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The library is back!

We would like to re introduce members to the library. We have changed the system slightly, where you only have to sign the book out and date it. The same on return and we would appreciate any comments which would enable us to recommend any books to members.

We have tried to establish a "top ten" of the best reads and Beginners, Intermediate and Experts sections, which should make it easier for members to select the book that is right for them. If you have any books out on loan we would appreciate their return. We are setting no time limit on the loan of books and the door should always be open.

If you think that we should purchase any specific book for the library, please let us know and we will try to acquire it. Any ideas to improve the facility are welcome.

The library has some excellent books which should help everyone improve their game. There is also a donated fiction section—no need to sign for these.

Please use this club facility, it is your library.



Molly O'Donohue/ Philip Thompson

In this Bulletin ...

- A panel discussion on signals with some interesting angles (pp 2-5)
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- An instructional hand by Steve Hurley (p 8-9)
- Sean on asking what bids mean (pp10-11)

Daytime Rankings Jan—March 2007

1st	Neil Naughton	62
2nd	Jim Murray	58
3rd	Flo Gray	50
4th	Connie Treloar	48
5th	Jill Cromer	45
бth	Colleen Price	43
7th	Kaye Campbell	37
8th	Colleen Perriman	33
9th=	Pat Lewis	32
9th=	Harold McCormick	32
9th=	Lance McDougal	32
12th=	Sue Hume	29
12th=	Betty Lewis	29
14th=	Rasma Bandle	28
14th=	Alexander Preece	28
14th=	Anne Preece	28
17th	Brenda Rogers	27
18th	Malcolm Aldons	27
19th	Sheila Murray	27
20th =	=Anne Baldwin	26
20th=	Ronnie Carlsson	26
20th=	Eileen Diprose	26
	_	

Signals by the Panel



Why signal?

On average we will spend twice as The problem is that you canmuch time defending than we will as not do all three at once. declarer. For any pair that wants to Which is best in what situaimprove their scores, therefore, im- tion and why? proving defence should be a top prior- To help throw some light on itv.

This partly involves working on different tech- including Michael Smart, niques but we can make big gains by a very sim- Roy Nixon, Julia Hoffman, ple tactic that is within reach of anybody even if Rebecca Plush, Roger Curnow, Earl Dudley and they do not want to study. This simple break- Richard Hills who shared their preferred signalthrough tactic is called letting your partner know ling methods and the reasons for their choice. what you want them to do.

Declarers have one big advantage over defenders. lots of options with different strengths and weak-They can see their partner's hand. There is nesses. though more than one way of "seeing". Defenders are not allowed to show their cards or use other tactics such as suggested by Groucho Marx ("I'll nod my head if I like your lead") - but they can signal by playing cards in a particular way.

What do we want to show?

There are three main types of information that you might want to give partner:



Whether, when they lead an honour, you want them to continue the suit (called attitude signals)



How many cards you have in a suit (which will also tell them how many declarer has) (called count signals)



Which suit you would prefer to be led

The Panel

this problem, I was helped by a panel of correspondents



It became clear that there is no right answer but

partner leads When an honour

The panel was evenly divided between those who preferred to show how many cards they had in the suit (count) or whether they liked partner leading that suit (attitude).



Count

The main advantage of showing count is that it, combined with information from the bidding, can help the defence get a count of declarer's hand more quickly. The main disadvantage is that the person leading has to think a lot more about whether it is a good idea to continue and will not always get it right. We may not have enough fingers and toes.

If you are showing count, you have to decide whether you will show partner the number of cards you started with in the suit or the number you have at the time of the discard (called "present count"). Most people seem to prefer present count on the basis that it is easier to do and partner probably needs to know how many you have left rather than how many

you started with but there was dissent. Earl though felt it more helpful to formulating defence to get the original picture of the suit distribution in the unseen hands.



Attitude

Showing attitude on the whole probably gives less information on the right way to defend the hand as a whole but requires less mental effort. Telling partner if you want a continuation of the lead is important if you want to take quick tricks in the suit or if you want to let them know that In general, there is a trend among experts to continuing could be a bad thing.

