



LIBRARY CORNER

Eric Rodwell's Bidding Topics

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If you are looking for an expert to weigh in on winning bridge techniques, you can find no one better than Eric Rodwell. A quote from his long-time bridge partner Jeff Meckstroth points out why Rodwell's books are good ones to choose to read. "Everyone knows Eric is one of the game's best bidding theorists. He also writes very clearly on these important topics, with material suitable for all players." So, you don't have to be an expert player to read and learn from the lessons in this book, but even experienced bridge players can learn from its contents

Rodwell is one of ten players who have won the Bermuda Bowl, the World Open Pairs, and the World Team Olympiad—known as the "triple crown of bridge." So he knows his "stuff." The chapters in this book began as articles for the Website *bridgetopics.com*. The author has covered each topic with both new players and experienced players in mind. The topics he included in the books include two conventions **he invented**—Support Doubles and Serious 3NT. Among the other topics in the book are chapters on new minor forcing, Roman keycard Blackwood, and Cappelletti. Don't overlook this book if you are hoping to improve your bidding skills.



ALERT!!

A publication of ACBL Unit 206

November 2021



Editor: Sandy Cervantes

Features Editor: Cheryl Whitfield

A message from the president...

Our fearless leader is taking time off from her Unit 206 responsibilities enjoying a well-earned trip to Egypt. Hope you come home relaxed and restored, Iris. You deserve it!



Never one to let space go to waste, your editor would like to draw your attention to a couple of items. Those who have been involved with Unit 206 for a period of time will remember the "Spotlight" page in past newsletters. This feature would highlight a different player every month. Just because we sit across from each other on a regular basis doesn't mean we really know each other. We (I in particular) are lucky that Cheryl Whitfield is taking on this task. Hopefully, you will enjoy getting to know the other side of your bridge friends. Sometimes, we can forget that there is a whole world out there that extends beyond the confines of the game we love.

Also, John Friedl has generously agreed to undertake the challenge of writing a bridge column that will be of interest to all of us in Unit 206—regardless of our individual bridge experience or expertise. "One Last Thing" will focus on a myriad of topics including interesting hands (His first foray focuses on a hand that was played at our October face-to-face Mentor/Mentee game.) Other topics will include defense, leads, judgment, etc.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for improvement, just send them my way. I am always open to hear what you think: sandycervantesnm@gmail.com.

Sandy



CONGRATULATIONS



What a great time we all had at our October Eight Is Enough game. First, our hunger pangs were sated by the delicious spaghetti and meatballs provided by the ladies of the Epsilon Pi Chapter of Sigma Beta Sorority—thanks Margie Moses—and then we were challenged by an exciting and competitive team game. Thanks go out also to all who brought their delicious appetizers, salads, and desserts that we nibbled on all afternoon. There is no doubt that no one left the club that Saturday with room in their tummies. Congratulations to our winners: First Place—Team Caldwell (Betsy Caldwell, Anne Donnovin, Larry Reneau, Joe Viola); Second Place—Team Wyatt (John Graef, Myra Reneau, Pat Whitaker, Mary Wyatt); and, Third Place—Team Cart (Leigh Broadway, Donna Cart, Doug Cart, MJ Levine).

Muchas Gracias

On Thursday, October 7, Ginny and George (normally golfing) Gannaway led a team of bridge club members in cleaning and sprucing up the outside areas of the bridge center property. Doug Cart, Bert Shramko, and Bruce Antman could be found trimming shrubs around the building and property. Weeds had certainly taken over in the back of the building and side areas, but Iris Abelson, Diane Young, Marion Creighton and Mary Robertson could be found pulling them up with vigor. Meanwhile, Ginny and George were weeding and removing old petunias from the flowerbed near the roadway. Pansies have now been planted and hopefully will provide some blooms and color through the colder months.

Thanks for all your help. It looks so much better. — Ginny



Hardy, Har, Har

Bridge players are a notoriously naughty group—they'll go to bid with anyone!!

The brain is a wonderful organ. It starts working the moment you get up in the morning and does not stop until you sit down at the bridge table!



HATS OFF TO...

