



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

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ALERT – July 19, 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 June.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	38.73	1	Stephen Nantes	17.85	1	Nancy Cattanach	8.89
2	Mike Peng	30.13	2	Brian Kirkconnell	15.31	2	Joan Slover	7.77
3	Margot Stockie	24.50	3	Barbara Arthur	15.11	3	Martin Jones	7.15
4	Liz McDowell	23.69	4	Shelley Metcalfe	14.20	4	Anita Hanson	6.63
5	Cindy Mahn	22.93	5	Salvatore Pace	12.36	5	Susan McDonald	6.31
6	Ted Boyd	20.38	6	Suzanne Edwards	11.82	6	Molly Worden	6.25
7	Moira Hollingsworth	20.36	7	Roy Dandyk	10.25	7	Susan Kerrigan	6.19
8	Bruce Roberts	20.00	7	David Embury	10.25	8	Susan Durance	6.05
9	Colin Harrington	19.40	9	Lori Cole	10.03	9	Belinda Burt	5.85
10	John Vandergrift	16.60	10	Ron Lawrence	9.99	10	Mary Lynn Benjamins	5.65
11	Dianne Aves	14.03	11	Kathy Russell	9.35	11	Patricia Pietrek	5.60
12	Tom Ramsay	12.76	12	Renate Boucher	8.82	12	Barb Neibert	5.58
13	David Longstaff	12.63	13	Marlene Dopko	8.33	13	Jim Fox	4.67
14	Neil Jeffrey	11.82	14	Karen Whitworth	7.67	14	Ginny Alviano	4.61
15	Robert Griffiths	11.46	15	John Hanemaayer	7.28	15	Elinor Girouard	4.58
16	Pat McMillan	11.28	15	Nancy Phelan	7.28	16	Marianne Dziarski	4.47
17	John Moser	11.14	17	Cheryl Kip	7.16	17	Reinhold Kauk	4.26
18	Sandy Graham	10.42	18	Casey Baron	6.86	18	Noah Pace	3.92
19	Wayne Schroeder	9.38	19	Sue Peterson	6.66	19	Audrey Cook	3.79
20	Edith Ferber	9.30	20	Jim Veitch	6.60	20	Jane Wilson	3.65
21	Scott Hills	8.83	21	John Kip	6.30	21	Joan Lawson	3.49
22	Malkin Howes	8.58	22	Ted Kennedy	6.10	22	Brian Gaber	3.42
23	Steve Carpenter	8.15	23	Judy Widdecombe	5.78	22	Rick Arthur	3.42
24	Susan Lawton	8.07	23	Vivian McLellan	5.78	24	Jane Rushby	3.37
25	Kandis Smith	8.02	25	Lynda Burnett	5.68	24	Sue Andersen	3.37

New Club Members

A warm welcome to the following players who recently joined our club for the first time.

- **Patrice Burke**
 - **Ron Sayle**
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Masterpoint Races

The ACBL publishes lists of their leading players in various categories. We are now at the halfway point of the year and so over the course of the next few issues, we will report on how our players are doing. This issue will look at the top Canadian players in terms of their lifetime accumulation of master points. Click [here](#) for the full list.

Out of 586 players ranked, 12 live locally (although not all play at our club - yet).

28	David Baker
62	William Sheryer
103	Colin Harrington
177	Cindy Mahn
188	Tom Ramsay
239	Norma Ingram
283	Liz McDowell
373	Jeanne Colton
452	John Gilbert
453	John McFadden
573	Stephen Young
583	Edith Ferber

When it comes to the Barry Crane Top 500 (the total master points accumulated so far this year by all ACBL members), we have five of our members on the list. Click [here](#) for the full list.

210	David Baker
220	Peter Peng
241	Mike Peng
254	Robert Griffiths
345	Cindy Mahn





How I Became Addicted to Bridge, Part 2

Contributed by Lissa Lowes

After I became addicted to bridge, I began learning a lot more about the game and the ACBL (aka the Mother Ship). I had a lot to learn, including how to score. I was very apprehensive about that but, if I wanted to play North, then I had to know how to score. It ended up being easy and useful because it helped me understand why going down two vulnerable was much worse than going down two not vulnerable, and why bidding five hearts was not generally a good idea since bidding four and making five got the same score (and was less risky).

