

I have often heard it said among players that a bid can only be changed if the change is made in the "same breath". There is a notable exception, and that is the case of an "inadvertent bid". For example opening 1♥ with one heart and five spades would clearly be inadvertent. The bid can be corrected if the Director is satisfied that the player never intended to take that action. (Even after the next player has bid, but not after partner has bid)

The opening night of the Taieri Bridge Club was on Wednesday 23rd May 1973 and table money was 50 cents, which included sherry and snacks. The venue was the Palisander Lounge and it was attended by the President of the Otago Club Mr Bob Hudson, Miss Burns of the Taieri Womens Club and the Mayor of Mosgiel Mr Ralph McDonald., Simultaneously a learners' class was held in the tea-rooms below. The tutor was Mrs C.A. Hastings from the Otago Bridge Club and there were approximately 40 people in the class.

Taieri Bridge Club

Issue Number 101 May 2005



Congratulations to Frank Gradon and Judy Robertson who, with team mates Shirley Ford and Geoff Nisbet, won the recent Otago-Southland 10A point teams event. The big cheer that greeted the announcement of the winners showed that Frank and Judy are very well liked indeed at the Otago Bridge Club - just as at Taieri. Our own Otago Hospice Charity Tournament attracted a full house of 27 tables. It was ably directed by Judy Robertson and a total of \$900 was raised. Congratulations to June Burr and Margaret Scouller who came first.

1. Precision lessons are now finished with 9 enthusiastic graduates who have very much appreciated Steven Darnold's patient instruction.
2. The Beginners classes are still going strong with 4 tables of regular attenders.

Count, count, count (1)

This is the first of several articles about counting. A good declarer counts the cards played in a suit and uses that information to deduce the distributional shape of the defenders' hands. She also counts points as they become revealed during play and, in conjunction with the bidding, tries to infer the location of key defensive cards. In defence, counting is even more important. Here you begin with a reasonable idea what declarer's high card values are from the bidding but distribution will not be so evident; you use this information to direct the defence, and discard correctly. Since declaring is easier than defending we'll start by looking at counting from declarer's point of view. Imagine that you are South, declarer in 4 spades, West leads J♥, and dummy goes down:

North: ♠ K J 9 8; ♥ 9 5 2; ♦ A T 4; ♣ Q J 6

South: ♠ A Q T 2; ♥ 8 7 6; ♦ K J 2; ♣ A K 4

You have 9 top tricks (4 spades, 2 diamonds, 3 clubs) and you have really only way of making a tenth - in diamonds, by a finesse. But you can take the finesse either way; which should you choose?

There are many things that might help you.

For example, suppose East takes the top three hearts, with West discarding 3♦ and 3♣ at tricks two and three; then East switches to a trump which you win. Now, if *East had opened the bidding*

New Tablecloths

Judy Robertson has just sewn up 30 (!) new tablecloths and 30 covers for our tables. Please take care not to mark them with your pencil - or, if you do, please volunteer to wash them -- warm handwash, or cool delicate cycle in the washer. If you prefer to write with a pen we can supply water soluble ones!

Impending wedlock: solutions

Gordon knew that declarer had exactly 6 spade tricks, 1 diamond trick, and 2 club tricks; and was either 2-4 or 3-3 in clubs and hearts. There was no danger of club discards preventing Gordon from coming to two heart tricks.

So Gordon exited passively with a diamond (a club would have been just as good).

Declarer's error had been to ruff a diamond, revealing that he did not hold the K♦ (in which case a heart switch from Gordon would have been the only chance to defeat the contract). Without declarer ruffing a diamond Gordon would not have known whether it was time to cash out.

Declarer needlessly gave the defence a chance to count his hand.

Strange Laws

If you thought there were some peculiar laws in bridge, how about these laws (all from various states or towns in the USA).

1. Moustaches are illegal if the bearer has a tendency to habitually kiss other humans. (Indiana)
2. Persons classified as "ugly" may not walk down any street. (San Francisco)
3. It is considered an offense to push a live moose out of a moving airplane. (Alaska)
4. Detonating a nuclear device within the city limits results in a \$500 fine. (Chico, California)
5. If two trains meet on the same track, neither shall proceed until the other has passed. (Kansas)
6. Having sexual relations with a porcupine is illegal. (Florida)
7. You may not have more than two dildos in a house. (Arizona)
8. You may not fart in a public place after 6 P.M. on Thursdays. (Florida)
9. It is illegal to have sex with a cow. (Sulphur, Louisiana)
10. Horses are forbidden to eat fire hydrants. (Marshalltown, Iowa)
11. It is illegal to wipe one's car with used underwear. (San Francisco)
12. It is considered an offense to shower naked. (Florida).

with 1♥ you will feel inclined to play him for the Q♦ since otherwise he had only 9 points and might well have passed. If East had been dealer and hadn't opened the bidding then you would make the opposite inference.

That's a simple example of counting points. As a different example, suppose we have the same hands, the same contract, and the same play to the first four tricks; but this time South was dealer and the auction has been

1♠ - 3♠ - 4♠

Here things are different because East never had the chance to bid and counting points isn't much help. You try to get information about the opponents' distribution and you already know that East began with six hearts (as West had one, and you and dummy had three each, leaving six for East).

Suppose you draw trumps in 3 rounds and play 3 rounds of clubs with East following to all this. You now know that East had 6 hearts, 3 spades, and at least 3 clubs; so East has at most one diamond. So play K♦ (to drop the Q♦ if East it) and then finesse West for her marked Q♦.

This was an example where you could be certain of how to take the finesse. Next month we'll look at cases where you can't achieve certainty but can still raise your chances of a successful guess.

Impending wedlock

Frieda and Gordon were to be married. Gordon had proposed after proudly presenting Frieda with his large cucumber which he had planted lovingly in Frieda's front garden some months before. Voluptua was to be the bridesmaid though the term brideswoman would have been more apt. Randy's official role was to organise Gordon's stag night but Gordon had insisted that a quiet game of bridge was all he wanted.

So it was that Randy and Gordon were to be found at the Otago bridge club. They were doing quite well but it seemed that they needed a good final board. Gordon was West and neither he nor Randy entered the auction which was:

1♠ - 2♠ - 4♠

Gordon was on lead and led A♣. This is what he saw:

♠ K 9 2
♥ 6 5 2
♦ A 9 8
♣ Q J 5 4

♠ 8 3
♥ A Q 4 3
♦ Q 5 4 2
♣ A K 3

The A♣ held the trick and, fearing club disasters, Gordon then led 2♦. Declarer took this in dummy,

ruffed a diamond and then drew two rounds of trumps with A♠ and Q♠, Randy playing J♠ on the second round. Next declarer played a small club which Gordon took with his K♣.

The turning point of the hand had been reached. *What should Gordon do now?* As it happened, Gordon managed to find the right defence but he had been helped by a declarer error. *What was it?* (Answers on page 7)

Most declarers had not given the defence the chance to go wrong so this proved to be a good board for Gordon and Randy. On learning that they had topped the field they ordered a bottle of wine in celebration.

After finishing the bottle they were in no fit state to drive and had to order a taxi. They collapsed in the back seat and mumbled explanations and directions to the driver ("bridge, fun, stag night"). The driver could scarcely understand their slurred speech but picked up "stag night" and "fun" so exercised his initiative. A few minutes later he deposited them outside a house of ill-repute and sped off. There were no telephones in sight and no light visible except in that single establishment. So the night ended with Gordon phoning Frieda with the words: "Drunk, and in a brothel on Bridge street; can you come and fetch us?"