

and now I know why one gets that impression: It is because from the moment when the play to the first two rounds has not excluded three-three, the likelihood of three-three is much higher (barring special indications) than the original 36 percent.

There is also a lesson for the defend-

ers. Against weak players who play from the bottom upward and do not yield their high cards until they have to, many more cards become "significant" in the sense that we have been discussing, and many more inferences can be drawn when those significant cards do not appear.

★ *MOST ENTERTAINING MISDEAL* ★

## MY FATHER'S SON, THE BRIDGE TEACHER

BY EDWIN B. KANTAR

EXCERPTED FROM THE SEPTEMBER 1965 ISSUE

**E**arly in life, I decided I would either have to work for a living or enjoy myself. Observation showed that very few people could combine both. I decided to enjoy myself. I became a bridge teacher.

I have been teaching bridge for the past 17 years, steadily for the past six or seven. I can just see Stoney wince as he reads this. He is not feeling sorry for me, mind you, but for the people I've been teaching.

You see. Stoney thinks I can barely follow suit. But that's not really an insult. Stoney thinks only five people in the world can play bridge, and he's not fully convinced about the other four. Incidentally, Roth and Stone have so thoroughly indoctrinated their followers that five-card majors are the only way to play that if I ever happen to get a decent result against a Roth-Stoner by opening a four-card major, he invariably takes my hand out of the

board, and he and his partner examine my four-card suit as though it were some kind of snake, about to lash out at them.

However, for all of Stone's conversation, Roth makes him look like a piker. In Toronto, when Marshall Miles and I played (and I use the term generously) on the same K.O. team with them, Roth would inspire confidence in Marshall and me by making a plane reservation home before each match.

I mention all this only because I teach my classes to open four-card majors, if the hand calls for it, and I wanted the five-card majorites to know this before reading on. Four-card major propaganda may be on the banned reading list.

Oh yes, I also teach them to count for long suits instead of short ones when originally evaluating their hands. I would estimate conservatively that this has cost me close to three years of my life in futile explanations. (Many

of my ladies sneak Goren books into class.) Once, I mentioned that in order to give your partner a double raise you need at least four trumps and 13-16 points in support of partner's suit. Suddenly, a woman began leafing through her Goren book. She looked at the woman she came with and, with obvious relief, said, "He's going to be all right—he tells the truth!"

Now that I am in my reclining years, I have recklessly begun to teach limit raises. Live it up, and let the chips fall where they may.

I started out, naively enough, by teaching beginners. I should have realized immediately that I was not cut

out for this. In one of my first classes, I walked over to help someone play a hand. After a few tricks, every single card in the dummy was good and there was no way, even for this lady, to lose another trick. I simply said, "Go over to the dummy and take the rest of the tricks." With that, I left to assist at another table. As I glanced back, I saw the lady walking around the table to get over to the dummy!

At times they call me over to the table. "What should I play now?" the declarer usually asks me. I take a look and see six cards in everybody's hand. "What's trump?" I ask, stalling for time. "Hearts." "Do they have any left?"

"One or two, but c those clubs in dur remember, it's be they were played her right-hand o clubs in dummy g I know? I'm not p this time I've sne the hands, and y some of the endin

Sometimes the about a hand they night before. "I-v husband," the st (she's clearly loc but she forgets I' he bid three spa have done?" "Yo three spades?" "N gave me one spa clubs." (This is a v "And he mentione should I do?" "De hand?" I try. "Oh no spades—or ma king, ten, ace, nin like you put on th diamonds with s rest clubs, but it way, I said four h could have made he right?"

"No," I say, hat ness is slow, and anybody. "You w automatic four-he

The last straw ago when I was t son of a series fo ticular lady cam was the first lesse pened to sit Sou deal on the table, about to explain

## CHALLENGE THE CHAMPS

WEST HANDS FOR THE NOVEMBER BIDDING MATCH

(East hands are on page 41.)

- 1 North dealer; neither side vul.  
♠ 10 6 ♥ 9 3 ♦ Q 10 8 7 2 ♣ AK 5 4
- 2 East dealer; *South bids spades; North raises one level up to three; N-S vul.*  
♠ 5 2 ♥ A 9 7 ♦ K Q 10 4 ♣ A J 3 2
- 3 South dealer; East-West vul.  
♠ AK 8 7 5 ♥ J 3 2 ♦ K 10 4 2 ♣ 3
- 4 West dealer; both sides vul.  
♠ 7 2 ♥ A J 8 7 6 ♦ A Q J 6 4 ♣ 6
- 5 North dealer; North-South vul.  
♠ AK Q ♥ A Q 8 6 ♦ K 5 3 ♣ A 7 4
- 6 East dealer; East-West vul.  
♠ AK 7 4 ♥ Q 6 5 2 ♦ AK 3 ♣ A Q
- 7 South dealer; both sides vul.  
♠ AK J 5 2 ♥ K 4 ♦ Q 10 3 2 ♣ 4 2
- 8 West dealer; neither side vul.  
♠ K 8 7 5 4 ♥ A 9 8 5 ♦ AK J ♣ 3
- 9 North deals *and opens one spade; East-West vul.*  
♠ J 6 5 ♥ 9 ♦ Q 10 9 8 ♣ AK 8 6 3
- 10 East dealer; both sides vul.  
♠ A Q 7 4 3 ♥ AK J ♦ 10 ♣ AK Q 3

"One or two, but only little ones." "Are those clubs in dummy good?" "I don't remember, it's been a long time since they were played. Esther," she asks her right-hand opponent, "are those clubs in dummy good?" "How should I know? I'm not playing the hand." By this time I've sneaked a look at all of the hands, and you wouldn't believe some of the endings!

