



THE AMERICAN
BRIDGE TEACHERS'
ASSOCIATION
**QUARTERLY
MAGAZINE**

**Atlanta, Georgia!
ABTA's 2005 Seminar & Convention
July 19-21, 2005**



*Join ABTA Convention Delegates
at the Atlanta Botanical Gardens!*

Also In This Issue —

*An Interview with Eddie Kantar
Spring Book Reviews by Dee Berry
"Director Please" by Dorsey Shaw-Hensel
ABTAchat & ABTAdiscuss Wraps*



**We hope you
will join our
gift certificate
program!**

Dear ABTA Member:

In September 2004, we sent ABTA members a copy of the first issue of Audrey Grant's *Better Bridge* magazine. Baron Barclay is proud to be the publisher of this insightful and entertaining magazine and we hope you have already become a subscriber. The magazine has articles of interest to bridge players at all levels and is an incredibly useful source of material for bridge teachers.

We firmly believe that your students will benefit from the magazine and are offering a special incentive to teachers and club owners who assist their clients in subscribing.

***For each subscriber you enroll,
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To participate, let us know how many subscription cards you need and we'll send them right out along with the instructions for returning them to us. You can also purchase any of Audrey's materials through our company, with volume discounts for teachers. If you have any questions or would like to order, please call us at **1-800-274-2221**. Baron Barclay and Audrey look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Randy

A NOTE FROM RANDY BARON

Baron Barclay is pleased to announce that we are publishing and distributing Audrey Grant's Better Bridge products. We look forward to working with the teachers and are excited to be able to offer the following:

A 50% discount for any combination of 50 or more books and cards.



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The following items are now in stock:

Bridge Basics 1 - An Introduction (\$11.95)
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Available soon: Color-coded cards for Doubles and
New Edition of Opening the Bidding.

Available in late 2005: Bridge Basics 3 - Popular Conventions

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In the United States:
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In Canada:
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FUTURE ABTA QUARTERLY PUBLICATION DEADLINES

Summer: July 15, 2005 * Fall: August 15, 2005
 Winter: November 15, 2005 * Spring: January 15, 2006

!!!NOTICE NEW DEADLINES!!!

Eddie Kantar's Recent Publications

See Interview with Eddie Kantar page 14

Kantar Lesson Books 1-4 (64 lessons) cost \$105, or can be ordered individually.
 100 Magic Hands cost \$75 sent by email or postal mail.

Contact Eddie at ekbridge@earthlink.net or visit www.kantarbridge.com for details.

Mailing Address: 2700 Neilson Way #334, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

ABTA Convention Vendors

Any member wishing to sell or display bridge products (for a single manufacturer or product line only) is asked to contact the Business Secretary by **June 15**. Space may be limited so tables can only be guaranteed for those who reserve in advance.

Teachers

ACBL Would Like Your Help!

ACBL recently published a new "Play" course and plans on publishing more courses in the future. What topics would you like to see covered next. Send your preferences to abta@earthlink.net.

ABTA purpose is to help those who teach bridge to do it better - more effectively - more knowledgeably - more professionally.

Annual Call for Candidates for ABTA Master Teacher

By Ed Gentino, Connecticut

Have you considered earning the title of ABTA Master Teacher, the highest goal attainable in our extraordinary profession? This article tells you what the requirements are, what actions you should take, and how to gauge your chances of becoming a Master Teacher. Success means you will be recognized as a member of the elite group of ABTA Master Teachers who proudly wear the handsome Master Teacher pin while teaching, lecturing, cruising, AND who have the privilege of using the ABTA Master Teacher logo on stationery, business cards, and personally produced bridge works.

REQUIREMENTS

To be a Master Teacher candidate you must:

1. Have at least three years of continuous ABTA membership.
2. Have at least 100 hours of professional bridge teaching experience.
3. Submit a letter of your intention to be a Master Teacher candidate, to arrive **no later than June 30, 2005**.
4. Attend the ABTA Teachers' Seminar AND Convention in Atlanta (July 19-21, 2005).
5. Meet with our Membership Credentials Committee in Atlanta on Tuesday morning, July 19 between 8:00 am and 12:00 pm for a personal interview about your career and some verbal testing on your knowledge of bridge. If you are wondering if you are a good enough bridge player to become an ABTA Master Teacher, read through Ed Gentino's sample questions below.

If you decide to proceed, you need to register for both the Teachers' Seminar and Convention, as well as make your travel and hotel reservations. Remember, you need to

be in Atlanta on the morning of Tuesday, July 19 by 8:00 am!

LETTER OF INTENTION

Send to the Membership Credentials Chairman, Ed Gentino, 14 Cottwell Drive, Wethersfield, CT 06109-3009, and include the following information:

1. A statement verifying the first two requirements above.
2. Your e-mail address, if available.
3. Your background and history as a bridge teacher.
4. What materials you use (textbook, course outlines, materials you have created, etc.)
5. Samples of your work, i.e., outlines, lesson plans, handouts, etc.
6. A description of your teaching style (lecture/play, blackboard, whiteboard, "hands-on", student participation, etc.)
7. Who, when, and where you teach.
8. Any special awards, appointments, or attainments because of bridge.
9. Other goodies! Be good to yourself. Tell us all the good things that you've experienced or have accomplished through bridge.

SAMPLE BRIDGE PROBLEMS

Each year we provide a couple of Bridge hands to solve for members who are considering becoming Master Teachers. These hands are intermediate in nature, similar to those which are asked at Master Teacher interviews, and are presented to assist members in gauging their readiness to test for Master Teacher.

You can find additional problems in the Spring 2004 ABTA *Quarterly* page 24.

Problem #1

As Dealer you open with a bid of One Club, and everyone passes. LHO leads the S:10, and Partner tables a really ugly Dummy. Truthfully, would YOU have responded with Partner's hand? But that's not the question. You're now in the driver's seat, so decide how you will play this hand to make your contract!

PARTNER (Dummy)

S: K62
 H: 8763
 D: 106542
 C: 3

YOU (Declarer)

S: AJ7
 H: AK4
 D: AK7
 C: 7652

Problem #2

(Matchpoint Duplicate)

South	West	North	East
2S*	Pass	4S	Pass
Pass	Pass		

* Weak

NORTH (Dummy)

S: A763
 H: 7
 D: KQ54
 C: KJ32

WEST (You)

S: 92
 H: AK8632
 D: 872
 C: 96

You lead the H:A (Ace from AK) and Partner plays the H:9. How will you continue?

(Answers are on page 13...but no peaking!)

Editor's Note



WOW! It is truly a pleasure to have been chosen to be your *Quarterly* Magazine Editor! My vision for the *Quarterly* is to provide a forum for exchange of ideas and information dissemination. You will see old ideas and some new ideas in this issue. I would like to hear from you - the readers - as to what you would like to see in your magazine. In particular, please let me know who you would like to be interviewed for upcoming issues.

As you all know, the ABTA provides several online forums for our members to ask questions and share ideas. In visiting these sites, I realized that the vast majority of our members are not taking advantage of these resources. It may be that you do not have internet access or are uncomfortable with surfing the web. In any case, I have included in this issue a one-page summary of recent ABTachat and ABTAdiscuss submissions. I hope this will encourage you all to join the online discussions as there are invaluable tips for your teaching needs. If you enjoy these write-ups, please consider becoming a *Quarterly* volunteer Editor for either of these articles.

I am a big advocate of active ethics training by teachers. If we do not teach our students about "situations" at the bridge table, they will inevitably have a bad experience and consider quitting our game. On page 11, you will find an article entitled Director!!!!Please! which discusses when your students should call the director. If this topic area interests you, please submit articles of this nature for consideration to bridgeacademy@mindspring.com.