"attitude" though. Earl commented that many socalled attitude signals were not attitude at all. People were simply showing whether they had values in the suit.

The Bath Coup

The classic situation where bad things can happen without attitude signals is shown below.

▲632 **♦**KOT ♦9845 AJ7

Your partner leads the King, which holds as declarer ducks. Partner needs to know whether he has won the trick because you have the Ace or whether declarer is trying to deceivebecause if partner leads the queen declarer will win with the Ace and the Jack is now good. This is known as the **Bath coup**. If declarer has to work the suit on their own or partner can lead through declarer, the suit is worth only one trick.

Richard Hills pointed out to me that journalist leads are a defence against the Bath Coup. The lead of a queen shows either top of a sequence of QJT or QJ9 but also from KQT. The lead of the Queen requires partner to unblock with the Jack if he has it. Therefore, if the person leading from KQT does not see the Jack from partner he knows it is not safe to continue the lead.

Natural or reverse?

Having decided to show count or attitude you have to decide how you show it. The two most popular options are called "natural" and "reverse":



the suit or have an even number of cards ("natural")

Playing a low card to show that you like the suit or have an even number of cards ("reverse")

"reverse" signals. The reason for this is mainly that if you are encouraging a person to lead a suit You have to be clear about what you mean by it is better not to use you high cards to signal as this may cost a trick. The corollary, as Michael Smart points out, if you don't want the suit you can usually afford to throw away a higher card because there is no future in the suit anyway.

> If you are playing reverse when you encourage, you might as well also show reverse when you show count to be consistent. It is also easier to remember. Rebecca Plush commented that it also meant you had to lie less often when you had a doubleton honour.

Honour-specific signals

Sometimes the type of signal you give depends on which honour partner leads. This type of signalling is particularly common in no-trump contracts and there are a number of different options in place.



For example, in the Richard Hills/ Dorothy Jesner/ Hashmat Ali system an Ace asks for partner to unblock with an honour if they have one, but otherwise give natural count. The lead of the King asks for natural attitude.

Another commonly used method, identified by Michael Smart was for Ace or Queen to ask for attitude and K for count. So with KQTx you would want attitude (so you would lead the Q) and with KQxxxx you would want count (so you would lead the K).

Rebecca plays Ace for attitude and King for count. In a suit contract with AKxxx, attitude will tell you whether it is partner or declarer who will ruff the third round. In no-trumps, attitude can show that partner has the Q, enabling declarer to lead low and regain the lead with the King.

When there is a singleton in dummv

Sometimes partner's first lead of an honour will hold the trick but dummy will then be void. In this situation, many people will use the card they play in the first trick as a signal for <u>what partner</u> <u>should do next</u>. The most common approach is to treat it as a McKenney situation—if you fol-



low partner's winning honour lead with a low card you want to switch to the lower ranked suit. If you play high you prefer the higher.

The main disadvantage of this approach is that you have no way of telling partner that you want them to continue the suit and let dummy ruff. Too many people automatically try to find another suit when they see dummy is void but sometimes letting dummy ruff can be the best thing.

It can be a deliberate strategy

to "punch" dummy—make declarer use the trumps before they want to and it can also help you avoid crucifying partner's honour. Richard/Hashmat /Dorothy's approach is to play an odd card



when she wants partner to continue and "punch" dummy. A small even card shows a preference for a low suit switch and a high even card a preference for the higher.

Partner leads a low card—dummy wins the trick

Your only option here is to show count, whichever way you do it. You can also show count if you cannot beat partner or dummy's card. Otherwise, there is no scope for signals—you have to do what you need to do to win the trick or make it as costly as possible for declarer.

Following suit from declarer

Your only options here are to show count or just play the card you think you can most afford and/ or may fool declarer most about your holding.

When declarer leads trumps

There are interesting signalling options possible when declarer leads <u>trumps</u>. Some of our panel members used the Vinje trump signal which shows partner the overall distribution of your hand. This means that when declarer plays trumps, playing high-low shows that you have one even length suit and three oddlength; low high shows one odd and three even. The Bulletin's adviser in advanced mathematics assures me that no other combinations are possible.

