



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

ALERT – November 16, 2020

Top Online Master Point Earners at our Club

Contributed by Allen Pengelly

This table lists the individuals who have earned the most master points at our club in each of three master point bands since the beginning of October.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	39.67	1	Mary McClelland	13.80	1	Suzanne Edwards	13.00
2	Margot Stockie	27.11	2	Stephen Nantes	12.39	2	Shelley Metcalfe	9.55
3	Cindy Mahn	26.81	3	Sandy Graham	12.28	3	Barbara Arthur	8.66
4	Robert Griffiths	22.73	4	Kathy Russell	11.95	4	Nanci Phelan	8.13
5	Edith Ferber	20.71	5	Roy Dandyk	10.66	5	Joan Slover	7.27
6	Mike Peng	20.15	5	David Embury	10.66	6	Steven Allen	5.91
7	Moira Hollingsworth	16.82	7	Brian Kirkconnell	10.27	6	Joe Blake	5.91
8	Colin Harrington	15.31	8	Janet Howell	9.30	8	Andy Martinek	5.74
9	Diane Bourdeau	15/12	9	Sue Moses	9.27	9	Salvatore Pace	5.32
10	Liz McDowell	14.48	9	Brenda Semple	9.27	10	Connie Green	5.20
11	Dianne Aves	12.78	11	Brian Silva	9.18	11	Susan McDonald	4.90
12	Malkin Howes	12.22	12	Vivian McLellan	8.35	12	Susan Kerrigan	4.63
13	Tom Ramsay	11.90	12	Judy Widdecombe	8.35	13	Noah Pace	4.57
14	Stephen Young	11.67	14	Ron Lawrence	7.44	14	Marlene Dopko	4.46
15	Pat McMillan	10.86	15	Keith Prosser	7.41	15	Marion Allan	4.00
16	Neil Jeffrey	10.55	16	David Dennis	7.20	16	Anita Hanson	3.87
17	Peggy Pearson	10.52	17	Sue Peterson	5.47	16	Barb Neibert	3.87
18	David Longstaff	10.20	18	Cheryl White	6.45	18	Nancy Cattanach	3.73
19	Bruce Roberts	9.97	19	John Hanemaayer	6.22	19	Virginia Alviano	3.48
20	Ted Boyd	9.21	20	Mildred McQuillin	6.19	20	Casey Baron	3.43
21	Stephen Carpenter	9.04	21	Sandy Lee	5.96	21	Elinor Girouard	3.38
22	Kandis Smith	8.62	22	Lori Cole	5.19	22	Edward Murphy	3.32
23	Sharon King	8.42	23	Sue Voll	5.02	23	John Kip	3.30
24	Adrian Record	7.32	24	John Hayward	5.01	23	Joan Lawson	3.30
25	Thomas Haygarth	6.41	25	Kevin Latter	4.98	25	Martin Jones	3.28



Flowers Who Are Born to Blush Unseen

Contributed by Louise Dawdy and Kathy Chandler

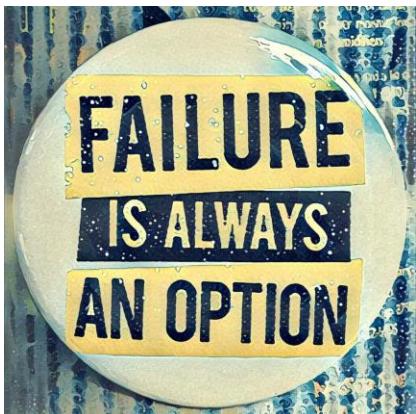
For those of us who have been loving the GRBC/BBO's online platform, we have many people to thank. Among them, and notably, is Grant Roberts. Grant took the helm early on and worked diligently to "bridge" in-person games to online games.

Much of Grant's background helped him navigate the transition. Grant studied math at the University of Waterloo and spent much of his career working in application software. Since retiring in 2014, Grant and his wife Anne have enjoyed spending more time with their three children and six grandchildren. Having grown up in a card-playing household, Grant found bridge a natural fit in retirement.

