



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

ALERT – January 4, 2021

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 our games went online last March.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	232.39	1	Sandy Graham	85.26	1	Suzanne Edwards	79.84
2	Mike Peng	143.36	2	Stephen Nantes	73.82	2	Shelley Metcalfe	57.34
3	Cindy Mahn	140.92	3	Brian Kirkconnell	71.97	3	Barbara Arthur	56.30
4	Margot Stockie	137.06	4	Brian Silva	71.24	4	Nanci Phelan	51.16
5	Robert Griffiths	122.23	5	John Hanemaayer	66.55	5	Robert Gilck	43.05
6	Colin Harrington	102.08	6	Kathy Russell	64.12	6	Andy Martinek	34.52
7	Moira Hollingsworth	95.66	7	Janet Howell	57.30	7	John Kip	33.09
8	Edith Ferber	93.74	8	Allen Pengelly	55.57	8	Noah Pace	32.17
9	Liz McDowell	90.48	9	Ron Lawrence	50.69	9	Salvatore Pace	31.74
10	David Longstaff	75.28	10	Sandy Lee	50.47	10	Joan Slover	31.52
11	Dianne Aves	75.22	11	Sue Moses	48.02	11	Susan Kerrigan	30.90
12	Ted Boyd	74.88	12	Brenda Semple	47.73	12	Steven Allen	29.38
13	Stephen Young	68.31	13	Lori Cole	46.20	12	Joe Blake	29.38
14	Bruce Roberts	67.99	14	Kevin Latter	44.29	14	Marlene Dopko	27.83
15	Tom Ramsay	66.11	15	Paul Latimer	42.41	15	Marion Allan	27.31
16	Neil Jeffrey	54.45	16	Keith Prosser	40.03	16	Joan Lawson	27.14
17	Steve Carpenter	51.15	17	Judy Widdecombe	39.84	17	Virginia Alviano	21.96
18	Diane Bourdeau	51.13	18	Jim Dalglish	39.26	18	Daniel Dopko	21.86
19	Adrian Record	47.29	19	Sue Voll	37.18	19	Elinor Girouard	21.05
20	Mary McClelland	47.18	20	Jim Veitch	36.80	20	Renate Boucher	20.56
21	Malkin Howes	46.68	21	Jack Cole	36.69	21	Donna McKay	20.02
22	William Christian	44.78	22	Adriaan Kempe	36.29	22	Edward Murphy	19.97
23	Pat McMillan	43.77	23	Cheryl Kip	35.98	23	Mary Lynn Benjamins	19.96
24	Peggy Pearson	43.40	24	Vivian McLellan	35.46	24	Barb Neibert	19.57
25	Thea Davis	34.81	25	Fred Young	32.27	25	Sue McDonald	18.83

Is There Another Trick Out There?

Contributed by John Moser

I haven't submitted an article for a few weeks because my partners have been playing so well that I had no material to work with.

Board 15
 South Deals
 N-S Vul

♠ Q 7 4 ♥ 7 6 5 3 ♦ A 6 5 4 2 ♣ 6	♠ 10 6 3 ♥ K J 10 ♦ Q 7 ♣ A J 10 3 2	♠ J 9 5 ♥ 9 8 ♦ 9 8 3 ♣ K Q 9 7 4	♠ A K 8 2 ♥ A Q 4 2 ♦ K J 10 ♣ 8 5			
<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>				N	W E	S
N						
W E						
S						
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			
Pass	3 N	All pass	1 N			

This hand is a simple 3NT contract. My partner made the contract without breaking a sweat, but he missed an opportunity to try for an extra trick with no risk. Take a look at this hand and see if you can see whence an overtrick might come.

The opening lead was the ♥7, which was won by the board's king of hearts. You already have nine tricks (one club, four hearts, two diamonds, and two spades). But it might be possible to take an additional spade trick - if spades are 3-3. You can test this with no danger to your contract, since you control all four suits.

As it turned out, there were only two pairs that made the overtrick. One of these declarers got lucky when the opponents led spades for him, and the other properly ducked a spade. If my partner had made an overtrick, we would have been tied for top, moving us from fifth to third! Bridge is one of the last ways that we have to stay competitive as we grow older, but even so I am now looking forward to the time when my grandchildren start to beat me. It's already happening in sports like golf and badminton.





