

LIBRARY CORNER

Planning the Defense: The Next Level

By Barbara Seagram

The word "planning" in the title of this book is significant. Planning is what all good bridge players do. This particular book is not really for the novice player. The authors' stated aim is to assist advancing players to become more sophisticated players of the game. Seagram perhaps is known best for her "25" books, several examples of which we have in our library discussing a variety of topics. The co-author of this book is David Bird, who is described on the back cover as "the most prolific bridge author of all time." Among his titles are eight American Bridge Teachers' Association Book of the Year awards. Obviously these two authors have a lot of valuable information and suggestions to offer. Noting that some of the plays and techniques might be difficult at first, the authors suggest that the reader persevere. "Most worthwhile accomplishments in life involve a bit of effort and application." Suggested "Defensive Plan" topics cause the reader to stop and think and begin to apply the techniques the authors offer. Each chapter ends with a bulleted list of items to remember. This list can serve as a valuable resource for review. Given the authors' credentials, it's a cinch that paying attention to the ideas presented in this book will, indeed, help the reader take his/her game to the next level.



ALERT!!

A publication of ACBL Unit 206

October, 2022



Editor: Sandy Cervantes

Features Editor: Cheryl Whitfield

A message from the president...

Please join me in thanking Sue Riddle for Sue Riddle is member of the month! Sue filled in as director multiple times (and sometimes at the last minute) while many of our usual directors were unavailable for much of the month. Thanks so much!!



Be on the lookout for some equipment and workers soon. The contractors for the wall replacement in the back of our parking lot will begin work in the next month or so. Most work will take place when no games are scheduled, so the disruptions to our regular activities should be minimal.

The nomination committee has been formed and Margie Moses is the chair. If you have any suggestions for board candidates or if you would be interested in serving, please tell Margie.

Most of you realize that our table counts have been down significantly in the last two months. We miss you, and we need you! Please consider playing at the club more often. Last month I mentioned our financial status, and in an effort to improve our situation, the board has approved an increase of \$1.00 in playing fees in face-to-face games at the CBC beginning November 1. For the present, online games will remain at \$6.00. In addition, the board approved yearly dues of \$20 beginning January, 2023. This fee is to be paid annually the first time a member plays at the club. Out-of-town visitors and current players who choose not to become members may play up to three times for \$10 per game. After three games, players will be required to pay membership dues. Working together with understanding and cooperation, we should be able to improve our financial standing.

Hope to see you at the CBC soon.

Iris



A Smidgen of Smiths

An Important Bidding Sequence Over Stayman

Your partner opens 1NT. You hold: ♠KQxx ♥xx ♦KJxx ♣xxx
The bidding:

Partner		You	
1NT	P	2♣*	P
2♥**	P	2***	

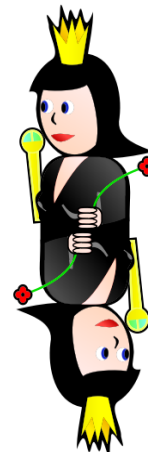
*You would bid 2♣, Stayman. You have 9 HCP, 4 spades, and an invitational hand.

**Your partner shows 4 hearts

*** What is your next bid?

You might think you should bid 2NT, showing an invitational hand without 4 hearts. BUT, what if your partner also has 4 spades? The simple solution is for you to bid 2♠ after your partner bids 2♥. This bid shows an invitational hand (same as 2NT bid) with exactly 4 spades. This way if your partner has only 15 HCP and 4S, they can pass 2S. The 3-level may not be safe. Of course, with the same auction, if you have 4 spades and 10+ HCP, you will bid 3NT over 2♥, which promises 4 spades. Your partner can correct to 4♠ if they have 4 spades.

If you have a 4-4 major suit fit, it is normally best to play in that suit. In no trump, a 4-4 fit will provide at most four tricks; but if it's your trump suit, it will produce a fifth winner, assuming you can draw trumps in 3 rounds which happens 68% of the time.



