



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

[Our Website](#)

ALERT – January 23, 2023

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

Of Note

- Friday's two **face-to-face games are rated club championship games** – extra master points with no extra cost.
- There will be a [sectional tournament at the Buffalo Bridge Center](#) in Amherst, NY from Friday, January 20 – Sunday, January 22.
- The [next Canadian Bridge Federation monthly online game](#) is on Saturday, Jan. 21
- We will be holding our annual **499er Valentine's Swiss Teams extravaganza** (includes lunch) at our club on Sunday, February 12. The sign-up sheet is posted on the Events bulletin board. See more information below in the Swiss Teams article below.
- Looking ahead, there will be **no Friday night game on February 17** because so many of our players are going to the [Barbados tournament](#).

Amazing Stuff on Our Bulletin Boards

- They say it takes a village to run a bridge club, but until you look at the list of **our management team volunteers** you may not realize the full extent of this truth. There are 94 positions currently identified, and all but two are filled. It is true that some people are doing more than one job, but still. And this list doesn't include the board members or the tournament volunteers! You can see for yourself by looking on the governance bulletin board at the club.
- Just beside the governance bulletin board is a bulletin board with posters showing how many of our members were in **the ACBL's top 10 for our unit in terms of masterpoint earnings in 2022**. Our high-flying members are bolded in red. It would be an understatement to say that our members have done well – in fact, we totally dominate. Well done, and thanks to Kathy Russell for posting these lists.



If you're looking in vain for our top masterpoint earners chart, you will find it on the last page.



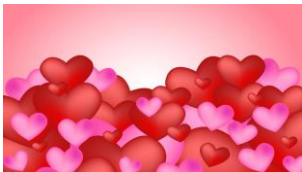
The Bean Counter

Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer

The old beaner is still off, but now he's dipping his toes into the Jordan River. Apparently, the name Jordan originates from the Hebrew "Yarden", meaning "to flow down". What a coincidence – your Treasurer's bridge motto is "to go down".

Interim Intermediate Bridge Lab

Because Liz McDowell is heading to Arizona for a few months, her very popular bridge lab is currently in hiatus. However, Roy Dandyk has kindly come forward with an offer to lead an interim intermediate bridge lab at our club, potentially on Tuesday mornings starting on Tuesday, January 24, but the timing will be decided by group consensus. The first lab will be free, and after that our regular \$8/\$10 fee structure will apply. If you might be interested, please email (rdandyk@gmail.com) or telephone (519-500-0293) Roy, and be sure to tell him whether Tuesday mornings work for you.



What are Swiss Teams?

Contributed by Mike Peng, President

In light of our 499er Valentine's Swiss Teams extravaganza coming up on February 12, today I am providing a very basic explanation of Swiss teams. Next week, I will discuss the Swiss movement itself and provide some sample results.

A team competition involves two pairs working together as a team of four. Let's call them Pair A and Pair B. They play against another team of two pairs, C and D.

- At table 1, Pair A sitting North/South plays against pair C (sitting East /West).
- At table 2, Pair B sitting East/West plays against pair D (sitting North/South).

This means that Team A/B are playing the hand from both directions – and so are their opponents (Team C/D). The goal is to see which team makes the best of the same hand played at both tables. In Swiss teams, the winning score is not necessarily the best contract. Stealing a contract and going down one, for example, might be the winning outcome.

Unlike regular pairs competition (most club games), in Swiss teams the results for each board are compared only between tables 1 and 2. There is a special scoring scale that allows the teams to calculate their success over a set number of hands in order to determine the winning team – but there will be people on hand to show you how to do this, don't worry.

Swiss teams are very popular – for most people the most fun form of bridge. For one thing, the Swiss format nearly guarantees that everyone will win masterpoints. And for another, you always have teammates to save your bacon when you have a bad round. Love is in the air.

What's Up with Strats - Revisited

Contributed by Mike Peng, President

The following are the results of a recent club championship F2F OPEN game at our club. The names have been removed to protect the innocent and the guilty... ☺

Tues Aft Open - Tuesday Afternoon Strat MP Limits: None/2800/1000

Club Championship , Tables: 10

Recaps (Section A - NS)

Pair	Names	Strat	Overall			Section			Score	%	mps
			A	B	C	A	B	C			
1		C							56.43	33.59	
2		C		4	2	4	3	1	87.79	52.26	0.96 Black (OC)
3		C						2	80.20	47.74	0.28 Black (OC)
4		B	4	2		2	1		90.16	53.67	1.72 Black (OB)
5		A	1			1			111.29	66.24	4.08 Black (OA)
6		C							76.84	45.74	
7		C							79.49	47.32	
8		B	6	3		3	2		88.01	52.39	1.08 Black (OB)
9		B							85.78	51.06	