Dear David

A Balancing Act

I was South. West bid 1♥ and my partner passed with an impeccably-balanced 14-point hand. By the book, she appeared to be justified - or was she? When East passed, I doubled with a 13-point hand and no five-card suit. West then bid 1♠ and my partner jumped to 3NT. She proceeded to comfortably make the contract - with an overtrick to boot! I'm a believer in little white lies which, if nothing else, ruffles the opponents' feathers! The crux of the issue is the supposition that if I, in the south seat, had a mere 8, 9, or 10 points, I would have passed, thereby allowing E/W a cheap contract and saddling us with a bad result. Can you please give me your analysis?

West Deals												
None Vul												
♠ K 9 8 6	♥ A Q 5 4 2	♦ 10 9 4	♣ Q									
		♠ Q 7 2	♥ K 9 7									
		♦ K Q 6	♣ K J 9 7									
		<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>			N		W		E		S	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ J 10 4 3	♥ J 6									
		♦ 7 5 2	♣ 8 5 4 2									
		♠ A 5	♥ 10 8 3									
		♦ A J 8 3	♣ A 10 6 3									
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>									
1♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl									
1♠	3N	All pass										

Players are often tasked with responding to partner's bid, even though they really don't have a bid that properly describes their hand. In this case, North is not "required" to take a bid, which is a good thing because any bid she made would be a lie. Too weak for no trump, not enough of the other major to double and no five-card suit to bid. She can only pass and wait. If East responds to 1♥, she can decide whether or not to bid at her next opportunity. On this hand, all was well. But what if South didn't have enough to balance? Then you didn't have a game and you can defend against 1♥ and probably get a decent result.

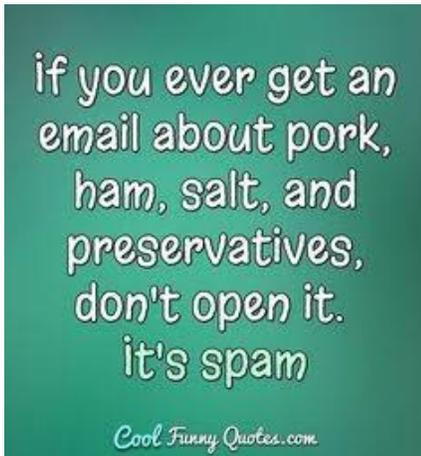
Another way to think about it is what to do when you have a penalty double of the opening bid. You can't double because that would be for takeout. The only thing you can do is hope your partner makes a balancing double so you can pass and reap the rewards. A final note: if you are nervous about balancing with a not-very-pretty hand, just remember that the reason you should try to do something is that your partner must have a decent hand because of the opponent's failure to respond to the opener's bid.

Here is an excerpt from a column by Larry Cohen regarding balancing.

"As [bidder after two passes], we are considered to be in the 'balancing seat'. That means: "If we pass, the auction is over'. Usually, it is not right to sell out so easily without competing at least for the partscore.

"Accordingly, the guidelines for bidding in this position are relaxed a bit. The general approach is to take action with a king less than you would have in the direct seat [second to bid]. Since an overcall in direct seat usually contains at least 9 or so HCP, an overcall in the balancing seat can be made with as few as 6 HCP. A direct-seat takeout double is usually a hand worth 13 points - in balancing seat it can contain only 10 (counting distribution). Overcalling 1NT in direct seat shows 15-18, so in balancing seat it shows approximately 12-15. In summary, here are the balancing seat auctions after an opening suit bid at the 1-level."

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			Overcall = 6+ HCP, 5+-card suit
1 of a suit	Pass	Pass	Double = Take-out with approximately 10+ points counting distribution
			1 NT = 12-15 balanced (and a stopper in the suit opened)



It's called quarantine coffee. It's just like normal coffee but it has margarita in it and also no coffee.



