

PLAN THE PLAY

	A86	
	62	
	104	
	A76432	
KQJ103		742
K108		J973
Q5		K98762
J105		---
	95	
	AQ54	
	AJ3	
	KQ98	

S N

1NT 3NT (Tip: When you are responder to a NT opening bid and you have a 5 card suit headed by an Ace or a King, add a point; a 6 card suit? Add 2 points. Even though you only count HCP in NT bidding.)

West leads Spade King. How will you play the hand?

Answer: You will have no problem if Clubs divide 2-1. BUT if they break 3-0, the Club suit will block. What on earth can you do about this?

Duck the Spade lead and duck it twice. Win the Ace Spades at trick three (perforce) and on that card, you must PITCH a low Club from declarer's hand. NOW play the C suit and you will have no problem, using up the high cards from the short side first. If you pitched anything else, you are toast!

Lord, give me coffee to change the things I can and wine to accept the things I can't.

Here are some bridge terms in common use among more experienced players:

A moose: a huge hand, typically with lots of high cards in all the suits. "I had a real moose."

The curse of Scotland: the 9 of diamonds. You explain this one to me...

Cheese: a reference to Swiss cheese: a hand with a lot of holes in it. "You opened that piece of cheese?"

Stiff: A singleton. "I had Queen-fourth, stiff King, three small, and King-Jack fifth" means your hand was Qxxx K xxx KJxxx. Obviously "stiff" derives from the fact that, like a dead person, the singleton must stiffly fall on the first round of the suit as it has no bodyguard to protect it.

Tight: used to describe a doubleton set of honors. "King-Jack tight," "Ace-King tight" means KJ or AK doubleton.

Tap: When on defense, to lead a suit that declarer is void in so as to reduce declarer's trumps. If you continually "tap" declarer every time you are on lead you are employing a "forcing defense." It is most often a fine defensive technique.

Fixed: When an opponent whom you consider not nearly as experienced as you takes a wild anti-percentage bid or play that happens to strike gold. Since their action will not be duplicated by anyone else in the room because it is so bad, if the lie of the cards happens to work for it, you get a bad score without doing anything wrong -- thus you are "fixed."

AH, SWEET MYSTERY OF BRIDGE

by Pauline Becker

There are some who think the game of Bridge
Is scary and mysterious;
They don't see players having fun,
They think it's all too serious.

The thought of playing duplicate
Is worse than Hannibal Lecter;
"No way!" they cry, "I might bid wrong
And someone will yell "Director!"

"We like our little game," they claim,
"Where no one knows conventions;
We bid the suits we really have
And Doubles cause no tensions."
"We've never heard of Lebensohl,
Jacoby, D.O.N.T or Stayman,
Cue bids leave us in the dark...
You're experts, we're just laymen."

But skill is all just relative,
And if the truth be told,
We all learn something new and fresh
With every hand we hold.

Who cares what kind of game you play
When all is said and done...
We want new players in our group;
Please come and join the fun!



LEAD FACE-DOWN

When it is your turn to make the opening lead, you should always place the card face-down on the table in front of you and ask: "Any questions, partner?" This gives your partner a chance to ask any questions about significant bids that have taken place at the table. Partner should not ask any questions when it is NOT her turn to lead until AFTER the opening lead is made. This way she cannot be perceived to be transmitting suggestions to you about what you should lead. After the lead is made face-down, **then** partner can ask questions. It also gives partner an opportunity to tell you that it is NOT your lead at all! In this case, you would be allowed to pick up your card and put it back in your hand.

Interestingly enough, after putting your card face-down on the table, (even if no questions have been asked,) if you should now decide you wish to switch your opening lead to a different card, you may not do so. This would be giving a mild message to your partner that your choice of opening lead was not clear-cut. We may never give unauthorized information to our partner. This just means that we can use our bids or our cards to signal our attitude towards her lead, but we may never use body language of any sort.

So next time your partner says: "Any questions, partner?" don't look at her as though she's got rocks in her head, she is merely following protocol. If you have no questions and it is partner's opening lead, say "no questions."

