the king (good) and continues with the jack. You win the queen in dummy and lead a low spade.

The 10 comes up on your right; hopefully, you put up the jack, but it loses to the queen. The heart jack is returned, which runs around to your queen. It appears that the risk you ran to try to give yourself the best chance in the spade suit has been for naught and that you would have been no worse off simply leading up to the king initially.

Consider though your LHO's ♠10. It strongly suggests he doesn't have the nine. When you now lead up to the king, RHO plays low smoothly. This may be embarrassing, especially if the 10 is stiff, but you decide to place the nine on your left and the ace on your right. You run the spade eight and to your delight RHO follows with ace.

You take four spades, a heart, a diamond, and two clubs: making two for +110. This proves to be an excellent matchpoint result.

The placement of the ♠9 on your left is an application of the Principle of Restricted Choice. When an opponent plays one of two equals, here the ♠10 (an equal to the 9), odds are close to 2:1 that he doesn't hold the other equal, here the 9.

The most common application of this principle probably occurs with suit combinations missing both the queen and the jack, such as: AK1096 opposite 8753. Say this is your trump suit. You lay down the ace and LHO (behind the AK1096) plays the queen (or jack). The odds are close to 2:1 that righty will not hold the other honor.

But back to our 2♠ contract. The full hand was:

♠ K76542
♥ K9
♦ 102
♣ Q42

♠ Q93
♥ J5
♦ KQJ5
♣ KJ108

♠ A10
♥ A10874
♦ 9864
♣ 73

♠ J8
♥ Q632
♦ A73
♣ A965





Matchpoint Scoring Versus Team Scoring

by Brett Adler



Playing for matchpoints is all about getting a better score than the other pairs playing in your direction. A score of -1400 may seem like a terrible result on its own, but if all the other pairs in your direction score -1430 defending a vulnerable major suit slam, your -1400 will score 100% of the matchpoints on that board.

In team play, the net *difference* is more relevant than the actual numbers, so with the same results, you would only score 30 points better than the opponents, which translates to 1 IMP (International Matchpoint, the first part of scoring team games). The real benefit of sacrificing at teams is that instead of scoring -1400 you might be able to take more tricks than that and score -1100, -800, or better, so the difference between your score and your teammates' +1430 represents a significant net positive for your team.

Unfortunately, the sacrifice also comes with the risk that you might score *worse* than -1400, with potential scores of -1700, -2000, or more. The worst scenario, of course, is that you sacrifice against opponents' slam only to find they can't actually make their contract.

I had some matchpoint decisions recently, so let me disclose my thought processes on two hands I found particularly interesting.

First, in a club game, I was South in the following auction.

Dealer: South
Vulnerability: All
Contract: 6♣ by South
Lead: ♠4

West	North	East	South (Me)
2♦ ¹	3♦	3♠ ²	1♦
Pass	5♣	5♣	6♣
All pass			

¹2♦ is a convention called a Michaels Cue Bid, which in this case shows at least 5-5 distribution in the major suits (♥s and ♠s). ²3♠ looks to me like the underbid of the century. East has a six spades to go with her partner's 5+ card spade suit, a very useful honor in West's other suit (K♥), and the A♣. The unfortunate outcome of this underbid for East is that I was able to show my second suit via 4♣. Had she bid higher in spades,

I might not have been willing to bid again, and we would have failed to find out about our double fit in the minors (♣s and ♦s).

NORTH			
♠	K		
♥	A86		
♦	7532		
♣	K9643		
WEST		EAST	
♠	Q108764	♠	AJ9532
♥	QJ1053	♥	K97
♦	10	♦	Q4
♣	2	♣	A5
SOUTH			
♠	---		
♥	42		
♦	AKJ986		
♣	QJ1087		

The reason I bid 6♣ was because I was confident that East/West could make 5♠ and I thought going down one or two would result in a good matchpoint score. After all, partner raised my diamonds showing at least four-card support, and then gave preference to my second suit (clubs), so North had to have at least a five-card club suit. The only hesitation I had was that I might push the opponents to a makeable 6♣ contract, but the way the auction had developed, I didn't think it likely the opponents would bid the slam. Even if they did, I had shown a stronger hand than I held, so they'd likely take any finesses into my partner's hand. A spade was led and I quickly wrapped up twelve tricks, pitching North's losing hearts on my long diamond suit after I drew trumps. This garnered all the matchpoints. We were the only pair to bid the slam, but note that the slam could have been beaten.

If West leads the ♥Q, I win with dummy's ace. Then when East wins the ♣A, she has a major decision to make. She knows West holds at least 5/5 in the major suits, so she can account for twelve hearts and twelve spades after the initial trick. Should she try to cash her K♥ or her A♠? This would be tough to work out, but fortunately she wasn't put to the test.

