



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

ALERT – December 21, 2020

Top Online Master Point Earners at our Club

Contributed by Allen Pengelly

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

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	46.90	1	Stephen Nantes	18.27	1	Suzanne Edwards	15.87
2	Robert Griffiths	35.74	2	Brian Kirkconnell	17.79	2	Barbara Arthur	13.97
3	Cindy Mahn	35.68	3	Sandy Graham	15.58	3	Shelley Metcalfe	13.56
4	Mike Peng	26.90	4	Kathy Russell	12.91	4	John Kip	8.63
5	Margot Stockie	24.46	5	Brian Silva	12.05	5	Susan Kerrigan	7.88
6	Moira Hollingsworth	22.10	6	Fred Young	11.69	6	Mary Lynn Benjamins	7.37
7	David Longstaff	20.31	7	Dave Leitch	11.41	7	Salvatore Pace	6.92
8	Colin Harrington	19.92	8	Ron Lawrence	11.20	8	Martin Jones	6.80
9	Stephen Young	19.37	9	Janet Howell	10.72	9	Nanci Phelan	6.55
10	Edith Ferber	18.95	10	Kevin Latter	10.62	10	Noah Pace	6.32
11	Adrian Record	18.07	11	Cheryl Kip	10.32	11	Christine Kelly	6.09
12	Ted Boyd	16.74	12	John Hanemaayer	10.16	12	Casey Baron	6.06
13	Liz McDowell	15.78	13	Jim Dalgliesh	10.04	13	Connie Green	5.72
14	Steve Carpenter	15.69	14	Tony Verhoeven	9.93	14	Jim Fox	5.61
15	Malkin Howes	15.40	15	Sue Voll	9.02	15	Molly Worden	5.58
16	Dianne Aves	14.68	16	Jim Hardy	8.61	16	Renate Boucher	5.41
17	Tom Ramsay	14.63	17	Jim Veitch	8.14	17	Elinor Girouard	5.38
18	Diane Bourdeau	13.34	18	Paul Latimer	7.91	18	Liz Graham	5.34
19	Bruce Roberts	13.32	19	Sandy Lee	7.60	19	Andy Martinek	4.86
20	Mary McClelland	12.95	20	Judy Widdecombe	7.58	19	Steve Allen	4.86
21	John Vandergrift	12.67	21	Patrick McLaughlin	7.25	19	Joe Blake	4.86
22	Wayne Jordan	9.62	21	Patricia McLaughlin	7.25	22	Marlene Dopko	4.84
23	David Wilson	9.14	23	Laurence Dean	6.97	23	Joan Slover	4.48
24	Neil Jeffrey	9.11	24	Karen Whitworth	6.81	24	Edward Murphy	4.46
25	Peggy Pearson	8.85	24	Donna Angst	6.77	25	Patricia Pietrek	4.30
						25	Marianne Dziarski	4.30



Confessions of an Internet Bridge Junkie

Contributed by Judi Carter

Playing bridge online is not a new activity for me. In fact, I have been playing online since it became feasible some 30 years ago. Yes, bridge and the Internet have been around for a long time. You would think that I would be an expert player by now with all that practice!

But although I play better than I did even five years ago, I am far too interested in the social interactions with distant people to concentrate as much as I should on the counting, inferences, and visualizing that expert bridge requires.

One of my professional bridge player friends once told me that if I were less interested in the people playing and more focused on what I was doing, I would be a pretty good player. Like that is going to happen!

In fact, some of my closest confidants are people I have "met" online as opposed to face-to-face. You see, that chat feature is pretty important to me. My real confession is that I kind of start playing in a casual game and end up "talking" with someone halfway around the world. When you can't sleep, finding a casual bridge game and conversation at 3:00 am is amazing! Bridgebase, the software I am most familiar with, has many options for playing bridge - including bridge solitaire, social games, team games, club games, and tournaments. In the most casual setting, you just sit at a table and wait for other people to join you - no arranged partner required. There seems to be no end to the number of things you can do online. I have even learned how to be an online director (and I could write a whole novella on this topic alone).

So now most bridge clubs are closed and if you want to play, it's online. There have been some changes since last March: online bridge has become more organized with regular club games and even tournaments, and now kibitzing is limited. But social bridge still exists.

I don't play *just* at my local club's online games.

- Twice a week I play in a virtual Philadelphia club with a regular partner, and on Sundays I often play in Florida with someone I don't know via the virtual partnership desk.
- In our local online clubs, sometimes I play with a friend from Boston but often with my regular local partners.
- I still pop into casual games and substitute in a local team game league.
- Sometimes I just offer myself up as a substitute in any game.

The choices are almost unlimited.

