



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

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ALERT – May 31, 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 the beginning of April.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	51.49	1	Stephen Nantes	26.85	1	Noah Pace	11.27
2	Robert Griffiths	40.56	2	Brian Kirkconnell	25.06	2	Virginia Alviano	10.09
3	Margot Stockie	35.53	3	Salvatore Pace	19.63	3	Patricia Malvern	9.70
4	Cindy Mahn	34.58	4	Suzanne Edwards	19.33	4	Aggie Udvari	9.60
5	Mike Peng	32.65	5	Barbara Arthur	18.86	5	Nancy Cattanach	9.44
6	Bruce Roberts	26.96	6	Shelley Metcalfe	18.12	6	Mary Lynn Benjamins	9.29
7	Liz McDowell	26.66	7	Casey Baron	15.78	7	Susan Kerrigan	9.13
8	Colin Harrington	24.42	8	Kathy Russell	15.45	8	Marg Sanderson	9.00
9	Moira Hollingsworth	24.25	9	John Hanemaayer	14.94	9	Belinda Burt	8.36
10	David Longstaff	23.62	10	Brenda Semple	14.45	10	Martin Jones	8.33
11	Edith Ferber	22.27	10	Sue Moses	14.45	11	Joan Slover	8.18
12	Ted Boyd	19.96	12	David Embury	13.04	12	Elinor Girouard	8.12
13	David Wilson	19.50	12	Roy Dandyk	13.04	13	Isabel Hetherington	7.69
14	Tom Ramsay	18.09	14	Karen Whitworth	12.82	14	Ginny Scott	7.47
15	Dianne Aves	17.36	15	Paul Latimer	11.98	15	Audrey Cook	7.12
16	Pat McMillan	17.03	16	Ron Lawrence	11.17	16	Kathleen Burns	6.88
17	Kandis Smith	16.12	17	Kevin Latter	10.98	17	Barb Neibert	6.87
18	Sandy Graham	15.18	18	Janet Howell	10.56	18	Bob Somerville	6.84
19	Malkin Howes	13.82	19	John Kip	10.48	18	Ginny Marshall	6.84
20	Neil Jeffrey	13.74	19	Cheryl Kip	10.48	20	Christine Baron	6.64
21	Mary McClelland	12.07	21	Margie Whyte	10.38	21	Jeannie Leforge	6.57
22	John Moser	10.45	22	Jake Liu	9.58	22	Jane Rushby	6.35
23	Thea Davis	10.22	23	David Dennis	9.56	22	Sue Andersen	6.35
24	Adrian Record	9.99	24	Lynda Burnett	9.35	24	Anita Hanson	6.34
25	Susan Lawton	9.75	25	Jim Veitch	8.85	24	Julia Prendiville	6.34

Membership Renewals

It's that time of year again - to renew your GRBC membership. We can look back on a very successful response to the pandemic and the club closure.

- The club currently has 259 members.
- There are 17 virtual club games per week.
- Beginner lessons have introduced over 60 new players to our game, and coaching sessions have given them the opportunity to practice what they have learned.
- Our dedicated online teachers have offered an excellent selection of ongoing learning opportunities that have been well attended.
- There have also been many thoughtful and generous donations over the past year.

With the ramp-up of the provincial vaccinations, the Board and Management Team are actively discussing the club's reopening plans. Our club must of course comply with public health guidelines and hopes to be able to reopen in the fall or the early part of 2022. In the meantime, we continue to have fixed costs: rent, insurance, Internet/phone and game directors. The rent reduction from Dare will expire after the August payment. Membership fees help to ensure we can cover these fixed costs.

To thank our membership for their continuing support, the Board is happy to announce that the membership fee, for next year only, will be reduced from \$70 to \$50. Annual memberships are effective July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Please continue to support our club by renewing your membership and asking your friends to do the same!