Linda and Ron Smith



NOT TO WORRY— THERE'S A PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Who knows, maybe this coming Friday, you wake up and realize that you have far more time on your hands than you know what to do with. Or, it could be that your regular Tuesday bowling partner is having hip replacement surgery and told you she will be out of commission for several months. Not to worry because the CBC can come to your rescue! Jan Alexander (janalexander@epbfi.com) heads up our Partnership Committee whose purpose is to match players with other players looking for part-

ners. They are happy to help both open and limited players (including new players). If you want to play more often, are willing to help a newer player, or are a new player yourself and are looking for a partner, we are here to assist you. Just let us know, and we will coordinate the entire effort reaching out to players with similar conventions, skills or interest to get the first game going. Don't wait—take advantage of this opportunity to increase your playing time!

FAIRYLAND DBC



Boo-hoo! There are no photos this month from the Fairyland club, but that doesn't mean we didn't have fun. In fact, just the opposite. Everyone had loads of fun! If you want to have a good time playing a competitive game of bridge and enjoying a delicious buffet luncheon, why not join us at the Mountain City Club on Thursdays at 10:15 a.m. We guarantee that Thursdays will never be the same again. There is usually something special in store, and more often than not, someone brings a mouth-watering dessert to share.

This month, there's a ghoulish buffet on the 27th and a special prize for the best costume. There's no need to wait for the last Thursday in October, though. Try us out ahead of time. Just you wait and see—you'll be setting your alarm on Thursdays and putting a reminder in your online calendar so you won't miss out on all the fun.

Hardy, Har, Har

Two good friends were playing bridge recently at Nooga East. Before starting the first round, Bill said to his partner, "Hey Jimmy, you won't believe how great was the new restaurant we went to last night. The food was delicious. You've got to try it."

Jimmy, always up for a good meal, was curious so he asked, "What's it called?"

"Oh, wait a sec," says Bill. "Um, gosh, hang on. Help me here. What's the name of that prickly red flower?"

"You mean a rose?" asked Jimmy.

"Exactly!" he said turning to his wife who was at the next table. "Hey, Rose, sweetheart. What was the name of that restaurant we went to last night?"



HATS OFF TO...



In October, our wide-brimmed, pointed hats are happily and gratefully doffed to our President Iris Abelson who has done a terrific job leading our rag-

tag group of bridge players through some precarious circumstances. Even during the best of times, helping a bridge club stay active and successful is not an easy endeavor. When you factor in the pandemic as well as the increasing number of opportunities to play ACBL bridge online, it truly can become an overwhelming responsibility.

Iris has taken her job seriously and devoted countless hours to her duties as president. She has been through some difficult times and, as amazing as it is, still comes out looking none the worse for wear! Thank you, Iris, for all you do and especially for doing it with a sense of humor. All of your efforts don't go unnoticed.



Greetings,

Larry and I are home from a wonderful trip to Kenya. The animals were beyond spectacular. We saw a lot of life and death. Although the deaths were difficult to watch, the new births were awe inspiring. Here is a photo of a new Topi (antelope) being born.

And, speaking of springing new life... that is what our Bridge Club needs at the moment. Please take a moment to

re-read last month's article by Iris on the financial state of the Chattanooga Bridge Club. We know everyone wants success but in order to ensure that we are successful, we need YOU - the PLAYERS! We are blessed with a permanent and beautiful facility in which to play. Many clubs would give anything to have that. We know Covid has been hard on our players. Sadly, it seems like some version of Covid is here to stay.

The Chattanooga Bridge Club is doing so much to have a game for YOU. We are holding special point games, team games, beginner games, lessons, snack and food games and online games. It is all there on the website. I do hope YOU can join us soon. Attendance by our members is VITAL to our continued success. So, in particular as a parting request, please make a special effort to play online if you can't make it to the Club. Winter is just around the corner, and we want to keep Tuesdays and Thursdays as Club options for our members.

I would love to see you at the Bridge table soon!

Quick tip:

Just a reminder that an auction only ends with 3 passes. Please don't tap your pass as that is not legal.