And although now that master points are involved I am not chatting as much as I did, I am still connecting with people outside my household for a couple of hours a day. And we can chat and laugh and gossip and make jokes about COVID and politics and scandal at the highest levels of bridge. So, for a few hours each day, I forget that we can't visit with our family or friends, that it isn't really safe to go have dinner in a nice restaurant, that going to the movies is out of the question, that watching junior hockey at the local arena is not on, that going south for the winter is dangerous, and even going grocery shopping is iffy. All those things we used to take for granted are very different right now - so thank you to everyone who makes Internet bridge possible.

By the way, if you are reading this and still haven't tried playing online, contact any of your club officials who will be glad to help you get started. Right now, I play under three different monikers - `cadeau123` and `grbc13` and `7ntxx`. When I direct, I'm `lbcdir6`. Be sure to say hello if you "see" me around.

Judi was one of the founding members of our club and our first club manager.



Dear David

Bad Boys, Bad Boys, Whatcha Gonna Do?

Sometimes, very experienced players think they can defy the precepts of good bidding with impunity. This frequently leads to bad results and animosity from partner. The rules of good bidding apply to everyone, even Platinum Life Masters.

	N North ♠ 654 ♥ ♦ J109843 ♣ KJ32	W N E S 1♠ 4♥ 4♠ 5♥ 5♠ 6♥ P P P
	W West ♠ 3 ♥ AK876542 ♦ Q5 ♣ 74	E East ♠ AJ10 ♥ Q1093 ♦ AK62 ♣ 98
	S South ♠ KQ9872 ♥ J ♦ 7 ♣ AQ1065	6♥ W NS: 0 EW: 0

The smarty-pants in the North seat decided to bid 4♠ over 4♥, on a hand that would barely be worth a raise to 2♠. East decided he might have enough for 5♥. South decided that his partner needed only two aces or an ace and the king of clubs to make 5♠. West decided he didn't know what was going on and tried 6♥.

Usually when you have made a bid on not very much, you would have sense enough to retire from the auction. Not Mister Smarty-Pants! His pass when the opponents are clearly (or not-so-clearly!) sacrificing, conventionally tells partner that he has first-round control of the opponent's suit, inviting partner to bid 6♠ if that information suits his hand. South is required to bid 6♠ or double, but he ended up passing it out! All would have well if Smarty-Pants had led a club, but he decided on the safe lead of the diamond jack, and declarer quickly wrapped up his slam. Both sides can legitimately make five of their major suit.

I usually leave the players' names out of these hands, but hopefully I have given you enough clues to guess who Mister Smarty-Pants is.

Our Christmas Party

Congratulations to the following winners at our Christmas party game last Saturday.

99

1. **Barbara Arthur and Suzanne Edwards**
2. **Barbara Lindsay and Charlene Schell**
3. **Donna McKay and Susan Kerrigan**

499

1. **Brain Kirkconnell and Stephen Nantes**
2. **Shirley Clairmont and Judy Widdecombe**
3. **Elaine Fay and Donna Westgarth**

Open

1. **Diane Bourdeau and Edith Ferber**
2. **Steve Young and Ted Boyd**
3. **Dianne Aves and Moira Hollingsworth**

Afterwards, some of the players got together on Zoom, and the 499ers hosted a sing-song led by Jack Cole and John Hanemaayer on guitar. It definitely added to the fun of the day and it was very clear how much everyone enjoyed each others' company and missed being together at the club! Next year in Jerusalem!



Screen Shot Courtesy of Sandy Graham



Click [here](#) to find out about a real time virus test.

What Would You Open This Hand?

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

The bidding in the vast majority of hands is 'automatic' for the first couple of bids. Most of the time, the big decisions are mostly whether or not you can stretch your flat 11 HCP into an opener. But some are not so simple.

I was West, playing at the beginning of a large tournament, and I considered opening this hand 1♥ but then decided on a pedestrian 2♥. What if partner held ♠KJ52 ♥8 ♦KJ ♣AQ7542? We'd land in 3NT, hearts wouldn't split, the round would be off on the wrong foot, and partner would probably be grumpy.

Board 4

West Deals

3oth Vul

♠ 6 4	♠ 10 7 3		♠ K Q J 9 8
♥ A K Q 5 4 2	♥ J 9		♥ 8 7 6
♦ 10 9 6 5 4	♦ Q 3 2		♦ K 8 7
♣ —	♣ K Q 9 8 7		♣ A 6
		<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center; gap: 10px;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ A 5 2		
	♥ 10 3		
	♦ A J		
	♣ J 10 5 4 3 2		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	All pass

My partner raised 2♥ to 3♥ which was passed out. Before passing this, I squirmed, wishing that I had opened 1♥. But trying 4♥ now would be a shot in the dark. 3♥ is not invitational - partner could have a lot less than he turned out to have.