Pay by cheque: Payable to Grand River Bridge Club and mail to: Bev Pope, 40 Piccadilly Square, New Hamburg ON, N3A 0C7
OR

Pay by e-transfer: Recipient: Grand River Bridge Club

Email: clubmanager@grandriverbridgeclub.com

Dear SANTA

Contributed by Joan Slover

Recently, I've noticed the increasing use of a convention called SANTA at our club. It was quite effective in disturbing my 1NT bid the other day. Click [here](#) to learn about SANTA.

Because I was wondering if SANTA offered advantages over DONT and Cappelletti, I asked Dave Baker what he thought about SANTA. Here's his response.

- The world has almost universally abandoned penalty-oriented doubles of opener's strong NT.
- 2♣ showing both majors is already incorporated into most notrump-disturbing systems.
- 2♦, 2♥, 2♠, 3♣ - all these relay bids make it possible for the opponents to show their partners that they have the artificial relay suit (for example, 1NT-2♥-dbl [showing hearts]-2♠)
- The purpose of a 3♣ or 3♦ overcall is to show 6+ and take away bidding room.
- With a major/minor two-suiter, when would you ever show the second suit at the 3-level when you have no idea if that would lead to a better fit?
- Bottom line: I like the idea of right-siding the contract to get opener on lead, but not enough to play a convention with so many flaws.

I would be very interested to get feedback from other players who either use SANTA or have had their opponents use it against them. You can email me at rxjoan@rogers.com.



Rookie Ramblings – Simple Overcalls

Contributed by Cindy Mahn

For the next few weeks, we are going to talk about different ways to compete in the bidding once there has been an Opening Bid by your opponent.

Here are some reasons why you would make an overcall.

- To get your partner to lead that suit
- To compete in the bidding
- To make it tougher for your opponents to bid

This week we will take a look at SIMPLE OVERCALLS. A Simple Overcall is a suit bid after your opponent has opened the bidding that does not jump a level. Simple overcalls are made with hands that have only one suit that looks suitable as a trump suit.

You should have a good five- or six-card suit with at least 8-9 HCP (you could have as many as 16 HCP). For example, 1♣ 1♥.

If you are at the lower end of your range with only 8-9 points, your points should be in the bid suit. For example, if you overcall one spade in this auction - 1♥ 1♠ - your hand should be something like ♠AKJxx ♥xx ♦xxx ♣xxx.

When you are prepared to open the bidding yourself (that is, you have at least opening points) but RHO opens first, it sometimes causes difficulty. If you have to bid your suit at the two level, you need a very good five-card suit or a suit with six cards along with some extra values. For example, if you overcall two clubs in this auction - 1♠ 2♣ - your hand should be something like ♠Qxx ♥xx ♦Kx ♣AK10xx,

Sometimes, we have to overcall a four-card suit in order to get into the bidding with an opening hand – because if you pass, you may not get another opportunity to bid. The four-card suit should be of good quality, since your partner will assume you have five cards in the suit and will raise to the next level with only three cards in your suit.

Overcalling a good four-card suit when the only other option is to pass can frequently be the best of bad choices. For example, 1♦ 1♠ with the hand ♠KQJx ♥Ax ♦xxx ♣KJxx.

When your partner makes a simple overcall, it is not forcing but you should bid if you possibly can. If you can't support your partner's suit but have your own good five-card suit, bid that.

If you want to learn more about overcalls, you should sign up for [Stephen Carpenter's workshop on that topic](#) on Wednesday, June 9.

- Overcall with a good suit
- Double with a good hand



Building a Beginner

Contributed by Sue Peterson, Allen Pengelly, Sue Moses, and Jack Cole

They say that it takes a village to raise a child. Well, this year was especially challenging, yet the Grand River Bridge Club community came together to apply that principle to building Bridge Players! Here are the things that we did!

LBIAD: Learn Bridge in A Day (Sue Peterson with Isabel Hetherington)

We offered two LBIAD workshops during COVID: one in September 2020 and one in January 2021. There were several challenges, such as marketing to people who had never played bridge and might not be comfortable learning online, adapting the PowerPoint (PPT) slides and manual to online learning, and finding a way to let students practise at the end of the course.

