

Women in the Bridge World

I am aware that anything I say on the subject of women in the bridge world is very prejudiced by the fact that I am female. However, that can't be helped as I'm not about to change my gender or am I about to quit playing bridge. So I'll try to present the facts or at least what I perceive the facts to be.

The fact that there are events for Women only says a lot. At the NABC's many women prefer to play only in these events. For some reason they don't seem to want to compete with the men. To me this indicates that they themselves think they are not in the same class as men bridgewise. I believe that this attitude does them a disservice and, in fact, limits themselves in their own minds and, in fact, carries over to life in general.

(For those of you who don't know why there are no longer Men Only events, it's because several years ago a women sued the ACBL because she couldn't play in the "better" Men's Pairs with her husband because of her sex. The ACBL resolved this dilemma by discontinuing men only events.)

I have played in only a few women's events and frankly I enjoy them much less than I do open events. The women who play regularly in these events at NABC's seem to have formed their own little league and are quite egotistical in their own realm. They take themselves way too seriously for their own good.... but I can't figure out how seriously they take the game of bridge.

Men, on the other hand, tend to remember that bridge is a game and treat it as such. The competition is just that and conversation is rarely personal. Good bidding and good play is appreciated for exactly what it is.

I must add that in my opinion, a lot of the males perceive themselves to be better players than their female counterparts. I have personally been the victim of their unintentional discrimination many times. They often explain alerts by turning to my male partner thus excluding me. They sometimes are rude but then so are some women. They are masters at snapping cards unmindful of how irritating it can be. However, most of these traits are quite mindless and lost to them in their intensity. I have

mostly learned to ignore them.

We women perpetuate this myth by continuing to play the roles that have been set for us, whether by them or by us. After years of observation and internal digestion, I have found that the two sexes often approach bridge from different angles.....and in my humble opinion, neither is right and neither is wrong. They are just different. Women seem to get great joy from the analysis and solving process while men, with their egos ever present, are more predatory and get their kicks out of advanced play and bidding techniques and complicated defenses as well as “getting the opponents.”

For some reason, be it genetic or what, men also seem to master the ability to visualize opponents and partner's hands much easier and sooner in their bridge careers. On the other hand we, women, know that we have had to develop that ability and are ever aware that it's an acquired trait.

All of this may sound somewhat harsh but remember it's only my observations and thoughts on the subject. There are many many women who approach bridge as equals to their male counterparts and are considered by themselves and others to be their competitive equals.

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