The second hand is from the New England Grand National Open Pairs final. When my partner, Larry Lau, opened 3♥ vulnerable, I had to decide what to do holding: ♠AJ962 ♥A53 ♦93 ♣A105.

If partner has seven hearts, at most two diamonds, and no other honor cards, a pass may be my best bid, as nine tricks will be our limit. If partner has more than two diamonds, then I can make extra tricks by ruffing partner's losing diamonds in my hand, so I should bid 4♥.

Of course, this is matchpoints, so I decided to bid 3NT. My logic was that we were below average for the session so far and needed a good score, and in terms of the diamond suit partner might have a diamond holding such as Ax, Kx, or KQ, in which case I'd make the same number of tricks in 3NT as I would in 4♥. Even if partner only had one or two small diamonds, the opponents might lead another suit, might block the suit, or might lead the suit and then switch (as no one in his right mind would bid 3NT with no diamond stopper and no diamond length).

Dealer: West
Vulnerability: N/S
Contract: 3NT by South
Lead: ♦A

West	North	East	South (Me)
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
All pass			

NORTH			
♠	10		
♥	KQJ10842		
♦	872		
♣	96		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K873	♠	Q54
♥	9	♥	76
♦	AK104	♦	QJ65
♣	J874	♣	KQ32

SOUTH	
♠	AJ962
♥	A53
♦	93
♣	A105

Continued on page 12.

The Negative Double

by Karen Barrett



First of all, there's nothing "negative" about a negative double. It's an invaluable tool in helping you and your partner find the right contract without

misrepresenting either the strength or distribution of your hand.

I think it's easiest to understand if you think of it as a takeout double by responder. A negative double occurs *only* when partner has opened the bidding with one of a suit and RHO has overcalled another suit. (Note that if RHO overcalls 1NT, the negative double no longer applies. A double in that position would be for penalties.)

In the auction 1♣-1♠-DBL, your double says, "I have the other two suits." In practice, sometimes you may only have the unbid major, but if so, before doubling you should consider what your next bid will be if partner chooses the other minor. Bidding NT or going back to partner's original suit might be options. In the auction above, partner knows you have at least four hearts. You may, in fact, have a longer heart suit, but not enough points to bid 2♥, which would require 10+ points. Let's look at two possible hands.

- | | |
|--------|---------|
| ♠ xx | ♠ xx |
| ♥ AKxx | ♥ AJxxx |
| ♦ KJxx | ♦ QJxx |
| ♣ Jxx | ♣ xx |

In the first hand, you have 12 HCPs, but only four hearts. If you bid 2♥ after a 1♠ overcall you would be promising partner at least a five-card heart suit.

In the second hand, you have five hearts, but only 8 HCPs. You aren't strong enough to make a bid of 2♥. A negative double is the best way to uncover a possible heart fit without misleading partner about the strength of your hand.

Once you start playing negative doubles, you and partner have to decide (and mark

on your convention card) what you play negative doubles "through." That means how high can the overcaller bid before your double changes from negative to penalty. I suggest you start with 3♣. If the overcaller bids anything higher than 3♣, your double would no longer be takeout and partner would be free to pass.

How many points you need to make a negative double depends on what level you're forcing partner to. Here's a general suggestion.

- If partner can bid at the one level, you need at least 6 points.
- If partner must go to the two level, you need at least 8 points.
- If partner must go to the three level, you need at least 10 points.

Some auctions have very specific meanings.

- In the auction 1♣-1♦-DBL, the doubler promises at least four cards in **both** majors.
- If responder bids 1♥ or 1♠ instead of doubling, she may only have four cards in that major.
- If the auction is 1♦-2♣-DBL, the doubler may only have one of the unbid majors.
- In the auction 1♥-1♠-DBL, the doubler promises **both** minors.
- In the auction 1♣-1♥-1♠, responder promises five spades; with only four spades, she would have made a negative double.

Opener's Rebid

After partner's negative double, you must make a bid that describes the strength of your hand and the quality of support for the suit the doubler has shown. In most cases, you'll be bidding as though partner had made a 1-bid in that suit.

With four-card support for the suit partner has shown with the double:

- with a minimum opening bid (13-15 points), bid that suit at the lowest possible level.
- with an invitational hand (16-17 points), jump one level to show extra strength. For example, after 1♣-1♥-DBL-Pass, jump to 2♠ with four cards in the suit.
- with a game-forcing hand (18+ points), jump to game if you're sure where it should be played. If you're unsure of where to play game, cue bid the opponent's suit to ask partner to tell you more about her hand.

Once you start playing the negative double you'll wonder how you ever bid without it.



KAREN'S QUICK REVIEW OF: NEGATIVE DOUBLES

Important Points to remember:

- It's only a negative double when partner has opened the bidding and RHO has bid a different suit.
- Make a negative double when you can't bid naturally because either
 - a. you don't have enough cards in the suit (5+); or
 - b. you don't have enough points to bid a new suit at the two level (10+).
- Think about what level your partner will have to bid at after your double and be sure you have enough points to be at that level.



