

## Questions and Answers (1)

From the August 1998 edition of Directors' Bulletin, the journal of the Australian Bridge Directors' Association.

### *What is a psyche?*

**Q:** What constitutes a psyche? Perhaps *DB* could include an article on this. My question is prompted by this hand.

12/W/NS	♠ 863		
	♥ void		
	♦ QJ972		
	♣ 75432		
♠ K75		♠ J1042	
♥ QJ1093		♥ AK8762	
♦ AK53		♦ 10	
♣ Q		♣ KJ	
	♠ AQ9		
	♥ 54		
	♦ 864		
	♣ A10986		
W	N	E	S
1H	2NT*	3H	4C
4H	5C	All pass!	

Result: NS -100 for a top. I was South. Partner=s 2NT showed at least 5/5 in the minors and 6-10 HCP. I suggested to partner that her 2NT constituted a psyche, and we should report this. (*Ed: Qld now has a system of compulsory self-reporting of psyches, with penalties for failure to report*). We reported it to our Recorder, who said this was not a psyche. I=d be interested in your opinion and any discussion e.g. what range of OPs constitutes a psych.

*Toowoomba Qld reader*

**A:** You certainly got away with murder on this hand, but not because partner psyched! But we won=t go into that.

The Laws define a psyche as >A deliberate and gross misstatement of honour strength or suit length=. ( For honour strength, you could substitute HCP count ). Law 40A says >A player may make any call or play (including an intentionally misleading call - such as a psychic bid - or a call or play that departs from commonly accepted, or previously announced, use of a convention) without prior announcement, provided that such call or play is not based on a partnership understanding.

It is intrinsic to a psyche that there be an intention to mislead. I don=t see North=s 2NT as showing such an intention. North made a decision to make an underweight bid, a dangerous decision at the vulnerability, and one which deserved in my view a worse outcome. We all depart from our announced agreement at times, particularly with the safety of more distributional hands. However, if partner has a habit of making bids such as this one, then you have an implicit understanding that partner may bid on less than the announced HCP range. The opponents are entitled to know about this, and you should be modifying your notes on the system card.

It=s difficult to lay down precise figures as to what constitutes a psyche. Some examples:

You open 1S with:

6HCP and ♠ 97. Clearly a psyche.

12 HCP and ♠ 97. Still a psyche (gross misstatement of suit length)

6 HCP and ♠ Q9742. Still a psyche (gross misstatement of honour strength).

You cue bid 4C on the way to slam having only a small doubleton. Psyche: intention to mislead, and no honour strength.

Some might argue that North=s call was 50% or more below minimum strength, and therefore a gross misstatement of honour

strength., and therefore a psyche. However, I doubt that there was intent to deceive. We all like to bid, and we don't often get 5-5-3 hands. Partner succumbed to the temptation. (I must admit that, had I succumbed, even the possession of the ♠ 7 rather than the ♠ 6 would not have tempted me to raise to 5C in this auction!).

This answer may seem unsatisfactory, but there is no exact rule of thumb in deciding if a call was a psyche or not. Perhaps panellists may like to present their views. Incidentally, I see no harm in the Psyche Recorder accepting your report. One of the duties of the Recorder is to note any bidding patterns that might be emerging in a particular partnership, and warn them of the dangers of developing an undisclosed partnership understanding based on partnership experience.

## Review of the Auction

**Q:** I am a novice director. After reading my first copy of *Directors=Bulletin*, I realised that here was an opportunity to obtain knowledgeable answers to awkward situations I have come up against. Here is one problem.

At the club where I direct, there are a number of senior players who insist that the bidding sheet be covered up as soon as the first trick is completed. As I understand Law 20F2, declarer or either defender at their turn to play may ask for an explanation of an opponent's call or play conventions. So how would the exposure of the bidding sheet contravene any Law?

*Macksville NSW reader*

**A:** I have had two requests on this subject from readers, so it is clearly a matter of concern to club directors.

We are talking about two different Laws.

1. Review of the auction after the final pass: Law 20C2 and 41B. Declarer or either defender may, at his **first** turn to play, require all previous calls to be restated. This refers to a restatement of the sequence of bids during the auction. It is not about explanations.

2. Explanation of calls during the auction and during play. Law 20F2 and 41C. You may request an **explanation** of opponents' bids at any time at your turn to call or play.

It is easier to understand this if you realise that these Laws were drafted in the days of spoken bidding, when there was no written record of the bidding. You were entitled to a restatement of all the calls at any time it was your turn to call, and this extends to your first time to play. But, once you have played to trick one, you are no longer entitled to a restatement of all the calls. From this time, you are entitled to know only the contract, whether it was doubled, but not by whom it was doubled. To conform with this Law, then the bidding sheet must be turned over once first hand, declarer and third hand have played to the first trick.

