

## 9/1 Saturday 0-30 Leaders

1<sup>st</sup> OA: Alice Kitzmiller & Beth Wales (57.9%)

2<sup>nd</sup> OA: Bill Breagy & Terri Jacobs (55.6%)



## 9/4 Tuesday Eve Leaders

1<sup>st</sup> OA: Martha & Andrew Grant (58.7%)

2<sup>nd</sup> OA: Steven Simon & Garen Wisner (54.9%)

CBA Seminars	CBA	Date/PM	Who	Topic
	0-30	15 Sep	TBD	TBD
	Sat	12:30		
	99er	11 Sep	Patrick Hoffman	Weak Jump Overcalls
	Tue	6:30		

## CBA NLM Games – Play Offen!

Mon NLM 7 PM CBA Wed Homestyle 11:00 AM CBA

Tues 99er 7 PM CBA Wed 199er 6:30 PM NKY BC

Thurs NLM 7 PM CBA 1st Fri 99er 10:00 AM NKY BC

**0-30 Sat 1 PM CBA (Lecture at 12:30 PM)**

## Area Tournaments

Sep 21 – 23 Dayton OH S

**Oct 1 - 7 Fort Wayne IN R**

Oct 19 - 21 Columbus OH S

Oct 26 - 28 Cincinnati OH (NAP) S/N

For Details go to <http://www.acbl.org/tournament-calendar/>

When **Balancing** in a competitive auction, avoid bumping opponents into a making game or a higher scoring strain!

## Balancing After Both Opponents Have Bid

by Karen Walker © 1997 <Click to See [Karen's Web Site!!](#)>

When the opponents have stopped at a low-level contract, you will often want to make a balancing bid or takeout double to try to find a contract of your own. Fairly aggressive balancing bids are especially popular at matchpoint (pairs) play, where the rewards can be great. However, there is some risk in entering the auction after the opponents have exchanged information, so you should adopt a more conservative balancing style in IMP (team) games and rubber bridge.

To determine whether or not you should reopen the bidding in these situations, keep these general rules in mind:

The **BEST** time to balance is when:

1. The opponents have stopped in a low-level suit partscore (1 or 2) - especially if it's possible that you can find a 2-level contract of your own (they've stopped in 2C, 2D or 2H or below).
2. The opponents have found a trump fit (they have bid and raised a suit).
3. The opponents have limited their high-card strength (they have willingly stopped in a part score).
4. You have length & high-card strength in the unbid suit(s).
5. You're not vulnerable. The opponents will be less tempted

to double because a set would only score +100 instead of +110 or +140.

The **WORST** situations for balancing are when:

1. You are extremely weak (fewer than 7-8 pts.).
2. You have a strong holding in their suit or you suspect they have a better contract available.
3. The opponents haven't found a good trump fit (they've stopped in 1NT or had an auction that suggests a misfit). Typical non-fitting auctions are: 1H-1NT; 1C-1S-1NT-P; 1C-1H-2C-2H; 1H-1S-2D-P.
4. Your honor cards are in the opponents' suits (especially the suit bid on your left).
5. You're vulnerable -- the opponents are more likely to double because a one-trick set (+200) will be greater than the value of their part score.

**How strong is partner's hand?** If the opponents find a trump fit and stop at 2, you can USUALLY assume that:

1. They have a combined average of about 22 HCPs & your side has an average of 18 HCPs. Subtract your HCPs from 18 to determine about how many points partner will have.
2. They have a 8 trumps and you have 5. Subtract the number of cards you hold in their suit from 5 to determine partner's length in their suit. The shorter he is in their suit, the more likely he'll have a fit for YOUR suit.
3. You and partner are likely to have an 8-card fit somewhere.
4. The opponents aren't crazy. Don't worry too much about balancing them into a game. If they haven't made a try for game, assume they WANTED to stop where they did.
5. If the opponents stop in 1NT (they bid 1C-1H-1NT or 1D-1NT, etc.):

**Balancing in the pass-out seat** is somewhat risky because the opponents don't have a fit. You'll want to have some extra strength to balance over these auctions. As a result, most of your actions suggest at least moderate length in the suit bid on your right (because if you had shortness in that suit, you probably would have made a bid earlier in the auction).

Some pairs like to play a double in these auctions as a "trap pass", showing a strong holding in the suit bid on your right. In this case, responder shouldn't be afraid to pass and lead dummy's suit.

