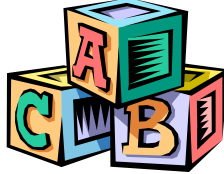


HOW ARE YOUR PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES?



One of the most important things you can do for your partnership is to strive for CONSISTENCY. You should have concepts and constructs and general principles that transfer easily from one situation to another. This makes your methods much easier to remember at the table. It makes it easy to build new structures that work. It ensures that your system hangs together well. It makes it easier for your partnership to solve new "undiscussed" problems at the table. And it ensures that you and your partner are always thinking on the same wavelength.

Your partnership should have clearly defined and consistent principles in each of the following areas.

- 1) Ownership
- 2) Constructive Bidding When We're in a Force (how do we show extras/minimum?)
- 3) Competitive Bidding When We're in a Force (how do we show extras/minimum?)
- 4) Doubles - General Approach in Common Situations
- 5) Inviting Game and Accepting Game Tries - Consistent Approach
- 6) Slam Bidding - Aggressive or Conservative? Tendencies.
- 7) Redoubles - General Agreements
- 8) Lebensohl
- 9) Lead-Directing Doubles
- 10) 2NT Bids in Competition
- 11) Constructive Bidding in Step Sequences
- 12) "Pass & Bid" Sequences
- 13) "Pass & Double" Sequences
- 14) Defending Against Conventions You Haven't Discussed.
- 15) What to Do if the Opponents Don't Know What Their Bid Means.

*Define your partnership principles in each of these areas
and be sure they are clear to both of you.*

1) Ownership

2) Constructive Bidding When We're in a Force (how do we
show extras/minimum?)

3) Competitive Bidding When We're in a Force (how do we show
extras/minimum?)

4) Doubles - General Approach in Common Situations

5) Inviting Game and Accepting Game Tries - Consistent
Approach

6) Slam Bidding - Aggressive or Conservative? Tendencies.

7) Redoubles - General Agreements

8) Lebensohl Agreements in a Variety of Situations.

9) Lead-Directing Doubles

10) 2NT Bids in Competition

11) Constructive Bidding in Step Sequences

12) "Pass & Bid" Sequences

13) "Pass & Double" Sequences

14) Defending Against Conventions You Haven't Discussed.

15) What to Do if the Opponents Don't Know What Their Bid Means.

(If you need some assistance in developing good general principles which are consistent with your partnership's general approach, or if you want some help in wording them so that they are simple and easy to remember, please talk with me. You will also find some help on the following pages.)

PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

1) **OWNERSHIP:** What determines that we "own" the hand? And when we own the hand, how far are we forced?

- *Suggestions:*
- *WHEN WE HAVE SHOWN GAME-INVITATIONAL VALUES BETWEEN US, WE ARE DEFINED AS "OWNING" THE HAND, AND THE OPPONENTS MAY NOT PLAY UNDOUBLED BELOW THREE-OF-ONE-OF-OUR-PRIMARY SUITS.*
- *IN ADDITION, THEY MAY NOT PLAY UNDOUBLED IN GAME UNLESS WE HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REJECT THE GAME INVITATION.*
- *IN ADDITION, THEY MAY NOT PLAY THE FIVE-LEVEL (OR HIGHER) UNDOUBLED.*
- *These agreements are sufficient for most situations, but, if you adopt them and/or alter them, you might wish to refine them further so that the degree of force will depend upon whether or not your side has found a fit.*

2) **Constructive Bidding When We're In A Force**

- *FAST ARRIVAL? or...*
- *PICTURE BIDDING (Jumps Show Good Trumps And/Or Extras?)*
- *Any exceptions to normal agreements?*

3) **Bidding In Competition When We're In A Force**

- *PASS IS WEAKEST ACTION? or...*
- *RETURN TO TRUMP SUIT IS WEAKEST ACTION?*
- *Does the level matter?*

4) **Competitive Doubles** - Generalized Agreements in the following situations:

- *Over-the-suit vs. Under-the-suit;*
e.g. USUALLY PENALTY OVER-THE-SUIT, USUALLY TAKEOUT UNDER-THE-SUIT.
- *Direct seat vs. Passout seat;*
e.g., USUALLY PENALTY IN DIRECT SEAT, USUALLY COOPERATIVE (Hxx) IN PASSOUT SEAT.

- Usual meaning at 2-level, 3-level, 4-level; e.g., TEND TOWARD TAKEOUT AT THE TWO-LEVEL, PENALTY AT THE THREE-LEVEL, CARD-SHOWING AT THE FOUR LEVEL.
- When We're in a Force vs. When We're Not in a Force; e.g., ALWAYS PENALTY WHEN WE'RE IN A FORCE.

5) Game Invitations

- For Example: INVITE CONSERVATIVELY - ACCEPT AGGRESSIVELY
- Other?
- Does vulnerability matter?
- "Invite Aggressively-Accept Aggressively" is NOT a winning strategy unless you play your cards like Meckwell.

6) Slam Bidding

- Aggressive or Conservative?
- Tendency toward Q-bidding and slow careful auctions? Or... Lots of splinters and fast auctions?
- Q-bid 1st-round controls before 2nd-round controls? Or... Q-bid 1st and 2nd-round controls equally?
- Agree or Disagree?: If we have 12 tricks if they don't take the first two (even when they can), we want to bid the slam.

