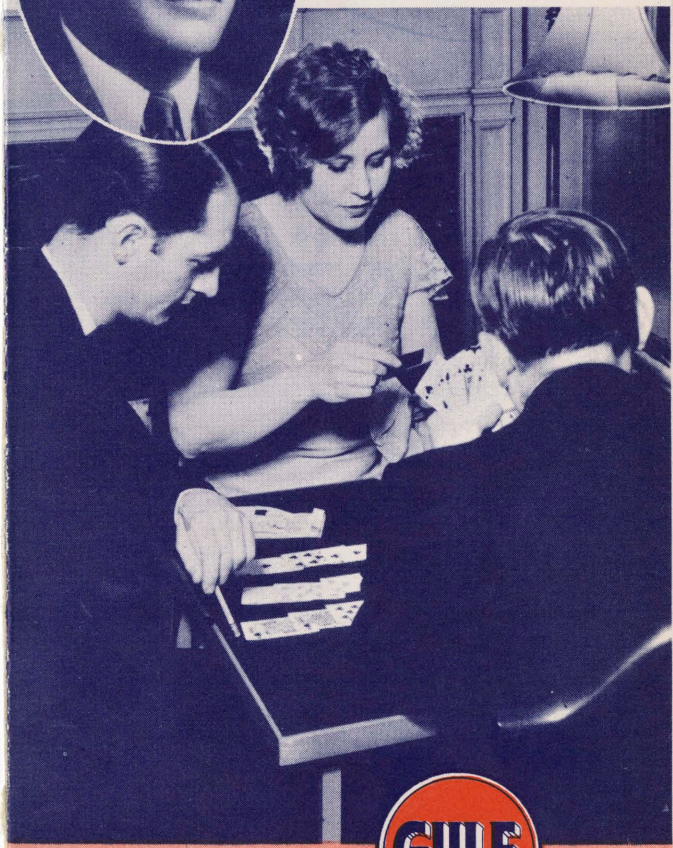
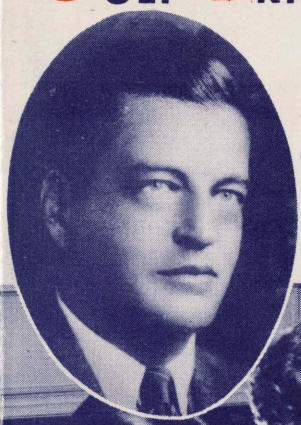


GULF **B** ^{3c} **R**IDGE **L**ESSONS

Number 3

The **VANDERBILT**
S Y S T E M



THE GULF REFINING CO.

The VANDERBILT System

THE Vanderbilt System of Contract Bridge was invented by Mr. Harold S. Vanderbilt who is known to many as the "Father of Contract." He is in a large measure responsible for the system of scoring at Contract Bridge now in universal use.

The basic feature of the Vanderbilt System is an artificial Opening bid of one club, which is made irrespective of the club holding and thus neither denies nor affirms a biddable club suit. In order to make this artificial bid the player is required to hold 3 quick-tricks plus, or better, unless the hand conforms with requirements for an original notrump.

An example of an original one club bid is as follows:

♠ A K 9 7 ♥ 9 6 3 ♦ A K 7 4 ♣ Q 2
or
♠ 9 7 ♥ A 9 8 4 ♦ A K Q J 7 5 ♣ 7

In measuring values under the Vanderbilt System the following quick-trick table is used:

A or K Q of same suit, or 2 K x = 1 quick trick
A K of same suit = 2 quick tricks

High-Card-Trick Table

Quick trick given above and

K x or Q J x of same, or 2 Q x, or Q x and J x of different suits = 1/2 high-card-trick.

K J 10 of same, K x and Q x of different suits = 1 high-card-trick.

A Q, A J 10 or K Q 10 of same suit = 1 1/2 high-card-tricks.

An unguarded King; or any Queen not included in one of above combinations; or a Knave with A K, A Q, A 9, K x or 10 x of same suit; or 2 J x equals a +value.

A total of but two-plus high-card-tricks can be counted in the same suit, i.e., A K J equals 2+ quick-tricks, or 2+ high-card-tricks.

Two plus values do not equal 1/2 high-card-trick.

In the Vanderbilt System there are three kinds of original bids:

1. Offensive.
2. Partly defensive.
3. Psychic, as distinguished from legitimate.

Game is the ultimate goal of all offensive original bids. While it sometimes pays to open the bidding, after partner has passed, in the hope of obtaining merely a partial score, it never pays to continue to bid (if unopposed by the enemy) except in the hope of reaching a biddable game contract.

The strength requirements for offensive original bids never vary.

Original One-Bids and Two-Club Bids

One of a suit (other than clubs) or two clubs may be bid with:

Not less than either:

- (1) a four-card suit and 2 1/2+ high-card-tricks, or
- (2) a five-card suit and 2 1/2 high-card-tricks.

Less than either:

- (1) three quick-tricks plus, or
- (2) original notrump requirements.

