

Library Corner



Defense: On the Other Hand

by David Bird and Larry Cohen (2020)

Students of duplicate bridge will recognize the names of both authors of this book, which addresses defensive techniques. The authors' previous book on card play instruction was named the American Bridge Teachers' Association Book of the Year. As in the previous book, this one contains 100 deals that are discussed by each author on opposing pages. The hands are similar but not exactly the same. The bidding is shown, and a detailed explanation of the play of the hand follows. The reader will do well to lay out the hands and walk through the play of the hand options that each author discusses. At the end of each discussion is an Understand Why section in which the authors briefly discuss why the reader would do well to follow their advice. A good example follows hand 87A. Cohen says, "Playing the QC from an original Q10x is an 'obligatory false card.' If you fail to make it, declarer cannot go wrong." The advice given helps the reader understand that in some situations not following standard "rules" can lead to better outcomes for his/her game.



ALERT!!

A publication of ACBL Unit 206

May, 2023



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A message from the president...



You have heard about how April showers bring May flowers. Well, in a similar vein, in April, the CBC Board brain "stormed" on new games that will come to life in May! We have added three new types of games:

- ♦ On Tuesday, May 2, we will start a U50 game, primarily for new players to get into duplicate bridge. The game will be every Tuesday morning from 9:00 to 11:30. Even better news is that the first two weeks will be FREE!
- ♦ On May 9, we will have a "mystery" partner Open game during our usual Tuesday Noon game. Once everyone arrives, we will have a random drawing to pair everyone. Arrive early to compare conventions!
- ♦ Starting May 15, we have added a Monday NIGHT GAME. This will be a two-session game, Open and 199 (just like our Friday game), and the first game will include food at 5:30 with the game starting at 6:00.

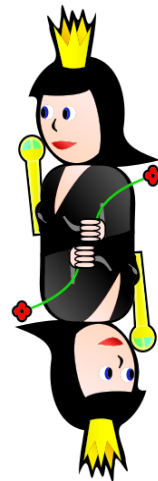
These are exciting times. Hope to see you at as many of these games as possible.

Richard Spangler



A Smidgen of Smiths

As difficult as it may be, we are going to have to wait another month to hear from the Smiths. They are taking a well-deserved break this month.



It Rhymes, What More Do You Want?

In early 2020, the ACBL announced that they were sponsoring a limerick contest. They were flooded with submissions and overwhelmed with how horrible some of them were. In fact, to quote the editors, "Because limerick writers typically employ puns and strained rhyming constructions, the poems are often groan-inducing by their nature, but many Bridge Bulletin readers seemed intent on lowering the bar even further." If you would like to read some of the real groaners, you can see them at <https://acbl.com/there-once-was-a-limerick-contest/>.

I see no reason to make you cringe, so here are a couple of the better entries.

*A handsome bridge player named Bert
Was known by the girls as a flirt!
His partner would bid
And just after she did
He'd wink twice and then blurt, "Alert!"*
Faye H. Dempsey, Greenville, NC

*A bridge playing fellow named Wade
Was unhappy with how he had played.
He was down in the dumps,
For though hearts had been trumps,
The card he'd pulled out was a spade.*
Sarah Saltus, Hackettstown NJ



Attention New Players Under 50MP Game

On Tuesday, May 2, we will start a new game for players with fewer than 50 masterpoints. This game is intended for those new to the game of bridge, as well as those who have never played duplicate bridge and would like to try it out. We ask that players arrive by 8:45 A.M. so we can start promptly at 9:00 A.M. The game should be over by 11:30 A.M.

Bring your friends, your neighbors, your family — all are welcome. The first two games will be free.



May Special Game Memorial Day BBQ

Come and celebrate Memorial Day weekend on Saturday, May 27, by feasting on delicious barbeque. If you have never tried it, this is your chance to taste MoMo's world famous pulled pork. More than likely after one sample, it won't be your last. You are asked to bring a salad, a potato dish, or whatever your favorite side might be. Don't forget, we especially love desserts! Lunch is scheduled for 11:30, and the game will follow.



