

# Olney Bridge Club News

*Official newsletter of the Olney Maryland Bridge Club*

## The Bridge Guy Speaks

We now enter the longest February in the past four years. Alas, the extra day this month is not a Saturday (no extra bridge), but we will persevere nonetheless...

We continued to tally 20 or more players on each of the past four Saturdays. Note that we currently have access to the library meeting room (for free). Anytime we show our interest in that library service, we all benefit. So, thank you all for attending and making communal use of the library!

On February 10 I started a new training activity. I prepared pre-dealt hands based on a Frank Stewart article and asked the participants to bid and play. Thereafter, we analyzed different alternatives and optimal play. I hope those of you in attendance found it useful. I'll plan to occasionally provide additional hands in coming months. The February 10 hand is presented later in this newsletter.

One final note – I plan to buy additional card tables as our numbers increase. I'd like to discuss (with the group that attends the Saturday session) how to fund those tables. Stay tuned.

As always, practice, practice, practice! And convince your friends to join us! Our message to the community: bridge is fun and intellectually stimulating – come join us! All ages are welcome!

## Patience

In my beginner bridge classes I said something along the lines of “No Trump

### **Beginner Bridge Lessons**

#### **Next Class:**

Lesson 1: Intro to Bridge – Mar 30

Lesson 2: Declarer Play – Apr 6

Lesson 3: Opening Bids – Apr 13

Lesson 4: Responses – Apr 20

Lesson 5: Opening NT Bids – Apr 27

Lesson 6 (optional): Defense – May 4

*Each class is from 2:30 – 4:30 at the Olney library.*

#### **Ongoing Practice Sessions:**

*Every Saturday from 2:30 – 4:30 at the Olney library.*

#### **Montgomery College Bridge Class**

*A beginner class is available starting February 21. Registration is due by February 20. This class has a fee but might be useful if you wanted a different perspective. Google “bridge for beginners card game montgomery college” to get the link.*

contracts are often a race to see who gets their tricks first”. Some people may have interpreted that as “play all my high cards as fast as possible”.

That was not the intended message... 😊

Here is a very simple sample hand that demonstrates how to set up a long suit before playing all the high cards.

(continued on next page)


North Deals  
None Vul

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

♠ 9 8 4  
♥ Q J 10 4 3  
♦ 6 2  
♣ Q J 9

♠ Q J 10 7 5  
♥ 9  
♦ Q J 10 8 5  
♣ 6 3

♠ K 3 2  
♥ A 8 6  
♦ 9 4  
♣ A K 10 8 7



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All pass			
Lead: ♠Q			

After North's 1D opening bid, South bids 2C (showing the 5-card suit with a hand containing 10 points or more). In this case, North bids 2NT to show a minimum balanced hand, and 3NT looks good.

Before playing to the first trick, you scan the hand quickly, looking for immediate winners. You see eight immediate tricks – the A and K in each suit. What happens if you immediately take those immediate winners?

Down you'll go. You'll win those eight tricks and no others. Whichever opponent wins the 9<sup>th</sup> trick will immediately take tricks in their long suit and win the rest. You promoted their Qs and Js (usually weak cards).

So, what is the alternative to win that one additional trick? You have two choices: hope that the hearts split 3 – 3, so that you can take the 13<sup>th</sup> heart; or hope that clubs split 3 – 2, so that you can take one (or two) additional clubs.

You don't need to memorize tables of suit split probabilities. However, you should

have a general idea that the 3 – 2 split is about twice as likely as the 3 – 3 split (actually, 68% vs 36%).

You can play this many ways, but for now think "brute force". Lead the A and K of clubs. If the split is 3 – 2, play another club to drive out the Q. The other clubs are good.

## The Takeout Double II

I wanted to follow up on last month's newsletter topic – takeout doubles. In that article I gave the basic approaches for making and responding to a takeout double. In this article I'll discuss a special case when using a takeout double. Then I'll talk about when a double is for penalty.

First, the takeout double may also be used when you have a **strong, mostly-one-suited hand**. With a long suit and a weaker hand you might make an overcall bid (e.g., bid 1S over a 1H opening bid by opponents). But here is an example with a strong hand:


North Deals  
None Vul

♠ Q 9  
♥ A Q J 10 6  
♦ K 10 9  
♣ 7 5 4

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

♠ A K J 10 8 6  
♥ 4  
♦ A Q  
♣ K Q 3 2

♠ 3 2  
♥ K 9 5  
♦ 8 7 5 4 3 2  
♣ 10 9



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1♥	Dbl	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All pass

East doubles (for takeout) with a very strong hand and long, strong spades.



Next, assuming you set up the club suit, how do you get to the South hand to cash in any extra tricks? The only entry to the South hand is the A of hearts! You must keep that card as a later entry, so take the K of hearts on the first trick.

Now, how to play the club suit to make use of all three high cards? First, don't think of leading the Q of clubs toward the Ace. Someone will cover the Q with the K, and you will then only be able to play two rounds with high cards. That is no better than playing the diamond suit.

Instead, take the Ace and lead toward the QJ of clubs. That will allow you to play one high card (A, Q, and J) on three successive tricks. If all goes well, the K and T will fall in the first three tricks, and you then win two more club tricks. Nine tricks in all.

## Famous Bridgies

Robert Todd is a youngish professional bridge player and active bridge teacher. He earned mathematics degrees at two universities (with background in physics and political science) but re-vectored into professional bridge after a stay in Helsinki, where he played with a number of European professionals.

Todd has placed highly in a number of national events, including a win at the 2014 Knockout Teams championships at the Dallas NABC. He has published a number of monographs on bridge bidding and play. He is president of the ACBL Educational Foundation.

Todd runs the Adventures in Bridge teaching forum (link: <https://www.advinbridge.com/>). He offers a free Clubs membership (link: <https://www.advinbridge.com/membership-details>). You can receive bridge emails and

articles for free. He also takes part in numerous bridge cruises, often pairing with other popular bridge teachers.

## Bridge Quotes

*Make the opponents guess last.* **Robert Todd**, quoted in *Bidding Basics: Bridge Philosophy*.

*Get into and out of the auction as quickly as possible with weak hands.* **Robert Todd**, same source as above.

## Olney Bridge Club

The primary purpose of the Olney MD Bridge Club is to teach and encourage social bridge in the areas including and surrounding Olney, Maryland.

We meet regularly (Saturdays from 2:30 – 4:30) at the Olney library for practice playing sessions.

Please feel free to send email to [bridgeinfo@bridge.careytutor.com](mailto:bridgeinfo@bridge.careytutor.com) with any questions, comments, recommendations, or other correspondence for the editor. In particular, if you have a bridge article to include in a future newsletter or a suggestion of a possible topic, any such submission would be much appreciated.

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