HAVE WE
TOAD
YOU HOW MUCH WE
MISS YOU?

Get Well Wishes

We send our warmest wishes for a very quick recovery to Marty Hershey as he recuperates from his recent surgery. Fridays are just not the same without Mr. Seventy. We miss you, Marty.



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.



Play With Someone New

Although the date is closing in, there is still time left to find your perfect partner for our upcoming Tuesday, November 8, "Play With Someone New" open game.

The CBC game starts at noon and your partner **MUST** be someone with whom you have never played. This is the ideal time to add to your partner match-ups. Who knows, it could be that this is a chance for you to develop an ongoing, regular partnership.

If you need help finding someone, just let us know. We can assist you.

**TRY
SOMETHING
NEW**

Upcoming Special Games

Make sure you mark your calendar now so you won't miss the fun at these upcoming special games. More information will be provided as we get closer to the dates.

October 17-23	STaC Week—chance for extra points
October 22, Saturday	Halloween Party STac Points Pairs Game
November 14 & 28, Monday	Online Mentor/ Mentee Game
November 8, Tuesday	Play with Someone New!
November 13, Sunday	Chicken Casserole Pairs' Game
December 10, Saturday	Christmas Party

SAVE THE DATE

Friday Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee Game



As usual, our face-to-face Friday Mentor/Mentee game is scheduled for the third Friday of the month—October 21. If you would like to participate either as a mentor or mentee, text or call Sue Shramko at 404.304.7017. Sue sends out partner assignments on the Wednesday prior to the game giving you plenty of time to get together to develop a convention card. This is the perfect time for mentees to practice new conventions that they are interested in adding to their bridge tool box.

Congratulation to our September winners:

North/South

First	Doug Cart/Jim Lafavor
Second	Susan Rothberger/Mary Robertson
Third	Ed Eller/Judy Klemm

East/West

Earl Rothberger/Judy Monen
Margie Moses/Sandy Boone
Joe Viola/John Hubbard

Online Mentor/Mentee Game It's Back!



You asked for it, and your wish has been granted. Yes, our Monday night online mentor/mentee game will resume next month on November 14 and 28—the 2nd and 4th Mondays at 7:00 p.m. Bert Shramko again will coordinate this popular game. If you would like to play either as a mentor or mentee, please get in touch with Bert at stdoms48@gmail.com.

Nooga East Bridge Club News

Just in case you haven't heard, there's a fun bridge game at Christ United Methodist Church at 8645 East Brainerd Road. We're there every Monday rain or shine. Everyone has a great time so why not test the waters and

come next Monday. Please arrive no later than 12:15 as the game starts promptly at 12:30. Call or text Sharon Lewis at 423.240.5360 or Sue Riddle at 423.509.3583 if you plan to play. Everyone is invited to come. We'd love to see you there!

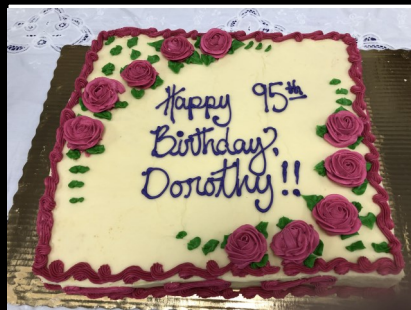


Cleveland Bridge Club News

The Cleveland Bridge Club would like to invite any and all players to come and play in Cleveland on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. You are asked to arrive early so the game can start on time. The venue is the Bradley/Cleveland Senior Center on Urbane Road. Please confirm that you plan to play by texting Polly Sullivan at 423.715.0986 or Teresa Moore at 423.321.2778. It is important to know who is coming so that in the event the Center should close unexpectedly, players can be notified.



In Memory



On September 14, we lost our dear friend Dorothy Seeber. Last March, we planned to celebrate Dorothy's 95th birthday at a Friday game, but unexpectedly, she was hospitalized. We were able to video our rousing and somewhat off-tune rendition of "Happy Birthday" which we sent to her. We received the following message written in typical Dorothy fashion. "Sandy, thank you so much. You guys at the bridge club are all wonderful and I miss seeing you. I am hopeful to go home in a couple of days. We are trying to get to the root of the problem which probably is the number 95!" Oh, Dorothy, we will miss you dearly.