I am looking forward to Atlanta with all of the wonderful seminars planned for our teachers - especially the "Thank You Party for Bridge Teachers" on Friday, July 22 from 6:30-7:30 pm. Please introduce yourself to me so that I can put a face with all the new names!

Donna Compton - Editor

Welcome New Members

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New ABTA Rosters

⇒ **Change of address
needed prior to
July 1, 2005!**

A new ABTA roster will be printed on July 1, 2005 and we want your information to be accurate. PLEASE update any changes in your mailing address, phone number and/or email prior to July 1.

The Post Office DOES NOT FORWARD your magazine so failure to report an address change causes you to miss out on your Quarterly and brings extra cost to the ABTA. Thanks for your help in keeping the ABTA dues down! Seasonal address changes should also be reported to the Business Secretary, Pat at ABTA@earthlink.net.

More and more ABTA members are getting online and enjoying the ABTA Online Chats. Be sure to update your new or changed email addresses so that you will be included in these Online Chats.

If you would like a copy of the new roster emailed to you as a Word document, send a note to Pat at ABTA@earthlink.net. Hard copies available upon request.

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PAT HARRINGTON

Price (including shipping) is approximately US \$13.50 or just under CAN \$20. Pay by credit card to avoid currency conversion problems. Order via FAX to ensure your name is spelled correctly. Allow at least 7 days for orders to be processed plus 10 days for shipping.

Letter to the Editor

Bidding Box Lesson

Last year I had the good fortune to play with a sweet “lol,” Mrs. Doris Brown now living in Madisonville, KY. She lived in Henderson many years, played lots of “kitchen table” bridge and a little duplicate bridge at the Madisonville DBC. The club manager called one Sunday morning and asked if I would like to come down to Madisonville and play with Mrs. Brown. I accepted.

Needless to say, I won lots of friends over what happened during the play of the game. As dealer, I opened the auction with a one heart bid. She responded one spade. I got the “STOP” card out, laid it very gently on the table and bid three hearts. All pass. I made five hearts.

What I didn’t know was that Mrs. Brown was not well versed on the bidding box procedure. When the hand was over I asked Mrs. Brown if there was any reason why she

didn’t bid four hearts. Her reply, “YES, you put the stop card on the table telling me not to bid again!”

After the game several players commended me on being such a gentleman about the incident. Our tournament director, Jay, found out about it and reminds me about using the stop card every time he sees me at a tournament. He thought it was very funny.

I did learn a valuable lesson – when playing with young players who may not be very knowledgeable about bidding boxes, I make a point to discuss the stop card.

I might add, I’d be happy to play with Mrs. Brown again. That’s part of going along with being a bridge teacher – *Don’t get bent out of shape because of your younger players’ mistakes.*

Marvin Lawson

Club Manager, Certified Director

ABTA Dues Membership Renewals October 1, 2005

ABTA dues for all members come due at the beginning of our fiscal year on October 1. Some members prepay for three years. If it is time for your membership renewal, you should have received your first reminder bill in April. Your second reminder will appear in the centerfold of the Summer issue of the *Quarterly*. Payments should be made to the ABTA Business Manager, Pat Harrington. Please make your payment in US Funds drawn on a US bank. Special arrangements may be made for our Canadian members.

If you forget your membership expiration date, it can be found on the mailing label of any material sent to you by the ABTA. Your membership number also appears on every mailing label. The letter A preceding your number indicates Master Teacher; the letter C indicates Professional Teacher Member; and an S indicates Associate Member. Check your label to see if your membership renewal is due.

Reasons to renew: Networking, Quarterly Magazine, Online Chats, Online Discussions, Book Reviews, Discounts on Bridge Items, Make Money!

President's Message



Leslie Shafer

A Warm Welcome to Our New Editor!

I'm sure all of you want to join me in welcoming our new ABTA *Quarterly* Magazine Editor, Donna Compton. This is her first issue! I'm sure she welcomes comments from you as well as suggestions for future articles.

2005 ABTA Convention Approaches!

Our Business Secretary and Convention Manager, Pat Harrington, has been very busy making final arrangements for our convention in Atlanta (this July). Carole Budnick, our hostess, has gotten together some great adventures for us as well. There is an astounding amount of work that goes into making these conventions appear smooth and effortless. Who do you think arranges for all of the wonderful speakers and presenters? (Our seminar and convention chairpersons!) Hundreds of emails and phone calls have already taken place with more on the way for those involved in the preparations. As you attend this summer's program, please take just a moment to say a personal "thank you" to these organizers who have donated their time and efforts.

Nancy Abbott, our publicity chairperson, had a full page description of our event in the ACBL's recent Teacher's Newsletter. Great job on that Nancy! I was thrilled when I saw our convention mentioned several

times in that newsletter. We have a symbiotic relationship with the ACBL. Although we are a completely separate organization from them, it is in our best interest to work together in our combined goal, to bring more bridge players into existence.

The Zen of Learning Bridge

Last April, I attended a "poker camp" in Las Vegas, run by high profile stars of the poker world. It was exciting to personally meet and talk to Howard "the Professor" Lederer, Annie Duke, Chris Ferguson, Phil Gordon and so many others. I attended workshops on how to improve my poker game and was amazed at the similarities between learning poker and learning bridge. So amazed that I wrote an article about it. One fabulous quote that I want to share with you (excerpted from my article) is on the zen of mastering any skill —

"If one really wishes to be master of an art, technical knowledge of it is not enough. One has to transcend technique so that the art becomes an "artless art" growing out of the unconscious."

—Daisetsu Suzuki

As bridge teachers, we know that many concepts in bridge are difficult to master. But once mastered, they become second nature and almost automatic. When a student becomes so comfortable with a certain technique that it is routine and a part of their unconscious, that is the "artless art." How do our students make this transition into the "artless art?" By playing more. How can we as teachers help? By allowing our students to play more and endure our lecturing less; by using hands that specifically utilize a new skill, over and over. Let's say you present the finesse technique in class this week. Trim your lecture time down to as much as you can bear (after all, we all love to hear ourselves, don't we?). Then give them 4-8 hands with you putting emphasis on the finesse part of the lesson. Their play time is

sacred and sorely needed in order for the lesson to sink in. After they have completed a hundred finessees, only then will they make the transition to the artless art of unconscious knowledge. They'll be doing finessees in their sleep. Of course, then you will have the problem of teaching them when

NOT to take a finesse, but that can wait for a while.

The zen of teaching bridge is when we allow our students the opportunity to play more, thus learn more. Apple martinis, hitting a royal flush, and facilitating the zen of bridge learning. Life is good!

Director!!! Please!

By Dorsey Shaw-Hensel, Dallas



Dorsey Shaw-Hensel

We are playing a game. The game has many players. The game has rules and guidelines to enable the players to participate and compete. To insure that all players will be playing on an "level playing field" and no player will have an unfair advantage, we have a knowledgeable person who is familiar with the rules and guidelines to set the game straight again if an infraction occurs. If any glitch, error, mistake, whoops! does occur the remedy is to put your hand straight up in the air and call out "DIRECTOR-PLEASE!"

No one but a director should make a ruling or "fix" the mistake. Think about it-would you let the opposing team measure the yardage or spot the ball? You need an unbiased person to interpret the miscue and get us going again. Besides your partner, no one in the room will stand by or help you more than the director.

If a director is called, everyone will be allowed to speak - just one at a time.

To be successful with your dealings with

the director try to stay calm, state what happened as clearly as you can-then stop and listen. Let the director ask what he needs to know to help you set things right.

Situations when you may need help are many, but let me give you the most frequent miscues-someone bids-but it's not his turn. Someone leads-but it's not his turn. Someone plays-but it's not his turn. Someone fails to follow suit and later has a card in the suit.