We found innovative ways to market the workshops – thanks to our members for promoting them and the Marketing Committee for getting the word out. Isabel handled most of this, including the registration, marketing, and one-on-one one calls with the participants,

When it came to developing the lesson, to demonstrate possible hands I went to the old-fashioned method of laying hands out on my dining room table, taking a camera shot on my phone, and inserting the result into the PPT! Although not fancy, it showed the flow of the bidding and helped the participants begin to understand point count and how to count their cards. The Zoom platform was great, although it was a bit frustrating not to be able to interact with the group as a whole. The LBIAD course is very basic, but even so you could tell that some were finding it a bit daunting. My mantra throughout the day was – *LET'S JUST HAVE FUN!*

At the last minute (two days before the workshop), we came up with the idea of using the practice module in BBO to allow the participants to play with a coach. Thanks to all of you who helped us out on that! We found club members with cell phones, allowing them to also chat as they played. Not without glitches, it nevertheless gave the participants a chance to really experience the fun of bridge.

Beginner Lessons (Allen Pengelly)

The next step for most learners at the Grand River Bridge Club – and the starting point for some - are the beginner lessons. Our Beginner 1 and Beginner 2 classes are provided in groups of five weekly lessons that provide a basic grounding in bidding and card play. Obviously, the lockdown has changed how we can deliver the lessons, but we have adapted in the best way we could find.

The lessons started with about an hour of lecture delivered over Zoom with PowerPoint slides, and then the second half of the lesson involved practice hands using SharkBridge software. The nice part about SharkBridge is that when practising bidding we can have two students bidding against robots, or - if practising declarer play - we can have a student playing against three robots. Each hand is played by the students, and then the teacher can take control of a central teacher's table and show how *they* would have bid and played the hand. This keeps the students engaged and excited, as they can see the thinking process behind playing the hands.

Online Coaching (Sue Moses)

With no Monday or Saturday bridge labs, the beginners needed somewhere to practise what they had learned and a place to meet people. Many of our newbies signed on as singles and during Zoom lessons really didn't meet anyone. For those reasons, coaching (using BBO teaching tables) was the perfect solution. There cannot be too many people left in our club who *haven't* yet been one half of the coaching equation!

After Beginner 1, the participants were given the opportunity to participate in two to three coaching sessions, and after Beginner 2 four sessions of two hours were offered. All those who planned on continuing playing took us up on the offer. My big challenge was finding coaches who were positive, caring, and comfortable with teaching. Our club is amazing in its desire to help others which made my job doable.

Next came the training for the coaches, with each one learning how to make a conference call with five people and setting up a practice table. As you can imagine, some people learned faster than others, so it was a lot of laughs and hopefully not too much frustration.

Once the coaches were trained in the technology and basic teaching methods, the participants were informed of who, when, and how. The participants loved that they were actually playing a number of hands and could talk about bidding and playing while doing it. Many foursomes have stayed together, and a number of partnerships have grown out of the coaching. Many coaches learned right along with the beginners, and every coach made at least one mistake, (purposely so beginners could see they weren't perfect 😊😊😊). The coachees loved the laughing that accompanied each session, and many learned that there is no undo in real games - but were happy when given that opportunity in the coaching sessions.

I could really see the difference after the sessions: the beginners were much more confident and really knew that they wanted to continue playing because there was so much more to learn. When I asked the coaches if they would be willing to do it again, they all said they would happily do it again (a big thank you to all of you). A wonderful experience for everyone.

Newcomer Workshop (Jack Cole)

Now that we had a pool of eager newcomers, the challenge was to get them into online play. On May 13, about 25 new players attended a Zoom workshop called "Playing in our Newcomer Games". The intent was to ease them through the mechanics of playing with us online, such as: getting a BBO user name, an ACBL number, and BB\$; being added to the GRBC "friends" list; finding our games and signing up with a partner; and the steps in playing a hand. Most students - but not all - had already been through some of those steps during their lessons and coaching sessions, so before the workshop I emailed the students to ask what they hoped to learn, and I got back requests that went well beyond mechanics. What they wanted now was insight into topics like: scoring, percentages, and strategy; alerts, the director, and chatting; stratification; convention cards; history; and interpreting the posted results. I was soon up to 100 PowerPoint slides! To cope, I distributed my slides and assigned the BBO and ACBL registrations as pre-workshop preparation, allowing us to complete the rest of the workshop in the two and a half hours available.