The CBC has received an anonymous donation in memory of Dorothy. We wish to thank the generous donor for this very thoughtful gift. This is such a wonderful way to honor and remember players that have been an integral part of the club. A donation remains anonymous unless otherwise specified.

Blast from the Past

Our October Blast from the Past is from a June, 2012 team game. Pictured from left to right are winners

Buddy Landis, John Felker, Earl Rothberger and Susan Rothberger.



Bridge Tip for September

A direct raise of a 2nd suit promises 4 card support (in blood!).

Eddie Kantar



How to Be a Better Partner



If you make a bid that asks your partner to give his opinion and his bid conveys it, don't overrule his decision. If you don't agree with his judgment, it is certainly acceptable to share your thoughts and reasoning, but make sure you do so after the game and out of earshot of others. Also, if you do it in a considerate and respectful manner, you increase the possibility that he will listen to you.

BRIDGE ETIQUETTE



Cards should not be taken out of the board until all players are at the table. Before you look at your hand, count the cards and ensure that you have exactly thirteen cards.

October Special Game It's Taco Time



Dig that Halloween costume out of the closet because it's time to celebrate. Never a group to miss a chance to have fun, this month we are treated to a Halloween party on Saturday, October 22. Since we are having a taco bar, we plan to "darles el bienvenido a los fantasmas y los duendes" or, in other words welcome the ghosts and goblins. You



can even wear your costume and dazzle us with your creativity. To take advantage of STaC week, this game has been changed from a team game to a pairs game. STaC is an abbreviation for Sectional Tournaments at Clubs. These games are held face-to-face at your local club but cover a larger geographic area. There are winners at the club level, but there are also overall winners who are awarded extra points. (In the recent August STaC, Myra Reneau won 17+ points.)

So, it's time to pull out your wig, mask and make-up—we're going to party hardy! The taco bar opens at 11:30, and the game should start at noon. We ask that you bring a side dish or a dessert to share. Be there...or be square!

Monday Night 349'er Game



Our 349'er evening game started in August and is slowly but surely growing in size. For those of you who are newer players, why not take advantage of a game with a more level playing field. The game is stratified and starts at 6:00. It should end around 9:00. If players are interested, over time we hope to incorporate a short lesson prior to the game as well as have a post-game analysis of 2-4 hands. We look forward to seeing you there!

How would you fill in the blank? "To me bridge ____."



We put pressure on Sue Shramko in October to answer our monthly question. Sue was quick to reply:

"To me bridge is a big part of my life. It makes me get my errands and chores done so I can go and have a mentally stimulating, but fun afternoon with people who have the same interest."

Deep down, we all knew that bridge is the great motivator!

Learn Bridge in a Day

Saturday, October 1, Dan Chandler conducted his Learn Bridge in a Day class at the Chattanooga Bridge Center. Thirteen prospective players showed up to learn how to play the game we all love. Susie Crouch and Sandy Cervantes welcomed each player as they arrived giving them nametags and binders. Jan Alexander, Gordon Park, Janie Hunt, Suzy Bryant and Jim LaFevor were table monitors and helped students wade through the myriad of LBIAD knowledge. The group broke up around noon so that everyone could enjoy a pizza and salad lunch. Enthusiasm was high and all those that attended voiced their interest in continuing to hone their bridge skills in our follow-up Saturday classes.



LBIAD is a great way to introduce bridge to prospective players and allow them to test the waters before they fully commit to learning this fun, but challenging game. The CBC owes a big debt of gratitude to Dan, who over the years, has organized and run many LBIAD classes and brought in a number of new and eager players. Dan is able to help new players focus on the basics and appreciate the mental challenge that bridge offers. His excitement and passion for the game comes through in his teaching and for many it's contagious. Mil gracias!