Recaps (Section A - EW)

Pair	Names	Strat	Overall			Section			Score	%	mps
			A	B	C	A	B	C			
1		C	3	1	1	2	1	1	91.43	54.42	2.30 Black (OC)
2		C							67.18	39.99	
3		A	2			1			104.73	62.34	3.06 Black (OA)
4		A	5			3			89.95	53.54	1.29 Black (OA)
5		C							80.65	48.01	
6		C							68.24	40.62	
7		B							83.02	49.42	
8		C			4		3	3	86.78	51.65	0.54 Black (OC)
9		C		5	3	4	2	2	87.20	51.90	0.72 Black (OC)
10		C							80.25	47.77	

At this game, there were only three pairs in Strat A, four in B, and an astounding 12 pairs in C. Six of the C pairs had fewer than 500 masterpoints! Now look at the overall results. Not surprising is that the top two overall finishers were from Strat A. What is surprising is that **third-place overall was a strat C pair receiving 2.3 MPs** - a pair that is eligible to play in a 499 game. If that pair chose to play only in 499 games, they would likely need to have three first-place finishes to get an equivalent amount of masterpoints (compared to a third-place finish in this open game).

Furthermore, five of the 12 pairs in C received MP awards in this game. That's the beauty of strats: although everyone plays against everyone else in an open game, the players with fewer masterpoints are competing for masterpoints with only their peers. And - bonus - they get a "boost" when they place overall. Another intangible benefit is that those who play up sometimes get free tips and advice from their more experienced opponents.

Bottom line: when possible, choose a higher-level game than you're used to playing in. It's the best way to improve.





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.

A key component of any partnership bidding agreement is recognizing whether your partner's bids are forcing or non-forcing. While this is a challenging concept for newer players, agreements and understandings of forcing and non-forcing bids will increase bidding success. In their book *Bridge with Bells and Whistles*, 2011, Mary Ann Dufresne and Marion Ellingham devote three chapters to forcing and non-forcing bids - Chapters 7, 8 and 9, (pp 79-112), using the Standard American bidding system.

Dufresne and Ellingham use Barbara Seagram's description of a non-forcing bid as one with both a *floor and a ceiling*, in that it limits the strength of a player's hand. Non-forcing bids show a defined maximum point count. When partner encounters a non-forcing bid, they are not required to bid further, although they may choose to bid on depending upon their hand strength: for example, 1♥-P-2♥-P-?. That 2♥ bid by Responder is a non-forcing bid which Opener may choose to pass. Responder has limited their hand by showing only 6-9 points with heart support.

In contrast, Dufresne and Ellingham describe a forcing bid as one with a *floor but no ceiling*. It is any bid that obliges or requires partner to bid for at least one round. A forcing bid requires partner to keep on describing their hand, for example 1♥-P-1♠-P-?. That 1♠ bid by Responder is a forcing bid and Opener may not pass.

Partnership discussion and agreements are necessary as some forcing bids are forcing to game, while others are just forcing for one round. It sure helps if partners are on the same page!

Over these past several weeks, this column has provided examples of hands outlining just that: forcing and non-forcing bids. To summarize some examples of forcing bids are as follows.

1. **Conventional bids such Stayman and Jacoby transfers after a 1NT opening bid by partner** are forcing for at least one round. Opener may not pass and Responder will describe their hand further.
2. **Strong bids** are forcing for at least one round. Some examples are 2♣ opening bids; reverses (where Opener bids a suit at the two level that is a higher-ranking suit than Opener's first suit – for example, 1♣-1♠-2♦; Opener bidding a new suit at the three level or Responder bidding that fourth suit (fourth suit forcing).
3. With few exceptions, **new suits bid by Responder** are forcing as long as no one has bid no trump at any point.

If you have enough information to know where the hand should be played, game or beyond, you need to make a forcing bid.

In contrast, non-forcing bids where the bidder's maximum strength is known include the following.

