

THE ARIZONA REPUBLICAN

11 FEBRUARY 1917

Foster Gives Rules for New Pirate Bridge

Pirate bridge is the latest. The fascinating game has won favor of bridge devotees who find it an improvement over auction. As yet no authorities have been discovered so that the few who have mastered the new game have been called upon to hold classes to instruct their friends. A recent article by R. F. Foster, that appeared in the New York Sun, will be helpful to those who are interested in pirate bridge which gives promise of being played at all smart functions in the future. It follows:

There is a new game in town. Frank Crowninshield, editor of Vanity Fair, got hold of it from Aleister Crowley, the dramatist and traveler, who had an idea that auction would be vastly improved if the players could not only select the trump best suited to their individual hands, but also pick the partner best fitted to carry the contract to a successful conclusion.

The idea having been worked over, adjusted as closely as possible to the present methods of playing auction, tried out in practice and then submitted to a number of experts at the older game. It is presented to the card playing world under the name of "Pirate Bridge," as a complete solution of the three great objections to auction as now played. These are: the misfit hands, the uncongenial partners, and the long drawn out rubbers.

Every one knows how provoking it is to make a perfectly legitimate bid and find all the trumps in one hand against it, or the long suit stopped by a player with the queen and ace over you. The one who should have been your partner is your opponent, and your contract is impossible.

Another common experience is to cut the worst player in the club, or the most unlucky card holder, rubber after rubber. It is just as bad to sit opposite an uncongenial partner, who has a system of bidding with which you have no sympathy, or which you do not understand.

Long Rubbers

There is nothing so tiresome as those long rubbers, with players waiting to cut in, while first one side and then the other

is set on the contract as a punishment for attempts to keep the rubber going. The scores above the line may run into the thousands, yet there is nothing in it, as the losses on one side about balance those on the other. In the meantime the players have missed their train or their dinner.

The new game, pirate bridge, proposes to do away with all these objectionable features by a very simple change in the method of selecting the partner to play the hand, so that the two best fitted to carry out a named contract shall be together and the two best suited to undertake another contract or to defend themselves against the one that wins out shall also be together. All the suit values, rules for bidding and play remain practically the same as in the present game of auction. The only change is that the player sitting opposite you is not compelled to be your partner.

Four persons play, cutting for choice of seats and cards. The lowest cut has the first deal and the next lowest sits on his left, and so on round the table. The dealer has the first bid or can pass. If he passes each player in turn to the left has a bid.

The moment a bid is made each player in turn to the left may accept or pass. No bid can be raised, overcalled or doubled until it has been accepted and a partnership formed to bid against. The player who accepts signifies his willingness to become the dummy partner of the bidder in that declaration without making any change in his position at the table, but he does not bind himself to remain his partner in case of any further bidding. The usual forms are: "One heart," "I accept," or "I pass."

When a bid is accepted each player in turn to the left, including the one whose bid has just been accepted, may bid higher or pass. Only the partners now opposed to the accepted declaration can double. If they double they may be redoubled. An acceptor cannot overcall his own acceptance unless some other bid and acceptance intervenes, but he may accept a higher bid. If he had a better bid in his hand he should not have accepted.

Overcalling the Contract

When an acceptance is overcalled, the higher bid must be accepted before any further bidding takes place and any player may accept it, no matter what he did on the previous bid, which is void the moment a higher bid is accepted. It will thus be seen that the same player might accept several different bids.

When no one will accept the first bid made, it is void, and the bid passes to the player on the left of the one whose bid is refused, just as if no such bid had been made. Suppose Z deals and bids two spades. No one accepts. A then bids a club. If none of the four players can make an acceptable bid, or if no bid at all is made, the deal is void and passes to the left.

When one will accept a bid that has raised a previous acceptance, it returns automatically to the last accepted bid, and the player to the left of the one who could not get an acceptor may proceed to bid as if no such bid had been made. Any bidder who is refused cannot bid again until some other bid is made and accepted, but he may accept such a bid. This is to prevent a player making a series of unacceptable bids, which would simply delay the game.

A double reopens the bidding, just as at auction. If the partner if the doubler does not approve of it, he may bid himself out of it, and if he can find an acceptor the double is void. There is little or no doubling in pirate. It pays much better to take one of the players you double for your partner.

Beginners are apt to imagine that they can ride to victory on the coattails of the strong hands by accepting, but as all bids are aimed at a certain player, whose previous bids or acceptances have indicated as the best partner, the one who interferes can be cut out. Suppose Z bids no trump and A accepts, Y bids two spades, aiming to get the no trumper that is stronger in spades for a partner, but B jumps for it, and says, "I accept." When it gets to A, who has the spades, he bids three spades, and Y accepts before it gets to B.

Playing the Hands

The player who makes the final accepted bid is the declarer and plays the dummy, no matter what bids went before or who made them. The player to his left leads. If the acceptor is immediately on the left of the declarer, the player opposite the declarer leads. The moment the first card is led the acceptor lays his hand on the table, face up, sorted into suits wherever he happens to sit, so that the dummy may be opposite the declarer or on his immediate right or left. The play of the hand is just as at auction, except that both partners may have to play, one after the other, in some deals.

A four line score pad is necessary, with a separate column for each player. When the contract succeeds, the declarer

scores just as at auction, but his acceptor credits all the points in the honor column. Suppose it is four spades and four honors. There is a game, for which a bonus of 50 is added. The declarer takes 36 below, 86 above. His acceptor gets 122 in honors.

The first player to win two games wins the rubber, for which he gets an extra 50, not shared by his acceptor, in addition to the regular 50 for the game. The penalties are the same as at auction, 30 for each under trick, 100 if doubled, and so forth. The revoke penalty is 50 points straight for each of the two players on the side not in error.