



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

## ALERT – November 6, 2023

Click [here](#) to access our regular game schedule.

### Looking Ahead

- ♥ Don't forget our **new 99er game on Saturday mornings** at 9:00 am. **PLEASE NOTE THE EARLIER START!!!!**
- ♥ Don't forget our **new 649er game** on Wednesday afternoons at 1:00 pm.
- ♥ Today's (Friday) and tomorrow's (Saturday) F2F games are **Club Championship games** = extra masterpoints, no extra charge.
- ♥ The Answer Lady will be giving a **mini-lesson on one-level overcalls** at the bridge lab on Monday, November 6.
- ♥ **Niagara Regional**, Tuesday, November 7 – Sunday, November 12
- ♥ **The Wednesday night BBO open game has been cancelled**, effective immediately.
- ♥ **The Swiss Teams game on Tuesday night, November 7; the open game on Wednesday night, November 8; and the open game on Friday night, November 10 have been cancelled** because so many players are going to the Niagara Regional.
- ♥ Saturday, November 11, **Beginner 2 lessons commence**
- ♥ The F2F games during the weeks starting November 12 and 19 will be **Club Championship games** = extra masterpoints, no extra charge.
- ♥ Saturday, November 18, **NAP District 2 Finals**
- ♥ **Local Sectional at our Club**, Saturday, November 25 and Sunday, November 26. **The November 24 Friday night open F2F game, the November 25 Saturday morning 99er game, the November 25 499er Saturday morning BBO game, and both November 26 Sunday morning BBO games have all been cancelled** because of the local sectional.

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### Local Sectional at our Club (SILVER POINTS)

Click [here](#) for more information on and to register for this upcoming sectional tournament at our club on Saturday, November 25, and Sunday, November 26. Attendance is limited to 96 each day (48 pairs and 24 teams), with pre-registration being required, and registrations are coming in briskly. At the time of writing, we have 16 pairs registered for the Saturday games and nine teams registered for the Sunday Swiss. We do expect to sell out. You have been warned.

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### North American Pairs District 2 Finals

The North American Pairs contest is a grassroots search for players from each ACBL district to earn the honour of being subsidized for a trip to the Nationals held in Louisville, KY in March 2024. Click [here](#) for more information.

In order to play in our district finals, players must have qualified. Click [here](#) for the list of qualified players. Please note that the list is organized by unit (we're Unit 249).

As you will see on the poster, you can play in the finals on Saturday, November 18 either by driving to Thornhill (\$35) or else online (\$20).

## A warm Welcome to Our Newest Member

- Lorraine Ward
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### Congratulations

*to the following local players who have advanced to the next ACBL rank.*

#### Club Master

- **Russel Kerr**

#### Regional Master

- **Tong Chen**
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## Hallowe'en

Everyone was in a good mood last Tuesday as most people either dressed up in orange and black or brought in Hallowe'en treats or both. Thanks to Bev Hitchman, Roy Dandyk, Sharon Boyd, Cindy Mahn, and Liz McDowell for their tasty treats. They were as delicious as they look.



Margot came as the queen of hearts and posed with her partner Dave who came as Freddy Krueger.

Sheila came as Ginnie Weasley of Harry Potter fame.





**Suzanne**



**Liz, Steve, and Cindy**



**Ron**

*Photo credit: Susan Lawton*

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## **Mrs. Kravitz is Back!!!!**

It has come to our attention that Mrs. Kravitz is alive and well and living in the Penske offices next door. Her sole mission is to memorize the licence plates of all of the Penske employees and visitors and make sure that no non-Penske car parks in one of their very scarce spots. Mrs. K has an office overlooking the parking lot and, when she isn't patrolling the lot, she spends her time looking through a telescope at the comings and goings out the window. As soon as Mrs. K spots an intruder car, she immediately assumes that the driver is a bridge player and rains hell-fire and damnation on our club.

We would therefore be grateful if you could spoil Mrs. Kravitz's fun by making sure to always park in one of our designated parking spots. They are clearly marked GRBC. Thanks for your help.

