



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

ALERT – August 26, 2024

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

Looking Ahead

- ♥ August 23: The Friday night open game will be an **NAP game**, \$1 surcharge
 - ♥ August 30: The Friday afternoon 749 game will be a **pop-up game**.
 - ♥ September 1: **BBO Pop-Up Games** (half-red, half-black MP)
 - ♥ September 2: **All games will proceed as usual** on Labour Day (but no bridge lab).
 - ♥ September 6: **The Friday night open game is cancelled.**
 - ♥ September 7-8: **St. Thomas Jumbo Tournament**
 - ♥ September 8: **The BBO games are cancelled.**
 - ♥ September 9-15: All BBO games will be **charity games**, \$1 surcharge
 - ♥ September 9: Bridge Labs resume (**Improving with Best-E-Bridge, Sonja Miner**)
 - ♥ September 9-13: All F2F games (except for Wednesday, September 11) will be **STaC games**, \$2 surcharge
 - ♥ September 11: **Barbara Seagram will be at our club.**
 - ♥ September 14: **Learn Bridge in a Day**
 - ♥ September 15: **Team Leagues** begin
 - ♥ September 16: Bridge Lab Mini-Lesson – **Tournament Play with Susan Lawton**
 - ♥ September 16-21: **Club Championship F2F Games** (extra masterpoints, no extra charge)
 - ♥ September 20: **The Friday night open game is cancelled.**
 - ♥ September 21: **Beginner Lessons** start
 - ♥ September 22: **BBO games cancelled**
 - ♥ September 23: Bridge Lab Mini-Lesson – **DONT with Sue Moses**
 - ♥ September 23-29: NABC Fundraiser Games (\$1 surcharge)
 - ♥ September 24: **AGM and Potluck**
-



Congratulations

to the following local players who were in the money at the Niagara Sectional

- **Mary Lynn Benjamins and Karen Whitworth**, 5th in A, Friday 0-750 Pairs
- **Sal and Noah Pace**, 4th in A, Saturday 0-750 Pairs
- **Barb Neibert and Anita Hanson**, 5th in B, Saturday 0-750 Pairs
- **Greg Leppington** and Aftab Alibhai, 2nd in A, Sunday 299er Pairs

Learn Bridge in a Day (Spread the Word!)

- Do you know someone who likes games – especially card games?
- Do you know someone who would enjoy the camaraderie at our club?
- Do you know someone who is mentally very sharp – and wants to stay that way?

Then tell them about our **Learn Bridge in a Day** event on Saturday, September 14 from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm in our teaching room.

- **Instructor: Stephen Carpenter**
- **Fee: \$35**
- **Current Enrollment: 14 (10 spaces left)**
- **Date: Saturday, September 14, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm**

This is a very fun day, designed to give the attendees a taste of bridge – and an appetite for more!

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

This link also works for those who wish to register for our beginner bridge lessons that begin on September 21.

Please join us for **Barbara Seagram's Finding the Killing Opening Lead!**

Registration is open, and so far **39** players have registered! It is exciting to see that this event is appealing to both members and visitors and bridge players of all levels.

Warm thanks to...

- Barbara Seagram, who donates her time, expertise, and passion for bridge to support our club in this fundraising event
- Everyone who has already registered
- Everyone who has shared the word with friends who are not club members
- Our directors who are accepting payments in person
- The volunteers who have already come forward

You can help to make this day a great success!

- Please register ASAP. [Barbara Seagram Event Registration form](#)
- Consider volunteering. [Volunteers for Barbara Seagram Event at GRBC](#)
- Spread the word. If you have friends who play bridge and who are not members of GRBC, please help us to reach them by emailing the event flier. [Barbara Seagram Opening Lead Flier](#)

Just in case you are wondering why Barbara will be selling bridge books and scarves from Cambodia...

Barbara Seagram and Patti Lee have built (and they sustain) four schools in Cambodia, thanks to the enormous support from the world of bridge. They have 16 teachers and librarians, all Khmer (Cambodian). The schools are in very remote villages. They also have many water projects. They build toilets for government schools and also for poor families in the villages. Having toilets in all schools means that the girls do not have to miss school for a week each month. Their projects also include building water towers at health care centers. Without these water towers, health care centers have to use water from the nearby pond where the animals bathe. Patti and Barbara also provide menses kits to hundreds of young girls in Cambodia, enabling them to go to school without interruption. They also help to support a local weaving center where the women make beautiful scarves which will be for sale on Sep 11th at the club.

