

STOLEN BIDS AFTER PARTNER OPENS 1NT by Barbara Seagram

S AJ6 H J10543 D AJ102 C Q		S Q953 H Q82 D 4 C K9432	S 2 H 96 D K98765 C 10875
S W N E 1N 2H ?	S K10874 H AK7 D Q3 C AJ6		

This hand is for all those who constantly ask "Why is it wrong to play Stolen Bids?"

When the auction goes:

S	W	N	E
1N	2C	Dbl*	

This Double should be Stayman. This is the correct use of a Stolen bid.

But, when the opponents interfere in your NT auction with a bid of 2D or higher, then Transfers should be gone.

After

S	W	N	E
1N	2H	?	

You want to reserve "Double" for a hand such as the North hand (above). It will show 7 or more HCP. It is called "showing values". South will now bid 2S and North will raise to 4S happily.

If you were playing Stolen bids, Double would have shown a FIVE card Spade suit. NOTE that you, as responder to a 1NT opening bid, may never at any time bid a 4 card suit.

Note too that the bid of 3C by North would show 10 or more HCP and a good 5 card or longer C suit. N only has 7 HCP.

The NT opener has the additional option of passing the Double and choosing to defend.

The only way to use Stayman after your RHO has interfered with 2D or higher is to cuebid their suit but in order to do that, you need to have 10 or more HCP.

It is important to agree with partner on what your bidding understandings are so that you will not have misunderstandings. There is also a convention called Lebensohl (very complex) but you need to agree on whether or not you are playing that convention.

Bridge Tips from Alex:

Some people think that it is rude or not nice or impolite or unfair to penalty double their opponents. But it is an important part of the game that does not seem to materialize very often. The most common situation is when you and partner freely bid 4S and your opponents now bid 5C. Half the time, these sacrifices are undoubled. Unpunished. This is not the way to get rich or famous or to get a good score. Double more. Alex always says that the meek shall not inherit the earth and will rarely end up in the winners' circle. You can still smile and be friendly even after collecting 800 or 1100. These same opponents will also be less likely to sacrifice against you next time. Indeed, they may even underbid because they are nervous playing against you.

More Tips from Alex:

In order to have a point of view on anything, always look at both sides of the story. Some of your partners are milquetoast and some are aggressive overbidders; like charging rhinos. You need to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em! Learn more about your partner's style so that trust will develop between the partnership.

Not all points are created equal. An Ace is worth more than four Jacks.

Let's look at one example: If partner always accepts all your invitations, then we suggest you do not invite with this hand when he opens 1NT.

S Q5

H Q87

D QJ86

C J743

With 8 HCP and 4-3-3-3, you always should pass. There is some shape to this hand with two 4-card suits, but Queens and Jacks are called Quacks for good reason. Just pass.

Bridge hand questions: If you have a hand you have played and want to know how it should have been bid or played, send it along to Alex at akornel@sympatico.ca

Please include details with it i.e. which seat you were in. Vulnerability and how the auction went. AND whether you are playing 2/1 or Standard.

Feel free to continue emailing me but he is best with bridge hands you have played. If you receive no answer (he is not as committed to emails as I am!), do holler and I will nudge him. And if you need an attachment sent on some aspect, please let me know and I will send. That is definitely not in his job description.