All these situations come up. Some of these we already know but what if something else occurs like the following:

Their bidding is strange (at least to us) and when the play starts the hand turns out to be as strange as you thought.

In the middle of the play, one opponent makes comments as to cards or bids.

The play is over and we think they went down some number and they do not agree.

The opponents come to your table as mad as all get out at each other and continue with the words!! and do not start to play.

The round is called, you move to the next table and the players continue to rehash the last round.

A player makes an insufficient bid and when it is brought to his attention he comments he "didn't see the other players bid."

All of these things could happen. We wish they would not-but they do. Call your director. This is what the director is there for and he will be happy to help you learn and enjoy this wonderful game.



BRIDGE STUDENTS `R US

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Humorous Bridge Anecdotes & Lessons

6 issues a year (bi-monthly); 8 Pages; Glossy w/2 colors
Student Cost: \$25 for one year; \$45 for two years

“Can’t tell you how much I enjoy your magazine. It’s just loaded with wonderful ideas and tips, not only for the students, but teachers as well. I’m always looking for new material and ideas for my students and you’ve given me so many great ideas. (How do you come up with all these great ideas?)”

The hands are always good, the tips are excellent, and I think this is a magazine that teachers can benefit from as well.”

— **Ed Layton, ABTA Member, California**

“... eight bright, punchy pages of well-targeted material, newcomers and their teachers would do well to subscribe to it. This is an unfortunate publication in one respect only — not enough people know about it! Rating: A

— **Tim Bourke, ACBL Book Reviewer**

Teachers — Subscribe Today! **A Treasury of Tips for Your Bridge Teaching**



Special Offer for ABTA Members:

*If you agree to periodically hand out my “highlights” issue to your students, I can offer you a subscription for yourself at below cost — **only \$10 a year for U.S. subscribers.*** The newsletters are not only perfect for your students, but are also great if you ever need to provide mini-lessons before a game or tournament. Excellent bridge tips presented with humor. The three years of back issues are available at the same cost of \$10 per year.*

Send your name and address to:

Leslie Shafer
690 Concerto Lane
Silver Spring, MD 20901
Phone: 301-593-6828
Email: slamhand@verizon.net

*I’d like to mail you a shipment of our complimentary “highlights” issue for **FREE!***

Just tell me how many you want for your students — 50, 100, 300? From one hardworking bridge teacher to another, my heartfelt thanks.

— *Leslie*

*** U.S. Orders Only**

International Orders No Longer Accepted — Sorry!

Answers to Master Teacher Bridge Problems

By Ed Gentino, Connecticut

Answer to Problem #1

PARTNER (Dummy)

S: K62
H: 8763
D: 106542
C: 3

Answer to Problem #2

NORTH (Dummy)

S: A763
H: 7
D: KQ54
C: KJ32

LHO

S: 1098
H: Q10
D: QJ83
C: AQJ10

RHO

S: Q543
H: J952
D: 9
C: K984

WEST (You)

S: 92
H: AK8632
D: 872
C: 96

EAST (Partner)

S: 10
H: Q954
D: AJ10
C: A10754

YOU (Declarer)

S: AJ7
H: AK4
D: AK7
C: 7652

SOUTH (Declarer)

S: KQJ854
H: J10
D: 963
C: Q8

Good players know that when your main source of tricks is outside the trump suit, **NO MATTER HOW WEAK YOUR TRUMPS ARE** you **MUST** lead them at every opportunity. (Can you imagine a weaker trump suit than this one?) The reason is to protect your sure tricks.

If you are tempted to cash just one Diamond before leading trumps, RHO will get two Diamond ruffs to set you one trick. And if you never lead trumps, you will go down a bundle.

If you lead trumps immediately and repeatedly, you will make your 1C contract, collecting three spade tricks, two hearts, and two diamonds. There's no other way!

Partner's H9 is not a signal to continue leading Hearts, but **IT IS A SIGNAL!**

Whenever Dummy turns up with a singleton in the suit led, 3rd hand is expected to give a suit preference signal to help leader with his/her next lead, whether it is now or later. A high card asks for the higher of the two remaining suits (excluding the suit led and trumps).

Partner's H:9 (high) is a signal to lead Diamonds (higher suit than Clubs), which can result in a one-trick set. If you shifted to any suit other than Diamonds, Declarer will make his contract of 4S, losing only 3 Aces.

If Partner instead held:

S: 10
H: Q954
D: A63
C: AQ754

he would follow with the H:4 (low) asking for a club switch.

Master Teacher Questions
may be found on page 7 of this issue.
Good luck Candidates!!
See you in Atlanta.

An Interview with Eddie Kantar

By Maggie Sparrow, Ontario



Eddie Kantar

Maggie: Eddie, we heard about your 100 Magic Hands in the last issue of the Quarterly, they sound great. Can you tell us more about your teaching techniques?

Eddie: For openers, I have recently switched to a simple format that is working like a charm. I used this to teach intermediate to intermediate plus players. I now use exclusively the 100 hands I am offering in the latest ABTA Quarterly, but the method works equally well with most any lesson. My classes average 12-20 tables. The hands I use do NOT have a central theme. Instead they have key points in bidding, play and defense **with each player involved in every hand**. I do NOT lecture for even one minute before they begin to play. After all, there is no one subject to hone in on. I do explain the format, of course. My teaching comes AFTER each hand is played. **I have found that lecturing before play begins is counterproductive**. I plan to address each major point after the hand has been played. In my opinion, overlecturing is one of the worst things a teacher can do. This is a fault I have tried very hard to correct. Now in my classes the students play more hands, have more fun and learn just as much if not more.

Think of taking medicine in small doses rather than all at once.

The objective is to try to teach them how to **think bridge**. This isn't easy because most students haven't been taught how to direct their thinking, mainly because they have been taught to memorize. Not good. The students love it when they see how problems can be solved in bidding, play and defense without overextending the memory. A few apropos jokes or stories thrown in never hurt. I do make that a part of my classes without turning it into the Comedy Hour thanks to Yvonne, the beautiful wife. Also, Yvonne fills in when there is an empty seat and gives me the buzz from the trenches.

Once the cards have been distributed they are told who the dealer is and the vulnerability. Then they bid the hand. As they finish the bidding, I write the final contract with the opening lead where it can easily be seen. For example: 4H by West. Opening lead: C10. They must play the hand at that contract from the designated direction with the designated lead, duplicate style. After they finish, the cards are placed face up on the table as if each player was putting down the dummy. When all four hands are clearly in view, I go into my act. I go over the bidding, the play and the defense pointing out what they should have been thinking about, hopefully anticipating possible questions. It is then that I allow for questions, never before. It is disruptive and frequently the questions do not refer to the topic. In addition, I tell them beforehand that I will field questions before and after the class plus they can e-mail me questions at any time.

When I think an important point has been

brought up in one of the hands, I have them put a somewhat similar example on the table to reinforce the point. The teacher should keep in mind that there is only so much that a student can absorb. After all, the important points are covered in the lesson sheets. For that reason I prefer that they do not take notes during the lesson. Too much clutter on the table is not good. As an aside: Early on in my teaching career, a lady approached me after a class and said, "Eddie, you can't possibly teach them all you know about a subject, so please don't try." I try to keep that in mind, and if I ever slip up Yvonne is right there to remind me.

I have found another technique worthwhile. Some of these 100 hands are decided early on—as early as the first few tricks. There is no point in playing these hands out. It wastes time. Either declarer has the rest, or the hand has been defeated with good defense and now the declarer has the rest of the tricks. When I see one of these hands coming up, I tell them to stop play after maybe four, five or six tricks. Nobody complains. After the number of tricks requested has been played, play stops and they put all 13 cards face up on the table as if they were putting down a dummy. Then I go over the hand. This shortened version makes it easier for both me and the students to hone in on the important points.