Here is a write-up on their projects. <https://bit.ly/4dwHwRp>



Player Profile – Debbie Miethig

Contributed by Anita Hanson

Today we are introducing Sectional Master and quilter extraordinaire, Debbie Miethig (DulcimerD on BBO).

Debbie was first introduced to bridge by her boyfriend's family on a rainy cottage weekend in 1981. Neither the bridge nor the boyfriend lasted though, and it was close to 35 years before she took the game up again - at GRBC's Gage Street location. Lessons got her started, then she honed her skills further at Monday morning labs, aided in part by former members Jean Farhood and Bill and Bev Pope. (It was at the labs that she was shocked to learn that it is sometimes okay to tell little lies!)

A very social type, Debbie was kept sane through Covid by online bridge, both competitive play and more casual games with friends. (Also very tech savvy, she was the one who came up with the system for BBO mentoring that many of our members used and loved during the lockdowns.) She now mixes it up, playing a couple of times a week online, and another couple F2F at the club.

Debbie grew up on a farm (Dairy Princess for the Region of Peel in Inglewood, Ontario, 1983-84!), then got her undergraduate degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies along with a Business option at the University of Waterloo, followed by a Bachelor of Education at Queen's in Kingston. She used this training to put in a decade as a Recreation Supervisor for the Town of Halton Hills, and then after another decade as a stay-at-home mom, she spent 20 years as an occasional teacher with the Waterloo District School Board. She has been happily retired since 2022.

A woman of many talents, Debbie plays the Hammered Dulcimer (feel free to ask her what that is) and has been playing and performing with the Celtic Crossing Folk Group and a Bell Choir for almost 25 years. She is also a quilter, generous with her quilted gifts, and a longtime member of the Waterloo County Quilt Guild.

She is married to Mike, an engineer whose accomplishments include working on the original Canadarm camera. (But he didn't want that mentioned here, so don't tell anyone I told you.) They have two grown sons, and love spending leisure time at their cottage on Francis Lake, cruising on their pontoon boat, listening to the loons.

Debbie put a lot of thought into her favourite bridge tip, which means it's a comprehensive one: Bridge is a game — lots of things to read, learn, remember, and put into play. Sometimes we need to bend the rules a little. Accept what happened, learn from it, and move on... no beating yourself up! And most of all... don't take it too seriously — this game is supposed to be fun!



The Answer Lady

Contributed by Susan Lawton

As the "The Answer Lady" I have been responding to questions from "newer" players. 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.

Question

Answer Lady, my partner and I played against you and your partner in a tournament. You were sitting in the North/South direction and we were East/West. I can't recall the exact hand, but your partner sitting North opened the bidding with 1♥, I (East) overcalled 1♠, and you, sitting South, bid 2♠. After the hand was played, I asked the meaning of the 2♠ bid and, after explaining it, you suggested I send you an email for your column outlining the question.

So here we are, asking the question! Thanks for responding to my email and providing an answer. Signed, your tournament opponents

<p>North Deals None Vul</p> <p>♠ 10 x ♥ 10 x ♦ 10 x x ♣ K Q J 10 x x</p>	<p>♠ A x x ♥ A Q x x x ♦ A x x ♣ x x</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ Q J x x x ♥ x x ♦ Q x x x ♣ A x</p> <p>♠ K x x ♥ K J x x ♦ K J x ♣ x x x</p>
<p><i>West</i></p> <p>Pass</p>	<p><i>North</i></p> <p>1♥ 4♥</p>	<p><i>East</i></p> <p>1♠ All pass</p>	<p><i>South</i></p> <p>2♠</p>

Answer

After North opens 1♥ and East overcalls 1♠, South needs to find a way to show support for Opener's hearts and the strength of their hand - that wonderful four-card heart support and the 11 HCPs. Without that interfering 1♠ overcall by East, South might choose to bid 3♥, a limit raise in hearts with four-card support and 10-12 HCPs.