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On Track...  ...To Online



### **ONLINE PLAYING OPTIONS FOR GRBC MEMBERS**

GRBC has added our name to the affiliated clubs of SE Carolina Club of Clubs. This means that whenever you play in one of these games, GRBC will get some money.

When you play in one of **our** GRBC BBO games, we get all of your entry fee (minus the BBO fee) from which we pay our many expenses for our club.

So, PLEASE KEEP PLAYING IN GRBC ONLINE GAMES WHENEVER YOU CAN. For the times that you wish to play bridge online and there are no GRBC games available (or a game with one of our pooling partners), then PLEASE CHOOSE SE CAROLINA GAMES. Your choice will help our club.

Typically, SE Carolina offers three games at different levels at 9:30am, 1:00 pm, 4:00 pm, and 7:00 pm every day. Click [here](#) for a link to the SE Carolina website game schedule. To access their games, go to BBO/Virtual Clubs/North America and type SE in the search bar or look for SE Carolina in the title (or VacB262410 or VacB183376). And for the month of November, SE Carolina is giving back \$1.50 of your entry fee if you sign up at least 45 minutes in advance.

Thank you for supporting GRBC games as your first priority, and then those of SE Carolina and our Unit 249 pooling partners.

Any questions? Contact: [Loricole@execulink.com](mailto:Loricole@execulink.com)

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## The Answer Lady

Contributed by Susan Lawton

As the “The Answer Lady” I have been responding to questions from “newer” players over the past several weeks. A request has been made to share those players’ questions and my responses in the Alert, essentially a column for the beginner player! You can write to me at [suzan2420@yahoo.ca](mailto:suzan2420@yahoo.ca).

*This week’s column continues the discussion around minor suit opening bids.*

### Question

Hello Answer Lady, we’ve been reading your recent columns around minor suit openings, where the dealer opens the bidding with 1♣ or 1♦, usually with two, three, or four cards in those minor suits. I had a hand recently that had five diamonds and five clubs. I opened with 1♦, even though my clubs were headed by better honours. Should I have opened with the 1♣ instead? How is it best to bid hands with those types of distribution? What should we have done?

Signed, Two newer players

### Answer

Good morning, two newer players. Over the past several weeks, this column has addressed minor suit openings with balanced hands: 4432, 3442, or 3343.

Sometimes those minor suits have extra length and Opener is confronted with a 1255 or a 2155 hand, an unbalanced hand with 5-5 in the minors. What to do? Open 1♣ and then bid 2♦ or open 1♦ and then bid 2♣?

Larry Cohen, in his *Bridge Bulletin*, February 2017 column, pp.30-31, provides the answer. Larry explains with that 5-5 shape you always open the higher-ranking suit first, namely diamonds. This makes the rebid a much easier proposition since Opener at the next opportunity can bid clubs, showing that two-suited hand: 5-5 in the minors.

With the 1255 shape and a minimum hand, if Opener starts the bidding with 1♣, a rebid now becomes more of a challenge. They can’t bid 1NT with a singleton; they can’t repeat the clubs with only five of them, and they can’t bid 2♦ as that would be a “reverse” (showing a stronger hand). Reverses were covered in the Answer Lady column from October 10, 2022.

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## Bean There Done That

Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer ([GrandRiverBridgeClubTreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:GrandRiverBridgeClubTreasurer@gmail.com))

If you have played in any of our GRBC online games lately, you might have noticed that other bridge clubs have raised their entry fees for ACBL-sanctioned (master points) games. On October 25, BBO increased the minimum \$amount that clubs can charge for their games from \$3.00US to \$4.50US.

Was this something the omnipotent ACBL mandated? It doesn't appear to be their doing! Their VACB program is basically paying "rent" to a Bridge Base Online "landlord". After three and a half years of not increasing the rent, they have. It's their web application and platform ... they are a business after all. BBO had a long-standing contract with ACBL to offer games with ACBL points - long before Covid19. When Covid19 struck, the two companies quickly worked to create a solution that helped F2F bridge clubs survive. And GRBC is glad they did.

Online bridge clubs can charge their customers whatever they want as long as it is above the \$minimum "rent". This does not directly affect GRBC, although it does price our entry fee (\$5.00US) closer to our competitors' fees. ACBL's fee structure for F2F/BBO table counts remains unchanged ... for now.