Just Ask Sue

Contributed by Cheryl Kip

Have you ever played a hand where everyone made the contract but you? Or others made an overtrick but you didn't? Perhaps your bidding was off and you ended up in a contract that no one else did. It happens more often than we would like to mention but sometimes we just can't figure it out.

If you'd like an expert opinion on how to bid, play or defend a hand, make a better lead, or use a convention - just ask Sue (that would be Sue Lawton). She will be happy to help those players in the **0-199 category** (Dave Baker - do not call! Sue will call you.)

Sue is willing to respond to any and all of your questions. Ideally, it would be about a hand in a club-sanctioned game so that Sue can go in and look at the actual hand. Just send Sue an e-mail indicating the date, session, and hand that you want help with. When asking about hands not played in a club game, try to provide as much information as possible. Please leave your name, e-mail address, and phone number and Sue will get back to you.

Sue's e-mail address is suzan2420@yahoo.ca.

Consecutive Costly Leads

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

West dealt and opened 2NT, North passed and East tried 3♣, Puppet Stayman. South knew that he would have no help from partner but came in with a 3♦ bid, hoping that he wouldn't be in too much trouble and suggesting a good lead to North. This was passed back to East who weighed his options, He considered bidding 3NT or trying for a black suit fit but decided to double. The double was passed out and West found himself on lead.

Board 12

West Deals

Both Vul

	♠ 10 9 6 5 4										
	♥ J 8 6 3										
	♦ 5										
	♣ J 9 4										
♠ A Q 7	<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #006400; color: white; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center; font-size: 12px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K J 8 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ A 9 2		♥ 5									
♦ A 4		♦ J 8 7 2									
♣ A Q 10 8 7		♣ K 6 3 2									
	♠ 2										
	♥ K Q 10 7 4										
	♦ K Q 10 9 6 3										
	♣ 5										
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>								
2 N	Pass	3 ♣	3 ♦								
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All pass								

If West leads a black card and the defence continues to lead spades and clubs whenever they are in, Declarer will lose control of the hand and win only five trump tricks for an E/W score of +1100. Not bad. Although E/W can make 13 tricks in clubs, it's hard to find that slam.

West mulled over his opening lead and thought he could protect his high cards in the off suits by leading a trump, so he tried the ♦A. After this start, the best that the defence can do is hold Declarer to down two by taking four aces and two heart ruffs for an E/W score of +500. The opening lead had decreased the potential penalty by 600 points!

Then, at Trick 2, West - still worrying about protecting his off suit high cards - continued with his second diamond. Oops!! Now Declarer can draw trumps, set up his heart suit and take nine tricks, losing just the four aces. E/W's potential +1100 that first slipped to +500 now plunged to an ugly score of -670.

West wrote about this hand for the daily bulletin at the 1999 North American championships. He said, "I blew 600 [points] with my lead at Trick 1 and another 1170 with my lead at Trick 2". West did have many better days (he won several national and world championships and was elected to the ACBL Hall of Fame). But some days the bear eats you.

Nobody gets it right all of the time.

Jake's Challenge #3

Last week, Jake Liu issued the following bidding challenge, and put the answer on our club's revamped Facebook page. For those of you who don't do Facebook, here is the challenge and its solution.

CHALLENGE

♠J2
♥862
♦AKQ865
♣J7

♠AK63
♥K53
♦T2
♣AK86

You are declarer at three no trump and receive the ♠9 opening lead. Dummy's jack is covered by the ♠Q and your ♠K. At Trick 2, you lead the ♦10 from your hand and West covers with the ♦J. Which card should you play from the dummy?

SOLUTION

Duck! This situation screams for a safety play.

The hand poses two risks to an unwary declarer. One is a 4-1 (or worse) diamond split. The other is an unfavourable lie of the cards in hearts such that East can trap your king with repeated leads of high hearts (meaning that East is the dangerous opponent and absolutely must not gain the lead).

By ducking the ♦J at Trick 2, you guard against both risks. West now has the lead and cannot hurt you, plus now a 4-1 or even 5-0 diamond split is no longer a problem.

What if West doesn't cover your ♦10 with the ♦J? In that case, you have no alternative but to cash the board's top diamonds and pray.