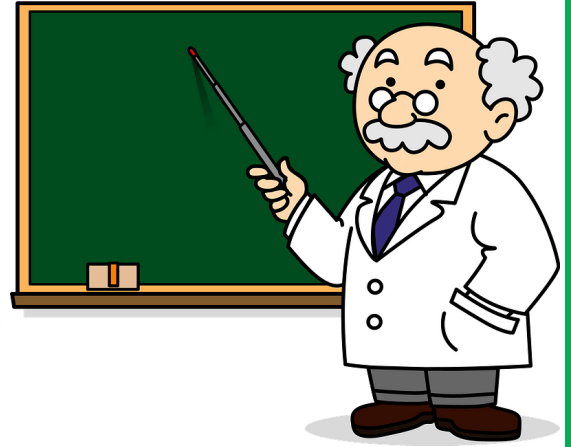
A tip of the hat and a very big thank you go to Shayna Scott who is in charge of controlling our tummy growls at the CBC. From shopping and storing to setting and replenishing the table to picking up the mess, Shayna is on top of it all—and always with a smile. Thanks, Shayna.



Also, an equally big thanks to Doug Cart for all those easily overlooked jobs he does around the bridge club building and grounds. You often can spot him—tinkering, filling, pulling, fixing, rearranging, clipping, stuffing—again always with a smile on his face and good humor in his heart. Way to go, Doug.

EDUCATION NEWS

The education committee is trying to develop lessons that will meet the varied needs of our players. The classes listed below are taught at the Chattanooga Bridge Club at 1103 Dalton Boulevard in Chattanooga.



Mike Holmes is working with beginning bridge students on Saturdays. Starting January 8, 2022, the second beginning bridge course will be offered. This class is for students new to bridge or someone coming back to the game. Bridge Basics II is designed to give students an understanding of competitive bidding. Students will learn 3-level preemptive bids, 2-level preemptive bids, overcalls and advances, and takeout doubles and advances. Also, students will be coached on basic defense strategy and play-of-the-hand techniques. Classes begin at 9:30 a.m. and finish at 11:30. The cost for this 8-week course is \$60.00.

Janie Hunt, Suzy Bryant, and Dan Chandler are continuing their 2/1 classes and duplicate play on Sundays from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The cost is \$6.00 per game. Students are coached on the 2/1 bidding system and appropriate conventions related to this system. Students may suggest conventions of interest or indicate a desire for additional practice. Within the process of learning the 2/1 bidding system, students are coached on basic play of the hand techniques and defense.



Teresa Moore is offering Play-of-the-Hand lessons for students who have begun their journey to learn the game of bridge and need to improve their declarer play. This class will start Saturday, January 8, 2022. The eight-week class will be taught from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Students will learn how to make a plan to facilitate playing a bridge hand. In addition, participants will learn how to promote tricks, develop entries, manage the trump suit, and finesse. Teresa also will focus on timing and, if and when appropriate, combining these various alternatives. The cost is \$60.00.

FAIRYLAND BRIDGE NEWS



Fairyland Bridge Club is now meeting at the Mountain City Club at 10:30 Thursdays. The location is fantastic. We have free parking, the space is private and well lit, and the food is wonderful. Everyone seems to love our new location. We had a nomadic reopening but now seem to have found our new home.

Membership to FDBC is automatic after three visits so please feel free to join us. We request that you inform Susie Crouch if you plan to come.

Our Christmas Party/Annual Meeting will be December 2nd at the Walden Club. Thank you Stephanie Felker for procuring a fabulous venue for this event. I recommend carpooling as parking downtown is expensive. Please arrive by 10:00.

Fairyland welcomes all to join us for fellowship while we play a little bridge.

Unit 206 Annual Meeting and Elections

According to the bylaws for Unit 206, the Board of Directors consists of nine members. Each member serves a term of three years. The Board is staggered so that each year the term of one-third of the members expires. No Director shall serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. The President of the Unit appoints a Nominating Committee which in turn nominates a slate of candidates for membership on the Board of Directors to be placed in nomination at the annual meeting in December. This year the terms of three Directors (**Iris Abelson, Sue Shramko and Tyler Smith**) will expire. The Nominating Committee has recommended the following slate for election to the Board of Directors by the membership of the unit at the December annual meeting: **Iris Abelson, Sue Shramko and Jan Alexander**. Iris and Sue are both eligible for a second term on the Board, having served only one full term so far. Additional nominations can be made from the floor at the annual meeting.

MANNERS ARE IMPORTANT!

Respect the time of others

- ♦ We recommend that you arrive at least 15 minutes before starting time.
- ♦ Watch the timer and be considerate of others; move when the round is called. Don't move early or late; move only after the round is called.
- ♦ Have a completed Convention Card (both you and your partner).
- ♦ Make your opening lead or table the dummy before you enter the contract in your private score sheets or the BridgeMates. Remember the opening lead is to be led face down to allow for questions!
- ♦ Bid and play in a timely manner.
- ♦ When moving to a new table, make sure you are at the right table with the right opponents.
- ♦ Also check to see that Bridgemates and Place Card agree.