Bridge at the Lunatic Fringe—Number 23 Squeeze Play for Those Who Think Squeezes Are Beyond Them

by Al Wolf

Squeeze plays in bridge are advanced plays, generally considered to be beyond the reach of beginning and intermediate players. In truth, gaining a full understanding of squeeze plays is a daunting task, requiring serious study. Most casual players are not so dedicated.

Yet, many squeezes almost play themselves. They don't require any deep analysis; they only require following a few rules. That's what this article is all about. It might have been titled "How to Avoid Messing Up an Easy Squeeze That's There for the Taking."

I'll focus on three aspects of the squeeze play:

1. Get remaining loser count down to one.
2. Recognize and retain threats.
3. Take all your winners—in the right order.

In general, one key condition for a squeeze is to be at the point in the hand at which you can take all the remaining tricks "off the top," except perhaps for the last one. The squeeze, if successful, will avoid the loss of that last trick.

You must have threats in more than one suit. A good way to think about identifying threats is as follows: a card that is not a winner, but has the potential to become a winner if the opponents throw away the wrong card(s). Threats are of two varieties. A threat can be a high card that would become a winner if the opponents throw away their even higher card(s). A second variety of threat can be suit length. If opponents discard cards from a suit in

which you have some length, even a low card can become a winner.

Finally, take all your winners in the non-threat suits, keeping all threat cards as long as possible. Save for last a suit in which you have a winner that represents the threat.

These ideas are best illustrated with a deal featuring Minna as declarer when she was a relative newcomer to the game.

Professor (North)

- ♠ K 8 3
- ♥ A Q 6 4
- ♦ 8 6 5
- ♣ Q 5 2

Minna (South)

- ♠ Q 9 7 5 4 2
- ♥ K 2
- ♦ K J
- ♣ A K 7

With both sides vulnerable, the bidding proceeded:

North	East	South	West
Professor	Visitor	Minna	Cecil
	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The professor planned to show a three-card limit raise, starting with a forcing 1NT and jumping in spades at his next turn.

Minna had an awkward rebid. The hand

was strong enough for a jump to 3♠, but the six-card suit was far too weak for that action. She finally settled on a bid of 2♣, suppressing the six-card spade suit. She happily bid 4♠ when partner made the jump raise.

Minna won the opening ♣10 lead in hand and led a trump toward the king. LHO won the ace, and continued with a second club. (He was hoping Cecil might ruff this trick.) Minna, however, won the trick with the ♣Q in dummy, and proceeded to pull trumps, taking out the remaining ♠J and ♠10 in Cecil's hand.

Now as Minna surveyed the situation, it seemed that she would make five. She could discard her ♦J and lose only the ♦A at the end. She was about to claim, conceding the final trick, when a thought occurred to her. Perhaps as she took all her winners, the opponents would make a mistake and discard hearts, making her fourth heart in dummy good.

With that in mind, she proceeded to take her winners, keeping all four hearts in dummy. With five cards remaining, she was dumfounded to see Cecil throw away the ♦A on her last spade. This seemed to Minna a colossal blunder, and she started to make a comment to Cecil to that effect. But she saw he was fuming, perhaps over embarrassment at having thrown away a winner. For his part, Cecil was apoplectic, not that he'd been the victim of a legitimate squeeze, but that it had been perpetrated by a newcomer who clearly didn't have a clue.

With this five-card ending, Minna cashed her last spade, discarding the diamond from dummy. Cecil was forced to discard the ♦A to hold onto all four of his hearts.

Professor (North)

♠ --	
♥ A Q 6 4	Cecil
♦ 8	♠ --
♣ --	♥ T 7 5 3
	♦ A
	♣ --

Minna (South)

♠ 2
♥ K 2
♦ K J
♣ --

The full deal:

Professor (North)

♠ K 8 3
♥ A Q 6 4
♦ 8 6 5
♣ Q 5 2

Visitor (West)

♠ A
♥ J 9 8
♦ Q T 7 2
♣ T 9 8 6 4

Cecil (East)

♠ J T 6
♥ T 7 5 3
♦ A 9 4 3
♣ J 3

Minna (South)

♠ Q 9 7 5 4 2
♥ K 2
♦ K J
♣ A K 7

Reviewing the rules with this hand as an example:

1. When the defense failed to cash the ♦A, but led a second round of clubs instead, declarer could claim all but the last trick.
2. The ♦K and ♥6 are threats. Note the heart suit especially. Perhaps you've thought in the past that discarding a heart can't hurt, as the fourth heart can't possibly be good. But think of it this way: As long as you keep all four hearts, whichever opponent has four (or more) hearts will also have to keep four. If he has something else he needs to protect, he may not be able to stand the pressure. That is the essence of a squeeze play.
3. Take all winners in spades and clubs, saving the heart suit for last—the suit in which you have winners (♥A and ♥Q) accompanying the ♥6 threat.

