

## **A WINNING ATTITUDE**

by Mike Lawrence: Judgment at Bridge 2

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One of the greatest players of our time, Bob Hamman, has a rule that is really a rule. Learn it, remember it and follow it.

### **Hamman's Rule**

After a good result, stop revelling in it. After a terrible result, stop fretting about it. The only important thing in your life right now is the new hand you just picked up. It's the hand that deserves your attention.

I can't begin to tell you how many bad results have occurred in bridge because someone forgot this rule and spent time thinking about the last hand when he should have been thinking about the new one.

Instead of lamenting your bad luck, take the positive attitude that the next hand will be better. I guarantee you will get a better result if you go into it with positive anticipation than if you go into it dripping with despair.

Hamman's rule is known to many. It's been around for a long time. In spite of its proven success, only a few players have the ability to follow it whenever something bad happens. You have to be aware of the rule and when you get a horrible result, you have to be in tune with your emotions to keep from getting depressed. That's the hard part. Knowing the rule is one thing. Following the rule is another.

There is a side benefit to following the Hamman rule. One thing about having a positive attitude is that your partner will play better and your opponents will sense your mood and perhaps pull back a little. Players may not know they are doing it, but someone who sends out bad vibrations is giving emotional support to their opponents. Don't be that person.

Homework: Google [Ecstasy](#) by Mike Lawrence. Go online and read it.

## WHEN OPENING BIDDER REBIDS HIS MAJOR

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Your partner opens one of a major and you respond 2D. Partner rebids two of his major. How many cards do you think he has in his major?

There are two schools of thought here.

W N E S

1H P 2D

P 2H

1. Some insist that opener have 6 cards if he opens a major and rebids it, after partner has responded at the 2 level.
2. Some insist that it is acceptable for opener to rebid a 5 card major after partner has responded in a new suit at the two level.

Who's right? Both views are valid. But that doesn't mean both are equal.

Two advantages to playing that a rebid of your major shows SIX cards:

1. On many hands, it makes the bidding easy for responder because he knows of a six-card suit right away. He learns quickly if the major will be a good trump suit.
2. Looking for reason two. Still looking. Still loo.....

Disadvantages to playing that a rebid of your major shows six cards:

**Here are three hands. You have opened 1 Heart and partner responded 2D** (it does not matter whether or not you are playing Two Over One).

What should you bid if you have agreed with partner that rebidding Hearts promises six cards?

S 643

H QJ863

D K

C AQJ8

**Is 3C a good bid? Most players play that a new suit by opener at the three level shows extra points (16 or more). This is a good requirement. Should opener bid 2NT without a Spade stopper?**

**Another one:**

**S QJ6**

**H AK763**

**D 2**

**C Q1085**

**I don't recommend 3C on this hand either. The last possible bid is 2NT when holding a singleton in partner's diamond suit. Won't he expect you to have at least a doubleton?**

**Another one:**

**S QJ6**

**H QJ986**

**D AK**

**C 873**

**You can't bid Spades. Partner does not allow you to rebid Hearts(!!). You can't raise Diamonds with two. And that would leave you with a very imperfect 2NT bid.**

**My belief is that requiring six cards for opener to rebid a major after a two-over-one response is bad bridge. So what should opener rebid on these hands?**

**The three hands above are typical hands that can't consider anything other than rebidding a five-card major. I recommend you read the discussions again. It's important.**

**Waiting for six cards to rebid the major is nice when it happens, but it comes at a big cost. If opener has to make a bad bid when he doesn't have a six-card major to rebid, the auction is not going to go well from there. Almost always, you will have a chance to rebid a six-card suit a third time and that will promise six cards.**



## ZIA MAHMOOD

At the ABTA Convention, we were lucky enough to have Zia Mahmood and also Bob Hamman come to speak to us.

Zia told us that he subscribes to the four F's in bridge.

1. **FUN.** Bridge is fun. You must remember it is only a game and you must always have fun. He says he has a lot of fun at the table.
2. **FOCUS.** A huge part of the game, and ever so tough, is to not get distracted. And if a declarer is taking a long time to play a hand, he has a problem so focus even harder to work out what his problem is.
3. **FORGET.** You have to forget the bad stuff that happened on the last hand or two and move on to the new hand, otherwise the next few will also be bad. (See Hamman's Rule earlier in this newsletter.)
4. "When all else fails", says Zia "and things are really bad, I go out into the hallway and use the F word."

## SIGNALS / CARDING & LEADS

Before playing against new opponents, it is wise to ask them what signals they use. Also, do they use any special or unusual leads. The most common carding you will encounter in gentler games (and other) is Standard.

e.g. When partner leads an Ace and you want to encourage, you play a high card to smile and encourage her to continue.

When unable to follow suit, you discard a low card if you do not wish the suit led and a high card if you do wish it led.

The above is all Standard. So if you someone asks you "what is your carding?" you simply reply: "Standard".

Some opponents play "Upside-down" which means that they do the opposite of the above. They discard a low card in a suit they DO want led. There are also other methods.

In any case, at a recent tournament, I asked an opponent..."What are your leads?" My opponent replied: " We use Wall Street Leads."

"Wall Street?" inquired I. "Yes, Standard and Poor."