Make Sure to Mark Your Calendar



Wednesday, November 3
Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, November 8
Online Mentor/Mentee Game

Sunday, November 14
Special Pairs Game at CBC

Friday, November 19
Face-to-face Mentor/Mentee at CBC

Monday, November 22
Online Mentor/Mentee Game

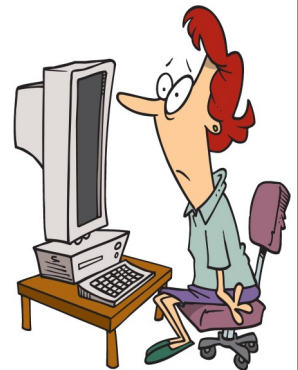
Thursday, December 2
Fairyland Christmas Party and
Annual Meeting

Saturday, December 11
Chattanooga Bridge Center Christmas Party
and Annual Meeting

Online Mentor/Mentee Game

The Online Mentor/Mentee game is on BBO at 7 PM every second and fourth Monday. The dividing line between a mentor and mentee is 500 points. These games are always fun and unpredictable.

They provide a great way to play with someone other than your regular partners. The club matches players with enough time so that each partnership can develop a convention card. Why not take advantage of this opportunity. If you would like to play, either as a mentor or mentee, email **Bert Shramko** at stdoms48@gmail.com.



We Need You

That handy, dandy, helpful Unit 206 directory that each of us uses on a regular basis doesn't just magically appear every December. For many years, we have been blessed to have **Winnell Goodner** dedicate time and effort to keep this tool up-to-date. Winnell needs your help to ensure that the directory is as accurate as possible. She'll have a master copy of the directory at the CBC and asks that you write any changes or additions on the master. If that is not convenient, any changes can be emailed to Winnell at winnellgoodner@comcast.net.



Don't Forget — November Special Game

The special weekend game in November is a pairs game on Sunday, November 14. Lunch is at 12:30 and the game will start at 1:00. That gives you plenty of time to make it to church and then head over to the Bridge Center for even more blessings. Also, don't forget—special games bring extra points! Call your partner right now to make sure you get in on the weekend fun. Players are asked to bring an appetizer, salad, vegetable, side dish or dessert. The CBC will provide the main course. Hope to see you there.



FF2F Friday Face-to-Face



If you missed our first Friday Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee game last month, you missed a great afternoon. There were 12 tables of mentors and mentees facing off in a competitive and challenging contest. In an effort to level the playing field, mentors sat North or East and their mentee partners sat in the opposite directions. An astounding 3.21 points were awarded to overall first place won by **Joe Viola** and **Sandy Boone**. Section winners were:

North/South —1st **Joe Viola/Sandy Boone**; 2nd **Margie Moses/Sue Carol Elvin**;
3rd **Joy Jones/Gray Boehm**.
E/W—1st **Larry Reneau/Judy Monen**; 2nd **Bert Shramko/Peter Elvin**;
3rd **Sandy Cervantes/Anne Donnovin**.

Come join us this month—November 19 at 12:00 noon at the CBC. If you would like to play, please text Sue Shramko at 423.304.7017 to let her know.

How would you answer the question... “To me bridge is _____?”

This month the question was put to **Frank Hughes** who, in true “Hughesian” fashion gave us an unexpected but interesting answer. “To me bridge is a form of communication.” Puzzled and intrigued, your editor asked Frank for an explanation. In reply, he said that bridge has provided him with another means of “talking” and sharing with his parents — one that he continues to enjoy to this day with his mom Bucky.



Do you know?



Last month we briefly mentioned the Bermuda Bowl which is part of the world championships of bridge. This competition will take place in Salsomaggiore, Italy, in 2022, and includes the Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, d'Orsi Senior Trophy and the Wuhan Cup. The European Bridge League held their qualifying tournament in late August. Several weeks prior to the start of the tournament, two highly regarded German players withdrew, stating on *bridgewinners.com* that the reason for their decision was that, "Fulvio Fantoni is confirmed to be a player on the Italian national team."