HATS OFF TO...

This month, we tip our hats to our **Thursday Evening Stalwarts**—those loyal supporters who rarely miss the chance to play in our only open online game. Word is, though, it's getting more difficult to stay loyal since we recently have had to cancel the game a number of times due poor attendance.

This game offers an opportunity to those who have conflicts with our regularly scheduled face-to-face games, and it would be a significant loss if we permanently have to suspend this game. Why not come out and join the Thursday Evening Stalwarts. Don't have a partner? No worries, there is always an ambassador available.

Hope to see you next Thursday!

Let us   
 never forget,
FREEDOM
 isn't **FREE** 

*“Our nation owes a debt to
its fallen heroes that we
can never fully repay.”*

Barack Obama

PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Getting a bad back from all that Spring gardening you're doing? Having trouble sleeping because of the resulting sciatic pain? You need to take a break and play some bridge! If you need help finding a partner, all you need do is email Partnership Chair **Jan Alexander** (janalexander@epbfi.com). Her committee matches players looking for partners so there's no excuse not to play. Let the committee know you'd like to play, and in no time you'll be having the time of your life (and maybe making a new friend).





Guess where they went last month?
Margie Moses, Rosalie Basten and Susie Crouch decked out and ready for anything and everything—even bears!

Fairyland Duplicate Bridge Club

Why not join us for fun and frolic at the Mountain City Club. We meet every Thursday at 10:15 A.M. We start play at 10:30 and break for a delicious buffet lunch. We are usually finished by 2:30 P.M. The people are nice and welcoming and the food is wonderful. Everyone is welcome, so bring a friend! Just contact Susie Crouch at susancrouch54@gmail.com to reserve your spot. If you've never had the opportunity to experience this game, it's time to come give us a try.



Our Marvelous Member of the Month for May goes to **Liz Norris**. You won't find a more loyal member who shows up every Thursday and offers to supply desserts more often than not. Liz has a very laid back demeanor, but don't let that fool you. She can tell a joke that lands a punch in the funniest of ways. You won't see it coming. She is truly a delight.

These happy bunnies were ready to welcome Spring and celebrate Easter at the April 6

game at the Mountain City Club. Pictured from left are Susie Crouch, Pat Whitaker, Dan Chandler, Suzy Bryant, Shayna Scott, Janie Hunt, Sandy Cervantes and Kathy Ellis.

New Monday Night Game Open and 199er



In an effort to provide another limited game option for our novice players and to offer an opportunity to play for those with daytime commitments, the CBC will have a Monday evening game beginning May 15. Similar to our current Friday day games, there will be an open as well as a limited 199er game. If you would like to share a meal, please bring a covered dish. Food will be served at 5:30 P.M., and the game will start at 6:00 P.M. We hope this appeals to many of our members, so spread the word. If there's enough interest, more games like this will be scheduled in the future.

Do you know?

We've got another Octogenarian!

If you were ever in doubt, here's more proof that the game of bridge has tremendous health benefits. This past March, **Arnie Meagher** celebrated his 90th birthday at the CBC with a delicious cake baked by Margie Moses. That smile on Arnie's face says it all!

For some of us, bridge might be a little like spinach. We may love it and consume it with a passion, but we aren't completely knowledgeable about its enormous health benefits. Here's a fact-sheet compiled by the ACBL showing just some of the benefits that bridge can have for the brain:



♥ A study conducted at the University of California-Berkeley (2000) shows that playing contract bridge can help to give the immune system a much-needed boost.



♥ An educational study conducted by Dr Christopher Shaw (2005) shows us that students who played contract bridge showed higher fifth grade test scores when compared to the students who didn't play the game.

♥ An intensive and more recent study done by the Mayo Clinic (2017) shows that playing contract bridge reduces the likelihood of mental decline before the onset of dementia.

