

Kibitzer

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Labor Day Sectional—first tournament in 20 months

For the first time in 20 months, Unit 123 held a tournament, and although attendance was less than half of previous years', it was called a success by CCBA President Tom Dressing.

"The board realized that many people would not be willing to attend a tournament, especially those



Matthew Dyer figured that if you have to wear a mask, it might as well be a fun one.

who have not gone back to the clubs and are still playing online," Tom said.

"We had to stick our toes into the water to get a feeling for how the general membership felt about attending a tournament. Now we have decided to hold a fall tourna-

ment," he said. It is scheduled for November 2-4 at Temple Jeremiah in Northfield.

Labor Day Tournament Chair Todd Fisher said those who attended enjoyed the games. "I had several people tell me that they were glad to be back at a F2F tournament."

Precautions were taken to keep players safe. The tables were spaced several feet apart, and players had to show proof of being vaccinated, and had to wear masks.



See page 3 to get all the information on Unit 123's Three-Day Regional to be held November 2-4 in Northfield.





Pres. Dressing discusses past, future tournaments



CCBA Pres. Tom Dressing

The Labor Day Silver Point Sectional Tournament was held September 3 through September 6 at the Weber Leisure Center in Skokie. We began planning the event when the number of COVID-19 cases were on the decline and bridge clubs were reopening and many players were returning to the tables. Unfortunately, by the time the tournament began, the number of COVID-19 cases were on the rise and some clubs that had been open had closed.

Planning for tournaments is usually done months, and even years ahead of the actual event. The CCBA Board needed to find out if players were willing to participate, so we could determine future plans.

Those plans now include Unit 123's Three-Day Regional, which will give players a chance to rake in gold points. The tournament will take place November 2-4 at Temple Jeremiah, 937 Happ Road, Northfield. We will have games that all players can enjoy, whether they have two points or more than 3,000 points.

Regarding the Labor Day tournament, which was last held in 2019, we had 488 players and 459 tables. This September, we had 180 players and 138 tables. Naturally, we would have been pleased by a larger turnout, but those who played enjoyed the event. The Board and I want to thank everyone who played. We took a number of precautions to keep everyone safe. For example, the tables were placed several feet apart, no food was served, and players had to show a vax card and wear a mask.

The next tournament decision facing the board is WinterFest, which usually takes place in January. The CCBA Annual Meeting is normally held during that event. Stay tuned. I'll keep you informed about CCBA's future plans.

The Board and I wish everyone a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving.

Tom Dressing
CCBA Board President



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Opinions of columnists are their own and may not represent those of the CCBA. For more information, go to www.bridgeinchicago.com or call the CCBA at 630-235-4718.



Rake in the Gold!
Unit 123 Three-Day Regional
November 2-4, 2021
Temple Jeremiah
937 Happ Road
Northfield, IL

Tuesday and Wednesday, November 2 and 3

10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

2-session Open Pairs

2-session Gold Rush Pairs

2-single session 0-5 pairs



Thursday, November 4

10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

2-session Open Swiss Team Game

2-session Gold Rush Swiss Team Game

0-100, 100-300, 300-750

2-single session 0-5 Team Games*

***(If insufficient teams, games will be combined with the Gold Rush Swiss)**

Masterpoint Averaging when possible

Stratification: A: 3000+, B: 1500-3000, C: 0-1500

Single session entries accepted for pair events

Tournament Chair: Suzi Subeck

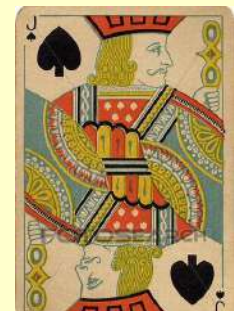
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Labor Day Silver Points Sectional



Tournament Director Todd Fisher



National Director
Peter Wilke



CCBA President Tom Dressing, center, and CCBA Secretary Jan Churchwell, right, check in player by asking to see his vax card, and then giving him a wrist band.

Getting Into the Bidding on Tough Hands – the Delayed Takeout Double



By Ginny and Jeff Schuett

Generally speaking, when right hand opponent opens the bidding and you have an opening hand yourself, you try to enter the bidding, either by overcalling or making an immediate takeout double. To overcall, you should generally have a 5+ card good suit. To make a takeout double with just an average opening hand, you need shortness in the suit opened to your right and at least three-card support for **every** unbid suit. However, there are some hands that do not meet those requirements and force you to pass ...at least for now. Consider you are East with the follow hands where your right hand opponent opens 1♦:

♠ KJ107	♥ 5	♦ K1042	♣ AQ64
♠ KQ107	♥ 52	♦ A92	♣ AJ94
♠ AQ94	♥ 5	♦ AJ3	♣ Q6432

When right hand opponent opens 1♦ you should pass. The only possible alternate is to overcall 1♠, but your partner is going to assume you have 5+ spades and you could get into trouble later in the bidding. Best action is to pass your first bid. However, let's assume the bidding continues:

N	E	S	W
1♦	P	1♥	P
2♥	?		

