

Beaumont, Texas 2009

Gold Gusher Regional

For Newer Players

Things you may want to know -

Six tips in going for Gold

Meeting Directors the easy way.

Preparing, Planning and Plotting



Tournament Chairs
Nancy and John
Smalley

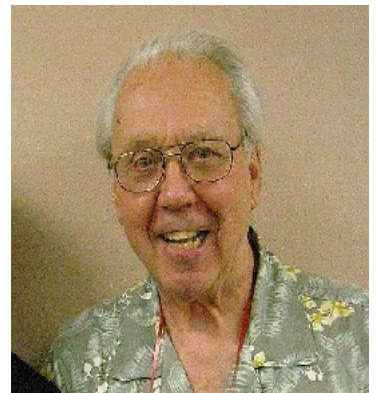
WELCOME - to Beaumont TX,

This issue is to help the non-life masters, It provides a lot of thoughts and ideas to help you win more gold faster, play better against stronger competitors, and cruise though major tournaments easier. You may know all the content. You may not. Either way it will help you make a better game plan, have a better chance, and if you win your Life Master here- see me or call me 409-351-4214. I want to share your joy.

Jack Evans - Editor

Unit 201 WebMaster

The past year has been an exciting one for me. I started January 2008 with 0.18 gold and went on a mission to get my needed gold and silver as quickly as skills, determination and luck would permit. I achieved it Oct. 14, 2008 to the thunderous applause of my fan. It occurred to me that in the course of doing many unproductive things, wasting energy, making many RHP's (to be explained) - I did learn how to do them better - and the opportunity to help others find an easier path was illuminated. This issue is to assist your quest - May it be faster, cheaper and better. I wish you Gold Luck, Jack



Meet Les Deele

Les Deele is the Unit 201 Website Host He is a Professional Novice bridge player, studies the game diligently and is viewed by many players in the area as the "Perfect Opponent"

His Mother is Maka Deele. She gave birth while playing party bridge. After he was born and wrapped in swaddling clothes, she said to the group, "Enough of this - Les' Deal" The game went on - the name stuck.

Les is famous for his play on one hand where he managed to: sluff an Ace and revoke on the same trick, and get a top on the board. That special happening is presented and - it's almost true.

Les has been seeking Gold for many years, and with help from everybody - has compiled some tips the newer player (non-life master) should find helpful. Gold Luck.



Tip # 1 -for Newer Players -

Go for Gold - All players need gold points to become a Life Master. (They also need red, silver and black.) The most popular tournament to get gold is Regionals. Regionals only award red points and gold points. The time to start collecting them is early in your playing career. When you're at a Regional, play as many gold award events as you can play well. Try not to waste an opportunity by playing a non-gold (red) event. Learn which is which and plan the events you want to play.

To win gold, you must play in an event with two or more sessions. You must place in an overall strat level of at least 750 points, or win your section (Strat A or B) in an open pairs session. In a Side Game Series, Gold is awarded to Section winners (1st in A) who play in a second session of that event - or who finish as overall Series winners.

Going for Gold works best when you're prepared. Being prepared means having a partner who can go to Regionals with you, and who has an agreed bidding system you both understand well. The most important technical factor in winning is getting to the right contracts. Get to the wrong contract and few declarers can make up the difference, and most defenders are good enough to punish you for missing the contract. I would guess that 90 % of the pairs playing at our level bid poorly and haven't taken enough time to understand the issues. Get yourself prepared. You'll play better and win more. The next most important item is having a game plan for the events you want to play. Then Gold Luck.

Tip #2 from Our Professional Novice - Les Deele

Go KO's - I think the best opportunity for Gold is a Bracketed KO.

WHY? Because teams in your bracket have comparable points. You are on an even playing field. Each match gives you a 50% chance to continue. Of course you must play well and have some luck, but so do the opponents.

Play them as equals. On average you can win half your matches, 1 out of two events you have a good chance to advance to the second. 1 out of 4 starts the odds say you will advance to the semi-finals and win 3rd & 4th place Gold or better. 1 out of 8 should get you to the finals. And on average, 1 out of 16 starts, you'll win your bracket. Start as many Gold Events as you can, and play as well as you can. Don't expect to win every event. Strive to play your best every hand, every round, every event, and work hard at that. Encourage your team mates to do the same.