Other than family and bridge, Grant boasts many other accomplishments, from running marathons (Toronto and Boston !!!), to being an avid snowboarder and, more recently, curler. In his spare time, Grant does some wire and clay sculpture (see photo).

With Grant's help, GRBC has teamed up with other clubs (Guelph, Cambridge, and Stratford) to offer more than 12 games a week. The availability of online games has proven to be a life-line for both members (bridge addicts) and GRBC alike (financial bottom line).

And, while, many of us miss our in-person bridge friends and foes, it has been an absolute delight to "see" and "chat" with all of them through the BBO platform. Thanks Grant!



If at first you don't succeed, you are just the same as 99% of all bridge players.

Resulting

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

My partner, South, opened 1♥ after East's pass. West passed, I bid 1♠ and partner jumped to 4♥. I can't imagine her bidding like that with more than one heart loser, so with all of my top cards I considered 6NT but then decided that 6♥ would be safer, so 6♥ was my second bid. This was passed out.

Board 12

East Deals

N-S Vul

♠ A 8 6 5 2			
♥ 2			
♦ A 3			
♣ A K 10 7 5			
♠ K 9 4 3	♠ Q J 10 7		
♥ K	♥ 7 5 4 3		
♦ 9 8 7 6 4	♦ 2		
♣ Q 8 4	♣ J 9 3 2		
♠ —			
♥ A Q J 10 9 8 6			
♦ K Q J 10 5			
♣ 6			
West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	6 ♥	All pass	

West led the ♦9, my partner won Dummy's ace, led the ♥2 off the board, and then paused to consider after East played the ♥3. Should she play the ace or finesse? She may or may not have one heart loser, but the diamond lead has raised her fears that the opponents might be able to engineer a diamond ruff.

After long seconds of considering the possibilities, my partner chose to play the ♥Q. This, of course, lost to the singleton king and back came another diamond which was ruffed by East and our scientifically-bid slam was down at Trick 3.

After she claimed the rest of the tricks, my partner asked if she should have played the hearts differently. When you can see all of the cards, it's plain to see that playing the ♥A at Trick 1 will give us all 13 tricks, and I was tempted to suggest that playing the ace at Trick 2 followed by the queen might have been a safer plan.

There is a nasty affliction that bridge players are susceptible to known as resulting. Sometimes when they see a play that works, in this case playing the ♥A on the first heart lead, they think that that is the play that should have been made. Suggesting that the ace should be played on the first round of trumps on this hand would be an example of resulting.

Luckily, I am a slow typist and before I could suggest that my partner had erred, I reconsidered. While playing the ace to drop the singleton king works in this case, it's far more likely that East might hold ♥K3 and West ♥457. Now, if West's lead were a singleton ♦9 instead of the top of his long suit, playing the ace of hearts and then the queen would lead to West's getting a diamond ruff whereas taking the first-round finesse will give South all 13 tricks. Playing the ace on the first round of hearts is simply an anti-percentage play that happens to work this time.

This is just one of those hands where there isn't enough information at Trick 2 to make an informed decision, but I think South gave herself the best chance the way she played it.

Those blessed with any lead except a diamond easily made 12 tricks after losing the heart finesse. Others in 6NT went down: a spade lead from East was automatic and there were E/W spade tricks after the heart finesse lost.

 **Don't result.**

Learning the Lingo - UNBLOCKING

Contributed by Jean Farhood

What does it mean to “unblock” a suit? Basically, it means to play a highish card from your hand in order to be able to access winners in the opposite hand.

“Unblocking” can be done either as declarer or as defender. First, as declarer, let’s imagine that you hold the stiff ♠A. If you read last week’s Alert, you will know that means you have a singleton ♠A. And let’s say the dummy has ♠KQJxx - but you won’t be able to cash these tricks until the ♠A has been “unblocked” from your hand. And, of course, once you have unblocked your ♠A, you still have to have a way to get to dummy in order to enjoy your ♠KQJxx.