Now you have support for the two remaining unbid suits and you can make a delayed takeout double. Basically, this shows an opening hand or better and says I would have made a takeout double of one heart. Remember you have entered a live auction – South could have a very good hand. Therefore, you need a good hand as well. West should go out of his way to bid one of the unbid suits -- ♠ or ♣. Note this bid shows a better hand than making a balancing double as West in the following auction:

N	E	S	W
1♦	P	1♥	P
2♥	P	P	DbI

A balancing double here also shows interest in the unbid suits -- ♠ or ♣, but is not as dangerous as doubling as East above, where you have not heard South pass his partner's raise to 2♥. Example hands for this balancing double by West would be:

♠ KQ92	♥ 42	♦ 963	♣ A982
♠ J1032	♥ 53	♦ A42	♣ KJ64
♠ QJ32	♥ 742	♦ 2	♣ KQ642

*Ginny and Jeff Schuett—bridge teaching, directing, play.
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Congratulations Rank Advancers. You Did It!

Junior Master

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Ellen Goodman
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Additional information on the unusual XYZ Convention



Jim Diebel

Winning with Wimpy

Continuing our discussion of XYZ from the previous column: XYZ stands for three consecutive bids on the 1-level – without interference. After opener rebids 1H, 1S, or 1NT, Responder has several options using the XYZ convention.

1. Any bid on the 3-level is natural and game forcing.
2. All invitational sequences must begin with an artificial bid of 2C.
3. 2D is an artificial bid promising game-going values. The auction cannot die below game.

I've previously shown you how Responder can force to game with one or two long suits (3 level jumps on the 2nd round). I've also discussed how Responder can invite game with 5 and/or 6 card suits, or NT with balanced holdings. Before we continue with the final phase of XYZ, there are 2 sequences I need to address:

Opener	Responder
1C	1D
1S	2C*
2D**	Pass

* Relay to 2D, presumably to invite game somewhere.

** Accepting the relay and

Opener	Responder
1D	1H
1NT	2C*
2D**	Pass

* Relay to 2D, presumably to invite game somewhere.

** Accepting the relay.

In both of these sequences, Responder wants to sign off as cheaply as possible in diamonds. In both cases, he starts with 2C, forcing partner to bid 2D. He then passes (unexpectedly), letting partner know he has either a non-forcing rebid of his own suit, or a non-forcing raise of partner's opening suit. These sequences don't come up terribly often, but they accurately describe Responder's holdings and intent when they do.

This leaves the final artificial bid of XYZ: namely, 2D is an artificial bid promising game-going values. The auction cannot die below game.

When Responder has game-going values, without XYZ, it can be awkward to probe for the best game after Opener has previously made 2 calls. When Opener's 2nd call is 1H or 1S, Fourth Suit Forcing works ok, but a few sequences can be problematic, such as

Opener	Responder
1C	1D
1H	?

If Responder now wants to force to game or slam in clubs or hearts, (or perhaps is a bit too strong to bid 3NT) he must start with FSF

2S. Depending on whether Opener has a spade stopper, or perhaps 3 card diamond support, the auction might get uncomfortably high before Responder can explain his reason for the artificial game force.



When Opener's second call is 1NT, without XYZ, Responder's only forcing sequence will usually start with New Minor Forcing.

This can get confusing when Responder wishes to investigate slam, because NMF only shows invitational values or better. When Responder has the stronger hand, he will be required to continue to come up with forcing calls.

I survived over 35 years playing this way, so it's certainly not terrible, but much like the benefits of 2/1 Game Force, being able to tell partner that you wish to be in a game forcing sequence at the earliest possible time in the auction has tangible benefits.