♥ Further studies (including notably the 90+ Study) show that mentally stimulating activity such as playing cards or completing crosswords can reduce the risk of developing dementia by as much as 75%.

In addition, a study done recently involving members of the Israeli Bridge Association found that a full 97% of respondents said playing bridge improves their mood; 85% said that they play bridge because of the social interactions it fosters; and, 65% feel that bridge reduces daily stress.

Saturday Classes

April is gone, but you can still take advantage of our Saturday classes. **Janie Hunt** and **Margie Moses** are continuing their 2-hour classes covering a multitude of topics. Classes begin at 9:30 A.M. and should end by 11:30 A.M. Each class costs \$5.00. There will be lots of exercises and even some homework (remember that?). You can take all four remaining classes or just those in which you have a particular interest. Here's the May line-up.

May 6	DON'T (Disturb opponents' NT)
May 13	Weak 2 bids and Strong 2 club openings
May 20	Reverses and Jacoby 2NT
May 27	Whatever the class wants or a day of play.



Myra's Box



As a follow-up to last month's column, I would like to bring your attention to the April issue of our *ACBL Bridge Bulletin*. On page 6, Editor Paul Linxwiler explains the whys and wherefores of the new policy regarding masterpoints awarded in face-to-face games. Don't be put off thinking that you need to have a doctorate in mathematics to understand how to calculate the increase, ["...any F2F club game in which more than 18 deals are played will pay

the "full" award (as calculated using the current club formula) times a factor of $n/18$, where "n" is the number of deals you play, up to a maximum factor of 1.5."] However, what is important for you to know is that now there are **more masterpoints awarded in face-to-face games**.

Also, I recommend that you read his editorial in full. If you do so, you will be able to understand and appreciate that the Chattanooga Bridge Center is not alone in dealing with the difficulties we confront in resuming live games. Although this new policy is not a solution to all the problems we encounter in trying to regain the table levels we had prior to the pandemic, it should help equalize the face-to-face and online games.

Looking forward to seeing you soon at the bridge table.

Myra

Friday Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee Game

TGIF—that's right, **Thank God It's Friday**—specifically the third Friday of the month. Make sure you mark your calendar now so you won't miss any of the fun at our Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee game on Friday, May 19. Everyone loves to play in this game. In fact, just last month we had 14 tables turn out. This is the perfect opportunity for newer players to improve their game, and for more experienced players to share their knowledge. If you are interested in playing either as a mentor or mentee, text or call **Sue Shramko** at 423.304.7017.



April winners were:

North/South

First	John Felker/Leslie Nelson
Second	Ann Keown/Linda Metz
Third	Sandy Cervantes/Sara Mayo

East/West

Stephanie Felker/Susie Crouch
Carol Grizzard/Rosalie Basten
John Graef/Jim Lafavor

Why not



Summer is just around the corner, and if you are looking for some "Hot Fun in the Summertime," we've got you covered. Join our Monday Evening Mentor/Mentee online game for exciting competition and great camaraderie. We guarantee you will have a ball. All you need is your tablet, laptop, or computer and access to Bridge Base Online (bridgebase.com). The game is held every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at 7:00 P.M. The games in May will be on the 8th and 22nd. **Anne Donnovin** is in charge of this very popular activity, and she is always looking to sign up new players either as mentors or mentees. She will match you up with plenty of time to develop a convention card prior to the game.



For newer players, this is the perfect opportunity to practice a new convention or get constructive criticism on your play of the hand. For experienced players, it's a great way to give back and help keep alive this wonderful game we all love. Everyone has a chance to come out on top, so don't miss this opportunity to win masterpoints. If you would like to play, let Anne know by contacting her at aadonnovin@bellsouth.net.

Cleveland Bridge Club



It's unfortunate, but the Cleveland Bridge Club has not been able to find an answer to their dilemma and remains closed for

play. The club currently is exploring the Various options available to them and will communicate any news as soon as the information becomes available.