Upcoming Classes

As a follow-up to our recent Learn Bridge in a Day class, Suzy Bryant and Janie Hunt are offering two months of continuing education classes. Classes are held at the Chattanooga Bridge Center from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

October 8	No Trump Openings, Stayman
October 15	No Trump Openings, Transfers
October 22	Opening Suit Bids—1 level
October 29	Responding to Opening 1 Level Suit Bids
November 5	Rebids by Opener—Minimum, Invitational and Maximum
November 12	Rebids by Responder
November 19	Strong Opening Bid—2 Clubs
November 26	Weak (Preemptive) Opening Bids



If there is interest, the classes may continue and would include a wide variety of topics such as leads, overcalls, and finesses. Each class costs \$5.00. Players can pick and choose the classes they would like to attend. Any novice player who would like to tune up his bridge skills is welcome to attend.

DO YOU KNOW...

What's the Rule of 15? (Pass) Pass (Pass) ???

You're in 4th seat — three passes to you. What should you do? In 1st and 2nd seat, it is fairly easy to determine if your hand has the requisite values to open the bidding. In 3rd seat, we all know that we can open with a much lower point count; your partner has already passed, so there is not much hope of getting to game. Maybe, just maybe, it will be your lucky day and you will keep the opponents out of the action. At the very least, you may aid your partner in selecting the killing lead.

But, in 4th seat, things are different. Unless you have a real opener, chances are that the points are fairly evenly divided between the 4 hands. You certainly do not want to open the bidding and allow the opponents to find their 9-card spade fit, forcing you to compete at the 3-level in diamonds. If you hold a borderline opening hand, here's where the Rule of 15 comes into play:

**Add your HCP to the number of spades in your hand—
if it totals 15 or more, you should open.**

There is a logical reason that your spade suit becomes part of the calculation. Your strength is limited and no one has opened the bidding in front of you. If the opponents do enter the auction, chances are that you will be battling for a part score and if you hold spades, the opponents can't overbid you at the 2-level.

The Rule of 15 does not affect what suit you should open — just open the bidding as you would if you held a full opening hand. Take a look at the hands at the following hands:

HAND 1

♠ Q
♥ J54
♦ AJT63
♣ A987

HAND 2

♠ AJT97
♥ 54
♦ AJ43
♣ 84

HAND 3

♠ 54
♥ AJT97
♦ AJ43
♣ 84

HAND 4

♠ AKT98
♥ KJT9875
♦ 5

Hand 1 would qualify as an opening hand in 1st—3rd seats — but with the ♠Q singleton, it is advisable to pass in 4th seat.

You probably would not open **Hand 2** sitting in 1st or 2nd seat, but with 10 HCP and 5 spades, it fits the Rule of 15 for an opening hand in 4th seat.

Hand 3 is the same as Hand 2, but with the majors reversed. This hand can be opened sitting in 3rd seat, but doesn't meet the Rule of 15. It is best not to open 1H only to hear your LHO overcall spades.

Hand 4 illustrates why the Rule of 15 is only a guideline to use when you are in doubt— here there's no doubt. Open this hand in any seat!!



One Last Thing...

By John Friedl

Defenses Against 1NT

What is the easiest bid in bridge to respond to? It's an opening bid of 1 No Trump. Opener has defined a narrow point range and a fairly narrow distribution – no six-card suit, no singleton or void, and depending on your partnership agreement, maybe no five-card major.

When your partner makes an opening bid of 1 No Trump, you have a variety of options and the choice is usually pretty clear. With a balanced hand you can pass with fewer than 8 or 9 points; invite to game with a balanced 8 or 9, or raise to game with a balanced 10 to 15. If you have an unbalanced hand you can transfer to your long suit, then pass, invite, or bid game.

Because it makes the auction so much easier for the Opener and her partner to find their fit and appropriate level, experts try hard to find a way to inject a bid into the auction that makes it more difficult, and also opens the door for the opponents to compete for a part score whenever possible.