Opener answers the 2D call much the same way he answers a NMF probe, but there is no rush to show maximum values for fear of being passed out in part score. Opener will generally attempt to give Responder useful information he hasn't already provided, such as 3 card support for partner's suit, or extra length in one of his own. (Continued on page 10)



"Best of the Best"

BRIDGE *with* LARRY COHEN



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Unusual Notrump is good convention to know

The "Unusual Notrump" is used to show a 2-suited hand. It is used after the opponents have opened the bidding. A jump overcall of 2NT shows at least 5-5 in the two lowest ranked unbid suits. For example, a 2NT jump overcall of a minor shows hearts and the other minor. A 2NT jump overcall of a major shows both minors.

The big questions for Unusual Notrump are:

1. What strength?
2. What suit quality?
3. When does it apply?

What Strength?

Usually, the Unusual 2NT is made with a preemptive (weakish hand, such as): ♠ 8 5 ♥ 2 ♦ K J 9 4 3 ♣ Q J 10 5 2. Not vulnerable, after the opponent's 1-of-a-major opening, I would bid 2NT with this hand (planning to accept whatever decision partner makes). If I were vulnerable, I'd like to have a little bit more. However, I could make an Unusual 2NT bid with a super hand such as : ♠ 5 ♥ 4 ♦ A K Q J 2 ♣ A Q J 9 8 2. This time my plan is to bid again after my partner chooses a minor.

There is a school of thought that Unusual Notrump bids should be avoided with a medium hand such as: ♠ 4 ♥ Q 6 ♦ A K J 5 4 ♣ K Q J 10 2. The thinking is that when partner chooses a minor, you won't know whether or not a game is in the picture. For that reason, many players choose to define the Unusual 2NT as "weak/preemptive or very strong--not in-between." There are pros and cons to this philosophy; suffice to say that you should discuss with your partner whether or not he adheres to this practice.

What Suit Quality?

This depends a bit on your general preemptive philosophy. If you are an aggressive preemptor, your suit quality will obviously have the possibility to be worse than a sound preemptor's. I suggest that the vulnerability is the most important factor. Vulnerable against not, it wouldn't occur to me to commit an Unusual 2NT overcall after their 1 ♣ with, say: ♠ 5 ♥ K J 8 7 2 ♦ Q J 9 4 3 2 ♣ 2. At favorable vulnerability, I wouldn't mind an Unusual 2NT bid with those poorish suits. When Vulnerable, I like to have much better suits--better meat at the top. In all cases, 5-5 is the minimum distribution (although a former partner of mine would sometimes have 5-4...and I think I even recall 4-4). :)

When is 2NT Unusual?

The unusual 2NT is NOT on after the opponents open a weak 2-bid. Over a weak 2 ♦ /2 ♥ /2 ♠, a 2NT overcall shows a balanced 15-18 with their suit stopped. The 2NT overcall is "unusual" after the opponents open any of these bids: 1 ♣ /1 ♦ /1 ♥ /1 ♠ /1NT/2 ♣. If the opponents bid and raise a major, then 2NT is unusual.

An overcall in notrump at the 3-level is always natural. An overcall on the four-level (see more below) in notrump is unusual, showing a 2-suited hand. (The 2 suits are presumed to be minors, but if the partner of the 4NT bidder chooses clubs and then the 4NT bidder bids diamonds, his 2 suits are diamonds and the other major).

Example: 4 ♠ -4NT; P-5 ♣ -P-5 ♦ = ♦ + ♥

(Continued on page 9)

Unusual 2NT is good convention

(Continued from page 8)

Other/Advanced

Just as with any convention, you need to make sure if it is on:

- 1) By a Passed Hand (I recommend YES)
- 2) In balancing seat (I recommend NO -- a jump to 2NT in balancing seat should show 18-20 balanced)
- 3) After opponents bid 1 any--Pass--1 any (I recommend YES)
- 4) After the opponents bid and raise; for example 1♥ --Pass--2♥ -- (I recommend YES).

Also, what if the opponents double your Unusual 2NT bid? What does partner's pass mean? His

redouble? For example: 1♦ 2NT Double Pass -- (Recommendation: Pass of the double shows equal length in the two shown suits).

High-Level

In competition, 4NT is usually unusual. For example, in each auction below, 4NT is takeout (assumed to be minors):

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
4♥	4NT		

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	Dbl	4♠	4NT

In all of these auctions, 4NT is takeout. If the opponents' suit was hearts, then the "unusual" notrump is always minors. If their suit was spades, this might not be so. The partner assumes minors and bids accordingly. If he picks clubs and partner corrects to diamonds, then the 2-suiter is diamonds and hearts.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	4♠	Pass	Pass
4NT			

Here, opener likely has 6+♦ and a 4-card suit on the side. East assumes it is clubs and if he has enough clubs to prefer clubs to diamonds he bids 5♣. If opener then removes to 5♦ it means 6+♦ and 4♥.