Maggie: Some students will always 'get it' right away, for other is seems quite a struggle. How do you help the ones that struggle?

Eddie: You can only spend so much class time with strugglers. It's not fair to the others. I try to give them extra help before or after the lesson. Using this format a "struggler" is seldom too embarrassed mainly because many of the others are making mistakes as well. Even though the hands

are not hard or tricky or anything like that, it's just that most players, even the stronger ones, have not yet learned to 'think bridge.' My job.

Maggie: Is it possible to teach card sense or at least improve it a little?

Eddie: To me card sense is something you either have or you don't. I have never seen anyone actually acquire it. Of course it helps if you have played other card games when you were younger. I spend an inordinate amount of time discussing card combinations. I think that is a good way to get a feel for the cards.

Maggie: What is the best way to teach card play?

Eddie: By example, I'm big on 'tricks': how to count tricks, the difference between fast and slow tricks, etc. But mainly I use the lessons hands, particularly if there is something interesting in the play. For example if the key to a hand is entry management, after the hand is over I give them other examples of entry management with the cards.

Maggie: Let's move on to beginners. Do you recommend teaching card play first? Since beginner classes often are a mix of those who have played a little bridge and true beginners, how do you hold those who know about bidding back and keep them from trying to bid hands when we haven't taught that yet?

Eddie: Well, you are looking for trouble when you have players of different levels in the same class. Big trouble. I would avoid that by forming separate classes. Also, **I do not** believe in teaching the bidding before the play. It is far easier to understand bidding

after one sees which cards take tricks, particularly length tricks. The method I am proposing here works best with 1-3 tables but can be used with more.

What I do is start them playing a few 'War' hands. No dummy, no partners. After the cards are distributed, the dealer leads any card, and the play goes as in a bridge hand. Nothing is trump and the high card takes the trick. Once you can talk about tricks, you have something to work with. The second step is more War, but this time with a partner. Now they learn not to take partner's tricks! Then you can show them ways (cards face up on the table) of developing extra tricks by losing a trick to set up tricks. KQJ combination is a good example. And KQJ2 is an even better example. Arrange the cards so that the suit is divided 3-3-3, the opponents having the ace and show them how the deuce morphs into a trick. The concept of length is important to emphasize. Eventually you explain the principle of the finesse (leading from weakness toward strength). I have many, many diagrams of this in the *Bridge for Dummies* book.

The next step is explaining that the partnership that has more strength (high card points) figures to take more tricks. So you teach them how to count high card points. Just aces, kings, queens and jacks. No short suit and no long suit points! When the next hand is dealt each player announces aloud how many HCP he or she has. The team with the most HCP divides their total count by 3. Say that team has 24 HCP. Divide by 3 and the answer 8 tells how many tricks are needed 'to win.' (If the total is 23, when divided by 3, the nearest multiple is still eight. Once again they play, but this time, finally, a dummy goes down. Still no-trump. The player who has the most HCP is the declarer and the concept of the opening lead is introduced plus leading from length, etc.

Not too much more than that. Less is more. Now that the dummy is down they get the idea of the declarer playing both hands.

Eventually the teacher must introduce the concept of trump (or wild cards). The teacher shows how aces can be trumped, etc. once again emphasizing that you have to follow suit. Now, finally the students are taught how to count high card points. When the cards are redealt each player starts by announcing their point count aloud. But this time something new has been added. The team with the most points also announces their distribution aloud. For example: "I have 3 spades, 5 hearts, 2 diamonds and 3 clubs". After both players have announced their distribution, it can be determined whether an eight card fit or longer exists. If it does, that suit is designated as the trump suit and the requisite number of tricks +1 for the fit are calculated. So this time if the team with the most points has 24, they have to take nine tricks because of the upward adjustment for the fit. This gives them an appreciation of an eight card or longer fit. If more than one eight card fit exists, the hand is played in the major suit fit. This will be explained later when scoring is learned. At the end of the hand the teacher tries to point out one or two simple techniques in play and defense. Perhaps third hand high, perhaps showing how trumping in the short hand gains a trick, etc. Also constant mention should be made of distribution being just as important as points. They go hand in hand. Inevitably there will be those who are impatient to get to the 'real' bidding. (They have probably played before.) Once the teacher thinks the students have 'got it' it is time to discuss the bidding. You will tell them that they are going to be telling their partner exactly what they have been telling partner aloud only this time in 'bridgese,' not in English!

I do not believe in teaching students to

count extra points for length or shortness before the bidding starts! This concept can be introduced as the bidding progresses. It is counter productive to teach students to add points for distribution and then have them subtract those points when they are obviously not working. Why not wait to see if there is a fit (then add points) or if the hand is a misfit (subtract points)? This is the way it is in the real world. Nobody likes to learn something and then have to unlearn it.

I would like to talk a little bit about teaching the students to add (or subtract) points for distribution. Keep in mind I am assuming that the bidding is being taught LAST, not first. This means that the students have played quite a few hands using the method I have suggested. A good teacher will point out during the play the extra trick taking potential of long suits that have been (and vice versa) and the advantage of shortness when having support for partner (and vice versa). But nothing about distributional points yet.

In no time they will be ready to start counting points and perhaps opening the bidding. We start with this example hand:

S: 4

H: A873

D: Q86432

C: K6

How many points is this hand worth?

Some teach to count extra for short suits, others extra for long suits. Clearly, both short and broken long suits can be quite valuable or totally worthless! Why not listen to the bidding and then decide?

Say LHO opens 1D. At this point the 5th and 6th diamond, (forget the D:Q) are unlikely to be worth the cardboard they are printed on. Students who count for length will surely think they have a better hand than they actually have. Subtraction time. Say partner overcalls 1S. Now the singleton spade is also

worthless, it's actually a minus! Those that have been taught to count for shortness will once again be off base. More subtraction. Too many subtractions and class size will dwindle. No subtractions and they will not learn how to accurately evaluate a bridge hand. I know. Too many come to my classes for the first time adoring every singleton or void they have-no matter what. Get the picture?

I realize that this method is not a cure all. Obviously reevaluation on fitting hands will be necessary. However, if the student (anyone) wants to become even a half-way decent bidder eventually he or she must learn to develop some bidding judgment. I think this is a good way to start.

As for opening the bidding, I would start by telling the student to open all 12 HCP point hands (forget the exceptions), any 11 HCP hand that has a six card suit, two five card suits or any 5-4-4-0 pattern. Period.

This is what I believe. Let the letters start pouring in. let's talk about it.

Maggie: What percent entertainer are you versus one who imparts knowledge?

Eddie: I do tell stories and a few jokes. As mentioned, Yvonne reminds me if I start getting carried away. Hearing them laugh is a great aphrodisiac and they seem to love stories. The problem is that they often remember the stories and not the lesson! Incidentally, most of the stories are concerned with some hand I played and got egg on my face. They love it when teacher makes a boo boo. Love it. To answer the question about percentages, Yvonne says 80-20. I think more like 85-15. Oh yes, the imparting knowledge is the bigger number!

Maggie: Can you share with us a funny story or two? Are there jokes that you use in class?

