

Ballina Bridge Club March 2008

The Power of Two – the Deuce



What the deuce does it mean ?

Deuce is referred to a type of playing card. Deuce is considered as one of the four playing cards in a deck that have two spots. In sports such as Lawn Tennis, Badminton as well as Table Tennis, its meaning refers to a tie between the two players wherein any one player out of the two has to win successive two points to win a game after the tie.

Deuce is used an exclamation in times of confusion and is also referred to the devil.

You are Declarer in a contract of 3 No Trumps. The opening lead is the 2 of Hearts. You heave a sigh of relief – why ? Well, the lead tells you that your Left Hand Opponent does not have a five card suit to run against you. If he has made the usual lead of 4th highest, you know he holds no card lower than the 2, and therefore the lead is likely from a four card suit.

You are playing in 4 Hearts. The opening lead is the 2 of Clubs. What can you tell from this lead ? Well, LHO has an Honour in Clubs. (Low from an Honour). That Honour will not be the Ace (“Never lead away from an Ace against a suit contract”) and he does not hold a sequence of touching Honours. (“Lead top of touching honours”). If the lead is 4th highest, he holds only four Clubs. He does not hold Ace and King, nor honours in sequence in another suit, because he would lead that combination in preference to leading from an unsupported honour. So as you stare at that innocent 2 of Clubs, already you are making assumptions as to the layout of the missing honour cards.



When you hold a doubleton – two cards in a suit, remember to play the high card followed by the lower card. This way of playing is known as a Peter, or an Echo – and allows your partner to work out that you hold only two cards in this suit. However, playing High – Low from an honour doubleton (Ax, Kx, Qx, Jx and even 10x) is not a recommended lead and you should probably only consider this lead if your partner has bid the suit.

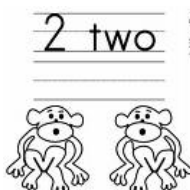
The discard of the 2. If your discarding method is to play high to encourage, then the discard of the 2 says “Not this suit partner, try something else.”

You signal with the 2. Partner plays the Ace and you play the two. You are saying to partner, “Sorry partner, I cannot help in this suit.” Ofcourse, if you play Reverse Attitude, low to encourage, then the 2 sends an encouraging message.

Your partner opens the bidding and you make a 2 over 1 response. Eg 1♥ : 2♣. To make such a response, you must hold at least 10 high card points – no distributional points allowed here – **you must hold 10 high card points**. At the Ballina Club this is an area where I see many players go wrong. You hold ♠ 542 ♥ 7 ♦ K76 ♣ KQ9865 – you cannot pass – you hold 8 points. You cannot introduce your Club

suit – you need 10 points, so you must bid 1NT. You partner must not expect a neatly balanced hand – all you are saying is “I have some values partner, but I am unable to bid at the two level because I do not hold 10 high card points”.

Overcalling at the two level. Strict requirements apply here. An overcall at the two level requires at least 11 points and a robust suit. A powerful suit is essential. If you are vulnerable, you really need an opening hand to come in.



The Rule of Eight The Rule of Eight is a system for deciding whether or not to bid at the 2 level over an opponent's 1 No Trump bid. This Rule of Eight can be applied whether the partnership agreement is to play any style of overcalls such as Brozel, Cappelletti, D.O.N.T, or other conventional methods. Since the main factor in deciding to make an overcall is the distributional feature of the hand, the point count becomes less important. It is called the Rule of 8 because you contract to take 8 tricks.

The player subtracts the number of Losing Tricks from the total number of cards contained in the two longest suits. If the subtraction results in a number of **2 or more**, then the player should decide to make an overcall. If the subtracted number is **less than 2**, then the player should **not** make an overcall.

♠ AQ873
♥ K63
♦ 85
♣ A94

The total number of Losing Tricks is 7. The total number of the cards in the two longest suits equals 8. Subtract 7 from 8 and the number equals 1. The player, according to the guidelines of the Rule of Eight, should not overcall. The player holding this hand should actively defend.

♠ K8653
♥ K8754
♦ 85
♣ 4

You will notice that this example holds only 6 points whereas the first example holds 13 points. However, here the number of Losing Tricks equals 7, but the total number of the cards in the two longest suits equals 10. Subtract 7 from 10 and the number equals 3. According to the guidelines of the Rule of Eight, you should overcall using whatever methods you employ to show a 2 suited Major hand.

♠ Q10764	♠ 9	♠ KQ964
♥ AQ73	♥ AQ9754	♥ 85
♦ 64	♦ QJ85	♦ K5
♣ 97	♣ 85	♣ K986

The three hands above all indicate that you should bid over the opponent's 1NT opening, using your gadget to show a 2 suited hand. It does not matter if the bid shows a strong 1NT 15 – 18, or an Acol 1NT 12 – 14.

If you apply the Rule of Eight, you will find yourself bidding on hands with which you would previously have passed and *vice versa*. A hand shaped 5 – 3 – 3 – 2 rarely qualifies.