Regional Event Information - Events that award Gold

Stratiflighted Events have multiple sets of players who do not compete against each other. These events have, Flight A and Flight BCD. In A any player can compete against the best players, but they cannot win in Flight BCD if they play in A. Flight BCD is Stratified that is it has multiple strat levels that compete among themselves. (D players may play against several B players) In the overall awards, The winner of Flight BCD must be a BC or D pair or team. Both Flights award Gold and Red Points.

Stratified Events or Flights require players to compete directly with players in all Strat levels in that event or flight. However, winners of each strat must be in that strat or a lower one.

Events that award Gold and Red, have more awarded points and a higher percentage of Gold for greater number of entrants and higher level of competition. A multi-session Stratified Event will award Gold to the top two Strat levels, provided they both allow players with at least 750 Masterpoints.

KnockOuts. 2 or 4 Session Events. At the end of each Session you are either KO'd or you continue. Get through the first half and you win some Gold. In **Bracketed KO's**. 9 to 16 Teams start each bracket, Then 6 to 8 teams play in session 2, Four teams are in the semi-finals and the final two play the last round for the win. Teams are bracketed (grouped) by team members summed MP's, to group comparably experienced teams. It doesn't usually matter how much you win by. **In a Compact KO**, the first session reduces the teams from 9-16 to four which continue into the second session. Compact KO's are bracketed and the total number of teams determines the number of brackets.

Two Session Stratified Swiss Teams. There are only overall awards by Strat. Gold For Strats with at least 750. If the Event is Stratiflighted, each flight has its independent awards.

Open Pairs, Side Game Series with Gold awards An Open Pairs 2 session event having three Strats :A - 2000+, B - 500-2000 C - 0-500 Win your section of a session (A1) and the points awarded are converted to gold when you compete in a second session. Place overall and you'll win more Gold.

Tip #3 from - The Professional Novice -Les DeeLe for Newer (Non-Life Master) Players -

Persevere for Gold - "The thrill of victory - the agony of defeat. " We all feel them both, yet we are the same player both times - not an expert 1 day and a sub-dufus the next.

Discouragement, Depression and Defeatism (3D) erode confidence, ability to focus - and are great obstacles to success. Getting KO'd happens. Deal with it. 15 out of 16 events on average you'll be KO'd. Your ability to recover and win the next event I suspect has more to do with confidence, ability to focus, and good feeling about your team, than it does with your fundamental skill. Get positive, support your partner, team mates, play well and let the negative factors help your opponents lose, and propel you to gold.



Bid as Partners - after all it is a partnership game. Part 1

It's a Rule. Each pair on your team must have identical convention cards. More importantly - you must know what yours says, and even more importantly, know what partnership agreements you have for contextual variations.

I'll give you an example: Answer this question, then ask your partner. If you play Jacoby 2NT over 1 Major opening - what is the priority of the responses and what are they? Do you agree in all the details Then, if after 1M opening by Pard, and opponent overcalls, what does your 2 NT mean? How do you want Pard to respond to that ? How does Pard want you to respond?

If you and Partner both answered exactly the same, you got 1 out of a hundred. If you play cue bids as limit + raises, and play Western Cue, how do you know which is which? Most A level players have excellent answers and common agreements. Most Novices like me and you don't have a clue, but hey, I'm a Professional Novice, and I know what I don't know. Do you play Reverses? Each partner should write what they mean by a reverse and what strength hand it promises? If you play Michaels, write down on a piece of paper, the conditions that must exist for a cue bid to be Michaels. Then ask your partner to write down his version of the requirements . If you play Roman Key Card, the confirmed suit is Hearts, and the sequence is: 4NT, 5H, 5NT: what is partner asking or telling? If 4NT, 5C, 5D: what is partner asking? What is he/she promising? Do you play 1430 or 3014, write your answer then ask partner to write his. Playing weak 2's, what are the priority of rebids over a 2NT Response ?

There are hundreds more variations of agreements that can cost you gold. You won't cover all of them but you may cover some that will help you get gold. Do it before you win gold - not after you might have lost gold.

