

FOOD FOR THOUGHT FOR ALL BRIDGE PLAYERS ...by Marti Ronemus

Husband Gary and I have no children (and no grandkids, darn it), but we do have dogs and I imagine we feel the same way about them that you do about your kids, although we'll never have to provide bail money or new sneakers.

Anyway, a couple of years ago we got a new puppy, a chocolate and white Chihuahua, Ozzie. (Gary says it takes a big man to walk a small dog, especially true with Ozzie, as he was about the size of a robust hamster). As my faithful readers can imagine, this was a BIG Event at our house. Ozzie even has godmother, Shirley, to give you a clue.

When we took Ozzie to his "Meet the Vet" appointment, we received a great bag of goodies, including a little pamphlet, "How to Have a Well-Behaved Puppy." Determined to, for once, have a well-behaved dog, we were excited about that. Sadly, it turned out that we were incapable of saying "NO!" to Ozzie, and the pamphlet was thrown into a drawer.

I found it recently and want to share it with you. The advice is sterling. Every time you see the word "puppy", substitute the word "partner".

"Treat your new puppy with respect and love if you want an enduring relationship."

Look, people, you picked that partner! Respect Pard's point of view. Compromise. Play Inverted Minors if he will play Roman Key Card Blackwood.

"Catch your new puppy doing something right." It's so easy to say, "Why did you do that?" or (my favourite) "Where is the hand you were bidding with?" Or "What were you thinking?" All unanswerable, except to say, "It seemed like a good idea at the time." How about instead, "Pard, you did a masterful job of establishing those long diamonds! You were able to dump the losers on that suit." Pard may not have any idea what the heck you are talking about, but next time she has a long suit, she'll look for a way to drop losers on it. Maybe.

"Keep training sessions short, otherwise your puppy will lose interest." While we know that you can give your Pard ideas to improve on every single solitary hand, it's more important to just enjoy the game. Remember, the word is "Partner."

"Small morsels of food are useful in modelling good behaviour." This doesn't mean we fill our pockets with Oreos (although you could do worse!). Think of compliments as the Partner version of dog biscuits. Give Pard many small rewards, and watch him shine. Just don;t do it in front of opponents. It could be hurtful.

Your puppy cannot learn a new command right away. Repetition is the key to success." It takes at least a dozen mishaps with Stayman and Transfers before getting it right. Just relax and await victory.

"Never use harsh words. Your puppy is trying to do the right thing. If he isn't learning, it's your fault!!" Nobody wants you to win more than your Pard. And remember Pard is putting up with a lot from you too. Put away that rolled-up newspaper.

"After a good training session, you should have a nice cuddle with your puppy." While this is the best advice in the entire pamphlet, you might want to be careful. I'm not sure if your club would approve.

Well, that's my story and I'm sticking to it. Editor's note: We're betting that Marti named their dog "Ozzie" after Oswald Jacoby, creator of the Jacoby Transfer. Our daughter is dating someone named Don. We recently found out that his last name is Blackwood. Now we nickname him "Key Card".

LOSER ON LOSER...By EDDIE KANTAR

S 87532

H 82

D Q105

C KJ7

S QJ9

H AQ3

D AKJ4

C 942

S 10

H KJ10964

D 873

C A65

S AK64

H 75

D 962

C Q1083

East South West North

2H Pass 4H All Pass

Opening lead: Spade Ace

Bidding Commentary: East has a near maximum Weak Two and West, a choice of responses.

A raise to 4H is reasonable as is 2NT asking for more information. If West tries 2NT, East bids 3C showing a feature-the ace or king. This guarantees that West will bid game.

Defensive Commentary: As North, give count in spades. After declarer has preempted or bid two suits and partner leads the ace, presumably from ace-king and dummy has the queen, third hand gives count playing the S 2. (Lowest from an odd number of cards.)

As South, it looks right to switch to a low club at trick two. Partner figures to have an honor or two in the suit given the fact that East has a weak hand.

As North, play the C K at trick two, the higher of unequal honors. If you had equal honors such as the QJ, play your lower equal.

Play Commentary: As East, you start with 9 top tricks: 6 hearts, the AK of diamonds and the C A. Rather than pin your hopes on the diamond finesse, use the S QJ in dummy to develop your 10th trick. Win the CA, draw trumps ending in dummy and lead the SQ, discarding a club. South wins the king, cashes the CQ and leads a third club that you trump. All that is left is to cross to dummy with a diamond and discard a diamond on the SJ. No diamond finesse is necessary.