Stay tuned and keep your fingers crossed.



Nooga East Bridge Club



If you're looking for a good time, there's tons of fun to be had at the bridge game at Christ United Methodist Church at 8645 East Brainerd Road. The game is held every Monday at 12:30. You are asked to arrive no later than 12:15 so the game can start promptly. It's a very welcoming group, so why not test the waters and try it out next Monday. All you need to do is make reservations by emailing noogabridgeeast@gmail.com.

Bridge Tip for May



When all your honor cards are in your two long suits, add 1 extra "purity" point.

Eddie Kantar

Blast from the Past



You still have one month, but as you can see, it's time to pull out the purple. ACBL's The Longest Day fundraiser is just around the corner. Unit 206's TLD fearless leader, **Mary Robertson**, has lots planned. Be on the lookout for announcements as you won't want to miss any of the exciting activities planned.

It has been more than ten years that the ACBL has collaborated with the Alzheimer's Association in this activity. The Longest Day is a sunrise-to-sunset activity whose purpose is to raise funds for the care, support, and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association. Held on the summer solstice, the longest day of the year, this event challenges the participants to push their limits and complete approximately 16

hours of a consecutive activity—such as playing bridge. It's one day to honor the strength, heart and endurance displayed by people with Alzheimer's and their caregivers every day.

The photo above was taken at our 2014 TLD fundraiser. Pictured in purple from left to right are Judy Kemp, Ian Madden, Suzanne Atchley, Suzanne Nichols, Lee Atchley, Nancy Mapel, Grady Nichols, Susan Kimm, Emogene Lewis, Myra Reneau, Cal Brassfield, and Sandy Cervantes.



A very big high five goes out to **Marilyn Murphy** on becoming Unit 206's newest lifemaster. Marilyn achieved her goal in April at the Gatlinburg tournament while playing with friends Wanda Everhart, Lea Stuart, and Linda Burns. They placed third in their section of the Wednesday/Thursday Knockouts.



We have some great news—the limit and the name have been changed on our Tuesday evening online game. The **349er game is now the 399er game**. That means that as long as you have less than 400 masterpoints, you can still play in this limited game. If that's **YOU**, please come and join us on BBO at 7:00 P.M. We're there every Tuesday evening rain or shine, and we are firm believers in "the more the merrier." Hope to see you online.



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.

How would you fill in the blank?

"To me bridge ____."



This month we asked **Marty Hershey** to fill in the blank, and, as you might imagine, in true "Hershey" style, one word just won't suffice. In fact, he's got an entire story to tell.

Marty's dad taught him bridge at the kitchen table in Long Island, and after only two days of instructions, released him into the world saying, "I think you're ready." Wanting to test out his theory, Dad promptly took Marty over to the local bridge club. One of the first hands Marty played at the club was a slam that he and his dad had bid. Unbelievably, he made the slam, and, as you might imagine, from that point forward, Marty was hooked.

Like many of us, Marty played bridge in college and often played at his fraternity house. In fact, Marty was so enamored of the game, he enthusiastically introduced bridge to one of his fellow fraternity brothers—**Mel Colchamiro**. That's right, we're talking about the *How You Can Play Like an Expert (Without Having to Be One)* Colchamiro!

Sadly, in 2006, Marty had a massive stroke and once he was released from the hospital, he made a promise to himself to faithfully read the daily bridge column in the newspaper. He wanted to see if he could come up with the solution to the problem presented. Marty sincerely believes that during his recovery, bridge helped him regain his mental acuity and reclaim some of the cerebral functioning he had lost due to the stroke. Working so hard also contributed to his decision to become a lifemaster, a goal he achieved not long ago.

Marty can't say enough about how much he appreciates not only the mental aspect of bridge but the social benefits too. He also fondly remembers when he saw Omar Sharif play in the Sharif Bridge Circus. The Circus was a touring professional team of world class players, organized and headed by movie star Sharif. They played exhibition matches against leading European and North American teams. Marty was lucky enough to see them play in the late 60's in Manhattan.