Sometimes they come and tell me about a hand they played at home the night before. "I was playing with my husband," the story usually begins (she's clearly looking for sympathy, but she forgets I'm on his side), "and he bid three spades. What should I have done?" "You mean he opened three spades?" "No, I bid one heart, he gave me one spade, I gave him three clubs." (This is a very generous game.) "And he mentioned three spades. What should I do?" "Do you remember your hand?" I try. "Oh yes, my hand. I had no spades—or maybe one—the queen, king, ten, ace, nine and an x in hearts—like you put on the board—the king of diamonds with some others, and the rest clubs, but it doesn't matter. Anyway, I said four hearts and he said we could have made three notrump. Was he right?"

"No," I say, hating myself, but business is slow, and I can't afford to lose anybody. "You were right. You had an automatic four-heart bid."

The last straw came up a few years ago when I was teaching the fifth lesson of a series for beginners. This particular lady came to class thinking it was the first lesson, and she just happened to sit South. I had a prepared deal on the table, open-faced, and was about to explain the bidding. I began

by saying that South was the dealer and that with 14 points and a five-card spade suit—in beginning classes you give them at least five-card suits or they won't bid at all—the correct opening was one spade.

"Mr. Kantar," this woman said, raising her hand, "Which spade should I bid?"

After a bit, you get to recognize questions of this type. If you try to answer them, you usually wind up wishing you had gone to work for a living. I parried. "Why don't you wait a bit, and you'll see what the bidding means." She seemed satisfied, so I continued: "South opens one spade . . ." "Mr. Kantar, where should I put the spade that South opens?"

Well, I answered the question, and that is why I no longer teach beginning classes. I now call my classes "intermediate" and "advanced." The fact that the same people come does not disturb me. In all of these classes, I start out by giving a 20- to 40-minute lecture on the topic of the day and then call out a prepared deal for distribution at the tables. Each player takes a suit, and I call off one suit at a time. Using this method, I can teach any number of tables without trouble—provided that everyone distributes the cards properly.

The fact that "eight" and "ace" sound so much alike has caused endless confusion—to say nothing of those students who forget to distribute the suit they are holding, to say nothing of the fact that somebody always winds up with too many or too few cards, to say nothing of the fact that almost no one bothers to count his cards, to say nothing of my mistakes as I call the cards. Otherwise, it is an infallible system.

In one of my "beginning" classes (which I had been teaching for about five years), a truly memorable event occurred. Having called out the hands, I noticed that one lady had wound up with 20 cards and her partner six! True to their code of trusting me implicitly, it didn't seem to faze either of them.

The lady with the 20 cards was one of my better students; by that I mean she had decided to go all out and count for her long suits, regardless of what certain books said, and she was trying to count up her hand. Her real problem was in trying to hold on to her cards. She needed a basket; they kept falling down. Finally she got organized, and with her 6-8-4-2 distribution she came through admirably with a one-heart

opening. Next hand passed, and her partner was in a quandary. This was an older woman, who had counted for short suits all her life, and she wasn't going to let a young upstart change her bidding habits. Relying on her years of experience, she realized that with her 0-1-3-2 distribution she had a truly magnificent hand. Why, in short suits alone she practically had an opening bid! Finally she called me over. "Mr. Kantar, Mr. Kantar!" she shouted hysterically. "I've never seen a hand like this before! What should I bid?" Had I been in a particularly fiendish mood, I would have counted up her hand with her, but the sight of her partner, trying valiantly to hold her cards, sobered me, and I finally revealed all. But it hurt.



## TEST YOUR PLAY

### Problem A

Rubber bridge; South dealer; N-S vul.

NORTH  
 ♠ A K 4 2  
 ♥ A 7 5 3  
 ♦ 8 6  
 ♣ A K 5

SOUTH  
 ♠ 7 6 5 3  
 ♥ K 2  
 ♦ A K Q J 10  
 ♣ Q J

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
5 ♠	Pass	5 NT	Pass
7 ♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Diamond three, six, seven, ace.  
 Diamond king, deuce, eight, five.  
 Diamond queen, four, spade deuce, nine.

**Plan the play.**

### Problem B

Matchpoints; West dealer; N-S vulnerable

NORTH  
 ♠ A K 3  
 ♥ A J 9 6  
 ♦ Q J 2  
 ♣ A K 4

SOUTH  
 ♠ Q J 10 7  
 ♥ 5  
 ♦ A 9 5 3  
 ♣ Q J 6 2

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	2 ♦*	Double	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
5 NT	Pass	6 NT	(All Pass)

\*weak  
 West leads the club ten.

**Plan the play.**

(Solutions on page 42.)

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