

Easybridge! Sound Bites

Pregame mini-lesson, designed to sharpen wits and improve winning ways

Bidding Over Michaels

This hand showed up for South at the club last week. South held:

W	N	E	S
_____	1♥	2♥*	??

**shows 5 of the other major and an unspecified minor. This is called Michaels. You don't need a lot of points, just that 5-5 shape.*

♠10	♥AJ1087	♦AQ1097	♣Q10
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Wow! Your partner opened hearts. What a heart fit! That usually means “what a spade fit” for the opponents. God's suit. Time to check the vulnerability. No one is red. Okay, we are in for a ride. Hang on!

Obviously 3♥ isn't going to be enough. It's not even forcing and you're trying to decide between a game and a slam. 4♥ might also get passed out.

If you and partner play splinters (subject for another day!), all is well. You can bid 3♠, showing slam invitational strength and a singleton or void in spades. The splinter will tell partner not to worry about two quick losers in spades.

But if you *don't* play splinters? Then you have to use all your cunning and wile. How about a tricky, sneaky 3♦ bid. New suit by responder is forcing and shows your great suit. You can switch back to hearts later. Let's see what pard says.

W	N	E	S
_____	1♥	2♥*	3♦
4♠	P	P	5♥
P	6♥	all pass	

At one table, North doubled 4♠ in frustration and only set it two. Many folks didn't even reach slam! Shame!! Here's what partner in North held:

♠A5	♥KQ932	♦K5	♣AJ75
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You can see North has a problem over 4♠. Lots of extra strength, but no place to play yet. E/W are succeeding in making your life miserable. By passing rather than doubling, North will give you a chance to show the heart fit. Then knowing you have a source of outside tricks in the diamonds, and a dandy heart fit, he can go to slam with those lovely black suit controls. Sometimes discretion (not to mention trusting your partner!) IS the better part of valor.

Presenter Highlights:

Bidding over Michaels

** Review Michaels: shows 5/5 and either small or large hand. If the Michaels hand is small, it won't bid again.

** 1 ♠ - 2 ♠ shows 5 hearts and an unnamed minor

1 ♥ - 2 ♥ shows 5 spades and an unnamed minor

1 ♦ /C - 2 ♦ /C shows 5-5 in the majors.

**On this hand, when the opponents show a strong spade fit, South needs to use a new suit to force the bidding.

**When the opponents try to block you, North should pass to give South room to make a decision! The 5 ♥ is invitational to slam, and North can accept.

Today's Easylaugh!

Farmer vs Lawyer

Clyde, a farmer in Alabama, decided his injuries from the accident were serious enough to take the trucking company responsible for the accident to court. In court, the trucking company's fancy lawyer was questioning Clyde.

"Several weeks after the accident, this farmer is trying to sue my client. I believe he's a fraud.

"Didn't you say at the scene of the accident, 'I'm fine,' " asked the lawyer?

Clyde responded, "Well, I'll tell you what happened. I had just loaded by favorite mule Bessie into the trailer and was driving her down the highway. This huge semi ran the stop sign and smacked my truck right in the side. I was thrown into one ditch and Bessie was thrown into the other. I was hurting badly and didn't want to move. I could hear old Bessie moaning and groaning. I knew she was in terrible shape just by her groans.

"About this time, a highway patrolman came on the scene. He could hear Bessie so he went over to her. After he looked at her, he took out his gun and shot her between the eyes.

"Then the patrolman came across the

road with his gun in his hand and looked and me. Then he asked, 'And how are YOU feeling?' "

(Bridge Tie-in: Sometimes it's best to complete the picture of your hand later.)

Today's Easytreat!

Butterscotch Candy

2 packages butterscotch chips

2½ TBSP creamy peanut butter

2½ cans potato sticks

½ C walnuts, chopped (optional)

Melt the chips. Double boiler is best. Add peanut butter. Add more or less to taste. When these are smooth and blended, stir in the potato sticks. Amounts are flexible. Cover all sticks and add nuts. Drop small blobs on non-stick cookie sheet or waxed paper. Keep the pieces tiny so your players can just pop them in their mouths. No sticky hands.