Fantoni and his partner Claudio Nunes were once ranked Number 1 and 2 by the World Bridge Federation. Unfortunately, for many years their opponents suspected that the pair regularly cheated. In 2014, a physicist from the Netherlands, Maaijke Mevius, decided to review videos of the European bridge championships that had been uploaded to YouTube. Her thinking was that although she was not an expert bridge player, her training as a scientist possibly could help her spot irregularities that had been missed by previous bridge "detectives." She did notice that the pair sometimes placed their cards vertically while at other times, the cards were placed horizontally. She shared her observations with a team of expert players who were able to "crack the code." In 82 of 85 instances, they were able to determine that if the pair placed a card vertically, their hands contained an unseen ace, king or queen of the same suit, or their hands were void in that suit. If the card did not meet these criteria, it was placed horizontally. (It is important to mention that both Fantoni and Nunes repeatedly have denied cheating.)

The ACBL permanently expelled both players in 2016 and stripped them of titles won during the preceding 4 years. The EBL banned the pair for 5 years and prohibited them from ever playing as partners again. The Italian Bridge Federation banned them for 3 years. The partners appealed the decision by the EBL, and in 2018 judges ruled in favor of Fantoni and Nunes. (The panel did not say that the pair had not cheated. Rather they said that there was insufficient evidence.) Six months later, the IBF changed its decision also. (The ACBL sanctions are still in effect.)

Many world-class players who have competed against "Fantunes" consider their offenses incontrovertible as well as unforgivable. One top American player, Steve Weinstein, says that they "ruined the records of bridge for years. They stole from honest players' dreams and joy and satisfaction, and they did it for almost a decade and a half."

In August at the EBL's tournament, Italy's first opponent was Scotland. In protest, Scotland forfeited the match. Next was Wales who also forfeited. Italy's other three opponents that day, Slovenia, Lithuania, and Ukraine, joined with the others and forfeited their matches. By the end of the week of competition, all 30 opponents in the qualifying tournament had forfeited. Fulvio Fantoni never played a single hand!

What was Italy's reaction to this massive boycott? The current president of the IBF wrote a letter stating, "We ask for the cancellation of the competition with appropriate measures: the damage to Italy's image was enormous."

It will be interesting to see what will happen in Salsomaggiore this coming spring. As host, Italy is guaranteed a spot in the competition. After hearing what happened at the EBL tournament, Steve Weinstein stated, "I have so much respect for what all the European teams did. I love what those teams did. That, to me, was one of the greatest days in bridge."

Cleveland Club News

No news is not necessarily good news. The face-to-face games for the Cleveland club are still on hold since the Cleveland Senior Center continues to be closed due to Covid-19. **Linda Burns** will let players know when games start back up just as soon as the Center receives clearance to reopen its doors.





Get to Know Dr. Mary Duffy

Did you grow up in a family that played bridge?

Both of my parents were bridge players, and my brothers and I got a "Bridge for Juniors" game as a Christmas present when I was 8 or 9. I don't remember ever actually playing much with it though. There were 5 children in my family with wide age ranges, so they taught us all to play chess. I suppose there was little time left for Bridge.



Mary Duffy on the right pictured with
Sandy Cervantes

When did you become interested in the game?

My first in-earnest bridge teachers were Frank and Maria Green back in the mid-80's. I played with their friend, Bert Wills, who was a very patient and understanding partner. I believe all three were members of the Chattanooga Bridge Club. My husband Gary Higbee had been an avid party bridge player, but we were both busy with work in our early years together. Later our daughter was born when we were 38 and 48, so we had little energy left to practice.

Do you find it helps that your husband and you share this common interest in the game?

I think it helps any regular partnership to grow their game together—as long as neither person is overly opinionated. While we spar at times over the "right" bid or play, we have planned many fun trips around bridge tournaments. When we travel, we try to find a local bridge club and have very much enjoyed playing with people at their home clubs.

How did you find out about the Chattanooga Bridge Club?

I had friends who played there, but had always been too intimidated to knock on the door. One afternoon at the Vine Street Market, I came across a copy of the *Lookout Mountain Mirror*, which advertised a "Learn Bridge in a Day" course coming up soon. Now retired, I was ready. Gary, excited that I was finally going to learn, decided to join me. We've been playing together regularly for over 5 years and thoroughly enjoy the game.

Have you taken lessons, or are you a self-taught bridge player? If you took lessons, where did you take those?