## Balancing Actions

If you're in the pass-out seat after the opponents stop in a part score, the meanings of your bids are:

- **Double** (1H-Pass-2H-Pass / Pass-DBL) = For takeout. You may be fairly light for this action if you have the right shape (shortness in their suit). A typical hand for a balancing double after the opponents stop in 2H would be:  
♠QJ72 ♥2 ♦AJ76 ♣Q1053.

- **Suit bid** (1H-Pass-2H-Pass / Pass-2S) = A one-suited hand that doesn't have the right pattern for a takeout double. Your failure to make a direct overcall at your first turn tells partner that your suit may not be robust:  
♠J7432 ♥832 ♦A7 ♣K107 .
- **Notrump** (1H-Pass-2H-Pass / Pass-2NT) = Unusual, showing length in the two lowest unbid suits (usually the minors). A balancing bid of 2NT is never natural; partner should always pull this to one of your suits. If the opponents stop in 2H, your balance of 2NT would show a hand like:  
♠7 ♥J72 ♦AJ104 ♣QJ972 .

### Responding to Partner's Balancing Bid

When partner balances over the opponent's low-level contract, it's important to remember that he has essentially already bid your cards for you. Your partnership's goal is to find a fit and a safe part score, not to bid a game.

- **If partner balances with a suit**, the best advice is don't bid on at all. Unless you have a great fit and extraordinary playing strength --or no fit, but a good suit of your own -- you should pass.
- **If partner balances with a double**, resist the temptation to jump in your suit. Respond your longest suit at the lowest level available. You may pass the double for penalty if you have a long, strong holding in the opponent's suit.
- **If partner balances with an Unusual 2NT** (showing the minors), he is warning you that he has no support for the unbid major. Just bid 3 of your longest minor, even if it's just a 2-card suit.

Also check out Mike Lawrence, **The Complete Book of Balancing in Contract Bridge**, 209 pp. Baron Barclay Books (2006) ISBN-10: 0939460130 ISBN-13: 978-0939460137 available to borrow from the CBA library

## Newcomer News 0-30 – Mike Purcell 513 702 4007 [mikpur@cinci.rr.com](mailto:mikpur@cinci.rr.com)

Congratulations to last week's leaders:

- 1<sup>st</sup> OA: **Alice Kitzmiller & Beth Wales** (57.9%);  
 2<sup>nd</sup> OA: **Bill Breagy & Terri Jacobs** (55.6%);  
 3<sup>rd</sup> OA: **Lisa Eisenstein & Patricia Burnam** (51.6%).

**Saturday September 8 there is no Newcomer 0-30 Game.** The CBA is hosting the **"Learn Bridge in a Day!"** event. The Newcomer game will resume Saturday September 15. Look for details about a new Newcomer Seminar Series in the next Newcomer Newsletter.

From time to time we'll look at bridge articles that speak to common Newcomer questions about the game. Here's one from the Learning Points © collection available on the CBA website. From the CBA Web Page Left Panel, click **Improve Your Game → Learning Points Icon**

-or- [http://www.cincybridge.com/Lessons/online\\_learning\\_points.htm](http://www.cincybridge.com/Lessons/online_learning_points.htm)).

The first 90 seconds are critical to the success of your contract. Wouldn't it be great to be able to plan a bridge hand so you make all the contracts you can make? It's not rocket science. Here is a step by step approach and an example hand that shows how good planning leads to a successful result. You can take the approach and apply it to all hands you declare.

Edwin Kantar teaches that any plan is better than no plan at all. As you practice Stop → Look → Listen → Analyze → Plan → Execute you will improve your analysis and planning ability and your ability to get useful information from the bidding and play of the cards.

When you do, let us know how it works for you. When you succeed let us know too, so we can play in a different section. We won't want to be playing against you..... ☺

By Steve Moese (Mike Purcell, ed.)

*Declarer Play Level: BASIC  
Tuesday Night Lecture Series*

- **Stop**      Planning the play:
- **Look**      1. Before you play, count winners and losers. How many tricks do you need?
- **Listen**     2. Review what your opponents said/did not say, and what they led.
- **Analyze**    3. Look for ways to eliminate losers or create winners.
- **Plan**        4. Formulate a plan. We know what our options are (losers and winners, sources of tricks), which defender can hurt you, and what additional information we need to make informed choices. Look for the best opportunity with highest chance of success.
- **Execute**

Planning is often dynamic – the direction you choose depends on what you learn along the way. Sometimes the obvious plays are not the best plays. Learning the best play for a given card combination helps. Playing the cards you have for the number of tricks you really need helps even more. Playing within the context of the entire hand is our objective. Check every plan to see if you overlooked an opportunity or threat.