Note that the hand is easy to play, without much to keep track of. Just run your winners, and if the ♦A has not appeared, try the hearts. The squeeze will only work at the end if one opponent has to protect against both your threats.



Kibitzer Editor:

I am very sorry to announce that this edition of Kibitzer will be the last issue for editor Linda Starr. Linda has done a wonderful job assuring the exceptional quality of our newsletter. She has nurtured our writers and found new contributors to add to the interest, variety, and breadth of the material we publish. On behalf of all of us, I thank Linda for keeping us informed and stimulated bridge-wise, for her care of the written word, and for maintaining the integrity of the publication.

Bill Wood will now assume the job of Kibitzer editor. Bill has a long history as a bridge player, teacher, director, club owner, and advocate for the excellence of the game. We look forward to his contribution to this important aspect of the bridge world. Material for Kibitzer can be sent to Bill at wawool@juno.com or at 203-803-9566.

Additionally, Jennifer Tingets who has handled the production end of Kibitzer has resigned. Jennifer is Tom Proulx's daughter and has continued her production tasks for us since Tom's untimely death. We will miss her and thank her for all her work to make Kibitzer look so good, and for handling the printing and distribution side of the job so efficiently.

Megan Cacioppo is now taking over the production chief job. Megan is an established graphic designer and we look forward to working with her and hopefully to expanding our social media presence as well.

Thanks to everyone—editor, production chief, writers, contributors—for keeping Kibitzer informative, interesting, and Connecticut's primary bridge-communication vehicle.

Esther Watstein, President CBA



Can't Cost Method—Chapter 46

by John Stiefel

It Can't Cost to Improve Your Bridge Game

This article is about my bridge philosophy (that “can’t cost” *you* to apply as well) rather than about a specific deal. I hope you’ll find it useful.

Besides bridge, I like spending time with my family, traveling, and playing guitar. One of my favorite songs to play is “Already Gone,” a song recorded by Sugarland in 2008 about a young girl who loves a young man her mother doesn’t approve of. The mother tries to get her to break up with him, but she’s “already gone.”

What does this have to do with bridge? Well, everything. *Once you finish a hand, it’s “already gone.”* If you get a bad result, put it out of your mind and move on to the next hand. Don’t waste time or energy trying to figure out whose fault it was or what you could or should have done better.

Most people instinctively understand the “already gone” philosophy, but have trouble applying it to bridge. So I offer three principles to help you apply “already gone.” I call these principles SAND, ABCD, and FOCUS.

Let’s start with SAND. This is an acronym for “Sorry And Nicely Done.” *That’s all you should ever say to your partner.* Now, I don’t mean that literally. Instead of “Sorry,” you can say things like “I should have switched to a diamond,” “You discarded a high heart, so I should have led one,” or “I should have cue bid my ace of clubs.” Any of these phrases and more will work as long as the clear meaning of what you say is “Sorry!”

Don’t say things like “Sorry. I should have played a club, but you discarded a low one,” or “I should have cue bid my ace of clubs, but you had enough to bid more anyway.” Those are what I call “Amtrak apologies” (e.g. “We’re sorry for the delay, but we couldn’t help it that there was a

snow storm.”) or “politicians’ apologies” (e.g. “I’m sorry four people died in Benghazi, but security there wasn’t my responsibility.”)

“Sorry” means sorry. Period. As far as “nicely done” goes, you can say things like “Well played,” “Nice 4♣ bid,” or “Nice defense.” If your partner makes a comment like “Well played,” you can say something like “Well bid” in return, but then no more comments. No one likes to listen to a back and forth of compliments. That’s gloating and it won’t make you any friends. So, bottom line, if all you ever say to your partner is “Sorry” and “Nicely done,” it will be much easier to apply the “already gone” principle. Also more people will want to play with you.

I remember playing in the Round of 16 in the Vanderbilt Knockout Teams at the Spring Nationals in 1971. I was 26 years old. One of my opponents was Billy Seamon of Florida. (His son, Michael, is a top player today.) Early in the match, I was allowed to make 3♥ when I could have been set. I thought to myself “All right, we’ve got them on the run now.” Instead, Billy said to his partner, “Sorry” and his partner said, “No, it was my fault.” Then they quietly picked up their cards and started playing the next hand. That was disconcerting! I remember thinking, “We got a good result, but it’s only good for one hand. How are we going to beat these guys when nothing seems to faze them?” Sure enough, they went on to beat us convincingly.

