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"Some Klinger-Schogger Principles to Guide Making What May Be the 'Most Important' Bid in Bridge"

Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen¹

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Michael Berkowitz in his 2019 article, "The Virtue of Passing" on Larry Cohen's bridge website, notes that, "It took me a long time to like passing. It feels so, for lack of a better word, passive, and I always wanted action." Similarly, Ron Klinger and Harold Schogger (2021) in their little book, The Power of Pass, suggest that:

"Most players beyond the beginner and novice stages bid too much. There is certainly satisfaction in bidding and making a contract. [But t]here can be even great satisfaction in passing and then being rewarded for your discipline by defeating the opposition contract when you would have been defeated if you had bid higher.

If you currently have difficulty in passing, we have a remedy for you... Each morning, after you shower and shave or put on makeup, whichever it is that you do, stand in front of the mirror and say 'No bid, No bid, No bid' until you can reproduce it regularly at the bridge table." (p. 7)

Klinger and Schogger in the book The Power of Pass use as Chapter Titles bridge principles that you can use to guide

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¹ As noted in an article in the Winter/Spring, 2024 article in The American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) Journal, https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/ABTA_1_24.pdf, Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, the purported ACBL Double Triple Emerald Gold Platinum LifeMaster with 20+ million ACBL MasterPoints, in fact is a hypothetical, and not a real person! So, this article was really, really written by Bruce Thompson.

making decisions about when you should PASS. Here Esther presents some of the Chapter Titles/bridge principles. *Each* chapter in the Klinger-Schogger book includes as examples *actual Boards* from various national and international bridge competitions.

Ron Klinger

Ron Klinger (1941-) is an Australian contract bridge player who has written more than **70** bridge books including his 1990 book, Guide to Better Card Play, which won the "American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) Bridge Book of the Year Award." His book, Right Through the Pack Again, won the 2010 "International Bridge Press Association Book of the Year Award." He was Editor of Australian Bridge for 13 years (1972-1985). For many years he has written, and still currently writes, a weekly bridge column for both the Sydney Morning Herald and The Sun-Herald.

Klinger also originated the Ron Klinger "**Suit Quality Test ('SQT') Score**". The "**SQT Score**" is computed by adding together (1) the number of cards held in the Suit and (2) the number of Honors held in the Suit (including the Ten if a higher Honor is also held). Suit contracts set at a level of "**SQT Score**" - 6 are generally relatively safe.

Harold Schogger

Harold Schogger is an English Bridge teacher, writer and director. He for years was the bridge columnist for the Jewish Chronicle. He is the author of the ebook Bridge for Winners. Esther especially likes Schogger's curated list of the "BOLS Expert Bridge Tips" winners:

<https://www.haroldschogger.com/bols1.htm>

The Dutch distillery BOLS has been in existence since 1575. From 1974 to 1994 the world's bridge experts submitted "expert tips" to BOLS the Dutch Distillers and each year a panel of eminent IBPA members voted on the very best of these tips.

Klinger and Schogger The Power of Pass Chapter Titles/Bridge Bidding Principles

Chapter 03 "Pass if an opponent opens 1NT and you were about to open 1NT, too."

Chapter 04 "Pass if an opponent opens with a suit bid and you were going to open with the same suit."

- Chapter 06 "You open with a weak two or a pre-empt. Do not bid again unless partner has made a forcing bid or invites you to bid again."
- Chapter 07 "You have made a limit bid. Do not bid again unless partner has made a forcing bid."
- Chapter 08 "Partner has invited game or slam. Pass is you are minimum."
- Chapter 09 "If the opponents are in a contract which you can beat, pass, unless you can also beat any contract that they might bid if you double."
- Chapter 10 "The opponents have stopped at the 2-level. Partner balances and they bid to the 3-level. Do not punish partner by bidding again. Pass!"
- Chapter 12 "Avoid bidding 5-over-4 if your side has the balance of power."
- Chapter 14 "Open light [with 11 HCPs] in third seat only if you are suggesting a good lead for partner, otherwise pass."
- Chapter 15 "Do not support partner's overcall or weak two or weak jump-overcall if you have 10 or 11 losers."
- Chapter 18 "Do not bid with 11 points if you have no attractive rebid."
- Chapter 19 "Be wary of competing if there is a risk of pushing them into a game which they might not have bid."
- Chapter 20 "If strong in a suit bid on your right, pass and hope for penalties later."
- Chapter 22 "Be reluctant to compete 3-over-3."
- Chapter 23 "Leave the 5-level to the opponents."
- Chapter 26 "Do not compete at a level higher than you wanted to bid initially."
- Chapter 28 "Do not compete against a strong 2♣ opening without extreme shape."
- Chapter 30 "Respect partner's sign-off."
- Chapter 32 "If partner doubles for takeout or showing values, pass for penalties only if you have strong trumps."
- Chapter 33 "Do not open a 4-3-3-3/4-4-3-2 with eleven points in first or second seat."



Esther says:

You may also be interested in "Esther Bridge Dialogue Lesson #79":
"Bridge Bidding: When to (1) Open the Bidding, (2) Overcall or
DOUBLE, Make (3) a 'Weaponized PASS', or (4) a 'Plain-Vanilla
PASS' ":

<https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/PASS.pdf>