Weak Two Openings and Weak Jump Overcalls. These bids are easy to make and the opponents find it difficult to bid over them. I heard Ishmael Del Monte talk about these bids the other night at the Gold Coast. He said, contrary to a widely held opinion, he had no objection to making these jump bids with voids in his hand.

Responding to Weak Two's with 2 cards in partner's suit. Now you know there is an 8 card trump fit. Ron Klinger suggests you count tricks rather than points in this situation.

If you have four quick tricks, raise your partner to game.



Opening 2♣. This is the strongest opening bid you can make and it is sensible to make it Game Force or 23 + points balanced. Consequently, your hand must be a real rock when you make this opening.

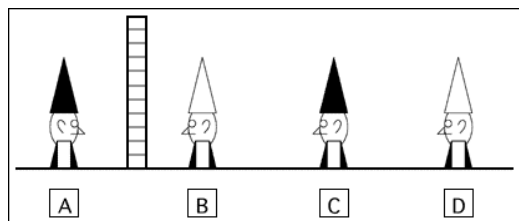
When determining whether to open 2♣ or not, apply the Losing Trick Count. If the hand is a 3 loser, then open 2♣ – if not, just open at the one level, and jump shift on the next round. Experts do not like opening 2♣ with two suited hands, and on the Internet, I have seen some top players open at the one level with huge hands. One daring expert even opened the bidding at the one level with a two suited hand of 22 points !

During one of Anne Bigg's teaching sessions, a brand new player approached Ron Hill. The beginner said to Ron, with deference, "I know you are an experienced player, and I wonder if you would be kind enough to answer a question." Ron, always willing to be pleasant and kind, agreed to help, although inwardly he was quaking at the knees, wondering what kind of question would be posed, and fearing that he would not know the answer.

"If my partner bids 1♦ and I bid 2♦ - which one of us plays the hand ?"

Ron broke into a big smile. He could answer the question – and furthermore he knew his answer was definitely right. So if you have any bridge questions to be answered, Ron Hill is the man to see.

Answer to last month's brain teaser



Question: Which one of them calls out ?

Answer: C calls out that he is wearing a black hat.

Question: Why is he 100% certain ?

Answer: After a while, C realises the answer. This is because D hasn't answered, and neither has A or B. D can see C and B, but can't determine his own hat colour. B can't see anyone. A is in the same situation as B. Since A,

B, and D are silent, that leaves C. C knows he is wearing a black hat because if D saw that both B and C were wearing white hats, then he would have answered. But since D is silent, C knows that he must be wearing a black hat as B is wearing a white hat.



Report from the Gold Coast Congress.

Players from the Ballina Bridge Club performed extremely well at this congress. **Lyn Arnett** and **Mike Gilfoyle** achieved a tremendous result by coming 2nd in the Ivy Dahler Swiss Pairs. This

event featured a star studded cast with players from China, Latvia, Lithuania and England as well as many top Australian and New Zealand players. Mike said they owed their success to a combination of factors. Concentration, a little bit of good luck, the hands suited their bidding style, all the opponents were pleasant and non-threatening and both he and Lyn played their personal best bridge.

In the Restricted Swiss Pairs, **Winston Guymer** and **Paul Cruickshank** finished third.

Henry Hirschhorn, Mary Leonard, Jan Blay and **Lyn Ebert** came 4th in the Novice Teams. They had a wonderful time, and Mary and Henry regret that their Masterpoint total is increasing, which means they will be ineligible for this great event next year.

In the Open teams, **Fiona Brown** and her team finished 13th. The team enjoyed a resounding victory against Ron Klinger's team on the last round. **Eric Hurley, Janet Brown, Bill Powell** and **Marjorie Askew** came 23rd and **Anne Bigg, John Fraser, Margaret Wilcox** and **Pat Fry** came 54th. Now 13th, 23rd and 54th mightn't sound too impressive, but when you consider that there were 274 teams participating in the event – then it's pretty good.



Recipe for Success. Several top players were profiled in the daily Bulletins at the Gold Coast. When asked to give tips to improving players, they all said "Read lots of bridge books". A Chinese national player said he has read over 1000 bridge books. The Irish national players Tom Hanlon and Hugh

McGann won both the Open Pairs and Open Teams. When I visited them at the Gold Coast for lunch one day with Fiona, I noticed several opened bridge books littering the apartment. So, if you want your results to improve, you know what to do. You won't just wake up one morning and find that you are a better player – you must put in some work on your game.

The Building Extension Sub Committee is looking forward to doing a presentation to the club members on the proposed extension to the Club House at 10.30am on Saturday 5th April 2008. The Sub Committee has had an enthusiastic response from the Council and the Trades people in regards to the proposed plans for the extensions and hope that the members will embrace the proposal in a similar manner. There will be many questions to be raised and these will be addressed at the special meeting. Plans will be on display in the Club this week and the Sub Committee wishes that all members will peruse the plans prior to the special meeting.



Barbara Meaney, Jack Pierce, Peter Tootell.

The last word on Two. *Don't sell out at the two level when your opponents have a fit.*

When your opponents have chosen to play at the two level in an announced fit, don't leave them there. Take some kind of competitive action, push them to the 3 level, rub your hands in glee, defend well and take them one