There are numerous other auctions where notrump bids in competition should be played as "unusual."

Larry runs and is the star of Bridge with Larry Cohen. He is a 25-time National Champion, ACBL Player of the Year, ACBL Honorary Member of the Year, ACBL Top 10 Living Most Influential in Bridge, and finally 2020 Hall of Famer. He is an author and hosts a weekly webinar, Bridge Made Simple (BMS).



Additional information on the unusual XYZ Convention

Continued from page 7)

The inquisitive will wonder what the difference is between:

Opener	Responder		Opener	Responder
1D	1S		1D	1S
1NT	2D*	and	1NT	3S
2H	3S			

or

Opener	Responder		Opener	Responder
1D	1S		1D	1S
1NT	2D*	and	1NT	3C
2H	3C			

I'll be honest and tell you I really don't know. I'll tell you how I treat them, and if you can come up with something better, I encourage you to experiment.

Both of the first sequences clearly show 6 spades and game/slam values. I think the second example might hold 7 or 8 spades, and not be quite as robust in high cards as the first example. I'd say the first example holds exactly 6 spades, and probably decent controls outside.

The second sequence I have stronger feelings about. The first example should show a strong hand of probably 5 spades and 4 clubs – perhaps 5-5. The second example shows a very strong hand at least 5-5 and probably 6-5 or even 6-6.

I'm going to conclude this discussion with a brief explanation about why I choose to play XYZ. The benefits it offers are small, and the opportunities for calamity are significant. The convention is not difficult to learn, but the chances of forgetting that a particular sequence is

forcing are real. Weighing the plus and minus, I would find it difficult to criticize anyone who decides that the risks are not compensated by the rewards.

As I get older, I find it increasingly difficult to add new treatments to my system. My brain does not function as efficiently as it once did, and my greatest concern tends to be whether or not I'll remember something new.

This is what I love about XYZ. Once committed to memory, there are no exceptions. Memorize three simple rules and all sequences can be logically deduced. The English language has irregular verbs and all kind of rules and exceptions to those rules. Even bridge has its share of maxims and we have to learn when to follow them and when to ignore them.

If you choose to play XYZ, even if you forget a sequence in a senior moment, you can sit back and work out what it has to be. Bridge rarely offers such consistency.

(Jim Diebel is a bridge teacher, club owner and director.)

Welcome Back!

Dan Driggitt was welcomed back to Mary Schultz's Fox Bridge Club after a long illness. To celebrate, players received cookies in the shape of the four bridge suits, which were baked by a fellow player.



Labor Day Silver Points Sectional Tournament



AUSTIN

FALL ♡ 2021 ◇ NABC

NOV. 25 - DEC. 5

The Fall North American Bridge Championships (NABC) will be held November 25-December 5 in Austin Texas, at the JW Austin Marriott. Registration is now open for that hotel and for the nearby Austin Marriott. Rooms are \$179 plus tax. For assistance, contact Conference Direct at 855-956-0776 or email acbl@conferencedirect.com.

The tournament, which attracts thousands of players, is held three times a year at varying locations in the United States. The NABCs can be enjoyed by players of all skill levels, from beginners to experts, in both pair and team



JW Marriott Hotel, Austin, Texas

Scam Alert

The ACBL has been notified of members being solicited by 'phishing scams.' We take all of these instances seriously and work hard to keep our sites safe. After any notification, we check our systems again.

FYI – Just because a phishing email lands in your inbox, it doesn't mean your computer is infected with a virus or malware. Phishers might send emails to thousands of addresses every day. If you reply to one of their messages, it confirms your email address is live. This makes you even more of a target. We appreciate your alerting us and helping to keep our network, and our people, safe from cyber threats.

Phishing is the most common type of cyber-attack that affects organizations like ours. Phishing attacks can take many forms, but they all share a common goal – getting you to share sensitive information such as login credentials, credit card information, bank account details, or to simply send money or gift cards.

games. This means there are points of many colors, including platinum.

All players must have an ACBL member number to participate in any event. (ACBL member numbers are valid for life, even if your membership is inactive.) If you have never been an ACBL member, you can purchase a full-year membership or become a guest member (120 days free).

When not at the table, one can take some time to explore the city and some of its one-of-a-kind attractions. While known for its thriving live music scene, there's plenty more to do, like visiting historic sites, sampling local barbecue and Tex-Mex, viewing local art, and more.

