

Improving by Steve Moese

I hope the offerings on these pages have entertained you and helped you on your journey toward becoming a better player. There is no substitute for practice and for a good partner – cultivate both. Here are some tips:

The Game

- 1) Bridge is a game of limited information. Maximize what you know about each hand. Know why facts are important. Avoid complexity and useless detail.
- 2) Winners make few errors and go with the percentages. Steady excellence is better than random brilliance.
- 3) Stay in the moment. Focus on the current hand and current contract. Forget the last hand once it's over.

Bidding

- 1) Start with 2/1 GF. It's common in tournaments. Learn other systems if you have a capable partner. Don't expect systems to fix flaws in effort, logic or technique.
- 2) Know hand evaluation. Learn to count tricks, not High Card Points. Learn the concept of working points.
- 3) Know the Law of Total Tricks and how to use it.
- 4) Use the top 10 conventions everyone should know. Once you've mastered those, add more if and only if they add value. Use only those you and partner can remember, and you both can use accurately.
- 5) Pay attention to vulnerability. Adjust your competitive bidding and preempting accordingly.
- 6) If you like to open light then you must respond heavy.
- 7) Know what your doubles mean.
- 8) Know the difference between when we open the bidding and when we intervene (double, overcall, preempt).
- 9) Keep it Simple – doing a few things well with help you develop judgment and skill – that's more important than a tool kit filled with tools we don't understand.

Declarer Play

- 1) **Stop – Look – Listen – Plan – Learn:** Before you play, decide what information you have from the bidding and lead. Determine who if anyone is the danger hand. Attend to facts learned during play.
- 2) Count winners, losers, entries. Identify where more tricks come from. Eliminate slow losers. Plan the sequence and check for problems.
- 3) Know common odds and common suit combinations. Use them to create a strong plan.
- 4) Take the best chance possible – often this means combining several chances – if chance A fails, we have chance B and C to fall back on. Always have a Plan B.
- 5) Go against the odds ONLY IF you have no other choice – a small chance is better than no chance at all.
- 6) If all else fails look for an end-play or squeeze.

12/16 – Future Master Leaders

1st OA: **Lewis Temples & James Hunkler** (52.6%)

2nd OA: **Evelyn McCarthy and Joan Diers** (49.6)



Bring your Questions, Hands, Ideas. Let's learn together!

Tues Eve 6:30 PM Sharp!

CBA Newcomer Games – Play Often!

Mon PM < 2000

Fri AM 0-10/NLM + Lecture

Tue PM 149er LTB

Sat AM Supervised Play

Wed AM 0-10/Homestyle

Sat PM NLM

Events at the Cincinnati Bridge Center

- **NEW! Wed 0-10 MP Homestyle Fri 0-10 Pairs.** Reservations Required. Lecture 10:30 AM. (Free Lunch & Newsletter) Call Kay kmulford@cinci.rr.com 631-8070.
- **The COMMON GAME:** Mon & Thu Eves. Mike Lipp.
- **December CBA Flyer – Check out the special games.**
- CBC Holiday Parties check with your favorite club!

Area Tournaments

[D11 Winter STaC](#)

Dec 26 – Jan 1

[D11 GNT Finals, Kettering DBC](#)

Jan 24-25, 2015

ACBL Tournaments <http://tournaments.acbl.org/display.php>

Defense

- 1) Spend more time on signals and thinking than any other part of your game. Count HCP and Shape. Count.
- 2) Know when to make a passive lead or an active one.
- 3) Know the 4 dummy types and defense strategies for each.
- 4) Count declarer's tricks. Where will our tricks come from?
- 5) Choose the suit then the card when on opening lead.

Build Your Skills

- 1) Focus on **WHY** not what or how. Ask questions.
- 2) Be the partner you want to play with.
- 3) Play with better players and against better players.
- 4) Learn how you learn best.
- 5) Use your resources – Read books, take lessons, go to lectures, play on line, talk to other players. There is never only 1 way or 1 right answer!
- 6) **Count, Count, Count**, then **Count** some more. Get in the habit of counting partner's HCP and declarer's or opponent's shape. Do the work. Success follows.
- 7) Imagine what you need to succeed and play accordingly.
- 8) Be ethical, friendly and welcoming. Help grow our game.

Good Books: Simon - [Why You Lose at Bridge](#), Root - [How to Declare a Bridge Hand](#), [How to Defend a Bridge Hand](#)
Kantar - [Take all Your Chances](#), [Eddie Kantar Teaches Advanced Bridge Defense](#)

Newcomer News — by Mike “Keeping Fun On My Convention Card” Purcell 513 702 4007

The Winter Bridge Class Schedule starting in January is at http://www.cincybridge.com/CBA_Lessons_3.html

Volunteers for this Saturday’s 10am game are Bob Fisk, Lorna Davis, and Richard Pleshek. This week we look at an odd 6-4 hand that can be shown in a variety of ways.

Board 6 ♠ K74
 East ♥ Q8
 Deals ♦ KQ
 E-W Vul ♣ Q109865

♠ J9 ♠ A1062
 ♥ KJ92 ♥ 1074
 ♦ J5 ♦ A109874
 ♣ AJ432 ♣ —

EW 2N; 2♥; ♠ Q853
 3♦; ♥ A653
 1♠; NS 1♠; ♦ 632
 Par -120 ♣ K7



Board 6 (Tuesday 12/16)

Bidding – I held the West hand and decided to open a little light in 3rd seat 1♣ (12-21 HCP, 3+ clubs) with only 11 HCP. North with 12 HCP and clubs is handcuffed in the auction and passes. East has 6 diamonds and 4 spades with 8 HCP. Many people will pass up a diamond suit, even 6 cards, to mention their spades. If you do West will rebid 1NT and leave East to either to pass or make a difficult rebid. Better for East in this special case where they are a passed hand to respond 1♦ up front. Now West will rebid 1♥ (showing 4 hearts) and East can safely rebid their spades at 1♠. Even if you normally play 1♣-1♦-1♥-1♠ shows a game force, this would not be on in this auction as East is a passed hand. Now if West rebids 1NT it is easier for East to pass or rebid 2♦ without any confusion for partner.

1♣-1♠-1NT-3♦ when you play New Minor Forcing – If you play New Minor forcing, then 3♦ in a 1♣-1♠-1NT-3♦ bidding sequence shows a weak 6-4 hand (6-9 HCP) with all bigger hands going through the 1♣-1♠-1NT-2♦ (Alert, New Minor Forcing).

Play of the Hand – Assuming 2♦ by East, you have 6 losers (3♣, 2♥, 1♦). You can pitch at least one spade loser on clubs and finesse spades to eliminate another for 9 tricks and +110.

Post Mortem – One of the more difficult things about bridge is that bids can mean different things in different circumstances. Be sure to discuss agreements with partner in situations like this hand where the opener could be light in 3rd or 4th seat to avoid confusion later on.

Bd	6	Made Scores		MPs	
		NS	EW	NS	EW
3♥	W	-2	200	4	1
2♠	E	-2	200	4	1
4♦	E	-2	200	4	1
3♦	E	-1	100	2	3
Pass			Pass	1	4
3♦	E	4		130	0 5