The second guideline I call ABCD hands. What that means is this: Suppose you have a choice of two reasonable actions, A or B. Suppose further that if you choose A, your partnership will get a good result, but if you choose B, your partner will have to choose between C and D. If he chooses C, your partnership will still get a good result, but if he chooses D, your partnership will get a bad result. For example, suppose you open 1♥ and

your partner raises to 2♥. Suppose also that you have a close decision of whether to pass or invite game. You choose to pass, and it turns out your partner has a maximum for his 2♥ bid and had a close decision whether to bid 2♥ or to make a stronger bid, such as a limit raise or a forcing 1NT followed by a jump to 3♥. So, A=partner makes a stronger bid than 2♥; B=partner bids 2♥; C=you decide to invite game after partner raises to 2♥ (which partner, of course, will accept); and D=you pass 2♥. You each made reasonable decisions, but together you chose BD and got a bad result. So, bottom line, recognize that ABCD hands exist—hands on which you get a bad result that is nobody’s fault. Don’t worry about it and move on.

Another example of ABCD: I played in the Atlanta Regional recently and had this hand: ♠AK9 ♥AK987 ♦654 ♣72

I opened 1♥, my partner bid 2♣ (playing 2/1), and I returned to 2♥ (which we play doesn’t promise six hearts). Partner now bid 3♥ (forcing), so I bid 3♠ (cue bid). Now my partner jumped to 4NT (Roman Key Card Blackwood), and I responded 5♣ (0 or 3 key cards). He now bid 5♥, and I passed. His hand was ♠xx ♥Q105 ♦AK ♣AKJ654. So we belong in 6♥ (which is an excellent contract), and even 7♥ is better than 50% to make (and was, in fact, cold on the actual layout). So A=partner bids 6♥ (or 5NT asking for specific kings), playing me for three key cards to justify my cue bid of 3♠; B=partner actually bids 5♥ (in case I had 0 key cards); C=I bid 6♥, playing him to have enough key cards to justify his jump to 4NT; and D=I pass 5♥, thinking he knew I wouldn’t cue bid 3♠ with 0 key cards.

If this had been 1971, I would have given him a piece of my mind and we no doubt would have had some sub-optimal results later due to being distracted or trying to make up for this result. Instead, I recognized that partner must have had

a good reason for what he did. I just said “Sorry” and we overcame this bad result to beat a very good team by single digits. In other words, we could have (and did) survive this bad result, but we couldn’t have survived a second bad result caused by trying to make up for or being distracted by the first bad result.

I call the third guideline for applying the “already gone” principle FOCUS. FOCUS means “Focus On the Cards U See.” Focus on what? Points? High cards? Distribution? What? I recommend focusing on the *distribution* of the declarer when you’re defending, or of one of your opponents when you’re declaring. So in the 75% of hands when you’re not dummy, write down the opponent’s distribution in your private scorecard; e.g. 5431 for 5 spades, 4 hearts, 3 diamonds, and 1 club. This will help you apply the “already gone” principle.

I’ve played and defended quite a few hands in the past few years. Sometimes I’ve played well and sometimes not so well. After each session, I’ve looked at my private scorecard and it turns out that the more distributions I wrote down, the better I played. I remember one session in which I didn’t think I had played well and—Guess what!—there were several hands for which I hadn’t written down an opponent’s distribution.

I have one more comment about the “already gone” principle. I’ve been asked, “How will you ever know when you need a swing to convert a close loss to a close win at IMPs?” The answer I give is this: “To tell the truth, I don’t ever remember trying for a swing because I felt I was behind. I do remember, however, several times when my team won a close match because of the second bad board the opponents got trying to make up for their first bad one. I also remember several times finishing a match that, even though it seemed as though we’d lost, I hadn’t

strained to get back lost IMPs. Then my teammates came back to the table smiling and our team had won a close match.

I guess what I’m trying to say is that you never know what’s happening at the other table and often if the cards aren’t being kind to you and your partner, they are being kind to your teammates. So keep your cool and let your teammates keep their good results.

Now I’d like to turn to another topic: Why do you play bridge? I’ve heard many answers including “My spouse makes me,” “I’ve got nothing better to do,” “I want to win,” or “I want to become a Pink Life Master” (or whatever). From my point of view, all these answers are wrong. The right answer is that there are only two reasons to play bridge—to learn and to have fun.

I once read a book about Albert Einstein. He had a great life and did some great things, but one day he was hospitalized and given only a few days to live. When he died, his family found several pieces of paper by his hospital bed with a bunch of equations written on them. In other words, he never stopped learning!

I draw an analogy to working for the purposes of getting the next promotion. Sure, we all want to be recognized for our achievements, but the way to do that is to focus on being a better doctor, lawyer, accountant, clerk, bricklayer, or whatever, and enjoy what you’re doing. The promotions will take care of themselves.

Bridge is the same way. If you focus on learning and having fun, the bridge rankings will take care of themselves. For example, I love to play against the best opposition I can find. That’s fun. One of my biggest thrills in bridge is the four Regional Knockout wins I have against Rodwell and Meckstroth, who I think are the best (honest) pair in the world.