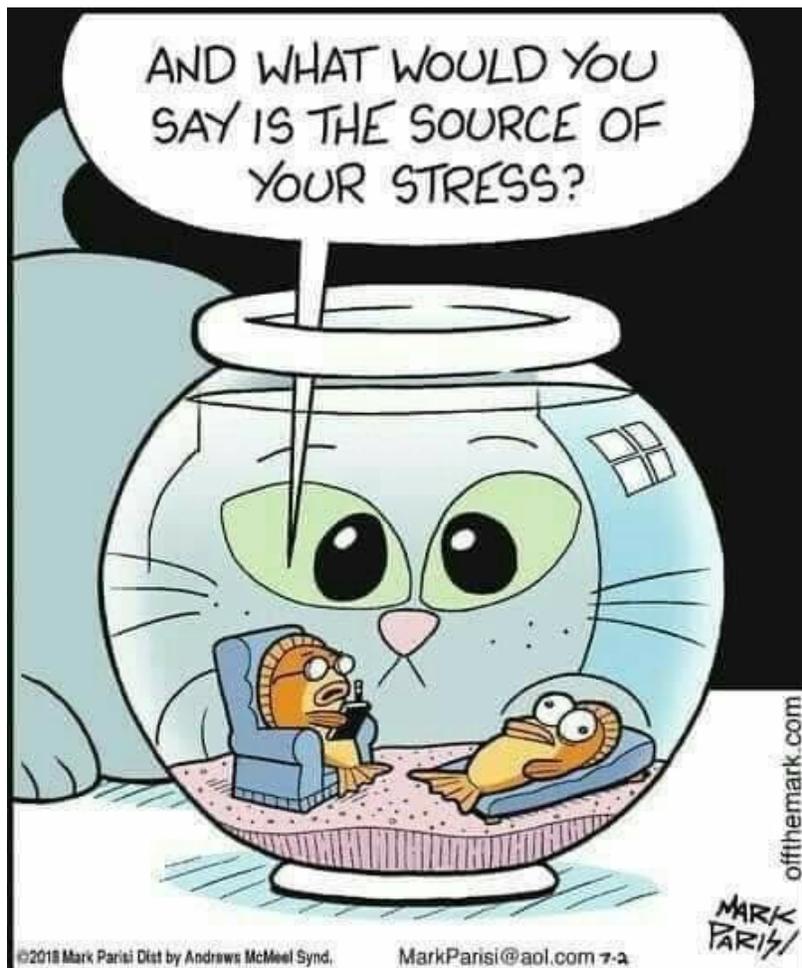
As a bonus, a very nice support tech at BBO went above and beyond, agreeing to host a four-board free practice game on the following Saturday! This gave 20 very excited students a chance to experience all of the above, while interacting with us on Zoom. Allen joined us and even wrote a hand-by-hand analysis, which he distributed to the students. After the game, the players laughed about frayed nerves and “sweaty palms”, but wrote that “it was (an) incredibly helpful and wonderful experience”.

Newcomer Game

On the following Thursday – most of these activities happened in the same Thursday time-slot – the GRBC’s inaugural 0-19 game took place, with Allen as both director and coach. Ten pairs – some of them paired up by us at the last minute – participated (and another pair joined our Monday 0-49 game). Allen gave them (limited) opportunities to ask for advice in order to continue their learning. The player with the “sweaty palms” wrote that she “really liked it. Way less stressful this time.” Success! The next week (last night), there were six full tables.

Not to be overlooked, the surge in Novice and Beginner lessons offered by the Club’s teachers has given these newcomers more experience and confidence. Our club’s commitment to fostering a welcoming place for learners has served us well.

