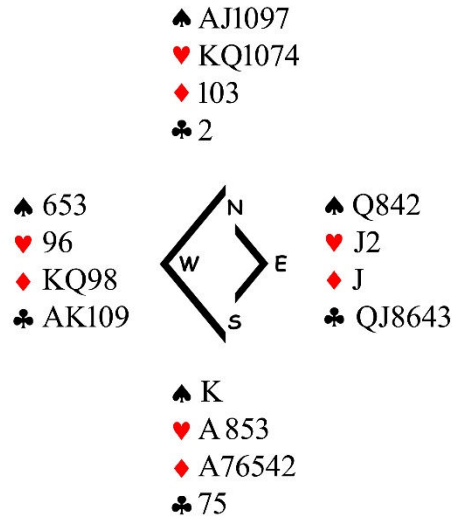


342. Michael's Cuebid

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S	W	N	E
P	1♦	2♦	P
4♥	All Pass		

--North South Vulnerable--

In the last few columns, we have seen that when one has opponent's suit, one passes or bids No Trump and does not try to contract it as a trump suit. One does not usually bid opponent's suit with it. A bid of opponent's suit is called a cuebid. In this example a direct cuebid when RHO opens the bidding shows a hand with five-five distribution in two unbid suits.

Michael's cuebid of a minor shows both majors, and a cuebid of a major shows the other major and an unspecified minor. Two No Trump asks for the minor. Most bridge players in Trail, except me, play a system called "Top and Other" instead.

This is the same as Michael's when a major is cuebid, but when a minor is cuebid, Spades and an unspecified suit are shown. Two No Trump asks for the other suit.

This example shows why Michael's is better than "Top and Other." First of all, bidding often prioritizes the major suits, and secondly knowing the two suits right away is often useful when one can immediately bid the limit of the hand and minimize communications between the opponents giving them the last guess.

The Bidding:

South passes, but would have opened this six-four hand if there had been no wasted honours. West, with a good 12 HCP's, does open One Diamond. North cuebids showing five-five in the majors. and less than 12 HCP's with a Two-Diamond bid. South jumps to game in Hearts.

If North had been playing Top and Other cuebid, Two Diamonds would show five Spades and five of another suit. South would play it safe and pass. The chances are that North has the two suits in which South has shortness so Two Diamonds is likely the best place to play.

Opening Lead: The Club Ace then the Diamond King.

The Play:

Declarer wins the Diamond Ace and draws trump. He then cashes the Spade King and ruffs a Club. He plays the Spade Ace, pitching a Diamond, then the Spade Jack. If the Spade Jack is covered, he ruffs, otherwise another Diamond is sluffed.

The Result:

Declarer will lose a Club and a Diamond making an overtrick in Four Hearts for +650.