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## Planning the Defense

By Barbara Seagram  
and David Bird

\$19.95, softcover,  
176 pages

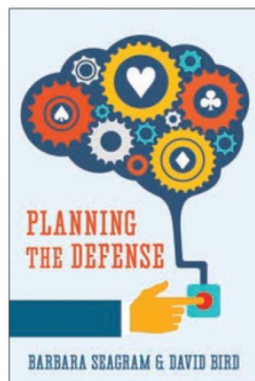
*Reviewed by  
Sue Munday*

### Defensive prowess

The dynamic teaching/writing duo of Barbara Seagram and David Bird is back, this time bringing clarity to the all-important but never-popular subject of defense.

More points are won and lost on defense than any other aspect of the game – and that’s where you’re likely to spend half your time. Defending a deal accurately is a euphoric fusion – an intensely satisfying mind meld. A botched defense, on the other hand ... heavy sigh. Well, here’s the guide to doing more melding and less botching.

The authors’ previous collaborations, “Planning the Play of a Bridge



Hand” (2010) and “Planning the Play: The Next Level” (2018), won the American Bridge Teachers’ Association’s Book of the Year honors. It’s not a reach to picture the ABTA gold stamp of excellence on the cover of their latest work, as well.

“Planning the Defense” uses the same learner-friendly format as its predecessors. A concept is

briefly explained. A deal is presented. The reader studies it and plans the action before moving on. It is advantageous, of course, to see all four hands. But showing the complete layout of the cards at this point helps the advancing player learn to visualize what’s needed to exploit declarer’s weakness and maximize defensive assets. The solution is explained, and the exercise finishes with a concise statement of the plan. Planning is every bit as crucial on defense as it is when declaring. Sec-

tions close with bullet points that summarize key concepts, and then “Now Try These” – a quiz that puts what was just learned into practice. This time, however, you see only your hand and dummy.

Lessons start coyly with standard signals, the most basic partnership communications: attitude, count, suit preference and discards. No more shedding low cards randomly. The pace picks up as the authors navigate defensive tools, seat-by-seat thinking and other planning strategies, and climaxes with count (points)! count (tricks)! count (distribution)!

“Planning the Defense” provides all the necessary building blocks for the newcomer/intermediate player eager to develop into a more skillful and imaginative defender and a better partner.

*Available from Baron Barclay and  
bridge supply houses.*