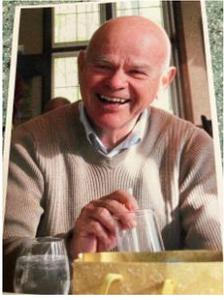
Why this transpired now is anyone's guess. Maybe they're trying to put a damper on the price wars that have been going on, allowing the small bridge clubs to compete with the biggie-sized ones. Maybe it's just a business decision ... because BBO takes 22.8% of the entry fee, their revenue just went up. Maybe the "rent" increase will steer players away from the VACB games to the other (no master points) games ... giving BBO even more moolah.

Maybe it's all a dream and we'll wake up in Kansas with Auntie Em.

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Have you ever heard of **amigurumi**? It's a Japanese term for making very realistic animals out of yarn by crocheting, and it's pretty incredible what some people can do – so incredible, in fact, that you often have to look twice to even realize it isn't real!





## Player Profile – Neil Coburn

Neil's motto (according to his wife) being "Why do today what you can put off 'till tomorrow?", he has finally, after a three-month delay, submitted his profile.

Neil was born in Stratford in 1939 where he attained his primary and secondary education. His leisure time was spent either on the golf course or at the hockey arena. He played three years of junior hockey and three years of senior hockey. He attended the University of Michigan on a hockey scholarship but returned home at Christmas when he realized that Engineering had nothing to do with trains.

Being a strong math student, Neil entered the by-correspondence chartered accountant course at Monteith and Monteith in Stratford. In 1962, he transferred to Price Waterhouse in Toronto where he received his CA. Immediately afterwards, not mature enough to commit to a permanent job, Neil accepted an offer to play hockey in Bolzano, Italy. His most vivid memory of the experience was the team road trips. Travelling by bus in the middle of winter to mountain towns, like Davos, Arosa, and St. Moritz in Switzerland, the bus driver would honk his horn as they approached the snow-covered hairpin turns high in the Alps. Looking out the window at the sky or the chasm below did nothing to relieve his tension.

On returning to Canada finally ready to settle down, Neil married his wife Susanne in 1964 and moved to Toronto to work in the investment department at Crown Trust. In 1967, Neil moved to Kitchener/Waterloo and opened his public accounting office. After buying their first home on Pinehurst Crescent in Kitchener, Neil and Sue were blessed with three girls – Sonja, Jannine, and Heather. In 1976, Neil's passion for golf led him to purchase a home behind the first green at Westmount Golf Club so that he could be closer to his family on summer weekends.

Being a person who seeks to try new things, in 1980 during the Quebec referendum on sovereignty, Neil moved his family to Ste Foy, a suburb of Quebec City, for the school terms. His girls, ages ten, eight, and six at the time, attended Ecole Ste Foy while he and Sue took French lessons, intermingling with French-speaking adults who were studying English. Although apprehensive at first, Neil's girls now admit it was the best learning experience and character builder they ever had. In 1985, with the girls now bilingual, they returned to Sillery, another suburb of Quebec City, for a four-month stint.

Nearing retirement and finding time on his hands, inspired by his daughter Heather who was also a CA and a bridge master, Neil decided to join the Gage Street bridge club. He feels fortunate to have met such a diverse and interesting group of new friends. He has found his enrolment in the club's research group of expert players studying advanced bidding very enlightening. This exclusive group, armed with the day's hand records, meets at the Bent Elbow after the 499er games on Fridays. It is composed of referee Dave Quarrie, humorist Gord Hunter, professor Doug Grant, mediator Dave Embury, pugilist Kevin Latter, and the conservative bidder Roy Dandyk. Neil is a fan of the three stooges and can really appreciate when Roy opens the discussion with "One heart was a great bid on Hand 7 and Kevin replies "That was a TERRIBLE bid". Following that, Dave opens a more balanced discussion of the merits of both positions.

Neil says, "Thanks to all the volunteers and keep on bidding".