Granted, 24 or 26 boards is not the same as 60 or 64 boards, and I’ve lost a lot more matches to Meckwell than I’ve won, but I’ve never changed my thinking about bridge being so great because it’s the only sport where anyone can play against the best in the world. Where am I going with this? (Watch out, political statement to follow.) I think it’s sad that so many players seem to not want to play against New England’s best players in Regional Knockouts. There seems to be a feeling that avoiding the best is an entitlement.

I think that’s too bad because that’s the best way to learn. And if you learn, you’ll improve, and if you improve, you’ll get to be a Pink Life Master (or whatever you aspire to) a lot quicker. I recall one time in high school, I went to sit with a kid named Bobby Schenk at the lunch table. He said he didn’t want to sit with me because I was “such a good student.” Well, a teacher overheard him and ordered him to sit with me. Lo and behold, Bobby became one of my best friends. Fast forward 50 years: don’t be reluctant to sit with the best “bridge students.” They’re nice (most of them anyway), you’ll enjoy the match, you’ll learn something, and maybe you’ll even make new friends.

I’m going to close this article with an offer. I’ve been told I’m a better than average bridge player, so if any of you ever have any questions about bridge (bidding or play), it “can’t cost” for you to email me at stief@juno.com. If you do choose to email me, I ask you to follow two guidelines: First, don’t use me to try to prove your partner wrong. So if you and your partner have a bidding disaster, give me *your* hand instead of your partner’s. Second, if a hand involves a partnership problem, please let your partner know you’re emailing me (preferably by copying him/her on your email).





Country Club of Darien

The Country Club of Darien congratulates the winners of the fall series.

1. Bill Ball and Bob Smith
2. Carolyn and Tony Halsey
3. Lindy Beardsley and Betsy Ryan

(Hamden) Bridge Forum

Tuesday

Leading Pairs: Kevin Hart-Jeff Horowitz, in their record-setting year, were close to doubling any other pair's performance, but Rita Brieger-Harold Miller had a strong December to score about 60% of Kevin's and Jeff's total, with Alan Milstone-Gernot Reiners a clear third. Top women's pair was Linda Bradford-Hara Dobyns.

Player of the Year: Jeff and Kevin dominated all three categories, with Jeff's handful of games with David Richheimer when Kevin was absent putting him on top. Rita and Harold only played together on Tuesdays all year, and finished joint third, ahead of Jon Ingersoll in fifth.

Van Dyke Cup: Jeff Horowitz led from beginning to end, winning a suspense-free final ahead of Kevin Hart, Harold Miller, and Alan Milstone. Jon Ingersoll, who nearly always makes the final, finished eighth. Rita Brieger (fifth) and Louise Wood (tenth) were the top women.

Friday

Leading Pairs: This came down to the wire, and was still up for grabs halfway through the last game before settling with Harold Miller-Burt Saxon ahead of Erik Rosenthal-Jim Uebelacker, and Steve Grodzinsky-Hank Voegeli. Breta Adams-Karlene Wood (fourth) were the top women's pair, and Jeffrey Blum-Nancy Horn (seventh) were the top mixed pair.

Player of the Year: Harold's strong mid-autumn run let him coast to top yearly honors over Fredda Kelly, Rita Brieger, Carl Yohans, and Norma Augenstein. Of our newer players, Arthur Broadus made it into the top ten.

Reynolds Cup: Harold Miller won his second cup on his decent carryover lead after an even final game ahead of Norma Augenstein, Carl Yohans, and Burt Saxon.

Tuesday/Friday Combined

Overall Player of the Year: Jeff Horowitz and Kevin Hart were 1-2 all year, with Jeff just in front at the end. Rita Brieger was just ahead of Harold Miller for third place. Louise Wood rallied in the autumn for fifth place over Gernot Reiners.

Champions Cup: It got close at the end, but was still a wire-to-wire win.

1. Jeff Horowitz
2. Kevin Hart
3. Jon Ingersoll
4. Rita Brieger
5. Erik Rosenthal.

Rita Brieger won the Slam Challenge for the third consecutive quarter, defeating Gernot Reiners.

Year-End Statistics

Fredda Kelly averaged 10.07 HCP for the year.

Success rates: small slams—63.05%, grand slams—64.86%, doubles—73.96%, and redoubles—44.44%

Breta Adams-Karlene Wood set a new record for grand slams with eight (of the 68 total bid and made for the year). Kevin Hart-Jeff Horowitz bid and made seven, and Erik Rosenthal-Jim Uebelacker, five. George Levinson bid and made six grand slams with two different partners.

Breta and Karlene were also well on top

in "optimistic bidding," followed by Abhi Dutta-Paul Johnson. Our top defenders were the pairs of Bill Reich-Simon Rich, Irene Kaplan-Gert Pedersen, Hill Auerbach-Larry Stern, and Abhi Dutta-Paul Johnson, all tied with each other and with Fredda Kelly.