Eddie: I have about 150 stories/jokes that I know by heart. Some are such sure-fire winners that I can't resist telling them. I have had students come up to me before class and beg me to tell such and such a story even though they have heard it a zillion times. Clearly the best time to throw in a story is when something comes up in class that is apropos. Here's one I tell when we discuss conventions: When I first started my partnership with Mike Lawrence he graciously said he would play my methods rather than vice versa. As a result I got a little carried away and started sending him what he called "dreaded Manila Envelopes" loaded with my favorite treatments. He got so fed up that he finally told me he was going to bid 3NT as quickly as possible and hope it wasn't a convention! Then he insisted I play a convention he thought was worthwhile: When one of us opens a major, a jump to the three level of the other major is artificial, shows opening bid values, promises at least four card support, and has an UNKNOWN singleton. Opener bids the next step to find out the singleton. It sounded good (many, many, experts use this now) and I agreed to play it. Fast-forward a few months to the National Men's Pairs in Houston where we are ringed with kibitzers. Please keep in mind that this convention has never come up in the interim and I had been weaned on strong jump shifts. Now that excuses are in place, here are our hands:

Mike (opener)	Moi (responder)
S: AKQxx	S: - -
H: 10xx	H: AKJ9xxxx
D: QJ	D: xx
C: xxx	C: AKx

1S	3H*
4S	5H*
6S	7H* All Pass

Little did I know what I had done-until Mike alerted my bid! 3H was alerted as showing spade support with an unknown singleton. Mike then bid 4S because he didn't care where my singleton was. He just wanted out. 5H was alerted as showing a void (you see how clever Mike is, I did have a void-in SPADES, but he thought it was in HEARTS!) With that useful information, Mike bid 6S. What else could I bid - 7H. This also was alerted. When they asked, Mike said: "Cancel all previous alerts" and passed. They led a club and I made it! Every kibitzer left. We didn't have one kibitzer (the word must have gotten around) for the rest of the session. Who can blame them?

Incidentally I have seen this convention scenario take place over and over again even with experienced players. **That is why I don't think 'convention overload' is the way to go with intermediate players.**

When I discuss Signaling vs. Notrump in my class, I lay out this diagram as an example hand:

North(Dummy)	
xxx	
West	East
QJ10xx	Kx
South	
Axx	

The idea, is for East to overtake the lead of the queen with the king to be able to drive out the ace. This goes against the grain. After carefully explaining why this should be done, I asked one class: "So who is going to overtake the queen with the king?" Silence. Finally, one lady piped up: Well, I wouldn't, but I know you would, you're so tricky"

Maggie: Do your students continue to take lessons from you for years? Do many students repeat a course?

Eddie: Not years, decades! To this day I don't know if they are coming back to learn more or hear the jokes. I had one lady who was in every class I taught for at least 10 years. For some reason she always wound up playing this same lesson hand (one of my favorites) in 6NT. It was a hand from the Notrump Play lesson. I noticed she went down for 10 straight years! The gist of the hand was that declarer was supposed to duck a heart holding Axx facing Kxxx and then test the suit to see if it broke 3-3. If it did, there were 12 tricks and no side suit finesse would be needed. If it didn't, a club finesse would be necessary. The way I set up the hand, hearts broke 3-3 but the club finesse didn't work. I wanted to reward declarer for proper technique (testing long suit establishment before taking a finesse in a shorter suit). For 10 years she took the club finesse and went down. I couldn't stand it any longer. The following year I put the club finesse onside and had the hearts break 4-2 so she would make the hand. And what do you think happened? She didn't take the club finesse, she played the ace-king and a heart and the player with four hearts cashed two tricks! I tried.

Maggie: *What are your favorite topics to teach? Are there any topics that you avoid?*

Eddie: I guess I like defensive lessons, counting lessons and inference lessons the best. I try to give lessons that the class probably hasn't had much of before. I'm hoping I can show them new techniques to help them in these areas. I shy away from teaching bidding for several reasons. For openers, if they take lessons from someone else, or have ever taken lessons from someone else, chances are most of those lessons are bidding lessons. Mainly I want to instill good thinking habits in the limited time I am with them.

More reasoning less memorizing is my motto.

Maggie: *What advice would you give our members to improve their teaching?*

Eddie: I have tried to do that in what I have written above. To sum up:

(1) Preparation; don't go to a class until you have carefully looked over the hands you plan to present.

(2) All explanations with cards face up on the table. Literally no exceptions to that rule.

(3) Not too much consecutive teaching at any one time (4-6 minutes max).

(4) A little humor, keep it light.

(5) Most of the class time spent letting them play. Chances are you not working with would-be experts, more likely students who don't want to embarrass themselves in class or when playing with friends. Playing with spouses or significant others is another ball game altogether. I have some great husband-wife stories. Most of your students want to play respectably and perhaps do well at the club level. Serious students with potential I would talk to privately.

Maggie: *You sell your teaching materials. What level of student are these appropriate for? Do your lessons teach a topic in depth or give an overview of a topic?*

Eddie: Thought you would never ask. Most of my materials are designed for intermediate to intermediate plus players. And yes, they do go into depth (within reason). I think the best lessons for teachers are Kantar Lessons Books 1 through 4. The lessons in those books can be used with the same format I have described. The difference is that the hands in each chapter zero in on a particular topic. The feedback has been very positive.

ABTA Online Activities

By Maggie Sparrow, Ontario

I am currently organizing the fall schedule for our on-line Chat topics. I would love to have some input from members about anything they would like to see listed. Also, anyone with any particular area of expertise who would like to come and tell us about it, let me know. In the three years that I've been doing this we've pretty much covered everything i can think of, so we'll be revisiting old topics unless i get some new input!

So....what would you like to talk about? What would you like to come and tell us about? What really works for you in your teaching? What topic have you enjoyed in the past that you would like to talk about further? Remember, these Chats are informal and friendly, sharing our ideas and our experiences with others.

ABTA Website

www.abtahome.com

Stay updated by checking our site regularly. If you would like your name to be linked to email on the members page, please send your permission to our web master Dennis Scott at bridge4fun@hotmail.com

ABTAdiscuss

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ABTAdiscuss/>

Join our on-line discussion list, it's a great way to ask questions, share ideas and feel connected to other teachers. If you don't want to receive the emails daily you can opt to receive the digest or go no mail and read and reply to the messages on the yahoo website.

ABTachat

www.bridgibase.com

Come to our once-a-month Chat group on-line to meet with others and talk about topics of interest. These sessions are a friendly and informal way of getting to know other

teachers and sharing ideas. They are held the fourth Sunday of each month, in the evening at 8.30 p.m. eastern, at Bridge Base Online. Check out the instructions on the web www.abtahome.com/page14.html for downloading the program, if you have not yet attended. (Or email Maggie at msparrow@csolve.net for a complete program as an email attachment.)

Dates & Topics for Upcoming Chats

June 26th Writing about bridge. At some point most bridge teachers start writing, whether it's a bridge newsletter, mini lessons, lesson handouts, bridge articles in the local newspaper, preparing a speech, or even writing your own full lessons. Come and discuss what works best. Tell us about your most successful effort or your biggest failure. What do we need to think about? What worked for you and why?

July 24th Your students' needs. Do you just advertise your lessons and hope students turn up or do you think about your students' needs and run lessons accordingly? How do you identify your students' needs?

August 28th The end of the summer and time to plan for the new teaching year. What materials will you chose for your lessons this year? Are you trying something new, or sticking to the ones you've always used. Are you planning on changing the format of your lessons? Or doing anything different? Come and share with others your plans and hopes for this year.

September 25th Bridge in schools. How does it work? Come and talk to our guest, Canadian bridge teacher Flo Belford, who has a lot of fun and success working with kids.

ABTAdiscuss Wrap

By Donna Compton, Dallas

ABTAdiscuss was created on November 3, 1999 and has 198 members. We welcome all ABTA members to join our yahoo discussion group. We urge all ABTA members to post their questions and comments on a regular basis so your ideas may be shared with the membership. See ABTA Online Activities page for further details. The following are excerpts of postings since the last Quarterly publication.