1. **Raising partner's opening bid** (for example, raising opener's 1♥ to 2♥ or to 3♥). Opener may pass.
2. **Responding 1NT to partner's opening bid**, i.e., 1♣-P-1NT-P. Responder's 1NT bid is non-forcing and Opener may pass.
3. **Opener's 1NT rebid after opening one of a suit**, i.e., 1♣-P-1♥-P-1NT. Responder can pass Opener's 1NT bid as the hand has been limited.
4. **Opener rebidding their suit at the lowest level**, i.e., 1♥-P-1NT-P-2♥-? or 1♥-P-1♠-P-3♥-? Responder is not required to bid as these bids are invitational only.
5. **Bidding NT at any point**, even after a strong bid, i.e., 2♣-P-2♦-P-3NT. That 3NT bid limits Opener's hand and Responder is not required to continue the bidding.
6. **Passed hands can't force**. P-P-1♥-P-? Responder's bid in this scenario is non-forcing.

The fact that a bid is non-forcing doesn't mean that partner can't bid. They can continue the auction if they have a suitable hand. The key is: *they are not obliged to do so*.

I have provided one reading resource to encourage further exploration of forcing and non-forcing bids. There are many others with additional information available online for newer players to begin exploring and developing their knowledge of forcing and non-forcing bids.

If the Bishop moves forward, the Queen can take him



TIME YOU LEARNED OUR LESSONS!

We are pleased to report that we have 12 beginners in our winter class – 3 full tables! It seems as if most of them heard about us by word of mouth – so thank you for spreading the word.

Jack Cole has developed workshops specially targeted at those of our players who are near the start of their bridge journey. Perhaps they recently graduated from our beginners' lessons? Perhaps they have been away from bridge for many years? Perhaps they would like to learn more about playing online? These newer players should run, not walk, to sign up for Jack's workshops.

- **Hand Evaluation**, Saturday morning, February 4. Online. \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Instructor: Jack Cole. Current enrollment: **5**. Level: **Beginner/Novice**. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. **IF WE CAN GET JUST ONE MORE STUDENT FOR THIS WORKSHOP, IT WILL GO AHEAD.**
- **Using the common Game**, Saturday morning, February 11. Online. \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Instructor: Jack Cole. Current enrollment: **4**. Level: **Beginner/Novice**. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.



New Minor Forcing: A Very Inviting Bid

New Minor Forcing is on every list of top 10 bridge conventions. It really is must-know convention.

New Minor Forcing is important because it makes it possible to find a major suit fit at a low level. And if it turns out that there is no major suit fit, New Minor Forcing allows the opening bidder to pinpoint his HCP range and suggest the final contract.

The participants in this workshop will play up to 16 hands where sometimes new minor forcing is a good idea ☺ – and sometimes new minor forcing is a very bad idea ☹.

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

Instructor: Malkin Howes

Level: **Intermediate**

Mode: ONLINE

Dates: Monday morning, February 6, 9:30 am – noon

Cost: \$20 members/ \$25 non-members

Current Enrollment: **5**

Click [here](#) for more information and to register.



Bad Slam Bid, Volume 2

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

Playing in a team game, I was South, the Dealer, and opened with a strong 2♣ bid. West passed and my partner bid 2♦ which promised some values, normally at least a King.

Board 12											
South Deals	♠ 10 8 7 3										
E-W Vul	♥ —										
	♦ Q J 10 9										
	♣ Q J 10 7 3										
♠ 9 4	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q J 6 5 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 10 8 7 4 2		♥ A 6									
♦ 6 4 3 2		♦ 8									
♣ 6 5		♣ A K 9 8 4									
	♠ A K										
	♥ K Q J 9 5 3										
	♦ A K 7 5										
	♣ 2										
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>								
			2 ♣								
Pass	2 ♦	2 ♠	3 ♥								
Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♦								
Pass	5 ♦	Pass	6 ♦								
All pass											

East bid 2♠, using up my bidding space so I had to go to 3♥. After West passed, partner must have been squirming on the inside as she bid 4♣. This bid shut East up, and I bid 4♦, knowing that partner would retreat to 4♥ with any tolerance for that suit.

This bid cheered North up and she went on to 5♦. East passed and I thought. After North's diamond raise, I was looking at two losers: a club and a heart. If I had been thinking more clearly, it would have occurred to me that if my partner had held support for diamonds and an outside ace, she would have made a more aggressive bid than 5♦. But it was late in the game and I was weary and annoyed with East for interfering with our auction.

So, I made a questionable bid of 6♦ which was passed out.

Because of partner's 2♦ waiting bid, East was on lead and out came the ♣A. When the lead hit the table, I started preparing apologies for my overbid. North could not hold the ♥A on this auction.

East took a long time before leading to Trick 2, finally playing the ♥A. Watching the play, I had seconds of deep regret for my bid..... until partner ruffed the heart ace.