When dummy has the second and third ranking cards in a suit, S QJ, (the ace has already been played) facing a void, think **loser on loser** play. Lead a spade equal and discard a loser. After the opponents take the trick, use the other equal to discard another loser. You gain a trick.

Editor's Note: Naturally, if you lead S Q and N covers with the King (unlikely since S lead the S Ace), then Declarer ruffs the S K and still gets to throw away the D loser on the high S Jack in dummy.

BIDDING TRAPS - WILL YOU FALL IN? By Eddie Kantar

The following 14 bidding problems all have one thing in common-they are designed to trap you into making an incorrect bid even though the correct one stands out like a beacon!

You start this quiz with 150 bonus points (you're welcome), but... you lose 10 points for each 'accident' you have. Sorry about that.

You are always South, not vulnerable against vulnerable, playing rubber bridge for real \$\$\$\$.

Ed. Note: You are not playing Two Over One

Ready?

1. You hold: S. AQ10xx H. Axx D. Axx C. xx

North	East	South	West
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Pass	Pass	1S	Pass
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1NT	Pass	?	
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2.

North East South West

Pass Pass 1S Pass

2NT Pass ?

3. You hold: S. AKJxx H. xx D. A982 C. xx

South West North East

1S Pass 2C Pass

?

4. You hold: S. AQ109xxx H. K D. AK C. AKx

(Do you like your hand?)

South West North East

2C Pass 2D* Pass

2S Pass 3S** Pass

4NT Pass 5H Pass

?

2C =strong and artificial, *2D= waiting, 3S= positive, 4NT= RKB, (1430) including the four aces and the SK. 5H showed two keycards.

5. You hold: S. AQJ10xxx H. x D. xx C. xxx

South West North East

3S Pass Pass 4H

?

6. You hold: S. Qx H. AQxxx D. xx C. KQxx

South West North East

1H Pass 1S 2D

?

7. You hold: S. AQxxx H. Qxx D. xx C. AQx

South West North East

1S Pass 2C Pass

?

8. You hold: S. AKxxxx H. AKJx D. x C. xx

South West North East

1S Pass 2C Pass

?

9. You hold: S. KQxx H. KJxx D. AJx C. xx

North East South West

1C Pass 1H Pass

2C Pass ?

10. You hold: S. x H. QJ9 D. Q109x C. AQ10xx

South West North East

Pass Pass 1S Pass

2C* Pass 2H Pass *2C is Natural, not Drury

?

11. You hold: S. AJx H. KQx D. A10xx C. Q10x

North East South West

1NT* Pass ? *1NT = 15-17

12. You hold: S. xx H. Jxx D. AKQxx C. xxx

North East South West

1NT 2S ?

13. You hold: S. x H. AKQJxxx D. A109 C. 109

North East South West

Pass 1C ?

14. You hold: S. xx H. J10x D. AQ10xx C. AK10

North East South West

1H Pass 2D Pass

2NT Pass ?

HOW TO AVOID THE TRAPS:

1. Pass. The trap is not to rebid 2S which shows six spades in this sequence.

2. 3NT Partner has 11 HCP and you have a sweet 14 including a strong five card suit.

The trap is not to pass or rebid spades.

3. 2D The trap is rebidding 2S and not showing diamonds, a lower ranking suit.

4. 7NT The trap is bidding anything else when you can count 13 tricks: 7 spades, 2 hearts, 2 diamond and at least two clubs. Playing the hand in 7S runs the risk, admittedly slender), of an opening lead getting ruffed.

5. Pass. Partner also knows the vulnerability and you have limited your hand making partner the captain. For all you know, partner may be chomping at the bit to double 4H.

6. Pass. You have a minimum and partner has a chance to bid. The trap is bidding 3C which shows extras or 2H which shows a stronger suit.

7. 3C A raise to the three level in this sequence either shows four card support or three card support with extras including strong support. (What you have).

8. 2H With a strong 6-4, start with the six card suit, then bid the four card suit and then back to the six card suit. With a weaker 6-4, start with the six card suit, repeat the six card suit, and then bid the four card suit.

9. 3NT You are too strong to rebid 2NT (the trap) which is not forcing and partner does not figure to have four spades and not rebid 1S.

10. 2NT A raise to 3H, a second suit, guarantees four card support... in blood. 2NT is just right.