This is, of course, a useful piece of information but it does take some effort to remember and, as Julia says, after you have gone through all the mental turmoil in getting the signal right, you do want to be sure that partner is actually watching.

Richard/Dorothy/Hashmat play another variant. When they have three trumps, they will play low-high if they want a ruff. With two cards and three cards not wanting a ruff they play high low. With four cards, the best option will be often be a forcing defence rather than a ruff.

Earl noted that some partnerships use a trump "echo" (playing high-low in trumps) as a signal that they liked partner's initial lead. He commented that this was particularly useful if you were playing count signals.

When you discard

With discards you have more options than following the suit because you can use both the value of the card and the suit to give information.



One of the great things about discards 4 is that you can have your cake and eat

it to because you often have to discard more than once. In general, there was a preference in the panel to showing suit preference on the first discard and count after that.

The most basic and obvious suit preference signal for discarding is to throw away what you do not want. This does not give as much information as other methods but it did find some favour in the panel on the basis that it is the one signal most likely to be accurate. Other methods may make you indicate preference before you really know what it is. It is also the one least likely to give unauthorised information because of the time you might take to decide with other methods.

The most common discard signals used in bridge generally are McKenney. A high card shows a preference for the higher ranked of the other suits. A low card shows a preference for the lower. Generally though, this had little support in its "pure" form among the panel.

REO

At the more complex end of the signalling continuum, Roy Nixon described REO signalling. Under REO, the first discard is "odds and evens" (see discussion in next column) and the subsequent discards show count making use of odd and even cards. An odd card shows an odd number of cards in the suit and an even card shows an even number. But what, you say, do you do if you have three cards all even numbers or four cards all odd numbers? The answer is to play high-low. So if you discard the eight followed by the six, you reverse the original message. The eight would now show an odd card

It was felt that REO may give more options for signalling with low cards but as Roy and Richard pointed out, it can be difficult to play a complex system such as REO in tempo, which creates the possibility of unauthorised information. The American Contract Bridge League has in fact banned the use of the count component of REO.

Overall, the most common signalling method on discards was **odds and evens** (see right hand column).

Ethics

As the panel discussion progressed, there was a lot of comment on issues of ethics associated with false-carding and hesitation in signalling. It has become a big enough topic for an article on its own and will be covered in the Director! series in the next edition of the Bulletin



Odds and evens

Odds and evens means that when you discard an odd card in a suit you are saying "please lead this suit". If you play an



even card, a high card says to partner you may want to consider this suit but is not as enthusiastic as an odd card. If you play a low even card, it says that you really do not want this suit led.

Michael Smart made the interesting comment that a high or low even card might be a more encouraging card in no trumps than it is in a trump contract. The reason is that in no trumps you are often relying on length in your best suit to win the tricks – throwing an odd card from your strong suit to say you really want the suit led will often cost a trick.

"Odds and evens" was the single most common preferred method of signalling but not all favoured it. Showing count was also popular and panellist did point to some problems with odds and evens. Julia Hoffman and Earl Dudley both pointed out that odds and evens often meant you had to make a definite choice about the way you wanted partner to play before you had the information you needed to make the choice. "For signalling to be effective, it must help partner not declarer", Earl said.

For example, if you have the king in a suit you will be quite keen for partner to lead that suit if the flow of points shows they are likely to have the ace. Otherwise it could be a disaster. It was much easier to be certain about the suit you wanted least and discarding suits you didn't want led gave you less of a problem at the start.

The last word on signals

One of our better players was overhead explaining that his partner played low encourage except when she could not decide what to encourage. If she could not decide what to encourage, she played her lowest card.