Tip # 4 - for Newer Players

It's not over til it's over. A Yogi-ism. You can't win yesterdays game today - and it won't be yesterdays playing that makes you win or lose today. I had one regional last year where I didn't win a thing for 7 sessions over 4 days, and then won 20 points, half gold, the last two days. Our team went from totally depressed to cloud nine ecstatic. Same players, same skills. My hero Zeke Jabbour says it best: Win some, Loath some. (spaces added). When you think you're beaten, you'll probably lose. Keep positive and - It's not over til it's over. Make the opponents beat you, don't beat yourself. It's hard enough to win 2 against 2 or 4 against 4. If you join the opponents side - it's really hard to win. As long as there is another card to play - there are points to be won. Don't ever beat yourself.

Play Hard, Play Nice, Play Often, Play Soon and - Gold Luck



Bid as Partners - after all it is a partnership game. Part 2

How do you bid differently in Free Bid situations vs uncontested auctions? What cue bids do you use? If Advancer bids a new suit- is it forcing or NF? - Does that change if Opp's bid? Do you play RONF or NSNF over a weak 2. If you play NMF, does the sequence O-1C, R-1H, O-1S, R-1NT, deny 5H's ? ACBL has a 24 page series called "Conventional Wisdom" which is excellent and, if you study it for about 3 hours, that will prepare you for 3 more hours with partner, 3 times a month for 3 months. You can't remedy this today - but sooner is better. It's not fun to find out you and your partner don't understand each other when you're in the finals of a Knockout. One big board usually swings the match. And my bet is on the best bidding pair or team. Why? The most important thing on each board is getting to the right contract. It makes a huge difference. If you get to the right contract, most declarers can bring it home. If you get to the wrong contract it will probably take Houdini to salvage the board. If you're defending against a poor contract you're probably going to punish the opponents unless Houdini is declaring for them.

If you aren't clear on these issues, do you want to learn about your misunderstandings as you're getting KO'd. - Or would you rather resolve them over a cup of coffee the week before? If not ready. - Set aside about 3 hours - seriously. You have time to resolve many issues right here between sessions.

Tip # 5 - for Newer (Non-Life Master) Players -

"Hang Tough". Did you ever have a good game going - only to blow it on one or more of the last few boards. My guess is yes. Do you remember how you felt? Playing each board, each card without doing a "RHP" (Really Horrible Play) is especially important in a KO or Swiss Team Event.

The best way to reduce those dreadful happenings, is to stay focused and concentrate on every hand until the final card is put back in the last board.

A different view of - It's not over, til it's over. Yesterdays point was - if there is an event left - somebody's going to win it. Why not you?

Today's point is, If the event you are playing isn't over yet, you haven't won yet" Hang Tough and play through the last card - with focus,

determination and a positive attitude. Spread confidence through your team, inspiring them to play at their best to the very end. Then celebrate and get ready to play hard in the next one. Play Hard, Play Nice, Play Often, Play Soon - and Gold Luck



Play Cool under difficult situations.

This is a tough one. If you and your partner get in a misunderstanding or a bad bid situation, be cool. I'll tell you about a Partner I had, and the way she handled a very tough situation. She, as dealer passed, and my RHO opened 2C's. I made the very bad bid of cue bidding 3C's without thinking. My LHO had even more difficulty with the bid than I did or my Pard. After several wrenching moments, he turned to my Pard. and asked, "What does that bid mean?" I wanted the next bus out of town. She said, " We have no agreement I am aware of on that bid. We play Michaels, but I don't think that makes sense because 2C's is artificial. In our method, it could be natural and show a long suit to encourage pre-emption, it could be lead directing indicating first round control with an Ace or a void, or it might be a good suit and suitable strength to make, which possibility I can evaluate from the strength I have in my hand." What a fantastic answer to a nonsense situation. Three things happened, My partner gave a great answer, which made life even more difficult for them and she exhibited overwhelming confidence. She convinced me she would not make a bid which would commit our side to an even worse situation, and my fear of the consequences of what I did were calmed. Most importantly, the cool she demonstrated inspired me to get my act together and start playing good bridge immediately. What a great partner.