We had 145 pass-outs this year, on which fourth hand scored 56.54%. Fredda Kelly won the pass-out title, Louise Wood was second, and Hill Auerbach and Rita Brieger tied for third.

Ten players played at least twelve times without having any late boards, Simon Rich retaining the Speedy Play title with the highest attendance. Our other quickest players were Marilyn Zolot, Nancy Horn, Phoebe Edwards, Donna Hersh, Phyllis Haeckel, Midge Ehrenfreund, Gerri Frankel, Perry Miller, and Pat Rooney.

Our top masterpoint winners for the year: Jeff Horowitz—67.65, Harold Miller—62.71, Kevin Hart—60.04, Rita Brieger—53.38, and Jeffrey Blum—42.02

Hartford Bridge Club

On a chilly November Sunday, HBC was the venue for a Swiss Team Life Master party in honor of Felix Springer and Ken Leopold. The 27 teams that participated enjoyed a pre-game lunch of pizza, followed by delicious homemade desserts and a celebratory cake. As team play began, Felix and Ken wracked up one victory after another. Ultimately, in a most unusual circumstance for a LM party, the two celebrants won every round, ending the afternoon as the top point-earning team. It was a fun afternoon and a good time was had by all.

For more information about HBC games and events, please visit our website at <http://www.hartfordbridgeclub.org>.



From the

Newtown Bridge Club

Newtown Bridge Club is participating in the Common Game (<http://thecommongame.com>). Not only can players compare their results with players at other clubs, they also have a personal history and play analytics of their games plus pro analysis of some of the interesting hands.

A Newcomer section has been added to the Monday afternoon game for players with 0-20 masterpoints. Newcomers also have their own strata in the NLM/499er sections at the Tuesday and Wednesday morning games.

At the Tuesday, December 22, evening game, the club passed the 2,000 table milestone for 2015, marking a new record for attendance.

Newtown Bridge Club plays Monday through Wednesday at Edmond Town Hall, 45 Main Street, Newtown CT. Open sections are played at all games. Directions and information may be found at the club's website www.newtownbridge.org.

Wee Burn

The following pairs did well in the Fall Series which ended November 19.

1. Janet Soskin-Sue Kipp
2. Mary Richardson-Betty Hodgman
3. Audrey Cadwallader-Karen Barrett
4. Marilyn Giannos-Donna Christensen
5. Belinda Metzger-Barbara Johnson
6. Lynn Reilly-Joan Bergen

Fourteen teams participated in the annual Swiss event on December 10. Winners were

1. Audrey Cadwallader-Karen Barrett-Penny Glassmeyer-Susan Mayo
2. Marilyn Tjader-Martha Hathaway-Belinda Metzger-Barbara Johnson

Congratulations to Penny Glassmeyer who is our "Player of the Year" for 2015.

Woodway Country Club

Winners of the Club Championship are Millie Fromm and Janet Soskin.

Winners of the Fall Series are:

1. MaryEllen McGuire and Betty Hodgman
2. Millie Fromm and Janet Soskin
3. Martha Hathaway and Sue Kipp

The first women-only Bridge World Championship was held in Venice in 1970, and won by the United States, which has dominated the Venice Cup ever since.

0-199'er Tournament Exceeds Expectations

Players from across the state as well as from Vermont, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island attended the 8th annual 0-199'er Sectional Tournament held at the Hartford Bridge Club on Saturday, November 14th. In past years, the tournament has attracted upwards of 17 tables for the morning session and as many as 13 for the afternoon competition. As game time approached on the 14th, however, the entry line extended to the doorway and, ultimately, 32 1/2 tables were filled.

Attendance records were again broken in the afternoon session as 52 pairs remained to compete for silver points and trophies.

Winners for each category were:

- 0-50 Jason and Ann Pettengill, Glastonbury CT
- 50-100 Mike and Fran Becker, Northampton MA
- 100-200 Carol McCullough, Foster RI and Sisan Smallman, Scituate, RI.

Sponsored financially by the Feldman Foundation, tournament amenities included educational handouts, a free lunch, snacks, and beverages. These, plus a welcoming and comfortable playing environment, have obviously caught the attention of emerging players from well beyond the Hartford area. Thank you to all who promoted and/or attended the event. We look forward to another capacity crowd in the fall of 2016.

Bill Watson, Tournament Coordinator
Laurie Robbins, Tournament Director

IN MEMORIAM

Connecticut residents as listed in the ACBL *Bridge Bulletin*

Ann M. Cady, Roxbury, CT
Edward L. Etkind, Torrington, CT

The opening lead was the ace of diamonds and I immediately regretted not bidding 4♥, as I can easily see 10 tricks in that contract—seven hearts, two aces, and a diamond ruff. The good news is that I can make my 3NT contract; the bad news is that it won't be worth many matchpoints because everyone else will make one more trick in 4♥. Fortunately, East signaled with an “encouraging” ♦6; they were playing natural signals and he thought that was the highest diamond he could afford to play.