I also learned about master points or MPs awarded by ACBL. At first, it was just that if I played well, I won MP's. Then later, when I was playing at Barbara Seagram's club in Toronto, I joined the ACBL and became aware of rankings and coloured points. At that point, I had about four MPs and no thoughts about trying for anything other than not disgracing myself at the table (oops). At no point did I ever think that I would never learn how to play bridge. Now of course, I realize the more I know, the more there is to know. With each hard-earned improvement, a new vista of nuances and gradations appears. Maybe that is part of the attraction though.

Then came a big new piece of information. Almost all coloured points had to be earned at tournaments! Occasionally, there were special events at the club (STAC or **Sectional Tournament At Club**) that could earn silver points. Sometimes, there were even opportunities to win gold. But mostly, you had to play in a tournament.

I was pretty scared the first time. But Barbara emphasized to her new players that they should go, that there was a special session for newcomers, and that the first one was free (and then you pay, as they say). So, a bunch of us went off to the Royal York and had a great time and won no MPs!

It helped to understand stratification so that it wasn't as scary. You play against everyone but get compared only to the others in the same strat which is based on the number of MPs you have. Playing against better players is an excellent learning opportunity.

At this point, I also started finding out that when I was trying really hard to play well, I made more mistakes than ever and didn't achieve my goal. Sigh again. I now needed to learn to relax, focus, have a good time, and enjoy myself. This is a lesson that I continue to learn.....bad board, oh well, move on.... It is such a pleasure though to bid/play/defend a hand well. Whenever that happens, I get a little more addicted, I think.

I kept chasing the points and right now I have 278 MP's (knowing the exact number of MPs you have is more evidence of addiction) and a shot at life master. But I need silver, red, and gold points of course.

Lucky for me, I joined the ACBL when it was still 300 MPs to become a LM. This is a big thing, since players who join now have to earn 500 MPs.

The development of virtual bridge has allowed me to play even more than I did before and thus

have more chances to win glory. But I am looking forward so much to returning to face-to-face bridge and going to tournaments. My plan is to keep on playing lots, take lessons, and relax! Wish me luck. And as an addict, I would never dream of giving up.

I forgot to mention that the two siblings I mentioned in my last article both went on to become addicted to bridge themselves, one of them being Malkin, who I think you might know...

I also forgot to mention that I became the manager of the Parry Sound Bridge Club when the former manager and director moved away. Then I became a GAME DIRECTOR. Apparently bridge addiction can take a very firm hold!

CHEAT SHEETS Get YOURS Today!



Rookie Ramblings

Barbara Seagram thinks her cheat sheets are the best thing she's ever done – and that's saying something!

Until the end of July, you can buy four of Barbara's cheat sheets for a special-one-time-only price of \$40. Click [here](#) for more information (about a third of the way down the page).

Going, Going, Gone?

Contributed by [Cheryl Kip](#), Membership Lead

On March 20, we introduced a new **BBO game for players in the 0-19 category**. This game was started so that newer players could play competitively at their level, earn master points, and maybe develop new partnerships.

Unfortunately, attendance for this game has been declining. For the first two weeks in July, there weren't enough pairs signed up to make the game viable. We need at least six pairs (three tables) in order to have a game. Last night was better, though, with four and a half tables (yay!!!).

I know, it's summer and the weather has been great, but in order to continue this game, we need your support. Please consider joining the game on Thursday evenings at 6:30 pm. Please note: you need an ACBL number in order to play in any club-sanctioned game. Currently, the ACBL is offering FREE four-month guest memberships at acbl.org/guest-join. Also, if you're playing a game at our club for the first time, please register your name, BBO username, and ACBL number with clubmanager@grandriverbridgeclub.com. If you need a partner, please e-mail me and I'll do my best to get one for you.