Once that 1♠ bid enters the auction, however, a 3♥ bid would usually be reserved for a weaker hand, four-card trump support, and around seven HCPs. What should South do? They can't bid 2♥ as that shows only six-nine HCPs and three hearts.

They don't want to jump immediately to 4♥ as that also shows a weaker hand with length in hearts. At this point, South isn't aware of the strength of North's hand. Possibly a game is available, or with additional strength potentially a slam.

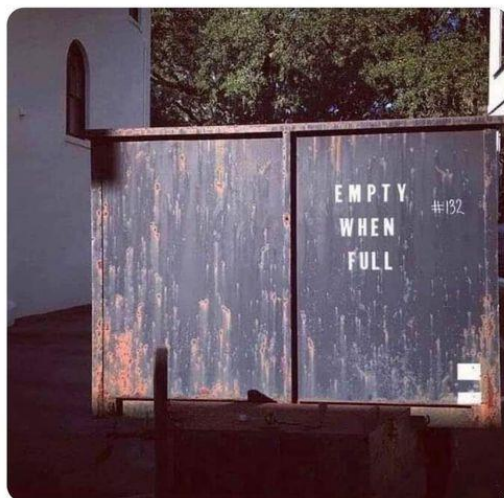
That's where the 2♠ bid comes in. Barbara Seagram: *When you bid a suit that has already naturally been bid by the opponents, you are using a cue bid.* On this hand, 2♠ is that cue bid, a **cue bid raise**, and takes the place of the 3♥ bid that would naturally occur without interference. It says: "Partner, I have 10-12 HCPs and at least four-card support in your bid suit". A limit raise in hearts or better. Opener with that information knows where to place the contract. On this hand with a good opener, North bids 4♥.

Cue bid raises can be very effective for two reasons.

- They immediately inform your partner of support for their suit, the number of cards in that suit, and the HCP in Responder's hand.
- They also interfere with the opponents' bidding sequence. If West wished to raise East's spades, they would now have to bid at the three-level to make that bid.

Barbara Seagram provides an excellent overview of cue bid raises, along with further examples in her book: *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*: Chapter 11, pp. 95-100. The quote listed above by Barbara is on p. 95.

Schrödinger's dumpster



Bridge Lab Mini-Lessons Resume

Mini-lessons at the Monday bridge labs will resume on September 9. We are very fortunate to have experienced players willing to share their wisdom.

Mini-Lessons	Topic	VOLUNTEERS
Sept. 9	Improving your game with Best-E-Bridge	Sonja Miner
Sept. 16	Tournament Play	Susan Lawton
Sept. 23	DONT	Sue Moses
Sept. 30	Initial Hand Evaluation	Malkin Howes
Oct. 7	Hand Re-Evaluation	Malkin Howes
Oct. 14	No Lab (Thanksgiving)	---
Oct. 21	Invitational Bids	Malkin Howes

Please email grbclessons@gmail.com if you have topic suggestions.

From the Archives – Why Do They Get Better Hands Than I Do?

By Jonathan Buss, Professor of Computer Science

Every bridge player has disappointing days when the other folks "get all of the cards". Sometimes it feels personal, as if the dealing machine doesn't like you. However, the dealing machine has no bias in any direction.

Many years ago, some deal generators did use flawed methods. They generated some hands more often than others, and many arrangements of cards were actually impossible. Also, some programs used the time of day as a "random" value (NOT!). Complaints led to improvements.

Nowadays, deal generators use correct algorithms and sufficient randomness.



Every hand of 13 cards is equally likely to show up in the North, East, South and West slots. A stiff king? Equally likely for everyone. Two voids? A nine-card suit? No odd-numbered spot cards? All equally likely for everyone.

In any particular session, one direction may well get more total HCP than the other, or more voids, or whatever. But there's no bias for which direction is which. When the director asks you whether you want to sit North-South or East-West, there are many reasons to answer one way or the other. But the cards you're likely to get are the same either way.

That moment when you realize there is only one person in this photo



From the SE Carolina newsletter

More About ACBL 2023 Convention Charts

Let's cover two more confusing topics this week.