Worried that he would give me a diamond trick if he continued the suit, West switched to the 3♠ at trick two. I briefly considered winning the A♠ and playing back the 9♠. Although that would set up a tenth trick, I feared West would look at the hearts in dummy and proceed to cash his diamond

suit, in which case, my 3NT contract would fail and I'd get *no* matchpoints. So instead, I decided on a little bit of deception. I cashed all seven of my heart tricks. During the run of the hearts, I pitched the ♣5, the ♣6, the ♠J, and the ♣10 from my hand.

Poor West couldn't help but notice my two spade pitches (and no diamond pitches), so he held on to his “winning” spades, leading to the four-card ending at right.

I now played a club to my ace, and exited with the ♦9 to West's now singleton king. West could cash the ♠K, but at trick thirteen, he had to give me my tenth trick—and all the matchpoints—with the ♠9. Maybe one day, I'll go with the field and make a normal, less stressful decision.

♠ ---
♥ ---
♦ 87
♣ 96

WEST	EAST
♠ K8	♠ ---
♥ ---	♥ ---
♦ K	♦ QJ
♣ J	♣ KQ

SOUTH
♠ 92
♥ ---
♦ 9
♣ A



MILESTONES AND CONGRATULATIONS

**Grand Life Master
(10,000 MPs and NABC+
Championship)**
Frank Merblum

Silver Life Master (1000 MPs)
Rodney Aspinwall

**Bronze Life Master
(500 MPs)**
Barbara Barrette
Diane Dadiskos
Asha Jain
Dorothy Kaplan
Susan Kipp
Susan Schroeder

Life Master (300 MPs)
Ron Freres
Margery Gussak
Renee Pomerantz
Irene Rivers
G. Stephen Thoma

THE KIBITZER

The Kibitzer is published quarterly by the Connecticut Bridge Association, Unit 126 of the American Contract Bridge League.

All comments, news, items related to the bridge world and of interest to our readers are welcome. Please send all items for the next *Kibitzer* by April 15, 2016.

Editor: Bill Wood
Phone: (860) 803-9566
Email: wawoo1@juno.com

**You can see The Kibitzer
in blazing color
at the CT bridge site:
<http://www.ctbridge.org>**

**If you would like to receive
The Kibitzer via e-mail, let us
know. Email Bill Wood at
wawoo1@juno.comt**

Your CBA Board

Esther Watstein	President	(203) 375-5489	ewatstein@optonline.net
Susan Rodricks	Vice President	(203) 521-2075	srodricks@optonline.net
Debbie Noack	Secretary	(203) 924-5624	mainerinexile@comcast.net
Susan Seckinger	Treasurer		
Phyllis Bausher	Tournament Coordinator	(860) 513-1127	seseck@sbcglobal.net
	Past President		
Mark Aquino	Nominating Committee chair	(203) 389-5918	PBBausher@comcast.net
Connie Graham	District Director	(617) 522-8626	maquino621@comcast.net
Allan Clamage	Board of Directors--Central	(860) 505-7833	cegraham38@aol.com
	Board of Directors--Fairfield		
	Bylaws Committee chair		
Jan Rosow	Electronic Coordinator	(203) 377-5010	allanbc@optonline.net
Sonja Smith	Board of Directors--Hartford	(860) 508-4484	jsrosow@gmail.com
Frances Schneider	Board of Directors--Northwest	(860) 653-5798	sonja721@gmail.com
Mike Wavada	Board of Directors--Panhandle	(203) 542-0719	frances77@gmail.com
Sarah Corning	Board of Directors--Eastern	(860) 763-3694	mike@wavada.org
Karen Barrett	Board of Directors--Southern	(203) 453-3933	sarah@corningfamily.org
Susan Fronapfel	Board of Directors--Southwest	(203) 286-7530	kebob@optonline.net
Ausra Geaski	Board of Directors--At Large	(203) 733-8525	director@newtownbridge.org
Sandy DeMartino	Board of Directors--At Large	(860) 533-7271	ausrag@aol.com
Joyce Stiefel	Board of Directors--At Large	(203) 637-2781	sdemar20@hotmail.com
Bill Wood	Kibitzer Editor	(860) 563-0722	jammis14s@aol.com
Debbie Benner	List Manager	(860) 803-9566	wawoo1@juno.com
David Metcalf	Tournament Director-in-Charge	(203) 259-3665	dlbfsa@optonline.net
Don Stiegler	Unit Coordinator		
	StaC Coordinator		
Millie Fromm	Unit Recorder	(203) 259-6648	millstantx@aol.com
David Keller	Webmaster	(203) 375-2840	david.keller@janussystems.com
Donald Brueggemann	Communications Director	(203) 488-3220	law-scribe@snet.net