The problem with interfering with the auction is that the 1 No Trump bid typically shows a strong hand, and if you interfere and your partner doesn't have a fit for your suit(s) you may be doubled and pay a heavy penalty. For this reason, there are just three types of hands that lend themselves to interference over 1 No Trump:

- 1) a hand with a single long suit of good quality, typically 6 cards or longer, the kind of hand you would open with a weak 2-bid or even a 1-level opening bid;
- 2) a hand with two decent 5-card suits, which makes it more likely that partner will have a fit for one of your two suits and you'll find an eight card fit to compete for a part score;
- 3) a strong hand, the equivalent of a 1 No Trump opening bid, preferably sitting behind rather than in front of the 1 No Trump opener.

Experts have developed a number of different conventions for interfering over the 1 No Trump opening bid, and we'll have a look at several of these, but by no means all. You and your partner should discuss which one you will play, and be sure you agree on the meaning of all bids within that convention.

Natural

This isn't really a convention, but all bids are simply natural suit bids. You should have a good six-card suit or longer and some outside values as well, as you can't count on partner to have any help for you.



Continued on the next page.

One Last Thing...continued

The advantages of bidding your long suit are that you disturb the opponents' communication, you guide your partner on defense if the opponents buy the contract, and you can make this bid in either direct or balancing seat. The disadvantages are that you may not find a fit with partner's hand; you risk a costly penalty double; and you help the opponents find the missing honors should they end up declaring. Here's an example of a hand where you would feel comfortable overcalling 2 Hearts in direct seat:

♠x ♥AJ10xxx ♦Kxxx ♣Qx

Cappelletti (a k a Hamilton)

Over a 1 No Trump opening bid you make the following bids:

- 2 Clubs = one long suit (6+ cards, not clubs)
- 2 Diamonds = both majors (typically at least 5/4 or better)
- 2 Hearts = hearts and a minor suit (at least 5 hearts, 4+ card minor suit)
- 2 Spades = spades and a minor suit (same as hearts)
- 2 No Trump = both minors (at least 5/5)
- 3 Clubs = a long club suit (6+ cards, preferably 7)
- Double = penalty oriented, a hand with values for opening 1 No Trump

The advantages of this convention are that you disturb the opponents' auction; you can show all types of two-suited hands and give partner a chance to find a fit in one of your suits; you help guide partner on defense; and you preserve the option of a penalty double when your side has the balance of strength. The disadvantages are that the bid of 2 Clubs to show one long suit has no preemptive value (the opponents can double for Stayman or play "systems on" for transfers) and you have to bid again to show your long suit; and your bid helps guide the opponents if they win the auction.

Modified Cappelletti

Over a 1 No Trump opening bid you make the following bids:

- 2 Clubs = either long diamonds (6+) or a 2-suited hand with a major (5+) and a minor suit (at least 4 cards)
- 2 Diamonds = both majors (at least 5/4)
- 2 Hearts = at least 6 hearts
- 2 Spades = at least 6 spades
- 2 No Trump = both minors (at least 5/5)
- Double = penalty oriented, a hand with values for opening 1 No Trump

If you bid 2 Clubs and LHO passes, partner is required to bid 2 Diamonds. You can then pass if you have long diamonds, or bid your major if your hand is a 2-suited major/minor combination. If you bid your major and partner has no fit, he bids 2 No Trump to ask for your minor suit (he should have tolerance for both minors).

Continued on the next page.

One Last Thing...continued

The advantages are the same as regular Cappelletti, but the 2 Heart and 2 Spade bids have more preemptive value than the 2 Club bid showing a long suit; and you can show all types of 2-suited hands as well as all single-suited hands. The disadvantages are the same as with regular Cappelletti, and partner does not know right away what type of hand you have when you bid 2 Clubs. Also, if you have a two-suited major/minor hand and partner has no fit for your major suit, you have to bid again at the 3-level.