# Time You Learned our Lessons!

## Still In the Cards

- **Beginner 2 Course**, starting Saturday, November 11, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm. Instructor: Sue Moses. In our teaching room. Cost \$75. Current Enrollment 19 **BEGINNER**  
WARNING: Enrollment is limited to 24 students – only five spots left!  
Click [here](#) to register.
  - **Scoring Matters** ONLINE workshop, Tuesday, November 14, 9:30 am – noon. Instructor: Jack Cole. ONLINE. Cost \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Level: **BEGINNER/ NOV-ICE**. Current Enrollment: 3  
Click [here](#) to register.
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## Continuing

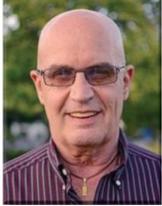
- **Newcomer bridge labs** every Monday morning, 9:00 am – 11:30 am, except on holiday Mondays. Mini-lesson on **one-level overcalls** by The Answer Lady on Monday, November 6 – no extra charge! \$8 members/ \$10 non-members. Subsequent mini-lessons are as follows: **Pre-empts** with Cindy Mahn on November 13, **Initial Hand Evaluation** with Malkin Howes on November 20, and **Planning the Declarer Play in Suit Contracts** with Dave Quarrie).
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## Recorded Lesson

**Get That Extra Trick by Playing Card Combinations Correctly**, two-hour digital workshop by Stephen Carpenter. Pay \$10 in any of the [usual ways](#), and ask [Malkin](#) to send you the link.

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The members of our club extend their condolences to Dave Quarrie who recently lost his wife Jay, and to Janet Howell who recently lost her husband Ceri.



## Dear David

### DSI (Do Something Intelligent)

Many experienced bridge players use acronyms such as RKC (Roman Key Card Blackwood) or NMF (New Minor Forcing) or FSF (Fourth Suit Forcing). A relative newcomer to the parade of doubles (negative, responsive, support, Rosenkranz, etc.) is the DSI double.

The dynamics of DSI are really quite simple. Your partnership has determined that together, you have the balance of strength. Your opponent has interfered in your auction. A double by you asks your partner to try for a sufficient penalty, or to bid on if that seems to be the better option.

Dear David: In the auction shown below, I assumed West's double was a 100% penalty double. When my partner was asked about the meaning of the double before the opening lead, he said it was DSI.

Dir: W			
Vul: N-S			
12		♠ A 8 5	
15 12		♥ A 9 7 3	
1		♦ 10 5	
		♣ A 10 9 3	
♠ Q J 7		♠ K 10 9 6	
♥ K Q 8 6		♥ J 4 2	
♦ K Q 6		♦ A J 8 7 4	
♣ Q 8 2		♣ K	
		♠ 4 3 2	
		♥ 10 5	
		♦ 9 3 2	
		♣ J 7 6 5 4	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♣	dbl	rdbl	2♣
Dbl	pass	pass	pass

East's redouble showed 10+ HCP. West's DSI double was an excellent choice. West knows his side has at least 25 HCP (actually 27 HCP on this hand) between them. His hand, although relatively strong, is aceless, with terrible distribution for a game contract (3433). Not only is he pretty sure they he can beat 2♣, but also the opponents are vulnerable and his side is not vulnerable. Down two would give them a clear top (+500 ) versus any game they bid. The good news – they beat 2♣. The bad news – they beat it only one trick (+200). The worse news – every other table was in 3NT for +400 or +430.

What have we learned from this hand? Although West's double was DSI, I would not be afraid of passing with the East hand because the vulnerability is favourable and East has lots of defensive cards. We also learned that even though every decision East/West made was correct, the result was disastrous. Sometimes you get to 3NT with 29 HCP and fail by a trick. On another day, you stop in 2NT with 22 HCP and you make four overtricks! The only advice I can offer – forget about the times you were unjustifiably punished for good decisions. In the long run, you will be rewarded for sound bidding decisions.