11. 4NT Invitational. Not strong enough to bid 6NT, too strong to raise to 3NT. Incidentally, if you wish to ask for aces directly after partner opens 1NT or 2NT, jump to 4C, Gerber. This particular hand is not suited for a Gerber ask.

12. 3NT The overcaller seldom has a solid suit. With solid spades East should pass and wait to lead the suit. The trap is to not bid 3NT.

Ed Note: You are not playing Lebensohl

13. 1H You can't risk a takeout double with a singleton spade, too dangerous. Partner is a passed hand and an opponent has opened the bidding, so you don't figure to have a slam. The problem with bidding 4H is that you go by 3NT where you need but one trick from partner - providing they can't run a black suit. The bidding won't end in 1H so you can always bid 4H later. However, by bidding 1H you give partner a chance to bid NT in which case you should raise to 3NT in a heart beat.

Take full credit if you bid either 1H or 4H. Besides, if you do bid 4H, a thoughtful partner will turn up with some diamond strength to make your day. And don't forget to claim 100 honors, remember, this is money bridge!

14. 3H Delayed support at the three level shows three card support and is a game force. If nothing else, you give your partner a choice of game contracts, 3NT or 4H. (Slam is doubtful as partner is showing 12-14+ HCP.)

Ed. Note: If you bid 4H on your second bid instead of 3H, don't deduct any bonus points as that is what we would suggest, not playing Two Over One.

THE TRAP AVOIDING RATING SCALE:

150-130 What a slam dunk this quiz was for you.

120-100 So you fell for a few traps, not too bad.

90-70 Brush up on your basics.

60-40 Hopefully your forte is declarer play, defense, or both because we know what it isn't!

Less I won't tell anyone and I'm sure you won't either.

21 RULES OF BEING A GOOD PARTNER

by Marty Bergen

I have always believed that your attitude towards your partner is as important as your technical skill at the game."

Rixi Markus, one of the all-time great players



I agree 100% with Ms. Markus on this topic. Half the battle in trying to win at bridge is being a good partner. Accordingly, I heartily recommend to all players to try very hard to always observe these rules:

1. Do not give lessons, unless you are being paid to do so. "According to an evening paper, there are only five real authorities on bridge in this country. Odd how often one gets one of them as a partner. " Punch (British magazine).

2. Never say anything to your partner unless you would want him to say the same to you. If you are unsure whether your partner would want you to say something, don't.

3. Never "result" (criticize your partner for a normal action just because it did not work this time).

4. Unless your intent is to clear up a misunderstanding, avoid discussing the hand just played. If you cannot resist, be discreet.

5. Remember -- you and your partner are on the same side.

6. Do not forget that your partner wants to win as much as you do.

7. If you feel the urge to be nasty, sarcastic, critical or loud, excuse yourself and take a walk.

8. When there is time between hands, do not discuss bridge.

9. When you want to consult another player about a disaster, ask about your hand, not your partner's.

10. Do not ever criticize or embarrass your partner in front of others.

11. Remember that bridge is only a card game.

12. Have a good time, and make sure that your partner does also.

"Bridge is for fun. You should play the game for no other reason. You should not play bridge to make money, to show how smart you are, or show how stupid your partner is... or to prove any of the several hundred other things bridge players are so often trying to prove. "

Bridge legend Charles Goren.

13. Trust your partner; do not assume he has made a mistake.

14. Although it may be unfashionable, it really is okay to be pleasant to a partner with whom you also happen to live.

15. Remember: "The worst analysts and the biggest talkers are often one and the same. " Bridge columnist Frank Stewart. Think twice before verbally analyzing a hand. Do not embarrass yourself with a hasty, inaccurate comment.

16. When you voluntarily choose to play bridge with someone, it is not fair to get upset when partner does not play any better than usual.

17. Never side with an opponent against your partner. If you cannot support your partner, say nothing.

18. If you think you are too good for a partner, and do not enjoy playing bridge with him, do everyone a favor and play with someone else. That is clearly much better than being a martyr. However, be careful before burning bridges -- another player's grass may not be greener.

19. Learn your partner's style, regardless of how you feel about it. Do not expect your partner to bid exactly as you would. When partner makes a bid, consider what he will have, not what you would have.

20. Try to picture problems from partner's point of view. Seek the bid or play that will make his life easiest.

21. Sympathize with partner if he makes a mistake. Let your partner know that you like him, and always root for him 100%.