Very Strong Bids

This topic is causing some confusion because it has been refined over the last several Convention Chart revisions. Very strong hands are generally shown using 2♣ open. What is a very strong bid? To be very strong and bid 2♣, you must satisfy one of three criteria. Because these criteria are "or", you need to meet only one criterion for your bid to be an allowed very-strong bid.

1. At least 20 HCP; **or**
2. At least 14 HCP and within one trick of game assuming suits break evenly among the other hands; **or**
3. At least five Control Points and within one trick of game assuming suits break evenly among the other hands. A = two control points and K = one control point

Game is considered to be ten tricks, not nine even though 3NT is game. 13 minus losers using the AKQ method. A key phrase is "***assuming suits break evenly among the other hands***".

NT Opens

Most everyone now knows that you are not allowed to open 1NT or 2NT with a void or a singleton that is not an A, K, or Q. A second rule that many of us have missed is that you cannot open 1NT or 2NT if you have 10+ cards in two suits even if the singleton is an A, K, or Q. To do so is a disallowed bid.



2 Submarines racing..



Bidding 1 Hat at the Regional

A Story by Jim Phillips (BBO: JimPh)

In the 60s, I had a partnership with Bernie Chazen who later became a famous expert and bridge travel agent.

Bernie was from Brooklyn and probably hadn't been further north than the Bronx when we traveled to Swampscott Massachusetts to play in a regional.

First round of the pairs, we started against two young men who looked like MIT grad students. After kidding around for a while, Bernie's RHO picked up his cards and said, "One Hat" (AKA 1 heart). The conversation proceeded as follows.

Bernie: What did you say?

RHO: "One Hat".

Bernie: "Fine. I say two shoes".

RHO: "This is a Regional. Stop joking and bid".

Bernie: " Who's joking? If you can bid hats, I can bid shoes."

Now RHO got mad and called for the Tournament Director. He turned out to be Henry Francis (later to become Editor of the ACBL *Bulletin*). Henry listened to the complaint and explained to Bernie, in his best Boston accent, "You don't understand, sir, he didn't bid "One Hat" - he bid "One Hat".

This, of course, set Bernie off once again.....

Reprinted from the BBO Newsletter, August 14, 2024



To get this joke, you need to know that the taxi driver is a British bear. The Brits pronounce "mall" to rhyme with "pal".

FOR OPEN PLAYERS



Dear David

The Expert Lead

The following hand will show you how to make the expert lead. It has no name – it's just an agreement.

	♠ 95													
South Deals	♥ KQ62													
EW Vul	♦ KJ1063													
	♣ A10													
♠ KQ10742		<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: 100px; height: 100px;"> <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													
♥ A9		West	North	East	South									
♦ 72		pass	1♦	pass	3NT									
♣ 652		pass	pass	pass										

You make the brilliant lead of the ♠K and everyone plays small spades. You know who has the ♠A, but who has the ♠J? If you lead the ♠Q next and partner started with ♠J6, you are a winner. If he started with ♠J86 (which means South started with ♠A3), your choice is between leading small or leading the ♠Q in the hopes that partner has the presence of mind to unblock by throwing the jack under the queen. If partner finds this play, she's a keeper!

Playing in a team game, there is no choice but to guess which spade to lead at Trick 2. If declarer has ♠AJ3, you will give him an extra trick, no big deal at team scoring. (Your goal at teams is to set the opponents' game contracts, irrespective of giving up overtricks.)

Playing in a match-point game, giving up an extra trick often leads to a bottom score instead of an average or average-plus score. You do try to beat their contract, but at the same time you avoid making risky moves.

Here is the full hand.

	♠ 95													
South Deals	♥ KQ62													
EW Vul	♦ KJ1063													
	♣ A10													
♠ KQ10742		<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: 100px; height: 100px;"> <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													
♥ A9		♠ 86												
♦ 72		♥ 10875												
♣ 652		♦ Q98												
		♣ QJ93												
	♠ AJ3													
	♥ J43													
	♦ A54													
	♣ K874													

As you can see, on this layout a spade continuation gives declarer an extra spade trick and she will lose a spade, the ♥A, and the ♦Q = 10 tricks for N/S. If you instead switch to a club, declarer will not make 3NT. If declarer starts hearts first, a second club lead sets up two clubs and one trick in each of the other three suits. If instead she finesses diamonds first, a second spade lead will set up the spades with the ♥A as an entry.

