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It's Just MayHem

with Beagen

I love gimmicks — Part 2

Are you always looking for little things to add to your game? I know I am. We continue with Part 2 of our series on bidding gimmicks.

McCabe over doubles of weak two-bids

The McCabe convention, also called the McCabe adjunct, occurs after one partner opens a weak two-bid and an opponent makes a direct-seat double. The partner of the weak two-bidder uses these Alertable methods:

1. Redouble forces the weak two-bidder to bid the cheapest suit and is the start of a single-suited escape or run-out bid. The redoubler then passes or corrects to his suit, and this is to play. In case the partner of the doubler bids, the person who opened the weak two-bid should pass.
2. 2NT is a game try with systems on (Ogust, showing a feature or whatever else you normally play).
3. A new suit is a lead directional raise of the weak two-bidder's suit. This is particularly useful because the weak two-bidder will frequently be on lead after a takeout double in the direct seat.

Here's an example of a hand in which the lead directing bid is really nice. Your partner opens 2♥ and right-hand opponent doubles. You hold:

♠87 ♥873 ♦Q874 ♣AQJ4.

Instead of raising to 3♥, you would bid 3♣. This shows a heart raise and asks partner to lead a club if he is on opening lead.

Some players use a variation of this gadget in which:

1. redouble shows a strong hand,
2. new suits at the two level are to play,
3. 2NT forces 3♣. You either want to play there or to sign off in a different suit at the three level.

In this variation, if you redouble, you can follow that with a bid in a new suit to show a forcing one-suiter or you can follow with an invitational raise of hearts.

Both of these variations are superior to standard.

Puppet Stayman

Puppet Stayman is used when the partnership has agreed that it is permissible to open balanced hands that contain a five-card major with 1NT or 2NT. Although it can be used after 1NT opening bids, it is much more common after 2NT openers or after 2♣ followed by a 2NT rebid. Puppet Stayman uncovers a five-card major in the strong hand, and it has the benefit of making sure that the stronger hand is the declarer.

Using this convention, responder should still transfer with a five-card major of her own, but with only three- or four-card major suits, 3♣ is used as Puppet Stayman. After a 3♣ response to 2NT the responses by the

opening bidder and the continuations are as follows:

1. 3♦ by opener shows one or four-card major suits
Responder's follow-up bids a
3♥ = I do not have hearts, but do have four spades,
3♠ = I do not have spades, but do have four hearts,
3NT = no four-card major, with checking for five,
4♣ = both majors, only interest in game,
4♦ = both majors, some slant interest,
4NT = no four-card major, with checking for five. Invitational to 6NT.
2. 3♥ = five-card heart suit
Responder's rebids:
3NT = to play,
4♣ = Roman Key Card for hearts,
4♦, 4♠ = cuebid in support of hearts,
4♥ = to play,
4NT = invitational to 6NT.
3. 3♠ = five-card spade suit
Responder's rebids:
3NT = to play,
4♣ = RKC for spades,
4♦, 4♥ = cuebids in support of spades,
4♠ = to play,
4NT = invitational to 6NT.
4. 3NT = no four- or five-card major suit
Responder's rebids:
4♣ = Gerber,
4♦ = transfer to hearts (rare),
4♥ = transfer to spades (rare),
4NT = invitational to 6NT.