Carl Lucas took his usual sardonic look at our claim that our 19er game is “stress-free”.



LESSONS NOT YET LEARNED

There are only these two lessons left between now and September. You have been warned!



Overcalls – The first step in competitive bidding

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

Level: **Novice**

Instructor: Stephen Carpenter

Date: Wednesday, June 9, 2021, 9:30 am - noon



Balancing

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

Level: **Intermediate**

Instructor: Malkin Howes

Date: Monday, June 14, 2021, 9:30 am - noon

How to Register and Pay

- Click [here](#) for more information about and to register for our workshops (\$20 for members, \$25 for non-members).
 - Click [here](#) for information about how to pay for your lessons (scroll down).
-



An Extra Chance

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

My partner, East, dealt and admired his 23-HCP hand. The opponents passed throughout as our auction went: 2♣-2♦-3♦-3♥-4♣-5♣-6♣. No need to ask for key cards with his hand.

	♠ 9 6 5 2	
	♥ K 7	
	♦ 8 5 3 2	
	♣ J 5 3	
♠ 8 7 4	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A 3
♥ Q J 9 6 4		♥ A
♦ Q 6		♦ A K J 10 9
♣ Q 10 6		♣ A K 9 7 4
	♠ K Q J 10	
	♥ 10 8 5 3 2	
	♦ 7 4	
	♣ 8 2	

South made the automatic lead of the ♠K and my partner saw that 12 tricks would be easy as long as the clubs split 3-2 as he would win five tricks in each minor plus the two major-suit aces.

Many declarers would draw trumps and take their 12 tricks, happy that they had found a good slam. But my partner saw a hope for an extra trick in hearts, so after winning his ♠A at Trick 1, he played the ♥A and then crossed to Dummy's ♣Q in order to lead the ♥Q off the dummy. When North played his ♥K on the queen, my partner ruffed and then drew all of the trumps. He then entered dummy with the ♦Q, and threw away his only loser, the ♠3, on the established ♥J. Partner's plan had been to throw away his losing spade on the ♥Q, even if North didn't cover – that way, he would just be trading one loser for another - but in the cases that *North* held the ♥K, there would be no spade loser.

This play has two advantages. First, if there should be an unhappy club split that involved a club loser, the contract could still be made if the spade loser had been avoided. Second, the game was matchpoint pairs where every overtrick is important.

This play gave him an overtrick and a very good score.

As declarer, always keep your eye out for that extra chance.

Diet tip: If you think you're hungry, you might just be thirsty. Have a bottle of wine first and then see how you feel.

FOR ADVANCED PLAYERS



Dear David

Trash Talk

In the system I play with most of my partners, the auction 1NT (by partner) - 2♣ (by me) is a RELAY to 2♦. What is a RELAY? A RELAY forces you to make a specific bid in order to save room and subsequently show a number of different hand types.

How is the RELAY different from a transfer? 1NT-2♦ is a transfer to hearts, showing five-plus hearts with an unknown number of points. On this auction, the 2♦ bidder would type “hearts” on the explanation line, since this bid has a singular and specific meaning. New Minor Forcing (1♦-1♠-1NT-2♣) and Fourth-Suit Forcing (1♦-1♠-2♣-2♥) are both examples of auctions where the last bid is an artificial request for more information. No further explanation than “nmf” in the first case or “fsf” in the second, is required. Once again, these last two examples have a singular and specific meaning.

Let's return to the Trash Stayman system. 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦. If the responder now bids 2♥, that shows hearts and spades OR four hearts and a longer minor and a NON-GAME-GOING hand. If instead, the responder bids 2♠, that shows four spades and a longer minor and a NON-GAME-GOING hand. If instead, the responder bids 2NT, that shows an invitational hand, like a 1NT - 2NT auction for standard bidders. If the opener accepts the invitation after 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT, there are a number of ways to accept.

As you can see from these rather complicated auctions, there is no way to adequately describe the meaning of the relay at the time it was made. The only thing you really need to know is that opener is forced to bid diamonds and neither opponent is saying anything about the club suit or the diamond suit. So, feel free to double 2♣ to show clubs or to double 2♦ to show diamonds. A double of an artificial bid shows that suit.