Daytime Rankings January—March 2006

-					
Monday			Thursday		
17	Colleen Price	Connie Treloar	19	Jim Murray	Robin Erskine
14	Flo Gray	Anne Baldwin	14	Colleen Perriman	Ronnie Carlsson
14	Joan Banyard	Clive Landau	12	Neil Naughton	Sasha Nekvapil
12	Roma Kennedy	Ronnie Carlsson	12	Lillian Tidey	Ashok Tulpule
11	Anne White	Helen Byrne	11	Pat Lewis	Denise McClelland
10	Gosta Lynga	Paula Lynga	11	John Daly	Joan Willis
10	Lance McDougal	Harold McCormick	10	Flo Gray	Sheila Murray
9	Barbara Silverstone	Helen van Gelder	9	Trevor Berenger	Ian Dalziell
9	Chris Akeroyd	Chand Gaind	9	Jill Cromer	Kaye Campbell
9	Lillian Tidey	Ashok Tulpule	9	Joan Banyard	Colleen Prince
9	Marie Whalan	Ruth Mackey			
9	Rasma Bandle	Ines-Marie Hodgkinson			
	Tuesday			Friday	
22	Betty Lewis	Katie Smith	22	Harold McCormick	Lance McDougal
12	Jill Cromer	Jean Wilson	13	Shirley Coutlhard	Jan Munro
12	Neil Naughton	Jim Chan	11	David Luck	Kaye Campbell
9	Brenda Rogers	Nancy Hitchcock	9	Brenda Rogers	Rena Prince
9	Betty Lewis	Carol Wilson	8	Neil Naughton	Patricia Sullivan
7	Alex Preece	Anne Preece	7	Betty Lewis	Nancy Hitchcock
6	Pat Lewis	June Lomax	6	Barbara Jones	Neil Jones
5	Ann Ng	Elizabeth Rogoyska	6	Catherine Marsden	Peter Marsden
5	Brenda Rogers	Carol Wilson	6	Connie Treloar	Barbara Crone
5	Maureen Blackmore	Pat Skinner	6	Jan Johnston	Richard Johnston
5	Monique Rohan	Pat Skinner			
5	Sue Welbourn	Roy Quill			
	Wednesday			Saturday	
17	Flo Gray	Gwenda Fitzgerald	20	Ruth Gallagher	Jim Murray
16	Eileen Diprose	Sue Hume	16	Chris Sheen	Mark Sheen
13	Alex Preece	Anne Preece	14	Neil Naughton	Gillian Parsons
13		Brian Treioar	11	Demse Gobes	Richard Longmore
13	Terri Henderson	Basil Rebera	10	Pat Lewis	Denise McClelland
12	Colleen Price	Anne Baldwin	9	Colleen Perriman	Heather Herrick
12	Dennis Blewett	Ralph Wingfield	9	Malcolm Aldons	Tom Coogan
10	Malcolm Aldons	Andrew Leslie	8	Connie Treloar	Brian Treloar
9 8	Sheila Murray Patricia Sullivan	Jim Murray Connie van Dette	7	Don Beer	Ella Beer



W

Р

Р

Thomson

Under-leading with class

Most of us know that it is usually a bad idea to The bidding went as follows: under-lead an Ace in a trump contract (except sometimes the Ace of trumps). When people do it and we guess wrong as a result, we usually feel Dyke very aggrieved. Sometimes though it is done for a good reason and from listening, and thinking about, the bidding.

Ian Thomson gave me the details of a highly vir-1H = transfer response shows 4+ spades tuous under-lead by Richard Brightling in a re- 1S = exactly 3 card support cent Australian trials game. Thomson-Brightling were playing Kieran Dyke and Ron Klinger.

The full hands were:

	EW Vul	
	Dealer: N	
	▲ JT3 ♥QJ ♦Q7 ♣ KQJ852	
 ★K2 ♥K6432 ♦K842 ★T4 		 ▲A764 ♥T95 ◆JT9 ▲A63
	▲ Q985 ♥A87 ♦A653 ♣ 97	

2CΡ 3C All Pass

Е

Brightling

Ρ

Р

In a previous hand the opponents had commented that Richard and Ian's bidding had made it easy to get the count of the hand. Theirs had done the same and full advantage was taken,

S

 $1H^*$

1NT

Klinger

Richard Brightling on lead from East with Ace to 4 spades knew from the bidding that North-South had a 3-4 spade fit so his partner had a doubleton. If he lead a small spade and declarer won, he would win the first club and then play Ace and another spade to give his partner a ruff.

