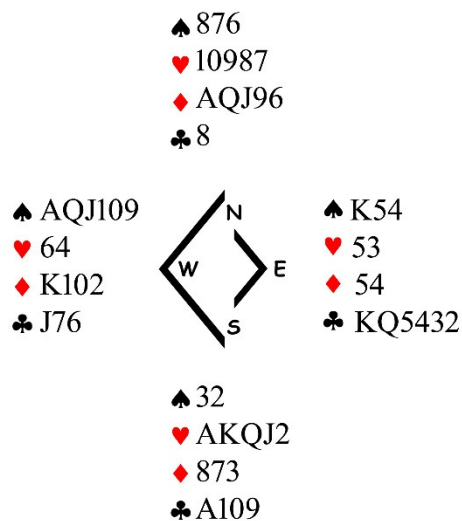


228. Making Use of Competition

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|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| N | E | S | W |
| | P | 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ |
| 2 ♠ | Dbl | 4 ♥ | All Pass |

--East West Vulnerable--

Bridge would be much simpler if every time one had points, the opponents stayed quiet. First of all, that is never going to happen, therefore one has to learn to make the best of it. Secondly, one must do the same back to the opponents when one can.

Competition adds a bid not available when the opponents are passing, the cuebid. The beginner bridge player will often bid the opponent's suit to tell his partner he has an opening hand and five cards in opponent's suit. The advancing player learns to defend when he had length in the opponent's suit. One would not want to warn the opponents they have a bad break, and one certainly does not want to create the problem of where to play the hand for oneself.

So one bids the opponent's suit when they are lacking that suit. One of the most common uses of the cuebid is the invitational cuebid. It shows at least three-card

support and a limit raise or better. Partner goes to three of the major if he needs more than a limit raise, and partner passes with a bare limit raise.

The bidding:

South, with 14 HCP's, opens One Heart and West makes a vulnerable one-level overcall. He could not have any less for that bid, therefore the lead direction is fine.

North has the same hand as in a previous column on the Law with the same total strength and shape, except two honours have been moved to the diamond suit. It was only a simple raise because the Jack of diamonds was a singleton Jack of clubs and the Queen of diamonds was the Queen of the opponent's suit, spades.

With those changes, a simple raise becomes a limit raise, and North makes a two spade cuebid. East doubles the cuebid, telling partner it is okay to lead the suit.

South is happy to go to game and loses two spades to make Five Hearts. The hand is fairly straightforward as long as South ruffs two clubs in dummy before drawing a third round of trump if the trump split 3-1. They are in fact 2-2 so the declarer can draw trump and take two diamond finesses.