I debated about whether I should add the Trash Stayman document to this article, but I ultimately decided that the vast majority would not be interested. If you want to see it, [send me an email](#) and I will happily forward it to you.



This is not a joke. You can now get gender- and race-neutral as well as hierarchy-free cards that avoid all the undesirable stereotypes embodied in traditional decks of cards.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PLAYERS

Jake's Challenges (#24)

♠ J 8 2
 ♥ A 7 5
 ♦ 10 7
 ♣ J 7 6 4 2



♠ A K 10 9 7
 ♥ K 6 3 2
 ♦ 4
 ♣ K Q 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	3 ♥	Dbl
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
All pass			

You are South declaring four spades. West leads the ♥9. Plan the play.

SOLUTION

If you are thinking about winning the first trick with the ace on the board so that you can finesse in spades for an overtrick, you should think about it some more. Counting your losers, there are four or five in your hand - two hearts, one each in the minors, and maybe the queen of trumps.

There is a safety play available that will ensure your contract (but rule out an overtrick). If you just forfeit your certain losers (a diamond and a club and possibly a spade), then you will be able to establish dummy's long clubs and discard your two heart losers on them. To do this, however, you must hang on to the lead until you have knocked out the ace of clubs. And, of course, you also have to make sure you preserve an entry to the board (♥A).

Accordingly, at Trick 1 play a small heart from the board and take the trick with your king in hand. Now bang down the ace and king of spades at Tricks 2 and 3. Both opponents will follow suit, but Her Majesty will not appear. Never mind, leave the ♠Q alone and start playing clubs until the ace turns up. Sooner or later, West will have to take his ace of clubs. Now his best defence is to cash his ♠Q and his ♦A, but that's the end of the line for the defence.

As soon as you get back on lead, enter the dummy with the ♥A and cash your established two clubs, pitching two heart losers from your hand.

Here is the full hand.

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

As you can see, if you had taken the first trick with the ♥A and finessed in spades, it wouldn't have been pretty. Here's what might happen. West could take his queen of spades, cash his ♣A, and lead another club. East could ruff and lead back a heart. West could ruff and lead a low diamond to East's queen. East could win the trick and lead a third heart giving West another ruff. Down three.

Saturday Night Open Game

If you happen to find yourself without a date or a party to attend on Saturday nights, you might consider playing in the Kincardine open game which starts at 6:30 pm. This game is struggling with borderline attendance, and a few extra tables would make a world of difference to them. You will recall that the Kincardine club is in our bubble, meaning that our players can just sign up in the usual way without having to notify anyone or seek permission.

**Skills developed by playing
The Game of Bridge**

Adhyayan
Quality Defined

Logical thinking and Reasoning

Communication, Imagination and Visualisation

Cognitive Skills

Focus, Problem Solving

Value of Partnerships

"No matter where I go, I can always make new friends at the bridge table."
- Martina Navratilova

Getting Personal

One of our members is requesting that everyone add their personal photo (not that of their pets or Charlie Brown) to their BBO profile so that he can know who he's playing against even if he doesn't know their BBO username.

In order to add your photo,

- Log on to BBO;
 - Click on the ACCOUNT tab on the right-hand side;
 - Click on PROFILE IMAGE at the bottom;
 - Click on SELECT PICTURE; and
 - Choose the desired photo and click on UPLOAD PICTURE.
-

New Bridge Teachers?