The outcome was even better because Ian had the \bigstar K. Richard led the \bigstar 4 and Ian played the \bigstar K and returned a spade to Richard's Ace. Richard then played a third spade for Ian to ruff. Ian then exited with his last trump to partner's Ace of trumps and eventually made the ♥K in the end game to beat the contract by one trick.

3C made in the other room when the defence failed to find the spade ruff.







Ν

1C

1S*

An Instructional Hand

by Steve Hurley

pick up the following hand:

♦OJxx ♥AJxx **♦**XXX

♣Ax

The bidding proceeds as follows:

S	W	Ν	Е
1NT*	Р	3NT	Р
Р	Р		

* 1NT shows 12 -14 points.

You lead the \blacklozenge Q and dummy is displayed:

♠Kxx
♥ 109x
♦Kx
♣ KQ109x

♦XXX ♣Ax

♦QJxx

♥AJxx

Declarer plays low, partner plays the $\bigstar 10$, and declarer wins with the $\bigstar A$. Declarer now plays the \mathbf{A} then a small diamond to the \mathbf{A} . followed by the $\mathbf{A}Q, \mathbf{A}J$, and another diamond.

Playing teams, how do you defend?

Lesson One

You must first find 2 discards on the run of diamonds. What do you choose?

In this case, partner has given you the answer. Typically an unnecessary honour card (either A, K, Q, J or T) shows the immediate honour below. Partner's $\mathbf{v}10$ is either a singleton or is from top of a sequence (promising the 9). As this cannot be a singleton (this would give declarer 5 spades

Playing team with imps scoring, as West, you and 5 diamonds for their 1NT bid so they will instead have either 2 or 3 spades), partner must have the 9 and at least one more spade. In other words, if you discard you spades, partner can defend the spade suit.

Lesson summary

Use available information and partners should make life as easy as possible for each other

Lesson Two.

You are playing teams. Defeating the contract is worth many imps if your team mates can make game. So giving away an overtrick (worth an imp) would be outweighed by picking up 8 or 10 imps. At this point, you have worked out you can discard spades. But what can partner have to defeat the contract?

Partner can signal to show what to lead on the 5th diamond but you have to discard before partner can show what they like.

Declarer has indicated the answer through the bidding and play. Declarer has shown A and the A, Q and J of diamonds. As declarer's bid has shown 12 to 14 points and 11 points have been played already, declarer can only have another 3 points at the most. If declarer has the AJ or $\mathbf{V}Q$ then partner has the $\mathbf{V}K$.

The answer then is to win the likely club lead after the run of the diamonds and under-lead your hearts to partner's hoped for King. Partner will then return a heart and you will take your 5 tricks (4 hearts and a club) before declarer can make their 9 tricks.

> Lesson summary. Count each suit and points – this opens many windows.

Lesson Three

Instead of teams, <u>change the event to pairs with</u> match point scoring.

In pairs, an overtrick may be worth a top and an undertrick may be worth a bottom to declarer **Given the information above, do you change your thinking and play?** .

You must now weigh up whether declarer has the ΨK or not. Is there anything you can do? At least you could wait for one more trick to see what shows up.

If declarer plays the $\bigstar J$, you now have an absolute certainty. This now makes 12 points in declarer's hand so they cannot have the $\forall K$. Take your ace and now underlead a small heart to partner's known King.

If the jack of clubs does not appear, it is still odds on that partner has the ΨK . So, with less certainty but the odds still on your side, lead to the King.

There is a **BIG** difference between teams and pairs scoring!

Lesson summary

Don't commit yourself until you have to ... but sometimes it will always still be a guess. In this case, play for the best odds and you will usually be in front.

Lesson Four

As declarer, what went wrong? In a nutshell, declarer gave away too much information. Look at the 4 hands:

♠Kxx ♥109x ♦Kx **♣**KO109x **♦**OJxx **▲**109x ♥AJxx ♥Kxx ♦xx **♦**XXXX **♣**Axx **∲**XXX **♦**Axx ♥Oxx ♦AOJxx ♣Jx

From declarer's perspective, there are 2 spade tricks, 5 likely diamond tricks, and 4 club tricks once the A is driven out. But no guarantee of 9 tricks....