So, what is the answer beyond making a pure guess? From a holding of KQ10xx vs NT, the expert lead is the queen, asking partner to follow suit with the jack if she has it, give count if she does not have the jack, or possibly to play the ace in case partner has QJxxx. There is one other holding that works the same. From QJ9xx, lead the jack, asking for the 10, count, or ace or king.

I am strongly suggesting to you that this method of defence gives you a huge advantage on opening lead against NT when you have a five-card or longer suit headed by the KQ10 or QJ9. The only caveat is that you must discuss this with your partners so that they understand how it works.



Photos Wanted for Our Member Bulletin Board

Contributed by Sharon Boyd

Just a reminder that I am looking for photos of you and/or your bridge friends either playing bridge, possibly at tournaments, or even participating in other non-bridge activities, such as fairs, concerts, fundraisers, etc. And if you wish to advertise one of these upcoming events, please send that information along as well. You can convey this material to me either by email (boyst1945@gmail.com) or in person, perhaps by leaving it in the pick-up drawer for me.

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 July.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	40.83	1	John Kip	14.07	1	Randall DeKraker	11.79
2	Edith Ferber	32.49	2	Marlene Dopko	7.96	2	Andrew Widdis	6.77
3	Cindy Mahn	29.38	3	Bob Giilck	7.21	3	Peter Gaasenbeek	6.72
4	Roy Dandyk	23.41	4	ML Benjamins	6.98	4	Phil DeMontigny	6.61
5	Kathy Russell	23.24	5	Cheryl Kip	6.97	5	Robert Darby	5.76
6	Mike Peng	23.12	6	Joan Slover	6.20	6	Nancy Kennedy	5.59
7	Dave Quarrie	21.59	7	Judy Widdecombe	5.64	7	Sonja Miner	5.08
8	Ted Boyd	20.12	8	Valirie Binkle	5.59	8	Sharon Nesbitt	4.76
9	Moira Hollingsworth	14.85	9	David Dennis	5.26	9	Sheila Charters	3.28
10	Suzanne Edwards	14.74	10	Molly Worden	4.97	10	Pat Northey	3.15
11	Liz McDowell	14.68	11	Renate Boucher	4.96	11	Carol Gerber	2.54
12	Pat McMillan	14.16	12	Joe Blake	4.92	12	Marianne Dziarski	2.29
13	John Hanemaayer	13.86	13	Elinor Girouard	4.57	13	Paul Raymond	2.22
14	Neil Jeffrey	12.43	14	Glenn Mockford	4.49	14	Mark Sherwood	2.20
15	Margot Stockie	11.91	15	Kevin Latter	4.35	15	Andrew McNaught	2.11
16	David Longstaff	11.16	16	Cheryl White	4.34	16	Joan Stroud	2.03
17	Neil Coburn	10.77	17	Vivian McLellan	4.32	17	Carla Laubach	1.95
18	Diane Bourdeau	9.96	18	Brian Gaber	4.29	18	Pat Gascho	1.92
19	Susan Lawton	9.25	19	Rick Arthur	4.17	19	Jacques Druart	1.91
20	Dave Embury	8.49	20	Manfred Young	3.99	20	Wendy Duff	1.84
21	Lynda Burnett	8.34	21	Ginny Scott	3.87	21	Doug Fickling	1.74
22	Paul Latimer	7.33	21	Sue Moses	3.87	22	JP Fraresso	1.60
23	Dianne Aves	6.77	23	Pat Pietrek	3.83	23	Ben Cornell	1.55
24	Steve Carpenter	6.62	24	Steve Allen	3.63	24	Judy Charbonneau	1.54
25	Tom Ramsay	6.35	25	Keith Schnarr	3.43	25	Becky Blake	1.44

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).

We have fun in **spades**.

We play with all our **hearts**.

We treat our members like **diamonds**.

You can Learn Bridge in a Day at our **club**.