Unblocking a suit can also be done by defenders. Let’s say partner leads the ♣Q against a 3NT contract. Dummy holds ♣xxx and you hold ♣Kx. You should “unblock” (play) your ♣K at Trick 1 so that if declarer ducks (ie, allows you to win the trick), you can continue with your ♣x. That way, partner will be able to continue leading the suit until declarer wins her ♣A. (Hopefully, partner has led from ♣QJ10xx and will have an outside entry to her hand.) If you don’t “unblock” your ♣K at Trick 1 and partner continues the suit, you will be forced play your ♣K at Trick 2. Declarer will be able to duck her ♣A again and now you are unable to lead a club back to partner.

Think back on some recent hands you have played and see if you can see a situation where “unblocking” a suit would have made a difference. Once you are aware of the importance of “unblocking”, your duplicate scores will improve!





Dear David

Fear of Fear Itself

So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Players often will not pre-empt at the proper level because they don't believe their hand is good enough, or perhaps they are afraid to bid because they are vulnerable. Here is the method you should be using. If you have a six-card suit with about 6-10 high-card points (HCP) - bid at the two level. With a seven-card suit – bid at the three level. With eight – the four level. Any deviation from these methods will not allow your partner to properly evaluate his or her hand.

D 13	N North <p>♠ ♥ A64 ♦ K10976432 ♣ 75</p>	W N E S 2♦ P 3NT P P P
W West <p>♠ Q9652 ♥ J109 ♦ ♣ QJ983</p>	S South <p>♠ AK103 ♥ KQ2 ♦ AJ8 ♣ A104</p>	E East <p>♠ J874 ♥ 8753 ♦ Q5 ♣ K62</p>
		3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0

On this hand, North has an eight-card suit, two big cards, and a void. In the diagram's bidding box, it shows how the bidding would likely go if North opened with 2 diamonds. South will make a stab at what he thinks they can make, and they subside in 3NT.

But there is every reason in the world for North to open four diamonds. Not only does he have the values for a four-diamond opener, but also he would like to make it difficult for the opponents to reach their possible spade game or slam. See what a difference this makes for South! Now South ought to bid 4NT (couldn't hurt) and partner will surprise him by showing two key cards the ♥A & ♦K. Now South can count eight diamond tricks, two spade tricks, three heart tricks, and one club trick, which equals 14 tricks. 7NT is the final bid and declarer can claim before the opening lead.

The importance of bidding at the proper level is apparent in this hand and in many other situations. I tell all my partners that if they don't feel their hand is good enough to pre-empt at the proper level, then don't pre-empt at all.

BBO Trump Splits

There is [an interesting article on Bridge Winners](#) which claims that BBO hands are biased in the sense that trumps tend to split differently than would be expected statistically.

When the declaring side has an eight-card trump fit, normal probability would predict that the outstanding five cards would split 3-2 67.8% of the time, but on BBO it's only about 63.99% of the time. 4-1 splits, on the other hand, would be expected to occur only 28.3% of the time, but on BBO they occur 32.7% of the time, while 4-0 splits should happen only 7.5% of the time but occur 9.6% of the time on BBO.

When the declaring side has a nine-card trump fit, once again BBO is biased. The mathematical probability of a 2-2 split is only 40.7%, but such a split occurs 45% of the time on BBO.

Similarly, 3-1 splits are more common on BBO (49.7% versus mathematical probability of 47.5%) and 4-0 splits occur 7.5% of the time on BBO compared to 9.6% of the time in real life. By the way, this bias applies only to BBO hands and not to the hands that we play in our virtual club, since our club's hands now are generated by The Common Game, not BBO.

A Gift from Barbara Seagram

Barbara Seagram has kindly donated her two-hour YouTube lesson on introductory 2/1 bidding to our club, along with very extensive printed notes. Like all of Barbara's lessons, this one is very clear and very watchable.

There are two ways you can get access to Barbara's 2/1 lesson.

- Be in the money in the 499er strat at our Christmas party on December 12 or
- Sign up for one of our intermediate winter workshops ([click here](#) for more information).

This gift is yet another example of Barbara's generosity and support for our club. We are very grateful.