Now all she had to do was cross to dummy with a diamond, ruff one more heart to be sure that the suit would run, draw trumps, and claim.

East's attempt to cash the ♥A was a very poor idea. If North had a heart loser it was not going to disappear. If she didn't have a heart loser, the lead of the ace would make Declarer's job easy.

With the lucky (for N/S) lie of the doubleton ♥A in East's hand, the slam can be made with any return since South's hearts can be set up with two ruffs. But that play is not obvious, and North might try something different, perhaps a ruffing finesse of the ♥A assuming that card might be with West.

At the other table, South opened with 1♥, bidding only 3♥ after North's 1NT response and East's spade intervention. 3♥ was passed out and went down. It certainly was a hand that N/S wanted to play in diamonds. But at the six level?



It's usually a bad idea to bid a slam missing two aces.

Painter : Are you comfortable with nudity?

Model : Uhhh... I guess so

Painter : Excellent!



FOR OPEN PLAYERS



Dear David

Tempo

In previous articles, I have expressed how important it is to be prepared to play a card “in tempo” so as not to give away vital information. Suppose you come upon this situation.

♠KJ642 (dummy)

♠A753 (you)

At some point during the hand, declarer will lead the ♠8. It may be vital that you play the ace if ♠8 is a singleton and declarer is trying to “steal” a trick. But if declarer has two small spades, it may be vital for you to smoothly play a small spade in hopes that declarer will mis-guess. If you have not thought about what to do long before declarer leads a spade, a significant hesitation will give away the show. (Online hesitations happen for many unknown reasons, so they are not reliable indicators of a problem.)

Hesitations that occur during face-to-face games are often the kiss of death. That being said, it is still important for you to attempt to play “in tempo” when you are playing online.

W	N	E	S
		Pass	Pass 1♦
1♠	2♠	3♣	3♦
4♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	
S South			
♠Q104			
♥K103			
♦AQJ52			
♣75			

North's 2♠ bid shows a limit raise in diamonds. South was allowed to play in diamonds at the other three tables, making 10 tricks for +130, so it was imperative for him to beat 4♣ two tricks for +300. South led the ♦A and then had to find a switch when dummy came down. It's time to see the entire hand.

The screenshot shows a bridge hand in progress. The bidding sequence is as follows:

W	N	E	S
		Pass	Pass 1♦
1♠	2♠	3♣	3♦
4♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The hand layout is as follows:

W West	N North	E East	S South
♠AJ982	♠K65	♠73	♠Q104
♥J95	♥2	♥Q876	♥K10
♦Q96	♦K964	♦8	♦QJ52
♣Q96	♣1043	♣AKJ82	♣75

The current play shows the ♥A being led, followed by ♥4 and ♥3. The score is 1-0 in favor of South. A "Claim" button is visible for South.

North is about to win the ♥A and lead back the ♥2, hoping for a third-round ruff. Declarer sees he is about lose two hearts, a heart ruff, a diamond and a spade - down two doubled, -300, 0% for E/W. What can he do to stop it? If he plays the ♥8 and ♥Q on the first two leads, South may think that his partner started with ♥A762 and switch to something else. That is what happened - down one doubled, -100, 100% for E/W.

Should South get this one right? If he thinks about the bidding, he should realize that his partner would have made a negative double with ♥A762. So, what happened? East was ready. When the two rounds of hearts were played, declarer dropped the ♥8 and ♥Q in tempo. Had he not been ready to falsecard, even a few extra seconds of hesitation might have given away his trickery. Think about problems before they occur.

If you ever feel like your brain is inadequate... Think of this guy!



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

#104

♠ AJ3	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center; width: 60px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>				N		W		E		S	
				N								
W					E							
				S								
♥ KQ5												
♦ Q1096												
♣ J105												
	♠ 109											
	♥ 2											
	♦ K75											
	♣ AQ98432											
West	North	East	South									
		1♥	3♣									
4♥	All pass											

I was sitting South defending a 4♥ contract. I led the ♣A to my partner's ♣7, while declarer contributed the ♣6. What would you do now if you were in my shoes?

SOLUTION

You've already got one trick, and your ♦K is seemingly a sure trick. As you have a singleton trump, your partner likely holds four trumps - so hopefully he can score a trick there. To defeat the contract, however, you are going to need one more trick. Where might the setting trick come from?

