

Bidding easier to learn than 'play'



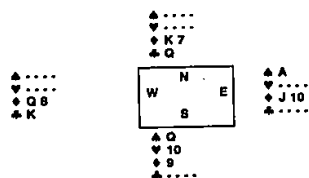
I wrote once before about the great French master Juste Le Dentu's sage reply when asked "Which is more difficult to learn, bidding or play?"

"Unquestionably, the 'play' of the cards," he answered. "If you really wanted to take the trouble, you could become an above-average bidder in 15 days, but to become a good card player might take 15 years."

His position is universally subscribed to, yet it is a wonder that among the world's finest, most of the problems become one because of the bidding. In the major tournaments today, where the standard of performance is exceptional, the play is responsible for at best only 25 percent of the swings. This is because the play by the masters is close to perfection but not so in their bidding.

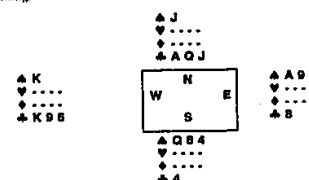
Today's astonishing hand was played many years ago in a famous European tournament. Less than a dozen declarers arrived in the 12-trick heart slam off the ace, king of spades. Each bid the hand as shown, which you can see didn't employ some of the sophisticated gadgets of modern times. Most declarers received the same lead, but only Karl Schneider of Austria, Jean Besse of Switzerland and Terence Reese of Britain, three of the world's foremost champions, succeeded. This was especially astonishing for their playing techniques contrasted dramatically.

Schneider pulled an even bigger bluff. After winning the heart ace, he played dummy's spade jack and let it ride to the king. To perform a squeeze, he had to lose a trick early. This west defender was hooedwinked, too, and continued hearts. Now Karl won in his hand and took the club finesse successfully. Next the club ace, club ten ruff, the diamond ace, and ran his trumps to reach this beautiful three-card ending.



When he played the heart ten, the defense was finished. West had to keep the club king so pitched a diamond, and dummy's club queen became useless. East had to keep the spade ace and was therefore squeezed in diamonds too, allowing dummy's diamond king, seven to win the last two tricks.

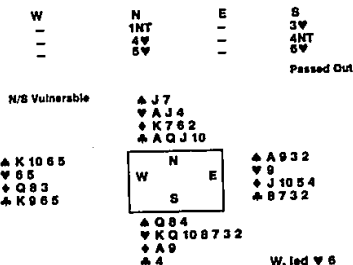
The great Besse relied on no sleight of hand to perform his wizardry. He treated it as a double dummy problem with a hoped-for ending, and this is how he did it. He won the heart ace and played the diamond ace, king. Ruffed a diamond and entered dummy with the heart jack to ruff the last diamond. Then he ran all of his trumps to reach this four-card ending.



Now a club to the queen and the spade jack. The defenders were helpless. If East won, the ace he's end-played in spades. If he ducks and West's king won, he's end-played in clubs.

Any questions? Yes, I truly agree the game is amazing!

Woody Boyd teaches local bridge classes and is working toward becoming a life master. He lives in Bloomfield Township.



Some hands are difficult to play. Today's is a monster that none of our champions foresaw until the dummy came into play. The lead suggested to each that West didn't have the A, K of spades and maybe not even the ace. The heart six therefore looked natural and offered a chance.

Here's how Reese handled the hand employing a magnum of deception. He won the heart ace in the dummy and didn't play another as he didn't want either opponent to signal spades if out of trumps. At trick 2, he played the club ace and the queen for a ruffing finesse pitching his diamond nine, which was won by the king. After due consideration, West fell into the trap and returned a diamond and our famous Britisher had seven hearts, three clubs and two diamonds.

FASHION CALENDAR

FRIDAY, JULY 31

Meadow Brook

Saks Fifth Avenue sponsors personal appearance by Bill Bliss, presenting his Autumn '92 Collection during formal luncheon fashion show to benefit Meadow Brook Music Festival, with cocktails at 11 a.m. and luncheon at noon, followed by show at 1 p.m. at Shotwell-Gustafson Pavilion on grounds of Meadow Brook Estate at Oakland University in Rochester. Patrons tickets are \$40, benefactor tickets \$100. For information call 370-3316.

Mother of the bride

Karen Miller presents suite for mother of the bride at Every Bride's Mother, 655 S. Woodward, Birmingham. Also, Stepping Out pre-

sents holiday wear.

SATURDAY, AUG. 1

Bill Bliss

Informal modeling of Bill Bliss Autumn '92 Collection 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Designer Salon, second floor, Saks Fifth Avenue, 2901 Big Beaver, Troy.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 5

Trunk show

Sweaterfest for '92 trunk show 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Diane M. 100 N. Woodward, Birmingham. Featuring Margaretta, Margaret O'Leary and Robin Richman. Create your own sweater, selecting from a variety of yarns and colors. Also, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 6.

Hotlines to phone for helping seniors

Here's a list of toll free numbers that may be of help and interest to older adults and their families. These toll free hotlines may be able to assist the callers in finding the information they require.

Social Security Assistance

1-800-772-1213

Hospice

1-800-331-1620

Energy Assistance

1-800-292-5650

Cancer Information Center

1-800-422-6237

Arthritis Foundation

1-800-283-7800

Taxpayers Information (Federal)

1-800-829-1040

Taxpayers Assistance (State)

1-800-487-7000

American Council for the Blind

1-800-424-8666

American Diabetes Association

1-800-232-3472

American Paralysis Association

1-800-225-0232

American Parkinson's Disease Association

1-800-223-2732

Auto Repair Complaints

1-800-292-4204

Alzheimer's & Related Disorders Center

1-800-272-3900

The phone numbers above are

provided by Renee Mahler, who

writes the On Aging column for the

Observer & Eccentric. She is a

gerontologist and the director of

communications and admissions at

a Rochester Hills nursing facility.

Mahler is a member of the Michigan

State Commission on Services to the

Aging. Send your questions to her at

Observer & Eccentric, 805 E. Maple,

Birmingham 48009.

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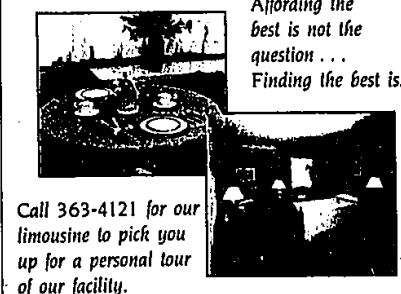
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Tuesday, August 4 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

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