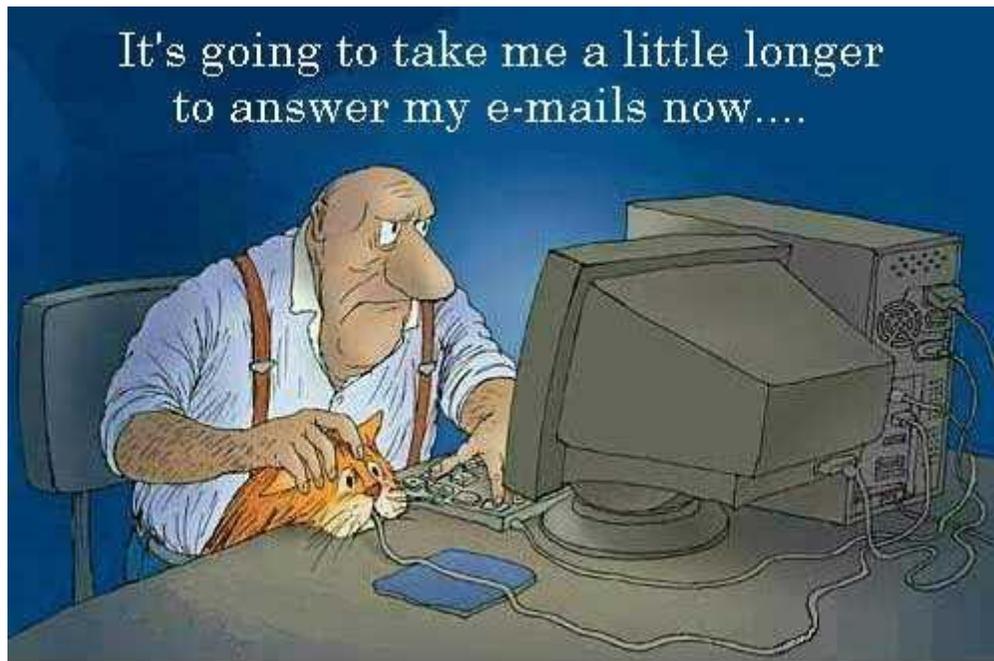
If you might be interested in becoming a bridge teacher, the ACBL's June accreditation session is offering a number of inducements. Successful applicants will receive a free start-up kit that includes a set of interactive lessons from Baron Barclay's new app, BridgeBee; either 100 credit hours on Shark Bridge or Vubridge Cardplay Basics; and one year of membership in the American Bridge Teachers' Association. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Silver Linings Games

On Friday, all games will pay DOUBLE regular club master points and the points awarded will be SILVER instead of black. You do not need to do anything special to participate in these games except pay the BBO\$2 surcharge.

Unit 249 Virtual Tournament

And on Saturday, May 29 and Sunday, May 30, our club will be hosting a unit-wide online tournament that is flighted and will yield SILVER master points **and** BBO\$ prizes. Click [here](#) for more information.



Coming Virtual Events

- Friday, May 28, 12:30 pm, **99er game (20-22 boards) \$7**
- Friday, May 28, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$7**
- Friday, May 28, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$7**
- ~~Saturday, May 29, 1:00 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) CANCELLED**~~
- ~~Sunday, May 30, 10:00 am, **499er game (18 boards) CANCELLED**~~
- **Saturday, May 29, Unit 249 Two-Session Matchpoint Pairs \$7 per session**
- **Sunday, May 30, Unit 249 All-Day Swiss Teams \$14**
- Monday, May 31, 12:30 pm, **49er game (18 boards @ 8 minutes) \$5**
- Monday, May 31, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Monday, May 31, 7:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Tuesday, June 1, 12:30 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Tuesday, June 1, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, June 2, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, June 2, 6:45 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, June 2, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, June 3, 9:30 am, **99er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, June 3, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, June 4, 6:30 pm, **19er game \$5**    
- Thursday, June 4, 7:00 pm, **999er game (24 boards) \$5**

If you would like to play in a particular game but lack a partner that day, you can either:

- ♠ Log in to [Pianola](#), click on Partner Finder, and create a Partner Finder Advert. This needs to be done at least a few hours in advance of the game. OR
- ♠ Log in to the game in question and register yourself on the Partnership Desk tab.

If you are looking for a regular partner, contact [Cheryl Kip](#), our membership lead.

We have fun in **spades**.
We play with all our **hearts**.
We treat our members like **diamonds**.
We're hosting a unit-wide tournament at our **club**.