DONT (Disturb Opponents' No Trump)

Over a 1 No Trump opening bid you make the following bids:

Double = any long suit

2 Clubs = clubs and a higher ranking suit (typically 5/5)

2 Diamonds = diamonds and a higher ranking suit (5/5)

2 Hearts = hearts and spades

2 Spades = long spade suit (at least 6 cards)

Typically with long spades and a stronger hand you bid 2 Clubs first, then spades; with a weaker hand you bid 2 Spades directly because of the preemptive value of that bid.

The advantages are mostly the same as with Cappelletti, i.e., you can identify a fit more easily when you show a two-suited hand, and you are disturbing the opponents' auction and making it harder for them to find their best contract. The disadvantages are that the double and the 2 Club bid have no preemptive value and you give up the option for a penalty-oriented double.

Meckwell (named after Eric Rodwell and Jeff Meckstroth)

Over a 1 No Trump opening bid you make the following bids:

Double = either one long minor suit (6+) or both majors (typically 5/5)

2 Clubs or 2 Diamonds = that minor and a major suit

2 Hearts or 2 Spades = long major suit (6+)

2 No Trump = both minors

After a double partner bids 2 Clubs and you pass if clubs is your long minor suit; you bid 2 Diamonds if that is your long minor; or you bid 2 Hearts if you have both majors and partner will pass with a fit for hearts or correct if he has a better fit for spades.

The advantages are that the 2 Club and 2 Diamond bids show the minor suit immediately, as opposed to a bid that shows an undisclosed minor; and the convention covers all two-suited hands. The disadvantages are that there is no opportunity for a penalty-oriented double; the double and 2 Club bids have no preemptive value; and the 2 Club and 2 Diamond bids do not immediately show which major suit is held.

Continued on the next page.

One Last Thing...continued

Landy

Over a 1 No Trump opening bid you make the following bids:

2 Clubs = at least 5/4 in the majors

2 Diamonds, 2 Hearts or 2 Spades = natural, 6+ card suit

2 No Trump = both minors

Double = penalty oriented

The advantages are that it is easy to find a major suit fit and the penalty-oriented double is retained. The disadvantage is that there is no bid to show a two-suited hand with a major and a minor suit.

Summary

Here are some things to consider in choosing which convention is best for your partnership:

- 1) Ease of remembering the bids. Conventions that have some bids with more than one possible meaning or ambiguous meanings may be harder to remember. A convention is not of much use if you or your partner forget it.
- 2) Should you use a convention in the same way in direct seat (i.e., sitting immediately to the left of the 1 No Trump bidder) or in balancing seat? If the 1 No Trump bid is passed around to you in 4th seat you have a better idea of what partner's hand is like in terms of strength (the partner of the opening bidder has limited his hand by passing), but your honor cards are sitting in front of the strong hand rather than behind it. Generally you will want to use the same convention in both situations, but you will need a stronger hand in 4th seat than in direct seat.
- 3) Always be aware of vulnerability. If you are vulnerable and the opponents have the balance of strength, you may be doubled and go down for a very bad result.
- 4) In choosing a convention to play, remember that most partnerships play "systems on" over a double of 1 No Trump or a 2 Club overcall. So if you double or bid 2 Clubs they will use Stayman and transfers and you won't have any preemptive value for your bid. These bids may give your partner some information, but they won't keep the opponents out of the auction if they have something more to say.
- 5) Showing a two-suited hand gives partner a better idea of where to find a fit. These hands come up more often than a hand with a single long suit.
- 6) A penalty-oriented double showing a hand equivalent to a 1 No Trump opener doesn't come up that often, but when it does it can be very useful. If you play a system with a penalty double, I recommend that you also play "systems on" for your partner. That is, partner can use Stayman and transfers just as if your Double was a 1 No Trump bid itself. When you make a penalty double in direct seat, your partner can pass with a good hand (a good 6 HCP or better), knowing that your side has the balance of strength and you are sitting behind the strong hand. If you double in balancing seat, partner should have a little extra to leave the double in.

Bottom Line

Pick the convention that you and your partner are most comfortable with. If one convention was head-and-shoulders above the rest, everyone would use it.