Book Recommendations

Bidding

Points Schmoits by Marty Bergen; Hardy Bidding in the 21st Century by Max Hardy; Bid Better by Dorothy Truscott

Play of the Hand

Kantar's Introduction to Declarer Play; Watson's Classic Book by Louis H. Watson

Losing Trick Count

♦ A mini-lesson handout may be found at the ABTAdiscuss message board in the February 18th, 2005 message.

♦ A Lecture by Ron Klinger on LTC may be found at http://www.bridge-forum.com/Archives/Ltc_lecture2_final.htm.

Relaxed Duplicate Rules

♦ I wish to offer a new game this fall that will attract newer players including current party bridge players. A relaxed rules game seems perfect for that crowd. Which rules do you believe should be relaxed and in what fashion. I can think of several such as leads out of turn, revokes, disposition of penalty cards, insufficient bids, claims and concessions...everyone's ideas are welcome. Send correspondence to bridgeacademy@mindspring.com for printing in the summer *Quarterly*.

♦ These games are a winner. Absolutely NO director calls, let them work it out by themselves. Provide a non-playing director.

Players can get help from director at any time during bidding and play. There are no time pressures. There is only one winner in each direction and everyone else ties for second (do not record names in ACBLScore). Winners at one event must play in same direction next time. Finally, get rid of any obnoxious players.

Class Rates

♦ The rates you charge should depend on whether you are getting the space and advertising for free or if amenities such as coffee and snacks are provided for your students. Rates also vary widely based on the size of the city in which you are located.

♦ In a classroom setting, there are more students per class and therefore less one-on-one attention. In a private home setting, you are providing much more than a two-hour bridge lesson—you are providing a personal entertainment service. Therefore the rates should naturally be higher for the private home classes.

♦ A good teacher must demand respect and the most effective way is to charge what you are worth. For some of you it may be scary to demand more money; however, 1. Are you worth it? 2. Don't you invest dues in the ABTA and continuing education courses for better skills? 3. Don't you have expenses (i.e. lessons, books, handouts etc.)? You may think that teaching bridge is a "hobby" but if you want your students' respect you need to start demanding what you are worth. Most of us teach bridge because of our love of the game and if you want your students to love it also, they need to have a vested interest in their learning.

Interested in joining the ABTA quarterly volunteer staff as the ABTAdiscuss Editor, email bridgeacademy@mindspring.com.

ABTachat Wrap

By Donna Compton, Dallas

Copyright Rules and Bridge Class Materials

(The following is a chat summary from a publishing company's point of view and not from an attorney's perspective. Nothing printed here should be interpreted to be legal advice.)

1. PUBLISHED BOOKS: You must distinguish between the copyright and various other rights which are included in copyright laws. Typically, the author does not transfer copyright, which is the basic ownership of the material to the publisher. However, he or she does sell (in exchange for royalties, usually) the right to publish and market the book. What that means is that if you want to reproduce material from a published work, you usually have to go to the publisher, not the author, since the publisher will control the permissions and rights you want to use.

2. FREE OR FOR SALE: There is no difference as to whether you sell the material or just give the material to the students for free. Most publishers will allow you to reproduce material. There may be a small fee, but it will not be large and it may well be zero if you are just talking about handing out a few sheets in a classroom setting. You are usually asked, however, that the source be acknowledged on any material you use.

3. REPEAT USE: If it is material you will be using more than once, you would probably ask once and explain that you are going to use it for classes throughout the year.

4. MAGAZINE/NEWSPAPER: Published books and magazine/newspaper articles are treated differently with regards to copyright rules because the authors of the magazine/newspaper articles may or may not retain ownership—depending on the arrangements between the author and the publisher.

5. FAIR USE: Permission would probably not be given to copy summaries and

exercises from a published book on a regular basis. This is where we get into the area of “fair use” which is a legal concept. The publisher tries to apply a reasonability test. For example: if what you are doing is using too much of the book, it is not fair to the author or the publisher. In legal terms, “too much” could be a small amount if it is what they call the “heart” of the work. For example, if the “heart” of the book were a group of hands, then you are probably infringing—this area is very grey.

6. ACKNOWLEDGE THE SOURCE: One example out of an entire book is probably not a problem but it is at least courteous to acknowledge the source. Bridge hands are not copyright, however, what is protected is the exact write-up of the hand. So you may use Eddie Kantar's example hands in class, but again, it is good ethics to acknowledge that he created them and not you.

7. TEACHERS' MATERIALS: Eddie Kantar has given teachers permission to use the hands from his four lesson books in any way we would like including for class handouts. The four lesson books are teacher materials and designed for you to use in any manner you see fit. In contrast, however, Eddie Kantar's defense books are published for student use and would require permission to be used as class handouts.

8. LESLIE SHAFER NEWSLETTER: You may use excerpts from my newsletter with a note as to where they may buy the newsletter.

9. PLEASE SEE: http://fairuse.stanford.edu/Copyright_and_Fair_Use_Overview/ for further guidelines regarding copyright rules.

Ways to Jazz Up Your Classes

(The following is an ABTAchat summary of expert teachers opinions on ways to jazz up your bridge class. These ideas printed here should be tried at home.)

ADDED VALUE

- 1. Class Supplies:** Three-ring binders with inside pockets and student bags with scorepads, cheat sheets, a catalog from Baron Barclay, an ACBL membership form, a cruise information flyer, a novice flyer for the local unit game...lots of stuff.
- 2. Labels:** Place labels on all notebooks, handouts, posters, etc.
- 3. Quality Materials:** Use heavy paper (40-60lb. paper) or stock card for handouts.
- 4. Good Appearance:** Your students notice everything – dress, hair, nails, posture, etc.
- 5. Visual Aids:** Place posters around the room, handouts with lots of illustrations. Use cards on the table and avoid the blackboard whenever possible.
- 6. Learn Students' Names:** Try to learn your students' names by the end of the second class. Ways to learn names: a) Write the name tags for the students as they enter the classroom and say goodbye to each student as they leave the classroom; b) Use the role call method if in a school setting; c) Place name cards on the tables.
- 7. Social Atmosphere:** Create a social group among your students with breaks during class and organize a brunch, lunch or dinner as a class about half way through the lesson series.
- 8. Video Tape yourself teaching:** You are your own worst critic. Take a look at your posture, grooming, mannerisms, etc.

HOMEWORK EXERCISES

- 1. Flash Cards:** Ask new students to make one flash card with a basic bidding questions on one side and the answer on the opposite side. Make copies (after editing) of the flash cards and distribute them to the class.
- 2. Pamphlets:** Give out different simple pamphlets and ask each person to write a 20

word summary of the most important idea in the pamphlet. Copy the summaries and pass them out to the class.

3. Pencil & Paper Quiz: Provide a weekly "quiz" handout the students take home to be discussed at the next lesson.

4. Single Bidders Hands: Give each student a bidding problem containing the bidding up to a certain point with a question mark for the last bid. Ask the student to write out what they would bid and why. Review the answers during the next class and give a prize for correct answers.

MARKETING

1. Focus on the Product: When making marketing decisions, focus not only on your class topic and materials but also on yourself. Express what makes you more desirable than the next teacher.

2. Logo: Create a personal logo and include it on all advertising and handouts. Your students should be able to identify your product as distinctively yours.

3. Advertising: Recognize a need in your community and then fill the need with your bridge classes. Some examples are the following: "Need to make new friends" or "Afraid that your mental muscles are getting lax?" or "You'll never be lonely if you play bridge." Visit <http://www.acbl.org/join/testimonials.html> for more ideas!

4. ACBL Cooperative Advertising Program: The ACBL will reimburse you 75% of your class advertising costs up to \$1000.00. Visit www.acbl.org for further details.

5. Data Base: Organize a class data base for future class advertisements. Use email and postcards to notify students of new classes.