Here is the full hand.

	♠ J2				
	♥ 862				
	♦ AKQ865				
	♣ J7				
♠ 9875	<table style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ Q104
N					
W E					
S					
♥ A974		♥ QJ10			
♦ J		♦ 9743			
♣ 10532		♣ Q94			
	♠ AK63				
	♥ K53				
	♦ 102				
	♣ AK86				

This week, Jake has a new challenge (#4) for you.

North Deals
None Vul

♠ K 8 6 5	♠ Q J 9 3	♠ A 10 7 2
♥ J	♥ A K 3	♥ 9 5
♦ 10	♦ J 5 3 2	♦ K Q 8 6
♣ K J 10 7 6 5 2	♣ 9 8	♣ A 4 3
	♠ 4	
	♥ Q 10 8 7 6 4 2	
	♦ A 9 7 4	
	♣ Q	

South bought the hand with a precarious four hearts contract (we'll draw a veil over the bidding). The opening lead was the ♠ 5 - to Dummy's ♠ J and East's ♠ A. East then cashed the ♣ A and led another club. Plan the play.

The answer can be found on [our Facebook page](#).

Learning the Lingo – PHANTOM SACRIFICE

Contributed by Jean Farhood

We learned last week about sacrifice bidding. What then is a “phantom sacrifice”?

The opponents have bid to game in 4♠ red (vulnerable), but you have sacrificed in 5♦ white (non-vulnerable) because you felt their contract was cold (makeable). Unfortunately, when the hand is over, it's clear that opponents would have gone down one in four hearts. This then is called a “phantom sacrifice” because they couldn't make their contract.

Instead of your side scoring 100 for putting them down one, you have given up 150 because you went down three. Even though you were white and even though you weren't doubled, the sacrifice bid was still too costly for your side.

It's true that it's important to pay attention to the vulnerability when contemplating a sacrifice bid, but it's also important to be aware of the fact that the opponents may have overbid to reach their game.

It's happening 🤔 just spotted these shirts that come with matching masks. 2020 fashion is wild 😂



I'd like to thank whomever told my mom that WTF means "wow that's fantastic." Her texts are so much more fun now

Just spent 15 minutes searching for my phone in my car.

While using my phone as a flashlight.

Special Games

Contributed by Al Pengelly

There have been many requests from many parties about running special games, as we used to in the physical clubs, but the answer has always been that there is no mechanism for doing this. I have personally asked the ACBL's Greg Coles about running team games, but his answer was that that idea is forbidden, at least for the time being.

Every month, the ACBL usually has a week of "special" games for clubs, offering either silver points or a combination of black/gold. They consider these to be the "replacements" for the special games that we used to be able to hold at our clubs - like our STaC games, for example. In addition, Greg Coles is very fond of pointing out that "every game on BBO is a 'special' game, since you are given 1.5x the MPs".

We can run as many games as we want, without having to apply for sanctioning (the way we have to in our physical club for games outside of our usual schedule), but there is no way to apply to run any "special" games that offer more MPs than the ACBL/BBO games are offering during that time period. Sometimes people phrase their request as wanting to run a charity game, but they still receive the same response.

PS The week of January 18 – 24, 2021 will be a Silver Linings week (silver points).

All of us right now



BBO's Post Mortem Feature

Contributed by Joan Slover

About a half hour after you play in one of our games, you should get an email from Live for Clubs Results. I would like to make you aware of a great feature that it offers. (If you're not getting the Live for Clubs emails but wish to, click [here](#) for instructions on how to set it up.

If you click on VIEW SCORES near the bottom of your email, it will bring up the players' results. Scroll down to below the results, and you will find all of the boards that were played in that game. Beside your name for each board that you played, you will see a blue REPLAY button. If you click on REPLAY, you will see the board and the bidding. Each time you click on NEXT at the bottom, you will see the card that was played next, and in this way you can review what happened at your table. If you would rather advance trick by trick, you can change to that display via the OPTIONS button.