Imagine what would have happened if she looked unsettled, angry, frustrated and said, "That has to be the most stupid bid I've ever heard, and I can't believe I have such a jerk for a partner"

-Tip # 6 - our Professional Novice - Les Deele
-for Newer Players - (Non-Life Master)

Play Your Game

Assume your playing in Swiss Teams and that you've entered the BCD Flight. 2 Session Stratiflighted Swiss teams are great opportunities for Gold. There is one major difference - if you lose a round you're not out and could still win. There is a minor difference, you may play against a much stronger or weaker team. My tip is - Forget the opponents - play your game. A weaker team can beat you and you can beat a stronger team. Just play your game - as well as you can - every card, every bid, every hand, every round both sessions. See ya on the winner stand. Wear Gold.



Rules are Rules: For Your Information

Newer players often send illegal information to their partner innocently: with comments, gestures, hesitations, incorrect alerting procedures, or lack of them and fumbling with the bidding boxes. The forgiving directors at your local club and tournament directors are always willing to give newer players a break. But in the finals of your first KO, don't learn the hard way - like me. The bidding rules prohibit conveying information by any process other than directly picking, placing appropriate cards on the table. We the novice do way more. If you injure your opponents with illegal information - do you expect forgiveness ? - would you grant it ?

One of the best ways to get a Director called on you is by making a long deliberate hesitation in a competitive auction - and then passing. Compound that with a mumbling "Oh -what do I bid now?" or "Well - since we're NV - - --". Whatever you do - be prepared to have a discussion with a Director. It's kinda fun - like hitting yourself in the head with a club. Better is to prepare yourself not to have that kinda fun. It's great to be polite, charming, friendly and entertaining - but when bidding, bid in tempo and with your mouth closed. It's very hard to do but very important. Another good way to meet a director is to look very disgusted or make a unkind gesture when your partner leads the exact opposite suit you wanted him to lead. Does that not give more information than gently placing a 2 on the table. I know everybody knows not to do it, but I see it done every game. If you want to tell - play poker - and bring lots of money.

- - - And now Les Deele's most famous hand - - -

A Les Kind Of Play

D S		N	
V B	S K Q J 10 9 X		
OL QH	H K X X		
	D Q X X		
	C X		
W		E	
S X		S X X X X X	
H A Q J X X X		H X	
D X		D A 9 8 X X	
C J X X X X		C K Q	
	S (Les)		
	S A		
	H 10 9 X		
	D K J 10 X		
	C A X X X X		

Bidding

W	N	E	S
			1C
1H	1S	P	1NT
P	2NT	P	3NT
P	P	P	

From the Jaws of Defeat.

Les, contracted for 3NT but wished he had bid 4S when the QH was led. The spades seemed hopelessly blocked. The QD seemed like the only possible entry once the heart king was removed, and that clearly was West's plan. If West had the AD, he would take it immediately and cash at least 3 more hearts. If East had it, the Queen was dead.

Les performed a creative and instinctive but slightly flawed plan to unblock the Spades. He let the QH hold and covered JH with the KH. When East played a spade, he revoked, sluffing his Ace of Spades, unconsciously following East's spade play.. Nevertheless, to Sluff an Ace and revoke on the same trick is truly a Les kind of play. On the 6 spades played from the board, Les pitched 4 clubs, and 2 hearts. East pitched 4 S's and 2 D,s. E/W smiled kindly and rolled their eyes. knowing well they would have a favorable chat with the director concerning the revoke..

Les now led the QD. East played the ace and Les played low. East did the best he could by leading the KC. Les took the ace and cashed 3 diamonds making 5 - pending a chat with the director.

Director, noting the revoke, granted a two trick compensation. West argued that if South didn't revoke he would have taken only 6 tricks: 1S, 1H, 3D's and 1C, so the equitable compensation should be seven tricks for the defense.

Les argued that if he didn't revoke, he would have taken the second heart lead and led a Club to the ace in his hand, played the AS and and exited with a club. East would have been end played and forced to lead a S or a D putting him back in dummy to run the spades. Les claims he would lose only a H, a C and maybe a D, thus making 4 at least, so the 2 trick penalty was more than full compensation.

The Director ruled 3 NT making 3. Everybody else was in 4 spades - Down 1 or more.

It was the first top of the year for our Les Deele. I think it happened August something.