Declarer hoped to get 5 diamond tricks and use the $\bigstar K$ as an entry to the club tricks. As you can see now, this line of play gave too much information to the defence. To make the contract, the club suit must be developed at some time, so do it first while little is known about declarer's hand. Win the $\bigstar K$ and play a small club to the Jack.

This by no means guarantees the contract but with little information to go on, West must be an insightful player to underlead their heart at this point. If they don't, you will now have 11 tricks. If the A is on you right, you must hope that East does not return a heart. They will likely lead a spade looking to set up the spade suit when partner wins their (hoped for) diamond trick.

Lesson summary

If nothing is guaranteed, make the critical decisions early and let the opposition guess.

Putting this all together.....

Make life easy for partner if you can, use the information available to you, make logical decisions and percentage plays, and put the pressure on the opposition, not yourself.

Director! Asking about the bidding





auestion.

In deciding whether or not to ask about the bidding, we often walk a fine line. We need to know what is going on but we do not particularly want to give declarer information or, more importantly, give,



through our question, unauthorised information that can make life difficult for partner.

To help clarify this, I posed some questions to Sean on the various do's and don'ts.

Are there any general rules about when you should ask about the meaning of a bid?

The general rule is that you should ask when it is not self-evident and the answer could affect how you bid or whether you bid or pass. Generally bids that are not self-evident would be bids that are alerted or self-alerting (where the bidders are prohibited from alerting) such as doubles.

Some bids that are alerted could be regarded as As Mandy Rice-Davies said once when a politiself-evident. For example, alerted transfers over a no trump opening would be self-evident for more experienced players but not necessarily for beginners.

Why ask only if you are likely to bid? deciding to bid generally means that the situation

There are several reasons for asking only when is not totally obvious. necessary.



what it means, you have vant.

To ask or not to ask. That is the given partner information that they might have worked out for themselves but cannot use.

> This is even more the case if you ask about a bid that is always almost natural when not alerted, such as one heart or one spade.

By asking unnecessary questions, you are also slowing down the pace of the game for no good reason. When the auction has finished you can ask that the bidding be explained.





You might be alerting the opponents to a bidding misunderstanding when they give the explanation.

What if the opponent says they could have worked out what their partner had even without the guestion?

cian denied taking advantage of her favours, "he would say that wouldn't he". The Director cannot verify this and, generally, will only accept this proposition if it is totally obvious-and the fact that their partner had to ask a question before

The fact is that in most of these situations, even You might be making life world-class players will get it wrong sometimes. difficult for your partner. Perhaps even more often than not, the ques-For example, if the oppo- tioner's partner will have worked it out independnents bid one club and you, ently-but, unless totally obvious, the possibility sitting with long clubs, ask of unauthorised information makes that irrele-

10

Are there any situations in which you should ask about un-alerted bids? Or can I just assume it is natural if not alerted and get protection later if it should have been alerted?

It depends on your level. In general, experienced players are expected to protect themselves during the bidding by getting information on a bid that not influence partner's lead. subsequent bidding suggests might not be all it seems (but do not ask about one bid only-see below). The more experienced you are, the greater the onus on you to protect yourself.



Can I ask about the meaning of one bid if the rest of the auction quite is clear to me?

It is generally not a good idea to ask about a single bid because this may give partner some unauthorised information about your hand. For example, if you hold clubs and ask if the five clubs bid ing and intimidation.

is natural. It is better to ask "can we review the auction please?"

Who can ask about the bidding at the end of the auction?

The player who is on lead can ask. If the player who is not on lead has a question, he should wait until partner has played a card face down and ask the question before partner



shows the card. This means that the question will



Can I ask about opponents' bidding style as well as their formal system?

Definitely. You are quite entitled to ask about such things as whether overcalls are normally good quality, what sort of hands people pre-empt on and the extent to which they stick rig-

idly to their system or psyche. You can also ask about inference. For example, whether a particular bid shows or denies a certain holding. The questioning though must be appropriate for the level of the opponents. Forensic questioning of inexperienced players is simply a form of bully-



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