One possibility is to give your partner a club ruff, but you're not sure whether the ♣7 is a singleton or not (there is now only the ♣K unaccounted for). If your partner is the one with the ♣K, continuing clubs will mean that you will lose the opportunity to attack a new suit - which could be the killing defence. Plus - even if your partner can ruff a club, it is unlikely to do your side much good since you're probably going to get only one trump trick no matter what.

What about trying to develop a trick in the spade suit? If your partner holds the ♠K, you don't have to do anything but wait. But what if your partner holds something like ♠Q8x? Combined with your ♠109, there is potential for a trick in the suit - but if it's going to happen you must lead spades twice from your hand. Let's see why.

Looking at your hand and the dummy, it seems likely that your partner is short in the minors. If that is true, declarer may be able to end-play your partner by removing all of his minor cards and then throwing him in with a trump. Alternatively, declarer may be able to squeeze your partner by running the diamond suit.

- **If the end-play**, partner will be forced to lead a spade away from his ♠Q8x into dummy's ♠AJx.
- **If the squeeze**, partner will be forced to shorten his spades so much that his ♠Q will fall.

However, if you lead spades twice from your hand in the early game, it foils an end play and breaks up a squeeze - allowing your partner to eventually score a spade trick.

Lead the ♠10 at Trick 2. When you get in with the ♦K, waste no time leading your ♠9.

Here is the full hand.

	♠ Q8652	
	♥ J1097	
	♦ 32	
	♣ K7	
♠ AJ3	W N E	♠ K74
♥ KQ5		♥ A8643
♦ Q1096		♦ AJ84
♣ J105		♣ 6
	♠ 109	
	♥ 2	
	♦ K75	
	♣ AQ98432	

Really good players help their partners out.



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 December.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	Ted Boyd	21.97	1	Suzanne Edwards	13.17	1	Nancy Cattanach	6.58
2	David Baker	19.47	2	Shelley Metcalfe	10.75	2	Belinda Burt	5.86
3	Colin Harrington	15.09	3	John Kip	10.51	3	Louise Dawdy	5.65
4	Moirra Hollingsworth	15.09	4	Cheryl Kip	9.67	4	Molly Worden	5.25
5	Cindy Mahn	14.69	5	David Dennis	9.41	5	Elaine Doyle	4.55
6	Liz McDowell	12.90	6	Barbara Arthur	8.61	6	Brian Gaber	4.23
7	Mary McClelland	12.86	7	Kevin Latter	7.47	6	Rick Arthur	4.23
8	Sandy Graham	11.86	8	Martin Jones	7.35	8	Jane Wilson	2.99
9	Mike Peng	11.47	9	Bev Hitchman	7.20	9	Audrey Cook	2.93
10	David Longstaff	9.84	10	Lori Cole	7.02	9	Debbie Miethig	2.93
11	Margot Stockie	9.29	11	Renate Boucher	6.95	11	Casi Zehr	2.89
12	Edith Ferber	9.14	12	Stephen Nantes	6.84	12	Don Slowinski	2.67
13	Stephen Young	7.06	13	Brian Kirkconnell	6.65	13	Kathy Chandler	2.66
14	Bob Griffiths	7.61	14	Jean White	6.35	14	Chris Beck	2.62
15	Neil Jeffrey	7.32	15	Susan Durance	5.67	15	Douglas Livesey	2.49
16	Dianne Aves	7.28	16	Nanci Phelan	5.51	16	Joan Stroud	2.15
17	John Hanemaayer	7.17	17	Marlene Dopko	5.42	17	Ginny Marshall	1.96
18	Bonnie Kains	7.12	18	Patrick McLaughlin	5.11	18	MJ Hartleib	1.95
19	Neil Coburn	6.40	18	Patricia McLaughlin	5.11	19	Charlene Schell	1.75
20	Sharon King	5.96	20	Jack Cole	4.98	20	Paul Raymond	1.67
21	Kathy Russell	5.85	21	Salvatore Pace	4.93	21	Donna McKay	1.61
22	Scott Hills	5.78	22	Jim Dalgliesh	4.92	22	Ellen Libertini	1.59
23	Adrian Record	4.95	22	Lynda Burnett	4.92	22	Susan Murray	1.59
24	Diane Bourdeau	4.90	24	Robert Giilck	4.88	24	Don O'Bright	1.54
25	Wayne Jordan	4.28	25	Shirley Clarke	4.77	24	Richard Wehrle	1.54
						24	Robert Darby	1.54
						24	Randall Dekraker	1.54

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 [Joan Slover](#), our membership lead.

We have fun in **spades**.
 We play with all our **hearts**.
 We treat our members like **diamonds**.
 We help our partners at our **club**.