7) Redoubles

- Penalty in direct seat, SOS in Passout seat?
- Always Penalty above the 2-level? Always SOS at the 2-level or below?
- Other?

8) **Lebensohl Agreements** in all situations where it may be applicable. For example, some possible agreements you might consider are...

- LEBENSOHL APPLIES ANYTIME WE MAKE A TAKEOUT DOUBLE AND THE OPPONENTS ARE IN TWO-OF-A-MAJOR.
- LEBENSOHL APPLIES WHEN RESPONDING TO ANY TWO-LEVEL TAKEOUT DOUBLE, EVEN WHEN RHO HAS BID OVER THE DOUBLE.

- *LEBENSOHL APPLIES VS. ALL ARTIFICIAL BIDS AT THE TWO-LEVEL WHEN WE KNOW ONLY ONE OF THE OPPONENTS' TWO SUITS (vs. Michaels, Astro, etc.)*
- *LEBENSOHL APPLIES ANYTIME THEY BID OVER OUR NATURAL NOTRUMP OPENING, OVERCALL, OR BALANCE.*
- *LEBENSOHL APPLIES ANYTIME PARTNER SHOWS A STRONG NOTRUMP, EVEN WHEN HE DID SO VIA A TAKEOUT OR CARD-SHOWING DOUBLE (e.g., vs. Flannery, Multi, etc.)*
- *LEBENSOHL APPLIES VS. ALL "FUNNY" 2-BIDS, WHEN RESPONDING TO PARTNER'S DOUBLE OR ARTIFICIAL TAKEOUT.*
- *LEBENSOHL APPLIES ANYTIME IT MAKES SENSE, EVEN IF WE HAVE NEVER DISCUSSED THE SPECIFIC SITUATION.*
- *LEBENSOHL APPLIES ANYTIME RESPONDER MAY HAVE A WEAK HAND AND MAY WANT TO SAY SO.*
- *LEBENSOHL APPLIES ANYTIME GAME IS STILL POSSIBLE FOR OUR SIDE.*
- *LEBENSOHL CAN APPLY IN OUR OWN CONSTRUCTIVE AUCTIONS (after opener reverses, after opener's 1NT rebid, after opener's Jumpshift to the two-level, etc.)*
- *My choice (ktm): LEBENSOHL APPLIES ANYTIME IT MAKES SENSE, EVEN IF NEVER DISCUSSED. LEBENSOHL APPLIES ANYTIME GAME IS STILL POSSIBLE FOR OUR SIDE, AND NEVER APPLIES WHEN GAME IS NOT POSSIBLE.*

9) **Lead-Directing Doubles**, particularly doubles of 3NT and Slam-Doubles, in the following situations:

- *We've Bid a Suit*
- *We Haven't Bid:*
- *No Suits Have Been Bid By Either Side*
- *We've Each Bid a Suit*
- *Doubler Has Bid two Suits*

10) **2NT Bids in Competition:**

- *Suggestions:*
- *WHEN 2NT CAN'T BE INVITATIONAL IT ISN'T NATURAL. (When not natural, 2NT is either Takeout or Lebensohl)*
- *2NT IS LEBENSOHL IF GAME IS STILL POSSIBLE*
- *2NT IS TAKEOUT IF GAME IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE FOR OUR SIDE*

- 11) **Constructive Bidding in Artificial Step-Sequences**
(2♣ Responses, Singleton Asks, Trump Asks, Control Asks, etc.)
- *THE MORE YOU BID THE MORE YOU HAVE? Or...*
 - *SAVE SPACE?*
 - *In some specific sorts of step auctions you may use the principle: THE MORE YOU BID THE MORE BALANCED YOUR HAND*
- 12) **"PASS & BID"** - If you pass on the first round, after the opponents have opened, then bid voluntarily (i.e., in direct seat) on the next round, does this show?
- a) a strong unbidable hand (e.g., with primary length in RHO's first suit)
 - b) a hand too weak to bid on the first round?
 - c) Two-suited? Weak or strong?
- 13) **"PASS & DOUBLE"** - As in (k) you pass on the first round, then double in direct seat on the next round. Is this:
- a) penalty or takeout?
 - b) a strong unbidable hand (e.g., with primary length in RHO's first suit)?
 - c) a hand too weak to double on the first round?
 - d) the wrong shape for a first-round double, i.e., the two unbid suits?
- 14) **The opponents make a conventional bid that you've never discussed** how to defend. (It happens, no matter how well you prepare.) Do you have a general approach to fall back on? What is:
- *Double?*
 - *Overcall?*
 - *NT Overcall?*
 - *PASS&BID?*
 - *PASS&DOUBLE?*
 - *A second double by your side?*
 - *How do you Q-bid?*
 - *If the conventional bid was artificial/natural, do your bids change in meaning?*
 - *Does it matter if their conventional opening shows a preempt, or a full opening bid?*

15) **The opponents make a bid and your screenmate can't tell you what it means.** Perhaps they've never discussed it. But, you need to know what it is, because the meaning of your own bid depends upon it. Of course, you may be protected by the laws, but it's better if you can take care of yourself. No one wants to go to a committee, and committees are not always fair. Better you try to win at the table. So, what do you do? (No, I do not mean "call the director." You may do that, or not - but you still have a bridge problem to solve.) Do you and your partner have an agreement?

Suggestion: Use the "Woolsey Principle:" *If they don't know what their bid means, we assume that it means exactly what it would mean to us if we had made the same bid in the same circumstances.*