<b>South</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>
1♠	Double	Redouble <sup>1</sup>	2♣ <sup>2</sup>
3♠	Pass	6♠ <sup>3</sup>	All Pass

Here’s hand where the bidding provides a planning road map for the play. Can you translate the opponent’s bids into a successful plan? You can if you put yourself in West’s shoes.

1= 10+ HCP but not 4♠

2= Weak escape; a place to play

3 = Science, Schmience. We got tricks.

Start by asking: “What shape and how many of the remaining HCPs must West have for a Takeout Double?”

**North**

♠Q65

♥AKJ532

♦A74

♣2      6 Spades  
          Lead ♦K

SLL:

HCP:

Top Tricks:

Losers:

Lead: **Threat!!!**

Analysis:

Can’t lose lead before rid of ♦ losers

**South**

♠AKJ1097

♥6

♦J32

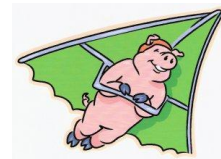
♣KJ5

Plan:

William S. Root, How to Play a Bridge Hand, pp. 200-201

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Here's the complete Analysis and Plan:

South has a skimpy 27 HCP slam. Few if any will bid it. The opening lead poses a major threat – 2♦ losers are immediately exposed. There are no trump losers, but 1♣ loser for sure. With so many immediate losers we cannot give up control of the hand. We must eliminate at least 2 of the losers before opponents gain the lead. Clearly our source of tricks is the Heart suit. How should we play Hearts?

We don't have much choice actually. West is marked with the ♦KQ (from the lead) and must have at least 5 more HCP to justify the double, probably 6 or 7 more. In fact, we can count on West to have 4 hearts too. West's likely distribution is 1♠, 4♥, 4♦, and 4♣ (though some 35 or 53 minor suit split is possible).

**North**  
 ♠Q65  
 ♥AKJ532  
 ♦A74  
 ♣2      6 Spades  
             Lead ♦K

**South**  
 ♠AKJ1097  
 ♥6  
 ♦J32  
 ♣KJ5

SLL:  
 HCP: 14 + 13  
 Top Tricks: 9  
 Losers: 3 Quick  
 Lead: Threat!!!

Analysis:  
 Can't lose lead before rid of ♦ losers  
 Assume LHO 1444 w/10+ HCP & ♥Q

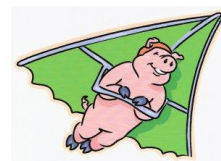
Plan:  
 2 Rounds trump confirm LHO's singleton  
 Finesse ♥J then ruff ♥  
 Use ♠Q as entry to 4 good ♥s.  
 Pitch 4 losers, make 12 tricks.

Clues from the bidding  
 West doubles South's 1♠ bid. East bids 2♣ over North's redouble.

William S. Root, How to Play a Bridge Hand, pp. 200-201

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Novice	Intermediate	Advanced
Take the ♥ finesse then cash 2 more ♥s to drop 2 losing ♦s. This fails when trumps split 1-3 and East has short ♥s.	Take the ♥ finesse. Lead to the ♣J, hoping for ♣Q onside. Play ♥A pitching ♦ loser. Cross ruff until ♥s are winners.	Plan for a 4-2 ♥ break with the ♥Q onside. Draw trumps before running ♥s where you drop 3 losers. No ♣ finesse at all!

**North**  
 ♠Q  
 ♥AK53  
 ♦74  
 ♣2

West's takeout double paints a very clear picture, if you listen. Assume West has 4 hearts and a singleton spade. Draw 2 round of trump leaving the trump Q in dummy. Finesse the HQ then ruff a low heart immediately (no over ruff possible).

← In this position lead a ♠ to the carefully preserved ♠Q, drawing East's last trump. Now you can cash 4 ♥s, discarding 4 losers from your hand. You lose only 1 trick at the end.

Making 6, beautifully played!

**South**  
 ♠J109  
 ♥  
 ♦J3  
 ♣KJ5

*Note:* The ♣ finesse is a **practice finesse – even if it works it can't help you.** Why take it? Knowing West has 4 ♥s (a 4-2 split is 33% more likely than a 3-3 split) suggests a 1<sup>st</sup> round finesse followed by an immediate ♥ ruff. That way you can exhaust all West's remaining ♥s with the ♥AK when you take the last trump out of East's hand with the ♠Q.

*The opening lead and the bidding both provide clues to the safest plan to make the hand.*

**Keywords:** SLL-APE, Listen, minimum takeout double strength and shape, ruff out a 4-2 break, avoid practice finesses, loser count,