

## DO YOU PLAY GELLMAN?

Do you play Gellman? Only Keith Gellman and Oswald Jacoby have the distinction of having more than one major convention named after them. In Gellman's case, however, so many creative conventions have been attributed to this inventive thinker over the past five years that we felt it would be useful to list and describe them all systematically (although some would argue that, together, they constitute an anti-system of sorts.) Whatever internal consistency they contain seems to derive from (1) Gellman's focus on locating not the usual Aces and majors, but JACKS and MINORS, almost to the point of obsessiveness, and (2) all invitations must be accepted (see "Forcing Invitational Gellman" below). Here's a rundown:

**"GELLMAN":** The standard, well-known basic convention which allows the partnership to locate that critical 3-3 fit in the minors.

**KEY-CARD GELLMAN:** The 5 Key Cards are, of course, the four Jacks and the 10 of trumps, with two higher responses also providing information about the 9 (see also "Checkback Gellman" below).

**ROAMIN' KEY-CARD GELLMAN:** A variation of the above, where the responses depend on whether Gellman happens to be in Manhattan, Forest Hills, Fire Island, Palm Springs, Rehoboth, or Florida at the moment. Rarely used, since few can keep track, including (reportedly) Gellman himself. Also known as Gellman Transfers.

**GELLMAN NEW MINOR FORCING:** ALERT! Played only if one's new partner is a male under the age of 18. Use "AT YOUR OWN RISK." This convention is banned in all 12 Southern states, plus Wyoming (but ON in Ft. Lauderdale and South Beach). For a description of this convention, please send a written request enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope; one will be mailed to you in a plain brown envelope with no return address.

**REVERSE GELLMAN NEW MINOR FORCING:** The meanings of the above convention are REVERSED if one's partner is female, over 80, and in a motorized wheelchair. This much more common treatment has in fact supplanted the original.

**FORCING INVITATIONAL GELLMAN (FIG):** Gellman is an incredibly generous guy who extends many invitations, and – oy! – who wouldn't want to accept? In this popular convention, many invitations are offered, yet NONE CAN BE TURNED DOWN. This deceptively simple convention is said to be a cornerstone of the entire Gellman system, in which all invitations are accepted. Also known as the Upside-Down Limit Raise.

**GELLMAN DISCARDS:** The meaning of the discard depends on whether the day of the month is odd or even. An ANNOUNCEMENT must be made with each discard of the day AND the month, similar to the beginning of every Gellman phone message. ("It's Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>." "It's Sunday February 29<sup>th</sup>," etc.). Unlike a Gellman phone message, however, the time of day to the exact minute need not be supplied. This convention is OFF on Federal and Jewish holidays and Shirley Bassey's birthday (look it up).

**UPSIDE-DOWN GELLMAN DISCARDS:** A variation on the above, whereby all meanings are reversed. Played only on December 24 (Gellman's birthday) and only in Germany, where this day is treated as holier than December 25 (obviously, in homage to Gellman). Important to remember the next time you're defending 6 spades on Christmas Eve in, say, Wannsee.

**TWO-WAY GELLMAN:** Convention obsolete since 1970, when Gellman hit puberty and it was clear that he was only going one way – his way.

**CHECKBACK GELLMAN:** Depending on the vulnerability, checks back for either (1) Jacks (natch) or, (2) Any hearts and the Queen of Spades. Via an intricate series of cuebids at the six level, the partnership hopes to take no tricks at all.

**GELLMAN RULE OF 20:** This rule dictates that one should open any hand with two Jacks or better. It has nothing to do with the number 20-- its name simply commemorates the 20 minutes that Gellman did some professional swimsuit modeling in his early 20's (true!).