However, you remain during play entitled to an **explanation** of an opponent's call.

So 'review' and 'explanation' are not the same thing. A review is a restatement of the auction. An explanation is an explanation of the meaning of an opponent's call(s). So your right to an explanation of a bid extends throughout the bidding and play. Your right to a restatement of the auction expires after you have played to trick one. Hence you should not be able to see the bidding sheet once you have played to trick one.

Related to the above question is this one.

**Q:** Our club has recently introduced bidding boxes, which have proved to be a great success. There is some controversy over the correct time to return the bidding cards into the box. As Director, I rule that the bidding cards may be returned to the box after North has entered the contract on the sheet provided, but the other players may request an extension of time to review the bidding.

This is generally accepted. However, there are some players who maintain that the bidding cards should be left on the table until declarer has played to the first trick. Is there a rule governing the return of the bidding cards to the box?

*Lakes Entrance Vic reader.*

**A:** As I understand it, the ABF have no specific regulations on this issue. Bidding boxes are used only when screens are in use, and it is their routine to remove the bidding cards when the screen is raised. Bidding boxes are widely used overseas, and no doubt they have regulations, but I'm not familiar with them.

Whatever you do must be consistent with the relevant Laws (see answer above). The problem is that the right of each player to a review expires at a different time i.e. once he has played to trick one. I see no problem with your procedure provided the players

realise they have a right to a review until they have played to trick one (in the case of declarer, once he has played from dummy).

### ***Lead during the auction***

**Q:** At a recent club session, I was called to rule on a lead out of turn before offender=s partner had made a call. She apparently had thought for some time, and her partner thought she had passed. Offender=s RHO had not made a call either. Offender=s partner had not seen the card, but both opponents had. Which Laws are appropriate?

*Surfers Paradise Qld reader*

**A:** Law 24 (card exposed or led during the auction). The lead has been made, so presumably was face up on the table. The fact that offender's partner did not see it is irrelevant. If it was led so that partner **could** have seen it (had she been looking), it is a played card and becomes a penalty card. Now 24B. It was prematurely led, and now partner must pass at this turn to call. Offender's RHO of course has the chance now to call.

Note also that Law 23 may be applicable. Offender, even if unintentionally, has silenced her partner at this turn. If you judge that partner may have taken some action which could have given the non-offenders a better score e.g. a phantom or badly judged sacrifice, then you will adjust the score. It is irrelevant whether the lead during the auction was intentional or just careless.

Remember also that, if the offending side become defenders, the penalty card Law (Law 50) applies. Under the 97 Laws, even after payment of the penalty, offender=s partner can=t take any action that could be influenced by having seen the penalty card.

Now for a similar situation to the above, but much more complex.

**Q:** The following actually happened in play a few weeks ago at our club.

W	N	E	S
	2S	P	P
Dbl	P		

At this stage, East led a card. (East is a novice , a recent arrival in Australia, and learning the language). South now tables his cards as dummy! (South is a very experienced, but apparently inattentive player). Where to from here?

*Wollongbar NSW reader*

**A:** What a mess!

Let=s start from scratch. East has made a premature lead during the auction (Law 24), so barring partner for one round. South has exposed his cards during the auction, thus barring his partner for one round! Further, South has taken action after East=s infraction before summoning the Director, thereby possibly forfeiting his right to a penalty for East=s infraction.

Can one allow play to proceed on the basis that South has condoned East=s infraction? No, because the auction is still alive. The auction is not over, by definition, until there have been three passes. So, at this stage, I would rule that East should make a call, and that, under Law 24, the card East led and all the cards South exposed remain on the table as potentially penalty cards. Is East, in making her call, entitled to use her knowledge of South=s exposed hand? I believe so. South has deliberately exposed his hand, and EW are entitled to the knowledge therefrom. Law 16 is not really applicable, because it refers to offenders= **withdrawn** actions. South=s action is not a withdrawn one, because Law requires him to leave his cards on the table.

So I would allow East to call, using her knowledge of South=s hand if she wishes, but West must pass for one round. South may then call with North barred for one round! What happens if EW ultimately win the contract? Then all of South=s cards become major penalty cards.

Over-riding all this is Law 72B1. This says in effect that, if an offender committing an irregularity could have known at the time that his irregularity could have advantaged his side, then the Director will award an adjusted score if the opponents have been damaged. It seems unlikely that East=s lead during the auction falls into this category. If she had a spade stack, all she had to do was pass. Her lead during the auction doesn=t seem likely to have been an advantage to EW. But I wonder a little about South=s (?inattentive) exposure of his hand, particularly if he had a hand that would happily play in 2SX.