Online Bridge

There is no question that most bridge players would prefer to play face-to-face, but now that we have been forced to play online, we're finding out it has its advantages too.

If you are hesitating to play online bridge or if you know someone who might be interested, take a look at [this link](#). The ACBL is making it very easy and appealing to play BBO bridge, including help on how to get a partner.

Try it. You might like it!



It's Back!!!!!!!!!!

Stardust Week returns for the last week of November (November 23-30). All games will award DOUBLE regular club rating masterpoints, and awards will be $\frac{1}{4}$ gold, $\frac{3}{4}$ black, for the regular game fee of only BBO\$5.

LESSONS NOT YET LEARNED



To Bid One More or Not to Bid One More

The Simplified Law of Total Tricks

There is still time to sign up for this **novice** workshop on Wednesday, November 18, 9:30 am – noon. The teacher is Malkin Howes. This workshop will help you figure out what to do when your opponents interfere with your bidding – namely, should you pass or bid one more? It's an all-too-familiar dilemma. Regular partners may find it beneficial to attend this workshop as a pair.

Level: **Novice**

Instructor: Malkin Howes

Fee: \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members

Date: Wednesday, November 18, 9:30 am - noon



Tips for Extra Tricks

Want to earn an extra trick as declarer? Then this is the workshop for you!

This workshop will focus on techniques to squeeze out extra tricks. Topics covered will include deceptive play techniques, loser-on-loser plays, making the opponents lead the suit you want, safety plays, and keeping the dangerous opponent off lead. The students will play several hands that demonstrate these new concepts, using the magic of Shark Bridge.

Level: **Novice/Intermediate**

Instructor: Stephen Carpenter

Fee: \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members

Date: Wednesday, December 2, 9:30 am - noon



Bridge Puzzles

Because apparently nobody wanted to sign up for the Flannery lesson on December 16, instead there will be an ALL PLAY workshop for intermediate players who will be challenged to solve a series of tricky but makeable contracts. This workshop is only for people who like to laugh (and cry) a lot. Your genial host will be Malkin.

**Click [here](#) for more information about our lessons and to register
and [here](#) for information about paying.**

Strategic Planning Session

Contributed by Cindy Mahn, President

Your GRBC board of directors - Cindy Mahn, Michael Peng, Lori Cole, Diane Jamieson, Joan Lawson, Beverley Pope, and Grant Roberts, as well as Jim Dalgliesh, your club manager - would like to thank Sue Peterson for organizing and hosting our strategic planning session on Tuesday.

At that session, we attempted to clarify our role as a board, reflected on our learning from the 2019 retreat, reviewed our strengths and weaknesses, and set some goals to focus on in the future. We will be communicating these goals to our members in late December.

Thanks so much Sue, you were amazing!

Coming Virtual Activities at our Club

- Friday, November 13, 1:00 pm, **499er game** (26-28 boards)
- Friday, November 13, 7:00 pm, **open game** (26-28 boards)
- Saturday, November 14, 1:00 pm, **199er game** (20-22 boards)
- Sunday, November 15, 10:00 am, **499er game** (18 boards) 
- Monday, November 16, 12:30 pm, **49er game** (18 boards @ 8 minutes)
- Monday, November 16, 1:00 pm, **open game** (26-28 boards)
- Monday, November 16, 7:00 pm, **499er game** (24 boards)
- Tuesday, November 17, 12:30 pm, **199er game** (20-22 boards)
- Tuesday, November 17, 1:00 pm, **open game** (26-28 boards)
- Wednesday, November 18, 1:00 pm, **499er game** (26-28 boards)
- Wednesday, November 18, 6:45 pm, **199er game** (20-22 boards) 
- Wednesday, November 18, 7:00 pm, **open game** (24 boards)
- Thursday, November 19, 9:30 am, **99er game** (20-22 boards)
- Thursday, November 19, 1:00 pm, **open game** (26-28 boards)

We have fun in **spades**.

We play with all our **hearts**.

We treat our members like **diamonds**.

Right now, we have 14 games a week at our **club**.