Interested in joining the ABTA quarterly volunteer staff as the ABTAchat Editor, email bridgeacademy@mindspring.com.

Spring Book Reviews

By Dee Berry, Washington

BERGEN FOR THE DEFENSE

How to Defeat More Contracts
Techniques Every Defender Must Know
by Marty Bergen

(Ten-Time National Champion)

This 2004 copyrighted 200+ page hard-cover book is a delight to read, and would be enjoyed by post-beginning through intermediate-advanced students as well as their teachers.

Divided into 3 sections (Signals and Communication, Accurate Opening Leads, and Defense with a Capital "D") Bergen's first book focusing solely on defense, is extremely user-friendly. All hands use modern Standard American bidding, as outlined in a single page. Basic agreements on standard attitude, count, and suit preference are briefly reviewed, with chapter references.

Each of the book's 15 chapters has at least two example hands, first presented with only two hands shown, and then after a catchy and concise discussion, all four hands are displayed. Teachers will find great example hands and Marty's analyses are designed for entertaining and enlightening reading. The book's layout is such that it could be the basis for a defense class, with additional hands needed for each subject. Or, for an advanced class, more than one chapter could be covered in a single lesson.

After the instructional chapters there are three brief sections on "Berganisms," tips for winning defense, declarer play, and bidding with page references. These provide an excellent review.

Of special value is an appendix with concise descriptions of odd-even discards and upside-down signals. Marty candidly

mentions that in his long-time partnership with Larry Cohen, "switching to upside-down attitude signals was very comfortable for us. However, while we understood the advantages of upside-down count, we found that switch to be awkward."

"Bergen for the Defense" would be a valuable addition to any bridge students and teachers libraries.

"Bergen for the Defense" is available (autographed by request) from Bergen Books, email: mbergen@mindspring.com, 800-386-7432; US \$18.95; teachers' discounts: ½ off.

P.S. Bergen is already working on volume 2

POSITIVE DEFENSE AT BRIDGE

by Terence Reese & Julian Pottage

Labeled for "intermediate/advanced;"^{2nd} edition, revised and expanded. The original book of the same title was published about 20 years ago, but has been out of print for many years. According to Master Point Press, this new edition has been revised and "much new material added by Julian Pottage." Reese died in 1996; Pottage, also English, won the 2004 IBPA (International Bridge Press Assn.) Book of the Year award for "Play or Defense."

In this soft-cover book there are 75 hands, each posed as a problem, with the solution on the overleaf. According to the back cover, this "superb collection of problems is designed to teach players how to think along the right lines and thus defeat contracts that otherwise might be made. Most of the hands are quite difficult, which is as it should be: there is no easy path to success at this game."

Teachers willing to take the time to break

the hands into categories will find a gold mine of material. The majority of my students would be frustrated by the hands' difficulty, and a little baffled by the complex bidding systems mentioned (a "Ghestem variation" bid would puzzle many expert players,) and the wide variety of defensive styles, although well explained, make the material more difficult to follow.

This book is highly recommended for source material and for exceptional students who like a real challenge.

Available from Master Point Press, email: info@masterpointpress.com. US \$16.95, CAN \$19.95

DEFENDING SUIT CONTRACTS

by David Bird and Tim Bourke

This is another in the "Test Your Bridge Technique" series; this soft-cover, 94 p book, was written by David Bird (English) and Tim Bourke (Australian.)

The authors candidly explain their preferences for defensive methods: "We will assume that the defenders are using attitude signals when partner leads a suit, except when a king is led. In that case they will signal count. It is for you to decide, at the end of the book, if you were impressed by this method. Signaling will not be relevant on most of the problems anyway. The emphasis will be on thinking logically and counting.

"We will assume the use of 'count discards' also. Using this scheme, you discard from the suit you can best afford, usually one that you do not want partner to lead. At the same time, you show your count in this suit. A discard of the ♥8, for example, indicates lack of interest in hearts and an even number of cards in the suit."

Bridge teachers who are not familiar with this method or who choose to teach other methods may not be fond of the book, which offers many gems for defense, but should, in my opinion, be termed "advanced" and not intermediate/advanced.

The authors note that "There are many different discarding methods, and we recognize this one may not be to your preference. However, we had to pick something!"

The problems are presented in groups of four, followed by thorough analyses and complete hand diagrams. The book is very user-friendly, as are all the books in the Technique Series. The problems should cause lots of food for thought, as even the 2nd problem hand was "flunked" by both teams in an international match. Definitely this book is for the serious defender willing to expend considerable effort.

Available from Master Point Press, email: info@masterpointpress.com or Baron Barclay Bridge Supplies, website: www.baronbarclay.com.

Quantity discounts are available for teachers. US \$9.95, CAN \$13.95.

Looking for Course Ideas?

If you would like some good ideas about various topics for bridge lessons, including mini-workshops, check out the vast listing of bridge courses offered at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, KS. One of our ABTA members is listed as an instructor.

Bridge courses are listed under Sports & Recreation in Continuing Education. The JCCC home page is www.jccc.edu. Check out both the current and past semesters to see the variety of courses offered.

- Submitted by Charles Lawson

Bridge Baron 15

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A Tribute to the Debi's in the World

by Marti Ronemus, Pennsylvania

mronemus@suscom.net



Marti Ronemus

“So, how about taking some painting lessons with me,” asked my friend Edith (Edith McMullin who developed Easybridge! and was the ACBL Novice/Intermediate Coordinator and Tournament Director for many years).

I said somewhat regretfully, as painting has always been something I wished I could do, “Oh, I don’t think so. It might be fun, but I have no talent, have never taken a lesson and I’m sure I don’t have any real ability.”

“Well, that’s never stopped you from playing bridge, has it?” she said. (Edith takes no prisoners!) “We go on Thursday. Be here at 9.”

Thus began an amazing adventure. After a year, I am more convinced than ever that I have no real talent, but I don’t care. The process of painting is what’s important, not the product. Interestingly enough, I’ve been whisked back to being a Novice, which is hugely beneficial to my own teaching. I’ve studied under two painters in two different classes, and I’m going to tell you a little about each of them. You’ll see how it applies.

The first is a teacher who is quite well-known and for good reason. He is a fabulous technician and produces truly lovely works. They dazzle the eyes. He begins a class by

putting up a slide of a lovely scene and the people in the class reproduce it as best they can (did I mention this is watercolor?). He walks around the room, advising and critiquing. He places a heavy emphasis on the structural sketch done before the painting begins. At least half of the 2-1/2 hour class is devoted to the sketch.

The drawing was the worst time for me. I honestly can’t draw and don’t have much interest in it. I just want to get started putting the gorgeous colors on the paper, and watching what happens when they start blending. (Sort of like lecturing to a new bridge player when all they really want to do is get their hands on the cards.) But I draw, with many sighs and a flurry of erasure droppings.

One thing that bothered me a lot in that class was that the instructor thought nothing about taking our painting or drawing away from us, and “fixing” it, to show us how to do something better. Now, my work is pretty terrible if I am honest, but it is MINE and it made me mad when he did that. My work was always vastly improved, but ... not mine any more. Does that make sense? I wasn’t really happy and not having as much fun as I thought I should. I actually had more fun on the occasional afternoon when Edith and I painted at her house.

I was ready to quit, but I kept hearing mention of a Debi Watson who teaches at the York (PA) Art Association, so I signed Edith and me up.

What a world of difference! Debi begins each class with a demonstration of a technique, illustrating a concept of how we can get an effect from our papers, brushes and colors. Then we each work

independently on a project of our own choice. Debi doesn't insist on sketches ("I don't teach drawing, I teach painting.") and since we are each working on separate subjects, there's a lot of excitement seeing what others are doing. Her own work is not only exquisite, but filled with joy and the unusual.