The play was simple. Without a diamond lead, we would make six heart tricks, four spade tricks, and a club. A diamond lead would hold us to 10 tricks. An easy game had been missed. Both partner and I had made conservative choices in the bidding and partner was probably grumpy.

This hand was from the ACBL under-5000 national championship. It was bid by 100 mostly-competent pairs, and with BBO's memory and my 14.7% score on the board I set off to look up those that had outsourced us and see how they landed where we couldn't.

Here's a summary of the first call by the West players. The brackets show the percentage of pairs that found the game after the various starts.

First Call	How Many Times	Reach Game
Pass	14	10 (71%)
1♥	31	31 (100%)
2♥	44	26 (59%)
3♥	8	5 (62%)
4♥	3	3 (100%).

At the tournament, 2♥ was the favourite opening bid and the bid least likely to land the side in game, while the more successful 1♥ was second most popular.

This of course, does not 'prove' that 1♥ is a better opener – but rather it is the bid that proves to be most effective on this hand, this time. East held a full opening bid with heart support; after a 1♥ opening bid, game was going to be reached.

Of course, when played 100 times there were a few bizarre scores (-1100 for 6♣ doubled, down four). The only negative E/W score came from the pair that tried the ambitious contract of 2NT, going down one.

I asked a group of local players how they would handle the hand. They overwhelmingly voted for 1♥. Perhaps because they had more time to consider their bid? Interestingly, many of the 1♥ bidders thought that they would be almost alone in their choice of 1♥.

As Dave Baker said, "Axx x Axxxxx xxx [in partner's hand] would make me happy to be in 6♦" Opening 2♥ will never get you there."

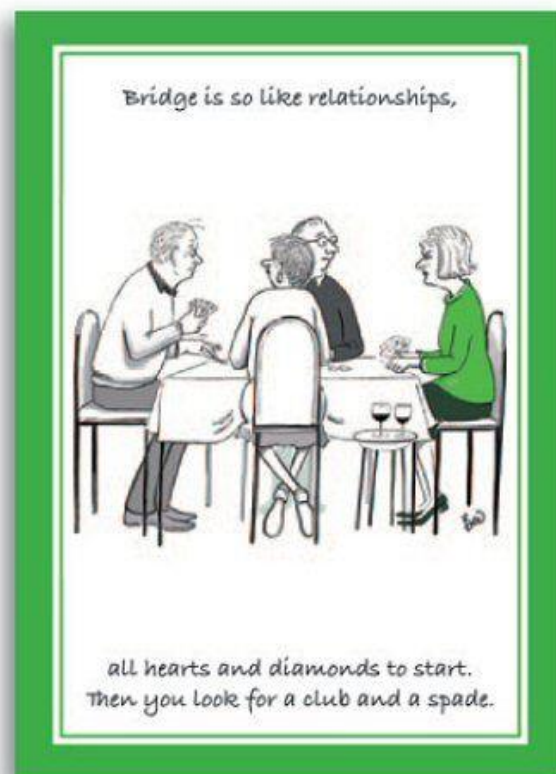
Voting results among the local players:

Pass---3½
1h-----18
2h-----9 ½
3h-----1

It was not indecision that led to the half vote. One player said pass with some partners and 2♥ with others.

Mr. Baker has refused to accept the voting results and has sent a team of lawyers to contest them.

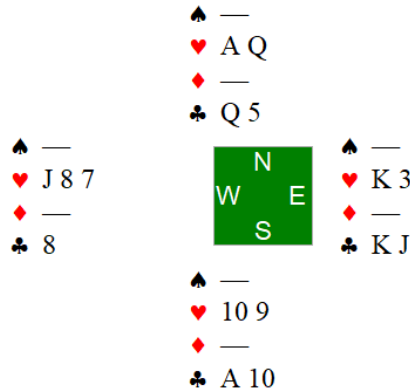
 **The line in bridge between being a hero and being a bum is a fine line.**



Jake's Challenges

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

In the bidding, East had overcalled one spade and North/South have ended up in 3 no trump. This was the situation after nine tricks had been played.



I have the lead in the South hand. If I play my cards properly, I can take three more tricks and make my contract. In fact, there are two ways to accomplish this. Can you see them?

ANSWER

There are two ways that you can take three of the last four tricks.

a) Either lead the ace of clubs and a small club. East will be forced to win this trick and then lead away from his king/three of hearts.

or

b) Lead a heart to the board's ace and then play the queen of hearts. East will be forced to win this trick and then lead away from his king/jack of clubs.

This technique is called a throw-in play or end play. It is especially useful when you suspect that a finesse is doomed.

This week, Jake has a new challenge for you.

W	N	E	S
X	P	1♣	2♥
X	P	?	
E biansan			
♠ K1072			
♥ AK106			
♦ K9			
♣ Q83			

QUESTION

The bidding has progressed as per the diagram (two hearts is a weak two). I was East and everyone was vulnerable. What do you think I should bid?