Mark Your Calendar

It's time to mark your calendar. Don't miss these upcoming events.

May 2	New Under 50 MP Game 9-11:30 A.M. CBC
May 4-6 Thursday-Saturday	Oak Ridge Sectional Tournament ICWU Union Hall
May 8 and 22 Mondays	Online Mentor/Mentee Game 7:00 P.M. BBO
May 9 Tuesday	Mystery Game! Noon CBC
May 15 Monday	NEW Open & 199er Evening Games Covered Dish at 5:30 P.M./Game at 6:00 P.M. CBC
May 18-21 Thursday-Sunday	NLM Regional and Open Sectional Atlanta Marriott Perimeter Center
May 19 Friday	Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee Game Noon CBC
May 27 Saturday	Memorial Day Pairs Game BBQ Lunch at 11:30 A.M./Game to Follow CBC
June 1-3 Thursday-Saturday	Knoxville NLM Sectional Knoxville Bridge Center
June 18-25 Sunday-Saturday	The Longest Day Fundraiser Face-to-face and online opportunities to earn extra points



How To Be A Better Partner



Never, ever scold your partner at the table. In addition to having a negative effect on your partner, doing so creates a very uncomfortable situation for all those at the table. Pointing out partner's mistakes in front of others makes you look like a bully and never helps in building a solid partnership.

BRIDGE ETIQUETTE



Remember, it is the responsibility of the North/South partnership to move bridge boards upon completion of the round. Please be sure to either move the boards to the next lower table or to the assembly table. This helps those arriving at a new table to start on time and not have to search for unmoved or misplaced boards.

One Last Thing...

By John Friedl Some Thoughts on Slam Bidding



Players who rely only on counting high card points to decide whether to bid Blackwood or Roman Key Card Blackwood to probe for a slam will sometimes be disappointed to find out that they have two fast losers, or that their slam needs two finesses to succeed. Those players will also frequently miss out on slams that are absolutely unbeatable, but that occur when the partnership "only" has around 28 high-card points.

There's a better way to approach slam bidding. Think "tricks" as well as "points." Yes, counting points is important because it is a way of quantifying honor values. But if you have a long suit, the low cards in your suit have no honor-point values but they will take tricks nonetheless. And what good is a singleton king (3 points) if you don't have the ace in the other hand?

If you are looking for a slam in No Trump, point counting takes on greater importance. You may have a long running minor suit that will give you seven tricks, but you also have to have the other three suits stopped to prevent the opponents from taking their tricks first.

If you are looking for slam in a suit contract, point counting is less important and may take a back seat to looking at distribution and controls (i.e., first or second round control or stopper in a suit). If you have a void, point-counters will sometimes assign three "points" to add to your honor count. But in a suit contract, when you have a void and a good trump fit, you have potentially no losers in that suit. In effect, you are playing with a 30-point deck. Likewise, if you have a singleton and partner has a few low cards in that suit, you have one sure loser, but you are also playing with a 30-point deck for the other twelve tricks.

There are two commonly used conventions that were developed specifically to identify situations where one hand has a singleton or void and the other hand has a few worthless cards in that suit, and the combined strength in the other three suits suggests the possibility of a slam.

The Jacoby 2 No Trump convention is a bid that immediately identifies at least a 9-card trump fit and asks the opening bidder if he has a singleton or void in a suit. If so, the Responder can reevaluate his hand based on any wasted values in that suit and his high card strength in the other suits.

A Splinter Bid is another way to immediately identify at least a 9-card trump fit and a hand with a singleton or void in a side suit. The opening bidder can then make the same sort of reevaluation of his hand to determine if there are wasted values, and then decide whether to probe for slam.