For Intermediate *Jake's*  
**Play a Bad Hand Well**

**No. 125**

N	♠ 2
W	♥ AQJ5
E	♦ Q872
S	♣ QJ32
♠ J1075	
♥ 82	
♦ 943	
♣ A864	

West	North	East	South
1♣	2♣	Dbl	4♠
4NT	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♣	All pass		

Hmm, my immediate leap to 4♠ didn't stop the opponents from riding high. My partner led the ♠9, which lost to West's ♠Q. At Tricks 2 and 3, West cashed his ♠AK and discarded two small diamonds from dummy. My partner followed suit of course. Declarer then led a small club, on which my partner discarded a spade. I allowed the dummy's ♣J to win the trick. He continued with dummy's ♣Q which I also ducked, my partner discarding another spade. Declarer continued with a small club from the dummy, and I ducked yet again. Declarer won the trick in his hand, and my partner threw away a small heart. At Trick 7, Declarer led the ♥9 from his hand, which my partner covered with the ♥10, and dummy's ♥J won the trick. At Trick 8, Declarer led the ♣3 from dummy which I won perforce. If you were in my shoes, what would you do to get Declarer down off his "high horse"?

**SOLUTION**

Let's review the situation. Your partner had no HCP in the black suits. Given his bidding, he highly likely to have both red kings - the ♥K and the ♦K. (If your partner has the ♦A, there would be no headache for your defence, and I wouldn't be wasting my time writing this article). That means your partner is going to be struggling to guard both red suits himself and he may be vulnerable to a squeeze. Successful squeezes require four conditions, which you can commit to memory by dubbing them **BLUE**.

- B** – One defender is **B**usy needing to guard two suits.
- L** – Declarer has only one **L**oser.
- U** – There is at least one threat card in the **U**pper hand.
- E** – There is an **E**ntry to the established threat card.

If any of these conditions is not met, there can be no squeeze. Let's see whether these conditions hold in this case.

- Presumably, your partner has both the ♥K and the ♦K, if this is true, he alone needs to guard both suits, Condition B holds.
- Declarer has already collected seven tricks and has four more sure tricks: the ♥AQ (via a finesse). He must have another heart in his hand because if he hadn't, he would have

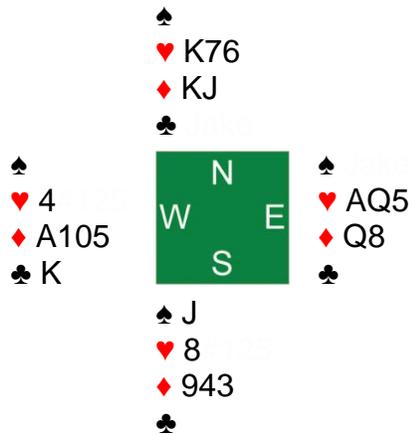
cash the ♥A when he had the chance), along with the ♦A and ♣K. Eleven tricks in total, just shy of one trick for his slam. So, Condition L holds.

- There are two potential threat cards in dummy – the ♦Q and the ♥5, and they both are sitting behind your partner (upper hand). Condition U holds.
- The ♥A is a sure entry, Condition E holds.

Now that you know a squeeze may be looming, if you listen carefully, you should be able to hear your partner screaming for help in a dolphin's voice. Do you have a life jacket for him? Yes, you do: you must lead the ♥8 at Trick 9!

All things being equal, you would prefer not to lead into a tenace, but all things are not equal here. By leading a heart into the ♥AQ, you obviously finesse your partner's ♥K, but Declarer can do that himself assuming he has a second heart - so you're not losing anything. In fact, this play loses nothing even if Declarer started with only a single heart - because that would mean he will always have a diamond loser even after two pitches on dummy's good hearts.

Here is the five-card ending.

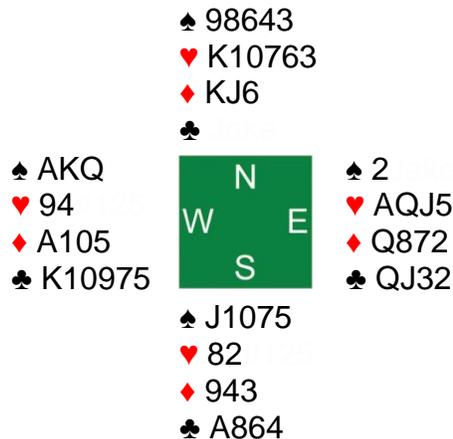


Let's see what will happen if you lead a card other than a heart at Trick 9.