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

Adjusted Scores

Contributed by Joan Slover

My friend got this response to a complaint about the adjusted score on a board where the opponents got a score of 100% despite playing only one trick of the hand (time ran out). I asked our lead director, Dave Baker, to explain how this could happen. Here is his response.

Whenever the last board of a round has not been completed (generally, the players ran out of time), a box pops up on the game director's screen with the relevant information. The director will wait for a minute to see if BBO can resolve the board. If the notification does not disappear after a minute or so, the director tries to determine how the play might have gone if it had continued. The director then enters that result. If the outcome isn't clear however, averages are given to both sides – except in the case where the preponderance of the time allotment was taken by one pair. In that case, the director gives an Average Minus to the slower players and Average Plus to the faster players.

A pop-up will tell the players about the score correction. If the correction comes up within a minute, it means that BBO has done the correction and thus it cannot be changed (unless a time issue has been registered by someone). In other words, do not call the director if BBO has ruled (except regarding time), as that result given cannot be changed.

If it takes longer than a minute to see a correction, that means the director had to resolve the issue and the players are free to dispute his or her ruling. I spell this out to make it clear that under no circumstance is it necessary to call the director to report an incomplete round.

You need to call the director only if you disagree with his or her ruling.



Gross Blunder: your 144th mistake of the session

Learning the Lingo – VULNERABILITY

Contributed by Jean Farhood

On each hand, your side is either vulnerable (red) or non-vulnerable (white). This relates to the scoring bonus you get for making your game or slam – and conversely the penalty for going down in your contract.

When you are red, the game bonus is 500 points and slam bonus is 750 points. When white, the game bonus is 300 points and slam is 500 points.

It's important to pay attention to the vulnerability because if you go down in your contract, the penalty is 50 points per trick when non-vulnerable - but 100 points per trick if you are vulnerable.

And it's even more costly to go down doubled in a contract. Doubled, non-vulnerable, down one costs 100, down two is 300, and down three is 500. Similarly, if you are vulnerable the penalty for undertricks is 200, 500 and 800.

The lesson here is to always be aware of the vulnerability when you are bidding.

LESSONS NOT YET LEARNED



Thanks to your help (as well as the hard work of Isabel Hetherington and Sue Peterson, we already have 17 people signed up for [our January 9, 2021 Learn Bridge in a Day session](#). Please keep on keeping on!

One idea – at \$25 a ticket, this would make a nice Christmas gift for a friend or relative who likes games and puzzles.



Preventing Declarer from Getting Overtricks

You thought you defended well, but then you looked at the results and saw that most declarers made only four spades while at your table declarer made five spades. If this has happened to you, then this workshop is for you.

The workshop will focus on a variety of defensive techniques to prevent giving up overtricks. Topics covered include dangerous versus safe opening leads, tips to avoid setting up suits for declarer, capturing declarer's honours with your honours, active versus passive defence, when to switch suits, and managing discards. The session will include playing some hands using the magic of Shark Bridge.

Regular partners may find it beneficial to attend this workshop as a pair.

Level: Novice/Intermediate

Instructor: Stephen Carpenter

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

2021 Winter Lessons

The schedule for winter lessons is up on our website now. Click here for information about Learn Bridge in a Day and the beginner lessons. Click [here](#) for the workshops for advancing players.

Players who sign up 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 more information about our lessons and to register and [here](#) for information about paying.

***Sometimes we get payment without registration
(often because people forget to click on SUBMIT at the end).
Sometimes we get registration without payment.
Both are necessary.
Signed, Yoda***

New Club Members

A very warm welcome to the following new club members.

- **Kathy Burns**
- **Jed Drew**
- **Janis Mauch**
- **Michael Dimond**
- **James Burns**
- **John Schnablegger**
- **Charles Walkey**
- **Annette Happel**
- **Fiona MacGregor**

Coming Virtual Activities

- Friday, December 18, 1:00 pm, **499er game (26-28 boards)**
- Friday, December 18, 7:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Saturday, December 19, 1:00 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Sunday, December 20, 10:00 am, **499er game (18 boards)**
- Monday, December 21, 12:30 pm, **49er game (18 boards @ 8 minutes)**
- Monday, December 21, 1:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Monday, December 21, 7:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards)**
- Tuesday, December 22, 12:30 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Tuesday, December 22, 1:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Wednesday, December 23, 1:00 pm, **499er game (26-28 boards)**
- Wednesday, December 23, 6:45 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Wednesday, December 23, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards)**
- Thursday, December 24, 9:30 am, **99er game (20-22 boards)**
- Thursday, December 24, 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**.
We had a fun Christmas party at our **club**.