

three clubs, so I re-evaluated my hand for about six to eight seconds and decided to pass. Immediately my LHO called the director for "protection" because there was a break in tempo. I was taught to re-evaluate my hand after every bid, and I thought I was playing at normal speed.

How long is a player allowed to think before making a move, whether to bid or to pass? If the opponents are bidding and playing too fast, do I have to rush and follow their tempo (which often ends up in a disaster for me) or should they slow down a bit in order to maintain an even tempo? It is not very pleasant when your opponents call the director on you. It just takes the joy out of playing bridge!

B.D. LIM  
Palos Verdes Estates, CA

*Chief Tournament Director Rick Beye comments: "As you point out, less-experienced players often require more time to digest information, especially in competitive situations. Truly experienced players understand this, as do veteran tournament directors."*

*"Law 73D points out that it is 'desirable, though not always required' for players to maintain steady tempo. A variation in and of itself is not an infraction. The exact time frame for a steady tempo is not defined by Law or regulation."*

*"As an aside, Law 90A empowers the director to penalize players who unduly delay or obstruct the game — as through needless director calls. I would hope that your club director takes the time to slow down your high-speed opponent."*

### Midwest charm

To the Editor:

I traveled from California to the Nebraska Regional, based in part on the experts' endorsements in the flyer. Sure enough, the tournament was super.

On the last day and at the very last minute, I found that I had no partner, and the Swiss teams had started. As I headed for the door, someone asked if I was sitting out the first

round. I said, "Not exactly." A short announcement to the room followed and, lo and behold, a team graciously took me in as a fifth member.

Hospitality lives, at least in Mid-America!

HUGH HUFF  
San Mateo CA

### Al would have passed

To the Editor:

Al Roth was a great theoretician. Many of the bidding devices in common use today are the product of his imagination. A cornerstone of Roth's methods was "having the goods" when you open the bidding. That's unlike current trends, which seem to permit an opening on just about any 13 cards.

The first deal in the August "It's Your Call" (page 32) is highly illustrative. South deals, opens 1♣, and then runs into trouble with this hand:

♠QJ95 ♥AQ9 ♦Q94 ♣Q87.

Not one member of the panel asked, "Why did I open this trash?" Al, who I had the fortune to know in passing, would have been looking to wash the mouth out with soap. Pass is correct, for several reasons. One and a half quick tricks are inadequate for an opening bid. Applying the losing trick count, including adding a loser for four queens and only one ace, yields eight. Eight-loser hands are not opening bids, unless three and a half quick tricks are held.

S. Garton Churchill, an advocate of the weak 1NT, would have passed that collection because of the inadequate defense. "Church" liked aces and kings, not "quacks."

If, to make game, partner needs a better hand than you're holding, pass is the correct call.

ELI DUTTMAN  
Plainsboro NJ

### Colorful choice

To the Editor:

In the early Seventies, Terence Reese championed a new convention that swept across Europe and has

been prominent ever since: the Multi-colored 2♦.

The Multi is frowned upon in the USA because the convention is considered to give an unfair advantage. There is a strong possibility that from Jan. 1 it will be legal for the Vanderbilt, Spingold and long team trials only — no more pairs, knockouts or regional events of any kind.

In the European Open Championships in Antalya, Turkey, American Roy Welland faced a vexing problem. Welland, sitting South with his side vulnerable, held:

♠KQ10 ♥— ♦AQ1083 ♣KJ853.

He heard this auction:

West	North	East	South
	2♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	3♦	DbI
4♥	DbI	Pass	?

(1) Multi: usually a weak two-bid in either major.

Welland's decision to jump to 6♠ did not work out too well when partner's hand proved to be:

♠8643 ♥AK10643 ♦— ♣972.

Not much of an advantage to North-South there, but this is the type of accident that can occur if you have little opportunity to practice a convention, either by playing it, or by playing against it.

It is considered too difficult for the average player to cope with, and when it first appeared in Europe it foxed a lot of good players, too. Once everyone became familiar with it, the terror rapidly disappeared — even modest club players were soon dealing with it in their stride. A lot of good players now believe there are better uses for an opening bid of 2♦, but they do that by choice, not because the convention is a pariah.

The Multi makes bridge more fun to play — for both sides. Rather than bury it under the carpet, why not offer a lecture on it at the next few NABCs and see what the reaction is — I'll even offer to do them!

MARK HORTON  
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