- If you lead a diamond, Declarer will go up with his ♦A and cash his ♣K, squeezing your partner. If he discards a heart, Declarer pitches dummy's ♦Q, finesses hearts with the ♥Q, cashes the ♥A (the ♥K drops), and the ♥5 is his 12<sup>th</sup> trick. If, on the other hand, your partner discards the ♦K, Declarer discards the ♥5 from dummy, finesses hearts with the ♥Q, cashes the ♥A, and the ♦Q is his 12<sup>th</sup> trick.
- If you lead a spade, Declarer will ruff with the ♣K, squeezing your partner exactly as above.

As you can see, if you lead a suit other than hearts, Declarer will make his slam.

Here is the complete hand.



A good partner anticipates his partner's problems.

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# Top 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 September.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	47.44	1	Lynda Burnett	15.77	1	Russel Kerr	8.59
2	Edith Ferber	26.63	2	Jim Dalgliesh	12.63	2	Randall DeKraker	7.91
3	Cindy Mahn	25.49	3	Cheryl White	11.22	3	Sharon Nesbitt	7.78
4	Mike Peng	24.68	4	Lori Cole	10.47	4	Brian Gaber	6.15
5	Ted Boyd	21.53	5	David Dennis	10.13	5	Pat Northey	5.17
6	Bob Griffiths	20.85	6	Janice Pengelly	10.05	6	Jane Wilson	5.10
7	Scott Hills	18.09	7	Elinor Girouard	9.67	7	Audrey Cook	5.00
8	Stephen Young	15.92	7	Martin Jones	9.67	8	John Aldridge	4.74
9	Roy Dandyk	14.49	9	Nancy Cattanach	9.05	9	Mark Sherwood	4.72
10	Margot Stockie	13.82	10	Bob Giilck	8.24	10	Paul Raymond	4.56
11	Moirra Hollingsworth	13.08	11	Sue Moses	7.94	11	Debbie Miethig	4.52
12	Neil Jeffrey	11.72	12	Jack Cole	7.41	12	Doug Fickling	4.33
13	Suzanne Edwards	11.42	13	Barbara Arthur	7.34	13	George Rybiak	3.86
14	Kathy Russell	11.29	14	Rick Arthur	7.02	14	Andrew McNaught	3.85
15	Neil Coburn	10.94	15	Bev Hitchman	6.95	15	Ben Cornell	3.61
16	Malkin Howes	10.38	16	John Kip	6.81	15	Don Slowinski	3.61
17	Liz McDowell	9.97	17	Judy Beauchamp	6.58	17	Richard Rybiak	3.47
18	Bonnie Kains	9.69	18	Anita Hanson	6.45	18	Pat Pietrek	3.46
19	Ed Hills	8.57	19	Regina Williams	6.14	19	Sonja Miner	3.25
20	Steve Carpenter	7.64	19	Denis Williams	6.14	20	Jim Fox	3.19
21	Susan Lawton	7.53	21	Andy Martinek	6.13	21	Louise Dawdy	2.92
22	John Hanemaayer	7.40	22	Janusz Poniatowski	5.73	22	Robert Darby	2.83
23	Sharon Boyd	6.53	23	Andy Wilson	5.62	23	Peter Gaasenbeek	2.69
24	Wayne Schroeder	6.44	24	Cheryl Kip	5.38	24	Joan Stroud	2.45
25	Thea Davis	6.33	25	Renate Boucher	5.27	25	Carol Gerber	2.43

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

- For both online and f2f games, log on 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. *When you use Partner Finder, it will allow folks to see your contact information. If you have posted a Partner Finder ad, kindly remember to check your phone and email and, when you've found a partner, delete your ad. Someone who replied to your ad may be waiting for a response.*
- For online games only, log in to the game in question and register yourself on the Partnership Desk tab (or look to see if someone else has already registered there).

If you are looking for a regular partner, contact [Joan Slover](#), our membership lead. Please let her know what sort of game/partner you are interested in – your playing level, your available time slots, F2F and/or online, and any other pertinent information.

We have fun in **spades**.

We play with all our **hearts**.

We treat our members like **diamonds**.

We anticipate our partner's problems at our **club**.