I have taken lots of lessons and read way too many books. But, I know those will pay off eventually. After I participated in "Learn Bridge in a Day" at the Bridge Center, I continued with the follow up series taught by Bill Adams. I also joined a Tuesday night beginner's game with Dan Chandler, and I never missed Ann Keown's "Play and Discuss" on Saturday afternoons. These were all extremely helpful. I've had specific lessons on Declarer Play and Defense with Mike Holmes' online teaching and more on defense with John Friedl. In the winters Gary and I play in a Florida club where one of our favorite teachers is Rosemary Boden. She has some great YouTube lessons available under "Rosie Way Bridge Lessons," which are perfect for beginners and intermediates. I highly recommend them. A few years ago Gary and I attended a group seminar with Larry Cohen while visiting Williamsburg, Virginia, and I have to admit to being a little star struck (and made the mistake of admitting it to Gary who had a good laugh at my expense).

Do you have a favorite bridge book that you can recommend to others as a help for improving your game?

So many books, so little time! My favorite at the moment is Eddie Kantar's *Modern Bridge Defense*, where I discovered how much I like defending. I can remember in my early games getting the idea that when the opponents declared, my partner and I could sit back and take a breather while mindlessly dropping cards here and there.

What advice can you give to novice players?

Play as much bridge as you can, whether it is solitaire, in club games/tournaments, or casual games with others on BBO. If you have not tried "Bridge Master" on the BBO site, it is a great way to learn to play increasingly complicated hands. It takes time to develop a "feel" for bridge, and everyone has their own pace. It is the sometimes painful mistakes you make that teach you the things you will always remember.

Do you have any other hobbies or interests?

I have been active in a book and film club for about 15 years. Over this time some have moved away or passed away, but most of our "core" members remain, and we are a happy group of like-minded people. I love attending plays and musicals of all types, both amateur and professional. I mothered an avid dancer, and with the immersion in her lessons, rehearsals, and performances, I've grown to love attending all types of dance productions. I used to enjoy playing golf, but bilateral rotator cuff repairs put an end to that.

Continued on the next page

Get to Know Dr. Mary Duffy (continued)

Personal Information

Are you a native Chattanooga? If not, what brought you here?

My parents were both native Chattanoogaans, but soon after their honeymoon, my dad began working in New York City. What brought me here was his fatal heart attack at age 45. My mom brought her brood of four with a baby on the way back to Chattanooga where we moved in right down the street from my grandmother (who loved her bridge parties). I was 10 at the time and thought I would never get used to hearing people say "Ya'll."

Where did you earn your medical degree?

I earned my degree at the UT Health Science Center in Memphis

Were you a general practitioner, or do you have a medical specialty?

I liked almost all of my medical rotations during medical school and had a difficult time choosing just one field so I decided to do my residency in Family Medicine. Gary teases that I would have made a lot more money being an "—ologist" of some sort, which is true, but have always been interested in a broad range of medical issues, which included pediatrics and gynecology as well as internal medicine.

How many years did you practice Medicine?

I retired at 55 (Gary was 65). I was in private practice for several years, which is something best done by the young when you are on call all the time. I worked in a variety of ER's, became a corporate physician when I got married, and I also worked several years as a Medical Director for TVA. It was difficult to say the "R" (retirement) word when the time came, but I still enjoy keeping up with the medical literature and earning my Continuing Medical Education credits in order to stay licensed.

Did you always practice medicine in Chattanooga? If not, where else have you practiced?

As a resident, about 2 weekends a month, I would moonlight working a 24-hour ER shift at the hospital in Monteagle. All kinds of problems would come in—from very simple to very complex, but with no other physicians, and no lab or X-ray staff on sight, this experience really helped to hone my clinical skills. Other than that, I practiced only in Chattanooga.

Do you have children? If you do, is/are he/she/they interested in playing bridge?

I have a 28 -year-old daughter who is busy establishing her law career and is not at all interested in bridge—at least for now, but I have my fingers crossed.

Before the pandemic, did you play in any bridge tournaments? If you did, how did you find that experience?

I have played in large tournaments in Atlanta, Gatlinburg, and Las Vegas, but also in smaller tournaments in Knoxville, Nashville, and Chattanooga. They are exciting, and especially fun when your friends are also in attendance. Since all levels of play are usually offered, tournaments are a great place to get experience and meet people from all over the world.

BRIDGE TIP FOR NOVEMBER

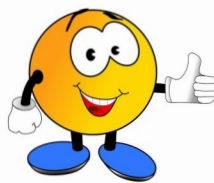


Do not give an attitude discard unless you think that partner will value this knowledge.

Remember that declarer has his eyes open too and may benefit from such information.