But then what do you do? Many players, having decided that there is indeed the possibility of a slam, immediately leap into a 4 No Trump key card asking bid. Sometimes it pays off, but often it lands you at a risky 5-level contract when you find out you are off two key cards and you need a finesse to take eleven tricks.

There is a better approach to slam bidding that is often available. In fact, one of the main advantages of the Two-Over-One game forcing bidding convention is that it identifies a game forcing situation at a low level, and leaves a lot of room for the partnership first, to determine if there is a fit in a suit, and if so, to show controls in the other suits. This is what Audrey Grant and Eric Rodwell in their book call a "Marathon auction." With extra values, the partnership first identifies a trump fit and then bids slowly to identify controls in the side suits. In this way, you can find out if you have fast losers without having to force the auction to the five-level by bidding 4 No Trump.

Let's look at an example to illustrate this point. You hold the following hand:

♠AQJ105 ♥94 ♦KQJ63 ♣9

Continued on the next page.

One Last Thing...continued

You open the bidding with 1 Spade, and partner makes a 2/1 game forcing response of 2 Hearts. You then make the normal rebid of 3 Diamonds, and partner follows with 3 Spades. Partner's bid sets the trump suit in spades. What is your next bid?

Many players would get excited, envision partner as holding the ace-king of hearts, king of spades, and either the ace of diamonds or the ace of clubs, and immediately jump to 4 No Trump, asking for key cards in spades. If that is in fact partner's hand, it is only 14 high card points, but combined with your 13, you have a rock-solid 27 point slam.

However, when you hear partner's response showing two key cards, you settle in at 5 Spades and when Dummy comes down you will find that you are either missing two aces or one ace and the king of spades. Further, you may need a finesse to succeed to make 11 tricks, if partner has something like this:

♠K87 ♥AQJ103 ♦97 ♣KJ4

It's still a 14-point hand, but not quite what you were hoping for, and when you get a heart lead, you have to hope the finesse works or you're down one.

Here's a better approach. Once you have identified a trump fit, if you have slam interest you can make another bid below game to show a control or to ask partner to show one. That bid has to be forcing for one round, and surely partner will not pass without at least returning you to the agreed-upon trump suit.

In the hand shown above, after you have shown your diamond suit and partner shows spade support, you can probe for slam by bidding 4 Clubs to show a control (second round). If Partner then bids 4 Hearts, you know you are missing the ace of diamonds and you would have to rely on the exact hand you envisioned in order for the slam to succeed. You would be justified in bidding 4 Spades, leaving the choice up to partner as to whether to go on. If he has a stronger hand, he may bid 4 No Trump, but with the two fast losers in diamonds, the missing heart king and probably worthless king of clubs, he can pass.

Let's give the opening bidder a little bit more:

♠AQJ105 ♥94 ♦AKJ63 ♣9

Here's how you might bid this hand, playing 2/1 Game Forcing.

<u>You</u>	<u>Partner</u>
1♠	2♥
3♦	3♠
3NT!	4♣
4♦	4♥
4NT	5♥
6♠	

What is your 3 No Trump bid? It can't be saying that you want to play in No Trump, because you have identified a major suit fit with partner. Clearly, you are telling partner you have some interest in slam and you're asking partner to show a control at the lowest level he has one. If he bids 4 Clubs he should be showing the ace of clubs. If he bids 4 Hearts he is showing the ace of hearts, but also denying the ace of clubs. And if he bids 4 Spades he is saying he has neither ace. Remember, it is possible he has a hand with three kings and two queens, but no aces.



In summary, the Roman Key Card Blackwood convention is very helpful in providing information about five key cards (four aces and the king of the agreed-upon trump suit), but in many auctions you have room to find out more information before committing to a contract at the five-level. As long as you and your partner share the understanding that in a Marathon auction, when you bid slowly and show a new suit, you are asking about controls and showing slam interest, you will greatly improve your slam bidding. But be sure you and your partner agree as to whether a control bid shows only first-round (ace or void) or first or second round (king or singleton) control.