Minimum original biddable requirements for:

four-card suits—one of a major, A Q 9 x, K J 10 x; one diamond, Q J x x; two clubs, A K J 9.

five-card suits—Q 10 x x x and shaded J x x x x.

six-card suits or longer—none.



Presentation of Vanderbilt Cup for 1933. Left to Right: Douglas Paige, Francis Rendon, Philip Abramsobn, Harold S. Vanderbilt (donor), B. Feuer, S. Rusinow.

Bid one club holding three quick-tricks plus or better, unless the hand conforms to original notrump requirements.

Three quick-tricks plus means:

- (1) With high-card-trick in but two suits either (a) 2 A-K, or (b) a set-up minor suit and an Ace.
- (2) With high-card-tricks in three or four suits; 3 quick-tricks, and either (a) an additional 1/2 high-card-trick; or (b) distribution very favorable to a subsequent suit-bid or bids.

Bid one notrump originally with:

- (1) a minimum of three-plus (3 1/2 if vulnerable) high-card-tricks;

- (2) a minimum of 4 (5 if vulnerable) probable tricks;
- (3) an actual (including K x) or potential (Q x or J 9 x x) stopper in all four suits.
- (4) a notrump hand pattern; and
- (5) irrespective of whether a hand conforms to three quick-tricks plus club-bid requirements.

The important hand pattern factors are:

- (1) distribution; and
- (2) high-card allocation favoring notrump: 4-3-3-3 and 4-4-3-2.

Sometimes high-card allocation outweighs distributional considerations.

One club and notrump are the original well-above-average strength-showing bids of the Club Convention.

Shaded Bids

Shade all bids when necessary; a player should exercise an intelligent latitude when confronted with a hand or a situation requiring an exceptional bid.

Bidding Two-Suit Hands

When two biddable suits are of equal length, bid the ranking suit first.

When two biddable suits are of unequal length, bid the longer first. Exceptions: (a) Bid a very strong five-card major suit before a six-card minor; (b) when not strong enough to open with one club, bid a four-card major in preference to two clubs with a five-card club suit.

Original Two-Bids

Bid two notrump with (a hand must meet all four requirements):

- (1) a minimum of $4\frac{1}{2}+$ to 5 high-card-tricks.
- (2) a minimum of 6 (7 if vulnerable) probable tricks;
- (3) actual stoppers (including K x and Q J x, but not Q x x) in all suits; and
- (4) a notrump hand pattern.

A good general hand pattern rule—only bid two notrump in hands containing a probable double stopper in three suits.

An original two-bid in a suit (except two clubs) requires a six or seven-card suit and fair strength in it. When vulnerable, 6+ to 7 probable tricks are required.

Two-bids in a suit show a one-suit hand, deny material strength in side suits, express a desire to play the hand only in the bid suit and are usually defensive and shut-out. Two-bids in a suit should be varied. They should be assisted with caution.

Original Three-Bids

Bid three or more notrump originally only when partner cannot have two quick-tricks, and you have a notrump hand pattern. Conversely, a Jump three or higher notrump bid after a negative response to a one-club bid denies at least two of the eight quick-tricks. The minimum requirements for this second-round three notrump bid are:

- (1) $4\frac{1}{2}$ plus to 5 high-card-tricks;
- (2) 8 or 9 probable tricks;
- (3) actual stoppers (including K x) in all suits; and
- (4) a notrump hand pattern.

Original Game Suit-Bids

Requisites: 8 to 9 reasonably certain tricks in a major, 9 to 10 in a minor, if vulnerable. Such bids are pre-emptive (partner should not assist or overbid

except with quick-tricks in at least three suits, including 2 or 3 aces), partly defensive and shut-out.

Responses to Club Bid After Intervening Bid or Double

After an intervening one-bid or Double, the partner of the club bidder has five courses open to him:

- (a) make a game-forcing double or redouble with 2 or more quick-tricks;
- (b) overbid with from 1 to 2 high-card-tricks (a one-notrump overbid after an intervening one-bid shows $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 high-card-tricks, including a stop in the adverse suit, and is semi-forcing);
- (c) pass with from 0 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ high-card-tricks;
- (d) make a game-forcing two-notrump bid, or
- (e) make a one-jump once-forcing overbid in a suit (a distributional force).

An intervening two or higher bid by Second Hand after a one-club bid breaks the chain of the Club Convention. In such a case a Double of either the club bidder or his partner means business, and an overbid, unless a Jump, is not an absolute Force.

Bids to Avoid

Never assist, overbid or rebid in the hope of obtaining a greater partial score. This is never justified. The bidding should be closed by passing, when it is evident that a game cannot be bid. The pass, Mr. Vanderbilt says, is one of the best calls in Contract.

This is No. 3 in a series of 6, including the Culbertson system, the Sims system, the Vanderbilt system, Slam Bidding, Laws of Pivot Bridge, and Conventional Signals used in Contract Bridge.

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