

Easybridge! Sound Bites

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

When I say "Count," I don't mean Dracula!!

One of my players brought me this hand from a tournament. Nancy held:

♠ — ♥AKQ5 ♦A2 ♣AKQJ932

What could she possibly open except 2♣? Plenty of points and 11 tricks in her hand. It would be ridiculous to open anything that wasn't at least a game-force. (You do play a 2♣ opening as a game-force, don't you?) And yet in the tournament, several 0–300 pairs played below slam level, and one actually below game!

Her partner replied 3♦, showing a good 5-card suit and 8+ points.

Now what?

Nancy bid 4♣, and partner then responded 4♠. Hmmm.

The plot thickens. Blackwood may shed some light on the case, even with a void. 4NT showed one Ace, and 5NT showed one King.

What should be the final bid?

She bid 7♣, making, for an average. She wanted to know if she bid it right.

NO!! All was well until the final bid, then her old bete noir, "The Count," let her down. You can count seven club tricks, one diamond and three heart tricks, right in your hand. That's 11. Partner's Ace and King give you two more tricks.

How do you know partner has the ♦K and not the ♠K? Simple! Pard jumped to 3♦, showing a *good* 5-card suit. If pard thinks a suit headed by the Q J deserves that treatment (notice how the bid preempted her partner) it's time for a Partner Exchange!!

So she should have bid 7NT.

Amazingly, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Continuous Pairs at the tournament played in a contract other than 7NT. At least most were in 7. Apparently, not enough people are Counting on their pards!!



Presenter Highlights:

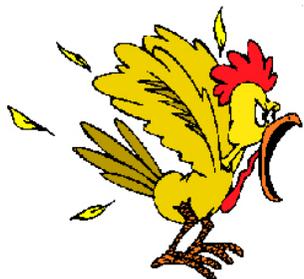
When I say "Count"...

COUNTING TRICKS FOR SLAM

- ♦ 2♣ opener only choice with so many points and tricks in hand. 2♣ is game force.
- ♦ Open 2♣ with 23+ pts., OR 8 ½ tricks in hand, OR you'd die if partner passed.
- ♦ Respond 2♦ *unless* you have a *good* 5-card suit and 8+ points. Otherwise, 2♦!!
- ♦ Counting tricks is often more important than counting points. Count the tricks, and show how pard's 3♦ response promised the ♦K.

Today's Easylaugh!

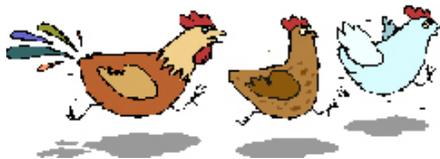
SMART CHICKEN



Zebediah was in the fertilized egg business. He had ten roosters whose jobs were to fertilize the eggs. Zeb kept records, and any rooster or pullet that

didn't perform well went into the pot and was replaced. That took an awful lot of time, so Zeb got a set of tiny bells and attached them to his roosters. Now he could sit on the porch and fill out an efficiency report simply by listening to the bells.

Zeb's favorite rooster was old Brewster. A very fine specimen he was, only his bell had not rung all morning! Zeb went to investigate. Several roosters were chasing pullets, bells a-ringin'. BUT Brewster had his bell in his beak



so it couldn't ring. He'd sneak up on a pullet, do his job and walk on to the next one. Zeb was so proud of Brewster that he entered him in the county fair. Brewster was an overnight sensation!! The judges not only awarded him the no bell piece prize, but also the pullet surprise.

(Bridge Tie-in: Old age & treachery will triumph over youth and skill every time!)

Today's Easytreat!

World's Easiest Shrimp Dip

- 1 can cream of shrimp soup
- 1 large pack cream cheese
- 1 small can cooked drained shrimp
- salt and pepper to taste

Serve with crackers or veggies. Will make 8 tables happy.

