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EDDIE KANTAR TEACHES

Advanced Bridge Defense

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I know that it is customary for the author to thank the people who have helped with the book you are about to read. I have two people I wish to thank: Ray Lee, the publisher, whose idea and patience (with me) made this book possible, and Yvonne Snyder, who read every word and told me in no uncertain terms when I wrote something that wasn't clear. Since Yvonne plays at the level at which this book is written, I made every change she suggested. If this book turns out to be a winner, it's because of these two people.

Eddie Kantar

Introduction

Hello again. I'm assuming that you have read (survived) the first book in this series, *Eddie Kantar teaches Modern Bridge Defense*. Well, whether you have or whether you haven't, prepare yourself for some advanced defensive techniques.

The emphasis in this book will be on defensive logic. Trump promotion, card combinations, deceptive play and most of all, counting. In fact, three whole chapters are devoted to counting: counting declarer's tricks, declarer's distribution and declarer's high card points, to be specific.

Having spent a lifetime teaching intermediate players, I can say with some authority that very few can count properly. (I guess if they could count, they wouldn't be intermediate players!) Some say that when they try to count, it slows down the game too much; others says they can't play and count at the same time; others don't think they can do it, so they won't even try. I'm going to ask you to try, because if you are not counting, you are playing a different game.

A warning. Once you start counting, your game will sink a bit. It's almost inevitable. One tends to forget about everything else and make more mistakes than ever. But once you master the basic counting skills, your game will improve so much that you won't even recognize the player you once were. The players you used to think were such hot shots are now suddenly looking human. You can do some of the same stuff they can. This book is going to help you think; it's going to help you count; it's going to turn you into a competent defensive player. But you must make a commitment to hang in there. Don't let me down on this one.

Eddie Kantar

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Planning the Defense at Suit Contracts



Ready in defense, full of resources.

EDMUND BURKE

The opponents are bidding their heads off; suddenly, the bidding is over and it's your lead. And just what have you been doing while the opponents were merrily sending these coded messages to each other across the table? Not daydreaming, I hope.

Defensive planning starts with the bidding and comes into clearer focus when the dummy appears. The bidding helps determine your opening lead. The dummy, partner's signals, and bridge logic help determine your follow-up plays. During the bidding you should be trying to build a picture of declarer's (and dummy's) distribution and strength. This picture also influences your opening lead. If the opponents wind up in a trump contract, you should ask yourself:

- 1) What kind of a trump fit do I expect from the bidding? Will it be a 6-3, 5-3, 5-4, 4-4, etc. Or are the opponents playing a misfit?
- 2) Did the opponents stretch to get to this contract or was it bid confidently with no invitational bids?
- 3) Does dummy figure to have a long side suit?
- 4) Has dummy preferred one of declarer's two suits to the other,

WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER:

- How to recognize what declarer's plan will be from the bidding and the dummy
- How to plan your own defensive strategy accordingly
- Some useful defensive stratagems you can apply in various common situations

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particularly the second over the first, indicating shortness in the first suit?

- 5) Do you have four trumps, a side-suit singleton, or an honor sequence?

The answers to these questions help determine your lead. Although this chapter deals primarily with planning your defense *after* the dummy comes down, it can't hurt to review the opening-lead decision. After all, if you screw up on opening lead, it may be too late to recover no matter how clever a defender you are.

Opening leads can be categorized as: *attacking*, *passive* (including trump leads), *short suit*, or *honor sequence*. The last two are self-explanatory. Attacking leads are generally made in suits headed by the ace or king. They are made when you fear (or see) a long side suit in dummy or are looking for a ruff. Leading from long broken suits also falls under this category. These leads are often made when you (or partner) have four trumps and your goal is to whittle declarer's trump length down to your size or shorter. Passive leads are safe leads, leads that neither gain nor cost a trick. There is an art in knowing how and when to make passive leads. Much of this chapter will be spent going over this aspect of defensive play.

If you have an idea of how declarer will get rid of her losers, you may be able to thwart declarer's plans. Basically there are three ways declarer disposes of losers:

- 1) Discarding them on dummy's strong side suit.
- 2) Ruffing them in the short hand, usually the dummy.
- 3) Via endplays, elimination plays, loser on loser plays, etc.

If (1) and (2), the two common techniques, are not available, declarer is usually stuck with whatever losers she has. There is no need for the defenders to rush madly to take their aces and kings, perhaps giving up tricks by attacking new suits. Declarer's losers aren't going anywhere. *Don't panic!*

	NORTH (Dummy)	
	♠ K 6 5	
WEST (You)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	EAST
♠ Q 9 4		♠ A 10 3 2
	SOUTH	
	♠ J 8 7	

This is a typical card combination where South, left to his own devices, has three losers and no winners. If the defenders get nervous and start the suit, declarer makes an undeserved trick.

If you and partner can identify these ‘dangerous’ suits (not always easy), these are suits to stay away from, far away. Declarer, on the other hand, is either hoping you will make a friendly play in one of these suits, or failing that, wants to force you to lead one. Thus the constant struggle between the declarer and the defenders to see who can get the other to break a dangerous suit.

Identifying the dummy

Once the dummy appears you can usually tell if you had it right with your choice of opening leads. If not, you may have to change horses in midstream. There are three common dummy types that should hit you in the face when you see them.

Type 1. Dummy has ruffing potential but little else

	NORTH (Dummy)										
	♠ 10 6 3										
	♥ 3 2										
	♦ J 7 6 2										
	♣ A 6 5 3										
WEST (You)		EAST									
♠ 9 8	<table style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;"> </td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ J 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ Q 9 7		♥ A 10 8 5									
♦ Q 10 9		♦ K 8 5 4 3									
♣ K Q 9 8 2		♣ 10 4									
	SOUTH										
	♠ A K Q 7 5 4										
	♥ K J 6 4										
	♦ A										
	♣ J 7										

NORTH-SOUTH VUL. DEALER SOUTH			
West	North	East	South
pass	2♠	pass	1♠
all pass			4♠
Opening lead: ♣K			

You lead the ♣K to dummy's ace, partner's ♣10 and declarer's ♣7. You see that the dummy is pretty bleak. Furthermore, there is no possibility of long suit establishment. The only real value in this pitiful dummy is the doubleton heart.

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Eddie Kantar's various bridge books have sold hundreds of thousands of copies in ten languages, not least because of his unique style and the humor that he introduces into the learning process. *Advanced Bridge Defense* is intended to cover some of the more complex concepts of defense for the modern novice player, and will undoubtedly be a standard reference work and teaching tool for many years to come. The topics covered here (including defensive strategy, inferences, various ways of counting the hand, developing extra trump tricks, falsecarding, and lead-directing doubles) are handled so thoroughly that even more advanced players will benefit from studying this book.

Designed to be used by students learning on their own or by bridge teachers, this book contains a host of features that help the reader to grasp the material: clearly laid-out concepts, margin notes, practice hands, chapter-end quizzes, key-point summaries at regular intervals, and an index. This book covers more advanced topics than its companion, *Eddie Kantar teaches Modern Bridge Defense*.

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Eddie Kantar is a professional bridge player, writer, and teacher, and has been inducted into the Bridge Hall of Fame. He has been World Champion twice, and has won thirteen North American Championship titles. Among his many books are *Defensive Bridge Play Complete*, *Introduction to Defender's Play*, *Bridge for Dummies* and *Roman Key Card Blackwood*. He writes regularly for numerous bridge magazines around the world, and is a frequent host on bridge cruises. He lives in Santa Monica, CA.



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