

ROY HUGHES

FURTHER ADVENTURES

AT THE BRIDGE TABLE



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Foreword

In this engaging collection of deals, author Roy Hughes challenges the reader to solve some of the most intriguing bridge problems that he has collected over years of playing and observing our fascinating pastime. Taken from numerous sources including world championships, national trials, late rounds of North American knockouts and online play from around the world, these deals explore multitudinous aspects of card play for declarer and defender. A wide range of topics is covered, and while there are some familiar themes, there is also exploration of some of the less well understood facets of the world's ultimate card game.

The first half of the book is accessible to the keen intermediate; the deals gradually increase in difficulty, eventually being challenging even for advanced players. Many of the problems presented have definitive solutions, but others are complex and defy facile classification, being drawn from the real world rather than contrived to make a point. All are provocative and written in the author's inimitable style. I think it is fair to say there will be something here for everyone interested in card play, for those who wish to improve as well as those who wish only to enjoy.

Sami Kehela
Toronto
September 2013

Author's Preface

All my life I have collected bridge deals that I found particularly instructive, perplexing, humorous or beautiful. By 2005 I had amassed a file folder bursting with scraps of paper which formed the raw material for *Card by Card – Adventures at the Bridge Table*. When it was published the following year, I immediately began to notice deals that I wished I had been able to include. Not having time to deal with them properly, I began another collection, this time a computer file called MoreCardByCard, hoping one day to be able to produce a sequel. Years went by and the file continued to grow. Now seemed like a good time to sort through it, discarding deals that no longer seemed so interesting and the occasional one that I had forgotten the point of, and writing up the ones that pleased me most. The fruit of that labor I present to you as *Further Adventures at the Bridge Table*.

The deals come from a variety of places. Some I faced as a player, and some as a spectator on Bridge Base Online or elsewhere. Others were given to me, or are deals I have taken from magazines or books where I had something I particularly wanted to say. Some deals have been adapted for sake of interest, which will be noted, and a few have been composed from scratch. If nothing is said, the reader can assume playing conditions of team-of-four matches scored at imps.

The hardworking reader will want to stop at key points and think. One such opportunity will generally come at the page turn, for with the exception of a few stories toward the end of the book, the deals are presented in problem format, with analysis overleaf. Often there is a clearly correct answer, but on occasion, as in live play at the table, the best approach is unclear. At times there will be further questions for the reader to consider. I don't always write "What would you do next?" which might grow tiresome; sometimes I simply leave a blank line.

This is a book concerned primarily with card play, but inferences from the bidding are sometimes relevant. Here there is a change from my previous collection, where the four-card major methods of my youth were assumed if there was no indication to

the contrary. This would be impractical in the new volume, for those methods are seldom seen today. Instead, if nothing is said, the reader can assume the new standard: five-card majors, three-card minors, 15-17 1NT openings, weak two's and a strong 2♣. This basic system is also used by me with my partner of recent years, David Turner. Many of the deals are ones we faced together at the table.

Another modernization has to do with defensive carding. I can no longer say, as Michael Courtney said to me, "Our carding is like your grandmother's." Grandma played standard carding, but David and I, like most of the players in the book, play upside-down count and attitude. We do, however, stick to old-fashioned fourth-best leads. Anything else will be explained as it comes up.

Hand patterns notated with dashes are specific with respect to the suits held: 4-3-3-3 means four spades and three of everything else, whereas 4333 means a flat hand.

The words "he", "his", etc., are used as masculine or neuter, depending on context. This is as I was taught, and I ask the indulgence of those for whom it is not the preferred approach.

This book could not have been produced without the help I received from numerous sources, not all listed here. I would like to thank Master Point Press, in particular Sally Sparrow and Ray Lee. I am indebted to Bridge Base Online particularly for its Vugraph archives, which provide a lasting record of high level play, and to the players everywhere whose exploits gave me most of my material. I would like to give thanks to Sami Kehela for his advice and foreword, and to John Cunningham, Irving Litvack, Zygmunt Marcinski, Jeff Rubens, David Turner, Peter Winkler and Anders Wirgren for providing material and helpful criticism. And finally, I thank my family for their unflinching support throughout.

Roy D. Hughes
Toronto
September 2013

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1. The Right Hand

My uncle, who at 98 still plays a sharp game, has a regular Wednesday night duplicate. Whenever possible, I join him for dinner and an enjoyable evening of cards. The competition is keen and there are always some hands I find of interest. On the following one, it is important to have the right perspective.

Dealer West ♠ K 4 2
Neither vul. ♥ A K 8 3
 ♦ A K 2
 ♣ A 7 2
 □
 ♠ A 7 6 5 3
 ♥ 10 4
 ♦ 8 3
 ♣ 8 6 4 3

West	North	East	South
pass	2NT	pass	3♠
pass	4♠	all pass	

Opening lead: ♣10

We play natural methods, so I found myself declaring 4♠ from the hand with the long trumps. Take over for me, and don't let my uncle down – what is the best way to take ten tricks?

A 3-2 spade break would be helpful, but it's best not to make a habit of asking for more than you really need. The right way to play this hand is to win the first trick with the ace of clubs and take two rounds of trumps with the ace and king. When they split, play the ace and king of hearts and ruff a heart. Cross to a diamond and ruff the last heart. Finally play a diamond to dummy and ruff the last diamond. That's ten tricks, unless the defense has stepped in at some point to take its trump trick, in which case the tenth trick is dummy's little trump.

Dealer West Neither vul.	♠ K 4 2 ♥ A K 8 3 ♦ A K 2 ♣ A 7 2				
♠ J 9 ♥ J 7 6 2 ♦ Q 10 6 5 4 ♣ 10 5	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ Q 10 8 ♥ Q 9 5 ♦ J 9 7 ♣ K Q J 9
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ A 7 6 5 3 ♥ 10 4 ♦ 8 3 ♣ 8 6 4 3				

If you play on clubs instead, you will go down when the cards are as shown in the diagram. Suppose you play low to the first trick, win the club continuation and cash the top two spades before conceding a third round of clubs. You are hopeful that either clubs break 3-3 or that you can ruff the fourth round in the dummy. Unfortunately, East wins the third round of clubs, draws dummy's last trump with the queen and cashes the fourth round of clubs for one down.

Taking only one top trump before conceding the third round of clubs is no better. This time East wins the third round of clubs and plays a fourth round for his partner to ruff with the jack, guaranteeing four tricks for the defense.

The way to look at this deal is from the perspective of the dummy, where all that has to be lost, assuming trumps split, is a trump and two clubs. In fact, the correct play gives you a chance even if trumps are 4-1, if the defender with four trumps has to keep following suit, as on a hand like this:

♠ Q 10 9 8 ♥ Q 9 7 6 ♦ Q 10 5 ♣ 10 5

It's just a matter of making the right hand good.

SPARKLING CARD PLAY AWAITS...

This book takes the reader further along the path traversed by the acclaimed *Card by Card*. The author presents intriguing problems in declarer play and defense and follows them with comprehensive analysis, given with a light touch and the occasional entertaining diversion.

The critics on *Card by Card*:

Hughes writes with a gentle authority that endears him to readers and I can thoroughly recommend this book to players at or seeking to attain a high level of play.

— Julian Pottage

This book is as well-written and tightly-knit as its predecessor, Building a Bidding System. We look forward to many more efforts from this engaging writer.

— International Bridge Press Association



ROY HUGHES lives with his wife and two children in Toronto, Canada. He has received the International Bridge Press Association's Book of the Year award for two of his previous books. His other pursuits include chess, classical music and astronomy.