Correction - Partnership Desk

Last week, we wrote that when you put your name in at the online partnership desk the director would try to find a partner for you, but that isn't the way it works.

In fact, when you put your name in at the online partnership desk, you are advertising your availability so that other partnerless players can invite you to play with them. Conversely, if you log in to the game and see that someone else is already registered at the partnership desk, you can invite him or her to play with you.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PLAYERS



Team Madness

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

We were playing a small (six-board) team match and from our point of view, it wasn't going well. On the first board of the match, I was in 4♥ with a heart holding of AT853 opposite KJ742. I had only three losers outside of hearts, so my only job was to avoid losing a heart.

With no reason to lead the first heart from one side or the other, I led low to Dummy's king. Of course, my RHO showed out and I had a sure heart loser. Down one, bad guess.

The next hand, buoyed by their good fortune, our opponents bid and made a spade slam with 25 HCP between them. Made six, bad luck.

There were a couple of flat part-scores, and then my partner opened a weak 1NT (11-13 HCP). I held: ♠-6 ♥-J9 ♦-AKQJ1084 ♣-K104. I thought: "I have seven tricks, surely partner can provide the other two. I bid 3NT which went down two, while 5♦ would easily be made. Down two, bad decision.

After all of this, we were not hopeful starting the last hand:

Board 36	♠ Q 10 6 4 2							
West Deals	♥ K 5 2							
Both Vul	♦ 5 4							
	♣ J 6 4							
♠ A K 7	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> </table>		N		W	S	E	♠ J 9 8 3
	N							
W	S	E						
♥ 8 7 6		♥ Q 9 4						
♦ A Q 6		♦ 10 8 7 3						
♣ K 9 8 2		♣ 10 7						
	♠ 5							
	♥ A J 10 3							
	♦ K J 9 2							
	♣ A Q 5 3							
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>					
1 N	2 ♠	All pass						

I was West and opened 1NT, showing 14-16 HCP. I don't know what North was thinking, but he bid 2♠. My partner passed, and South thought for a long time then passed. I passed and my partner was on lead. He led the ♥4 and Dummy's jack won the trick.

This was the last hand of a long day and I was thinking to myself, "We've had a poor round and dummy, who has promised nothing, has just put down a surprise 15 HCP. Let's get this hand over with; it's time to pour myself a gin."

At trick two, Declarer led dummy's ♠5; I played low, Declarer played the ten and partner won the jack. When dummy first came down, I had been ready to concede, but now I saw that we have a chance to beat 2♠. My cards were well placed over South's.

After winning the first spade, partner led the ♣10, ducked in dummy, and I won the king. Declarer, it seemed, had almost no points, so I figured he must have at least six spades. But if he had only six spades, I mused, then my partner must have three spades and I could give him a club ruff. So, I returned a low club.

Declarer won his ♣J and played a spade, won by my king. I gave my partner his club ruff and he shifted to a diamond. I won two diamond tricks and - for want of anything better to do - led another club. I was shocked when Declarer threw a heart on this and partner got another ruff. This was our seventh trick and I still had the top spade to set the contract three tricks for a score of +300.

North had been an aggressive bidder throughout the match, but a vulnerable two-level overcall with a mediocre suit and a nine-loser hand takes aggressive bids to the next level.

When the results came in, we were pleasantly surprised. On the first board, my opponent in the same 4♥ contract made the same bad guess as I did, our teammates found the same pushy slam, and even my 3NT stab was matched at the other table.

The only board that turned out to matter in this round was this last board, a part-score board at that. At the other table, my counterpart opened 1NT, just as I did, but at that table 1NT was passed out. The defence took eight tricks, so West went down two for a score of -200. This, combined with our +300, gave us a good win on the hand and the round.

Playing matchpoint pairs, one can usually get a feel for how the hands are going. We would likely score less than 25% on each of the three boards that I was unhappy about. But at teams, all that matters is what the opponents playing against your teammates do. There is no "field" to consider. Just because I didn't feel good about them didn't mean that they would be big losses.