Debi roams the room, stopping to visit with each of us. She encourages and uses Experiential Learning concepts. "Debi, I'm not happy with this." "What don't you like?" "This corner here." "Why not?" "I dunno..." Well, is it too dark? Does it stand out too much? Fade away?" "Hmm...maybe that's it. It doesn't stand out enough." "What could you try to fix it?" And so on.

Rather than forcing a solution on us, or painting on OUR pictures, she pulls the solution from us, one struggling thought at a time. As painful as it is, she guides us to self-knowledge and improvement. And then she says, "Try it and see what happens." Right out of the Easybridge! manual...letting the student experience the thrill of solving the problem.

Debi also creates an environment in which the student can thrive. I have never heard her make a critical remark about a painting. She always finds something in it that is worthwhile and worthy of remark. (Not too easy sometimes. I gave her one of mine to

frame for me, and after asking me which side was up, struggled for a positive comment, "Doesn't it feel good to have painted something you want framed?" she asked with a big smile.)

We all wander around looking at each other's work and she makes sure there are only positive remarks. As a result, we welcome each other's visits to our stations. Encouragement and kindness abound. I LOVE Tuesday mornings...it's the best part of my week.

So, think about your bridge teaching. Are you like Debi? Guiding and encouraging, but letting students find their own way? Giving concepts rather than making players memorize techniques? Making sure only kind comments will be heard? Do you show that bridge is a journey rather than a destination?

The most important painting lesson I've learned from Debi is that you don't have to be a GOOD painter to enjoy painting. And thank heavens that's true in bridge also. If we had to be good to enjoy this game, there would only be 20 people playing...in the world!

So here is to the Debi Watsons of the world...they encourage us, nourish us, nurture us, make sure we're having enough fun to come back, and sooner or later, turn us into reasonably respectable painters ... and players. Sounds like a role model to me!



Applebasket Tips Contest



Our new Applebasket Chairman, Jane Friend, is eagerly awaiting your entry for this year's contest. The winner will be presented with a crystal apple at our banquet. Entries must be at most one page on paper suitable for copying (no letterhead or other identifying feature). You need not attend the ABTA Convention in Atlanta in July to win. Speaking of tips, here's one from our Chairman – good things come in small packages so KISS (keep it short, sweetie). **Submit your teaching tip by July 1** via email to JFJKJB@verizon.net (best) or by snail mail to Jane Friend, 4319 Embassy Park Drive NW, Washington, D.C. 20016-3607.

S E M I N A R

July 19-20, 2005

Tuesday Afternoon, July 19

(The focus is on teaching and the business of teaching.)

Speakers Include:

(Speakers & times are tentative)

Bruce Greenspan - *Teaching Bridge For Fun & Profit*

Dennis Scott - *The 99 Second Bridge Teacher*

Dennis Dawson - *Don't Touch That Card* (A hands-on lesson presentation)

Leslie Shafer & Donna Bowser - *Putting Entertainment into Your Teaching - Jazz Up Your Lessons*

1:00-1:15 pm - Registration

1:15-1:30 pm - Introductions

1:30-6:00 pm - Speakers

6:00 PM - Closing

6:30 PM - Depart for optional dinner at

Pitty Pat's Porch (Reservations Required).

Wednesday Morning, July 20

Morning with Jerry Helms!



8:30 am - Continental Breakfast

9:00 am - Program Begins

12:00 am - Closing Announcements

→→→SEE YOU AT THE COVENTION!→→→

ABTA Seminar & Convention Registration Form

July 19-21, 2005

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Email _____

Check All That Apply

_____ Register me for the Convention (Wed-Thurs) \$150 US (\$175 after 6/15/05);
\$198 Canadian (\$231 after 6/1/05).

_____ Register me for the Seminar (Tues-Weds) \$40 US or \$54 Canadian.

_____ Register my guest(s) for the banquet (\$80 US or \$107 Canadian).

_____ Register me/us for the Wednesday evening Botanical Garden tour and dinner.

_____ I have enclosed a separate check (\$50 US per person or \$67 Canadian).

_____ Make a reservation for me (us) for Tuesday dinner at Pitty Pat's Porch.

_____ I understand that this is a firm commitment since reservations must be
made in advance. I will notify ABTA in advance of any change in plans.

_____ Check here if this is your first Convention or Seminar.

_____ Check here if you will be wearing your own ABTA name badge.

Mail to: Pat Harrington, ABTA Business Secretary
14840 Crystal Cove Ct. #503, Fort Myers, FL 33919-7417
239-437-4106 abta@earthlink.net - Make checks payable to ABTA

Non-US residents may
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July 20-21, 2005

C O N V E N T I O N

Wednesday Afternoon, July 20

- 1:15 pm Registration (only for those who did not attend Seminar)
- 1:30 pm Leslie Shafer - *Annual Memeberhip Meeting and Election*
- 2:15 pm TBA
- 2:45 pm Bruce Greenspan - *Finding Your Voice As A Teacher*
- 3:15 pm *Break*
- 3:30 pm Carole Budnick - *Components of a Successful Bridge Business*
- 4:00 pm Ray Lee - *Recent Publications for Bridge Teachers*
- 4:30 pm Closing Announcements
- 5:00 pm Botanical Gardens Trip (Reservations and Pre-Payment Required)

Thursday, July 21

- 8:00 am Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 am Lynn Berg
- 9:30 am TBA
- 10:00 am *Break*
- 10:15 am Allan Mazer - *Thinking Outside the (Bidding) Box*
- 10:45 am Jerry Helms
- 11:30 am Announcements
- LUNCH BREAK -
- 1:00 pm Ed Marzo - *Creating Great Deals for Your Class*
- 1:30 pm Julie Greenberg - *What's New at the ACBL*
- 2:00 pm Frank Stewart - *A Teacher's Task*
- 2:30 pm Gene Simpson - *Slam Bidding Over Notrump Openings*
- 3:00 pm *Break*
- 3:30 pm Fred Gitelman - *Bridge Base Online & Teachers*
- 4:00 pm Larry Cohen - *Lawful Preemption*
- 4:30 pm Shawn Quinn - *Helping Students Problem Solve*
- 5:00 pm Closing Announcements

Gala Banquet, Awards & Expert Panel - 7:30 pm

George Jacobs, MC

Jerry Helms

Lisa & David Berkowitz



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(Inquire about less expensive hotels)

Tuesday Evening Group Activity

Join us for a Southern style dinner at Pitty Pat's Porch - just a short walk from the Hyatt. Meals range between \$17-26. Reservations are required. Please inform us immediately if you must cancel. Guests permitted.

Wednesday Evening Group Activity

The evening will include a tour of the Botanical Gardens and dinner at Mary Mac's, a Southern family-style restaurant. Cost: \$50 all inclusive. Reservations & pre-payment required. Guests permitted.

Board Meetings

New Time! Tuesday, July 19 - 8:30 pm
Friday, July 22 - 8:00 am

Master Point Press



Bridge in Three Weeks by Alan Truscott

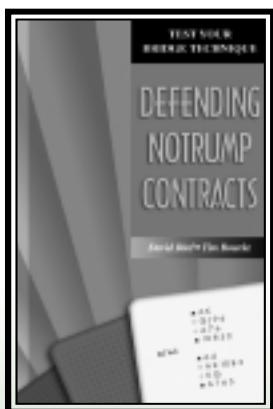
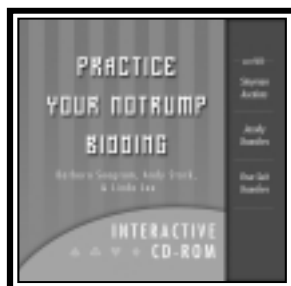
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