

Anticipate

I'm so excited, I can't wait
This anticipation—it's really great
If they don't bid soon
I'll probably swoon
I'm so psyched, I'll deflate

Even before you get to where you're going to play duplicate bridge, I hope you're anticipating.....thinking of the fun, the challenges, and the mental exercises that will ensue. And since you are a truly avid bridge player you are looking forward to these things and more with a very positive attitude.

Once you arrive (in the right frame of mind) and the boards are in front of you, anticipation should become your modus operandi. From the moment you pick up a bridge hand you should be anticipating. If you're going to open the bidding, what do you anticipate your rebid to be? If partner is the dealer, are you anticipating possible responses to yet unknown bids? If you're the dealer or partner has passed, are you anticipating whether (and if so, how) you can open the bidding? And are you anticipating overcalling, doubling or making some two-suited conventional call should your right hand opponent should open the bidding?

Then we get to the play of the hand. If you're declaring are you anticipating bad trump breaks? For example:

	North	IMPS	
	♠ A	Dlr: South	
	♥ K10876	Vul: E-W	
	♦ K8752		
	♣ J6		
West		East	
♠ KQ974		♠ 108653	
♥ 95		♥ 2	
♦ -		♦ AJ64	
♣ K109852		♣ Q73	
	South		
	♠ J2		
	♥ AQJ43		
	♦ Q1093		
	♣ A4		

Auction:	South	West	North	East	(1) Michaels cuebid
	1♥	2♥(1)	2♠(2)	Pass	(2) limit raise in ♥'s
	3♦(3)	Pass	4♥	4♠	(3) game try
	5♥	Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening Lead: ♠King

The declarer of this deal, South, overbid somewhat but got lucky since his partner had a second fit with him. Since N-S have nine diamonds between them it's a fact that West's second suit must be clubs. Therefore, one must be very careful in the play of the diamond suit as they can afford only one loser (the Ace). After pulling trumps South should lead the ♦10 from his hand towards the King thus preserving a tenace over the Jack as it is very probable that East had both the Ace and the Jack. When West shows out, it's now a simple matter to lead the ♦8 from the dummy finessing East for the Jack. On this deal it is all-important to watch the spots cards.

And if you're defending you should be anticipating which cards you can pitch and which cards you need to keep and how to signal to partner what you have?

Some might just call this planning and/or counting but whatever it is it implies thinking about it before you make some mistake from which you cannot recover.

To anticipate means to foresee an event and to take some action to prepare for it or to prevent it. For example partner opens the bidding with 1♥ and your RHO passes. You hold the following hand: ♠x ♥Axxxx ♦xxxx ♣Qxx. Surely you are going to bid 4♥ hoping to make it difficult for your LHO to bid. You are anticipating that the opponents likely have a spade fit and are making it as difficult as you possibly can for them to find it.

A common sequence that comes up where anticipating is usually rewarded is this:

Opp	Partner	Opp	You
1♣	Double	Pass	?

Your hand is ♠KJxx ♥QJxx ♦Jx ♣xxx

This is one of the very rare instances where you don't bid hearts first. Instead you need to bid 1♠ anticipating that you might get the opportunity to bid hearts later thus showing both major suits. This should insure that your side plays its 4-4 major suit fit if you can buy the contract. Remember that partner has forced you to bid so the first bid (1♠) shows nothing but the second bid (2♥) shows that you do

have some values and a willingness to compete. It does not ask your partner to get excited but rather to take a pick of the major suits.

Recent studies have concluded that the area of the brain known as the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) learns to anticipate risk and provide early warnings. Their findings have shown that there is activity in this brain area when you have to make a difficult decision from many options or when you have made a mistake. The brain has therefore learned to recognize when you might make a mistake even before a decision has to be made.

Of course it isn't always possible to anticipate correctly. Some partners and opponents just love to foul you up! But be very cautious about anticipating trouble or misfortune. Try to keep looking at the positive side but work at developing a 6th sense for dangers that could easily occur.

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