👉 **The scoring at teams (IMPs) and pairs (matchpoints) is quite different.**



"Bad news, its curiosity"



Dear David

Second Hand High

You will have learned that as a rule when declarer leads a card from dummy, you should usually follow suit with a small card (second hand low) unless you have a good reason to play an honour. But sometimes it is *imperative* to play second hand high.

W West	N North	E East	S South
♠ J ♥ K 10 4 ♦ Q 9 8 7 2 ♣ Q 10 9 6	♠ K 10 7 5 4 ♥ A J 8 3 2 ♦ 5 3 ♣ 8	♠ A Q 8 ♥ Q 6 5 ♦ A 6 4 ♣ A K J 2	♠ 9 6 3 2 ♥ 9 7 ♦ K J 10 ♣ 7 5 4 3

W	N	E	S
	2NT	Pass	
3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

0	3NT East	0
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Since South knew that her partner probably had a better hand than she did and East had denied a four or five-card major, South attempted to “find” her partner’s strength by leading the ♥9. If West plays the ♥4, North will play the ♥2, and East will win the ♥Q. When South regains the lead with the ♦K, her ♥7 allows North to take four heart tricks.

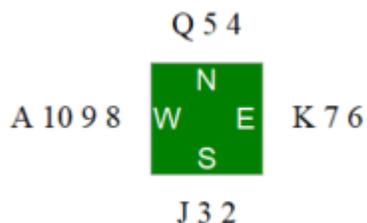
Playing the ♥10 at trick one fares no better. There are two ways to stop this insidious attack. Let the opponents win the first trick thereby severing the North/South communications. The second recourse works much better. Play the ♥K at Trick 1! If you assume the opening lead denied a heart honour, when North wins the ace you know he cannot continue the heart attack (teehee) without giving you an extra trick in the suit. So, you win whatever he switches to and hopefully go after diamonds. You will emerge with 10 or 11 tricks on this hand.



The first hand arose on a Thursday and the second the next day, so this situation comes up more often than you might think. The play is eerily similar to the first hand.

The opening lead was the ♦9, covered by dummy's ♦Q. Once Declarer played the ♦Q from the board, it didn't matter what East did, If he played the ace, he couldn't continue diamonds because of dummy's ♦10 – the suit was frozen.

A suit is frozen when neither the declarer nor the defenders can attack it without giving up a trick. Here is a common example of a frozen suit.



If East or West leads the suit, North/South will get a trick.
 If North or South leads the suit, North/South will not make any tricks.

And if East ducks the ♦Q, Declarer's ♦K will take a trick sooner or later.

In the event, East took his ace of diamonds and switched to a spade. Declarer then proceeded to take nine tricks after the heart finesse lost.





#31

Sitting South, you are declaring 4♠. West's opening lead is the ♣J. What should you do?

♠ A 6 4 3
♥ 8
♦ Q 7 5 4
♣ A 8 5 2



♠ Q J 10 9 7
♥ K Q 10 9 3
♦ A 9
♣ Q

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1 ♠
2 ♣	4 ♠	All pass	

SOLUTION

Your first test is whether or not to finesse at Trick 1. Here are two arguments in favour of the finesse.

- If the finesse loses to East, you can still discard a loser (your diamond loser) on the ♣A later on.
- Theoretically, the finesse has a 50% chance of success but, because West bid 2♣, the probability that he has the king is much higher than 50%.

Since you stand to lose nothing by finessing, you might as well go for it. In fact, your ♣Q wins the trick.

Your second test is to choose between cross-ruffing the hand or trying to set up the heart suit. The cross-ruff looks attractive, but if East holds all four outstanding trumps it won't work because East will be able to over-ruff you and then torture you by leading minor suits. There are fewer pitfalls if you work on setting up the heart suit.

Okay, we have a plan, but we still have to be careful as we are missing the ace and jack of hearts. At Trick 2, lead the ♥Q. West will take it with his ♥A, and his best defence is to lead the ♦J at Trick 3 - covered by dummy's ♦Q, East's ♦K, and your ♦A.