David Bird

BRIDGE ETIQUETTE



At the bridge table, don't forget what your mama taught you...it's always nice to be nice.

Also, it's important to remember that at the end of the hand, ensure that you do not mix up your cards until the result is agreed with the opponents.



One Last Thing...



Counting at the Bridge Table By John Friedl

A few years ago I taught a series of lessons on defense in bridge. We started in September and continued through April of the following year. For the first five weeks we focused solely on counting, with lectures and problem sets involving counting high-card points, trumps, declarer's probable tricks, the defense's possible tricks, declarer's distribution, and, by inference, partner's distribution.

It was tough sledding, to say the least. Counting is boring. It isn't exciting, or sexy. It's just hard work. But there's no way around it if you want to be good at bridge defense. And while all seasoned bridge players will agree that defense is the hardest part of the game, they will also agree that to be effective on defense, you have to be able to count quickly and accurately.

A few weeks into my lessons, one of the players in my class came up to me after the lesson and asked, "When will we get to the fun stuff?" I thought about it for a moment and then replied, "Is it more fun to win or lose?" The student replied, "Of course it's more fun to win." To which I replied, "Then we're doing the fun stuff right now. Because if you don't learn to count, you won't win consistently."

Here's a hand from the October Friday face-to-face mentor/mentee game that illustrates the importance of counting on defense. I'll start out by showing just your hand (South) and the dummy. East opens a strong 2 Clubs, West makes a waiting 2 Diamond response. East rebids 2 No Trump, and West raises to 3 No Trump, which ends the auction. You make what you hope will be a harmless spade lead.

Dummy

West

♠J2
♥T954
♦4
♣JT8764

South

♠876
♥KJ7
♦983
♣A932

Declarer plays the jack from dummy, partner covers with the queen and declarer wins with the ace. On the next trick declarer plays the king of clubs. You pause for a moment, and then you remember the old bridge adage that says "Aces are meant to take kings." So you play your ace of clubs, capturing that royal king from declarer. If you did that, you tied for a bottom score on the board. Why? Because you didn't pause to count.

How many tricks does Declarer have? You don't know for sure, but you have what looks like one club and two hearts, and you can see 10 high card points between your hand and dummy, which means partner rates to have about 6 to 8 more. Does declarer have a long suit that he can run to score more tricks? Not likely, or he would not have bid 2 No Trump as his second bid. So where are declarer's

One Last Thing *continued*

tricks going to come from? Well, looking at dummy there are two possibilities—hearts and clubs. And since declarer played on clubs first, it's likely to be clubs. How many clubs does declarer have? You can see 10 between your hand and dummy, and declarer should have at least 2 for his bid, so he has either 2 or 3. If he has the king and queen doubleton, taking the ace doesn't hurt because he can't get to dummy to run the rest of the suit. But if he has KQ5, then when you take the ace you set up the club suit for 5 tricks.

How do you know what to do? It's simple—duck the first club trick and see what partner plays. That will give you a complete count of the suit. If partner plays a club, you know declarer started with two. If partner shows out, you know declarer started with three, and you must duck the second club trick as well. (Declarer will surely lead the queen next.)

Here is the complete layout of the hand:

North			
♠	QT543	♠	AK9
♥	863	♥	AQ2
♦	AJT75	♦	KQ62
♣		♣	KQ5
West		East	
♠	J2	♠	876
♥	T954	♥	KJ7
♦	4	♦	983
♣	JT8764	♣	A932
		South	

As you can see, if you duck the first and second club leads from declarer, he can only come to six tricks—two clubs, one diamond, one heart, and two spades. But if you jump up with the ace right away, he has an easy nine tricks—five clubs, one diamond, one heart, and two spades.

If you learned that aces were meant to take kings, and you rely on that "rule" to make an automatic play without going to the trouble of counting (here, the club suit and declarer's possible tricks), you'll fail at defense. I like to tell my bridge students, whatever the topic of the lesson for that day, that there is no substitute for counting, and that rules are meant to be guidelines, not absolutes.

So if you're playing with a new partner, when you sit down to work out your convention card, don't neglect the lower left corner where it says what your agreement will be regarding count signals. Your partner has to be willing and able to give you accurate count on the suits as they are played, and you need to be willing and able to pay close attention to those signals and to adapt your play of the hand on defense based on your ability to count all four suits. As I said, it isn't exciting, it isn't sexy, and it can seem boring. But it is the key to winning bridge, and that means it can be fun. You can count on it!

