

## **TIPS TO BECOME A BETTER BRIDGE PLAYER**

**by Eddie Kantar**

1. Never, but never forget you are playing with a partner. It pays to consider what things may look like from partner's point of view.
2. You cannot defend properly unless you remember the bidding.
3. You cannot defend properly unless you watch the cards, particularly the little fellows.
4. You cannot defend properly unless you count.
5. You cannot expect your partner to defend properly if you make faces or show other signs of disapproval.
6. Keep one goal in mind: DEFEATING THE CONTRACT. Do not worry about overtricks unless you are defending a doubled contract or are playing tournament bridge.
7. A player who hesitates during the bidding is likely to have a problem hand. Keep the hesitation in mind.
8. The figure to focus on during the defense is the number of tricks you need at any given moment to defeat the contract. Defense is based on this figure.
9. Give your opening lead more than a little consideration. The fate of many a contract is determined by that one card. Use the bidding as a guide.
10. Make sure you and your partner are on the same wave length concerning leads and signaling conventions.
11. Don't compound a crime. If you, or more likely partner, has made an error, do not lose your cool. Many contracts can still be beaten after one defensive error, seldom after TWO.
12. If partner makes a nice play, a kind word or two at the end of the hand goes a long way.

## PLAY OF THE HAND BY MIKE LAWRENCE

*Ed. Note: You have all been programmed to ruff in dummy. Sometimes though, the trumps in dummy are far superior to the trumps in declarer's hand. At times like this, if you ruff your losers with dummy's trump, you will not have enough high trumps to be able to successfully pull the opponents' trumps. This shall cause you to think of what is often called "dummy reversal" whereby you ruff the small cards from dummy in declarer's hand. Have a look at this hand.*

### North

♠ 7  
♥ A K Q J  
♦ Q 10 8 5  
♣ A 8 6 4

### South

♠ A J 6 5  
♥ 7 6 5 4  
♦ K J 9 3  
♣ 5

**LEAD: S King**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1D	Pass	1H
Double	3H	Pass	4H

When you play a hand, you need to plan not only the current trick, but the succeeding tricks as well. South had terrible trumps, but he had a good fit for diamonds, an ace, and good shape. Certainly, North's trumps were a comfort to South when he saw the dummy.

Here is how the play actually went.

West led the king of spades, taken by South. South decided that if he could ruff three clubs in his hand, he might make twelve tricks. He started this plan by leading a club to the ace at trick two and ruffing a club in his hand at trick three.

South decided to knock out the ace of diamonds so he led a diamond to dummy's queen. East surprised South by producing the ace. Back came the nine of spades, which forced dummy to ruff with the jack of hearts.

From this point on, South could not make the hand. South could not draw trump because they divided four-one. South could never take a diamond trick because East had the singleton ace. East, of course, was quick to return spades every time he got in. Each spade lead forced dummy to ruff with a trump honor and that set up a trick for East's 10982 of hearts. A brutal hand.

	<b>North</b>	
	♠ 7	
<b>Dealer:</b> W	♥ A K Q J	
<b>Vul:</b> N-S	♦ Q 10 8 5	
	♣ A 8 6 4	
<b>West</b>		<b>East</b>
♠ K Q 10 3		♠ 9 8 4 2
♥ 3		♥ 10 9 8 2
♦ 7 6 4 2		♦ A
♣ K Q 7 2		♣ J 10 9 3
	<b>South</b>	
	♠ A J 6 5	
	♥ 7 6 5 4	
	♦ K J 9 3	
	♣ 5	

Now that you can see all four hands, perhaps you would like to try again.

South erred, as so often is the case, at trick one. South should let the king of spades win the first trick. The defenders won't be able to make the dummy ruff spades now. South will be able to ruff clubs in his hand AND set up the diamonds. South will make four hearts and may make five if the defenders err along the way.

Should South give up the chance at twelve tricks? That is a different question which you have to judge for yourself. Keeping in mind that West made a takeout double, there is a fair chance that hearts will divide poorly. The important thing about this hand is that South see and consider the possibility of letting West win trick one.

## AN AGGRESSIVE SLAM

S A976  
H K962  
D AQ4  
C Q3

S 104  
H QJ1084  
D KJ10863  
C ---

S KJ82  
H A75  
D 752  
C 987

S Q53  
H 3  
D 9  
C AKJ106542

This hand came up in a recent club game. North (my partner) opened 1NT. While I didn't have many points, I sure have a bunch of tricks, since partner for sure has at least two clubs. I bid 4C (Gerber) and partner bid 4S, showing two Aces. Now I was at the crossroads. So I bid 6C and prayed.

It didn't look good. West led the H Queen so for sure the Heart Ace is in the East hand. I thought a long time and prayed that East had either a doubleton or a tripleton Heart. There was no point playing the H King. I ducked it. West continued with another H. I ducked it and ruffed in my hand. I led a C to the Q and led yet another H...HURRAH! East had to play the H Ace. I drew trump but there was still work to be done. I still need to finesse for the D King as I needed to discard TWO Spades from my hand.

Just all so much luck needed. The Diamond finesse worked. I discarded a Spade on the D Ace and another Spade on the H King and life was good. But it was a bit pushy!!

## BBO TIPS FOR A BETTER EXPERIENCE

If there is a window on your screen that is blocking the cards, just click on it and it will close. When an opponents alerts a call, that window can also be cleared by clicking on it. If you need to review the auction, click on the box which displays the contract. That will bring up the auction anytime during play. Click on it to close it.

If you need to call the Game Director click on the blue rectangular box with the 3 white lines in it (we call it the hamburger!!) and one of the options is to call the Director. Do not chat to the table if you misclick and/or make an incorrect bid. Unfortunately, there are no undos allowed in Virtual Games.

Also, you should not tell the table that you meant to bid such-and-such. These chats can give Unauthorized Information to partner which, under The Laws of Duplicate Bridge, can penalize your side.

If you want to see what others did on a hand right after you finish playing it...go to HISTORY and then at top of that box, click on "other tables."

DO go to ACCOUNT (tab on right) and put in your **first and last name**. It is much easier for people to know who you are and chat at the table.

DO SAY HELLO to your opponents each round.

Sometimes you are chatting away and your chat is going to LOBBY. No one hears you! Important that you click on blue tab at bottom of the screen and make sure it says TABLE. If it says Kibitizers, Lobby, Private, etc., click on it and select "Table."

If you want to speak privately to an opponent, click on their name on their seat. Their account box will appear and you can message them privately by typing on the message line but the TABLE Chat option does not go away.

You may not chat privately to your partner during the auction or play.

If you are registered for a virtual game but are playing in a Casual game, the BBO virtual portion of the site does not recognize that you are logged in. You must, basically, be waiting and ready to start playing in the virtual game 10 minutes before the announced start time otherwise you will be left out of the game.

IF YOU USUALLY USE GOOGLE CHROME, SOMETIMES IT MISBEHAVES. We suggest that if you have a PC or Android product (not iPad or Mac computer) that you download Mozilla Firefox. Free and totally safe. It is a good backup when you are having a problem accessing a website. It is handy to have a second browser available.