You can also investigate what would happen if you have done something differently. For example, what if you had made a different lead? What if you had ducked? This feature saves you from having to lay out all of the cards on the table to see it visually. To look at the effect of alternative lines, click on PLAY and then choose the cards for each position by clicking on them. This is an excellent way to review your play and try to get better.

LESSONS NOT YET LEARNED



Giving the Gift of Bridge

It's getting close to our Learn Bridge in a Day taste of bridge event on Saturday, January 9, 2021. At present, we have a healthy contingent of 22 people signed up – but there's still room for more! Click [here](#) for more information.

Learn Bridge in a Day is great for people who might be interested in bridge but need to find out more. For people who already know they want to take lessons, they can register for our five-lesson Beginner 1 course, starting Thursday, January 14 from 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm. Click [here](#) for more information (scroll down).



Preventing Declarer from Getting Overtricks

It's not too late to sign up for this workshop.

Level: Novice/Intermediate

Instructor: Stephen Carpenter

Date: Wednesday, January 13, 2021, 9:30 am - noon

Three Winter Workshops Have Been Added

For the recent graduates of Beginners 2 and for other **really new** players:

- Opening Leads for Beginners – Wednesday, January 20
- Declaring No Trump Contracts for Beginners – Wednesday, February 17

For **intermediate** players, back by popular demand:

- Son of Declarer Puzzles – Monday, February 8

The complete schedule for winter lessons is up on our website now.

- Click [here](#) for information about Learn Bridge in a Day and our beginner lessons.
- Click [here](#) for the workshops for advancing players.

Players who register for one or more of the intermediate winter lessons will receive a free bonus - Barbara Seagram's fantastic Zoom lesson on the two over one bidding system, along with extensive lesson notes.

Click [here](#) for information about how to pay for your lessons (scroll down).

99er Game Added on New Year's Day - 12:30 pm Start

By special request, we are adding an extra virtual game for 99ers on New Year's Day with a 12:30 pm start time. Celebrate the new year by coming out to play in this game!

As usual, we have our regular Friday afternoon 499er game with 1:00 pm start and OPEN game with 7 pm start. Please remember to register 20 minutes prior to the start time for each game.

Yikes! I'm getting so many master points I don't know how much longer I can play in my favourite capped game!

Contributed by Kathy Russell

Players from the 99er game are asking when exactly they will be forced to "graduate" from the Thursday morning game. We've heard you asking.

- Are you immediately barred from a game as soon as you hit the magic number?
- Can you play if a player with fewer points invites you?

Here's the scoop ...

The ACBL (and therefore BBO) recognizes the master points you earned in a given month only once per month, namely on the 6th of the following month. If your recognized ACBL master-points are greater than the game's cap – regardless of who invites you - BBO will not let you register for that game. As long as the ACBL has your recognized/processed master points as being less than the game's cap, then you can register for and play in the game.

For example, let's say you are keeping a close eye on your master point total and on December 17 you had 99.75 MPs. You would of course still be able to register for the 99er game on December 17 because the cap for that game is 100. Further, let's say you do well and earn master points in that game, bringing your total to 100.25. You would still be able to register in the December 24 and December 31 99er games because the ACBL won't recognize your December winnings until the night of January 6. However, on January 7 you will no longer be able to register for the 99er game because the ACBL has you at more than 100 master points.

Healthy New Year From the Grand River Bridge Club



Coming Virtual Activities

- Friday, January 1, 12:30 pm, **99er game (20-22 boards)** 
- Friday, January 1, 1:00 pm, **499er game (26-28 boards)**
- Friday, January 1, 7:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Saturday, January 2, 1:00 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Sunday, January 3, 10:00 am, **499er game (18 boards)**
- Monday, January 4, 12:30 pm, **49er game (18 boards @ 8 minutes)**
- Monday, January 4, 1:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Monday, January 4, 7:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards)**
- Tuesday, January 5, 12:30 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Tuesday, January 5, 1:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Wednesday, January 6, 1:00 pm, **499er game (26-28 boards)**
- Wednesday, January 6, 6:45 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Wednesday, January 6, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards)**
- Thursday, January 7, 9:30 am, **99er game (20-22 boards)**
- Thursday, January 7, 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**.
2021 will be better at our **club**.