Now your slow diamond loser has become a fast diamond loser, meaning you need to get to dummy right away so you can cash dummy's ♣A and pitch your losing diamond on it. Play the ♠Q to tempt West to cover, but it turns out he couldn't possibly cover it due to having NO TRUMPS (the worst-case scenario). Now you can't afford to fool around any more, so you overtake your queen with dummy's ♠A and immediately discard your diamond loser on dummy's ♣A.

Next, at Trick 6 lead a small trump from the board. East will take this trick with his ♠K and - best defence - lead back a minor-suit card to shorten you in trump. Let's say he leads a club, which you ruff.

At this point, West has shown up with nine HCP (♥H, ♦J, ♣K, and ♣J). Since he overcalled at the two-level, it's highly likely that he also holds the ♥J. Now it's time for a ruffing finesse in hearts: lead the ♥10 from your hand and ruff in dummy if West plays his ♥J; otherwise, cross your fingers and pitch a minor-suit card from dummy. As it happens, both West and East play low hearts and your ♥10 wins the trick. Repeat the ruffing finesse with your ♥9. This time, West covers the ♥9 with his ♥J, so you ruff in dummy - and now your hearts are set up. (If West were to duck again, your hearts would get set up that way.)

Next, draw the outstanding trumps and cash your good hearts to make an over-trick. Here is the full hand.

♠ —	♠ A 6 4 3	♠ K 8 5 2
♥ A J 5 4	♥ 8	♥ 7 6 2
♦ J 10 3 2	♦ Q 7 5 4	♦ K 8 6
♣ K J 10 6 3	♣ A 8 5 2	♣ 9 7 4
	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ Q J 10 9 7	
	♥ K Q 10 9 3	
	♦ A 9	
	♣ Q	



We Need Your Help

Contributed by Sue Peterson, Marketing Lead

Our past Learn Bridge in A Day workshops have been very successful with high attendance. This is partly due to advertising in local magazines and newspapers which offer free postings for not-for-profit groups and partly to “word of mouth” advertising by our members. In case you aren't aware, Learn Bridge in a Day is a five-hour concentrated course geared towards true beginners, those returning to bridge after long absences, and those who want to test the waters.

This fall, the course is being offered on Saturday, September 11 at a cost of \$25, which includes a student manual. For those who want to jump right into beginners' lessons, they can sign up for this course which will begin on Thursday, September 16 in the evening, and run for five weeks.

Registration is now open for both the [LBIAD workshop and Beginner's Lessons](#).

Here's how you can help spread the word.

- If you know of any opportunities to post a short ad in an online or hard-copy publication, let us know and we will follow up.
- Now that we are out and about a bit more, mention it to friends or new people you meet. I mentioned it to a new gal in my golf foursome and now she wants to sign up. You just never know!
- Put it on your Facebook page or send a tweet.
- If you belong to a club or organization or are still in the workforce, don't hesitate to share or post the flyer which is attached to your Alert email.

Please let me know if you can make any connections (petersons@sympatico.ca). And thanks for your help!

2021 Summer North American Online Bridge Championships

During the ten days from July 17 to July 25, you will have tons of chances to play online at the Summer North American Online Bridge Championships - and they're all stratified. Click [here](#) for the detailed schedule, rules, fees, etc.

Coming Virtual Events

- Friday, July 16, 12:30 pm, **99er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Friday, July 16, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Friday, July 16, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Saturday, July 17, 1:00 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Sunday, July 18, 10:00 am, **499er game (18 boards) \$5**
- Monday, July 19, 12:30 pm, **49er game (18 boards @ 8 minutes) \$5**
- Monday, July 19, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Monday, July 19, 7:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Tuesday, July 20, 12:30 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Tuesday, July 20, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, July 21, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, July 21, 6:45 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, July 21, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, July 22, 9:30 am, **99er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, July 22, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, July 22, 6:30 pm, **19er game \$5**
- Thursday, July 22, 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**.
Master point addiction is quite common at our **club**.