



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

## ALERT – February 12, 2024

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

### Looking Ahead

- ♥ **The Friday night open games on February 9 and February 16 are cancelled.**
- ♥ [Niagara Sectional](#), February 9-11, St Catharines
- ♥ **Both BBO games on Sunday morning, February 11, will be special games with a \$1 extra entry fee and yielding 50% red points.**
- ♥ **Pop-Up 499er F2F Pairs Game**, Sunday, February 11, 1:00 pm, \$1 surcharge, 50% red points
- ♥ George Pepall will be giving a mini-lesson on **Slam Bidding (No Trump)** at the Monday morning bridge lab on February 12.
- ♥ **STaC Week**, Tuesday, February 13 – Friday, February 16, silver points, \$1 surcharge
- ♥ **Contrary to previous information, there will be a bridge lab on Family Day, Monday, February 19**
- ♥ **Online Swiss Teams game**, 7:10 pm Tuesday, February 20
- ♥ Lynda Burnett will be giving a mini-lesson on **Play of the Hand (No Trump)** at the Monday morning bridge lab on February 26.
- ♥ Diane Bourdeau will be giving a mini-lesson on **Responses to 1NT** at the Monday morning bridge lab on March 4.
- ♥ **Beginner 2** lessons begin, Saturday, March 9.
- ♥ Ted Boyd will be giving a mini-lesson on **Playing in our F2F Games** at the Monday morning bridge lab on March 11.
- ♥ [Sectional Tournament at Guelph Club](#), March 16-17

### 299er Game Leaders

The Common Game (<https://thecommongame.com>), on their homepage, keeps a Leader Board for 299er and Open games. In January, our club members Denis and Regina Williams were first on the Most Top 50 finishes list for the 299ers. In recognition of their achievement, The Common Game is making a deposit to their BBO accounts so they can have a "free play" in one of our games.

**299ER GAME LEADER BOARDS**

Points    Top 50 Finishes    Average Percentage

**JANUARY-TO-DATE 299ER  
MOST TOP 50 FINISHES**

Rank ▲	Wins ⇅	Player Name ⇅	Club ⇅
1	8	Denis Williams	Grand River Bridge Club
2	8	Regina Williams	Grand River Bridge Club

## Many Hands, etc.



Last Friday morning, Bob Darby, Jim Dalgliesh, Kevin Latter, and Randall DeKraker dismantled and carted out to Bob's truck all of the unwanted items at the back of our club.



Here they are loading one of the larger items into Bob's truck. Once the truck was loaded up, Bob and Randall headed off to take everything to a Mennonite thrift shop.



Kevin and Jim stayed behind to assemble these shelves (donated by a couple from Gadshill who wish to remain anonymous). All our stuff fit beautifully, and now everything is well organized and easily accessible.

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## Bean There Done That

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

We can give thanks to Covid19 for bringing us into the 21st century. Before that virus came rudely into town, GRBC accepted only cash and cheques as payment for games and membership fees. Then things changed: electronic transfers and debit card transactions were also accepted (not credit cards).

I wrote an ALERT article in mid 2023 that described how much we were paying TD Canada Trust to receive your e-transfers. In a normal month, there are not enough Interac transactions to warrant any banking fees. But that is not the case during membership campaigns and class registrations. We get dinged plenty. And Mr. Bean hates contributing to the bank's billion-dollar quarterly profits!

I should never have written that article because it caused an unexpected outcome. Without even suggesting it, many people started adding the e-transfer fee to their e-transfer amount. Maybe it was a gratuity for the Treasurer for great service? But he's too honest and the extra amount was treated as a donation to the club. Bottom line is ... you don't have to pay for the e-transfer.

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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).

### Question

In a GRBC 299 game, my partner was sitting North and opened the bidding with 1NT, showing 15-17 HCPs. I had eight HCP's, five hearts and four spades, but shortness in clubs and diamonds. I bid 2♦ a transfer to hearts. After the 2♥ bid, instead of going to 2NT I decided to mention my nice spades, so bid 2♠. I know I might have risked the better hand coming down as dummy, but in the moment I thought I should mention those spades. We ended up in 3NT which we made. What are your thoughts, Answer Lady? Did I bid this hand correctly or should I have bid 2NT after North's 2♥ bid to show my point count? Was it acceptable to bid 2♠ or perhaps there is a better way to describe my hand? A GRBC 299 player

	<b>N</b> ♠ AQ92 ♥ K43 ♦ KQ8 ♣ Q74	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	P	P	3NT	P	P	P	
	W	N	E	S										
P	P	P	3NT											
P	P	P												
<b>W</b> ♠ 876 ♥ Q102 ♦ A10 ♣ AK985	<b>E</b> ♠ 104 ♥ J7 ♦ J97643 ♣ J102													
	<b>S</b> ♠ KJ53 ♥ A9865 ♦ 52 ♣ 63	3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0												

## Answers

Thank you for sharing this hand, a natural follow-on to the last two weeks' columns that have examined both Jacoby Transfers and the Stayman convention.

As this is a F2F game we are unable to see the complete bidding sequence, only the final result. Just to review, North opened the bidding with 1NT, South bid 2♦, a transfer to hearts. North accepted the transfer by bidding 2♥, and then South decided to show their four-card spade suit and bid 2♠. North bid on to 3NT, where the final contract was placed.

There was considerable risk in using a Jacoby Transfer to show your five-card heart suit and then bidding 2♠. Instead, you might consider bidding 2♣ at the first opportunity. You have eight points with five hearts and four spades, as well as shortness in clubs and diamonds = the right shape and points to consider using Stayman. By bidding 2♣, your partner will be able immediately to show their four-card major suit if they have one. On this hand, they would bid 2♠ and you would then bid 3♠: *Partner I also have a four-card spade suit with invitational values.* With maximal values, your partner would then bid 4♠.

If your partner denies a four-card major by bidding 2♦ after your 2♣ bid, then you could consider bidding 2♥ to show that five-card heart suit. Your partner would know you were showing a hand with a five-card heart suit and a four-card spade suit - but again only invitational values. Well, let's hope they would - as that bidding sequence can be a bit tricky. Your partner would decide where the contract might be played - NT or hearts and at what level.

On this hand, your partner should probably choose to play in spades (because of your magic fit of eight trump suit cards). Whether or not to go to game is harder to know, given your partner's 16 HCP. This is when they must decide whether it's a "good" 16 points or a "bad" 16 points. Personally, I would lean toward the latter (as in pass), given the 4333 distribution and soft values. On this hand, three spades rates to make, but not three no trump or four spades.

*Barbara Seagram and Marc Smith: 25 Conventions You Should Know*: Chapter 1, on pp. 13-17, provide an excellent description of Stayman Convention, a summary on p.18, and a quiz with answers on pp. 19-20. It's a great opportunity to review and refresh one's memory of this convention.

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# Time You Learned our Mini-Lessons!

**Newcomer bridge labs** most Monday mornings, 9:00 am – 11:30 am, except on holiday Mondays. Upcoming mini-lessons include **No Trump Slam Bidding** with George Pepall on February 12, more **No Trump Play of the Hand** with Lynda Burnett on February 26, **Responses to One No Trump** by Diane Bourdeau on March 4, and **Playing in our F2F Games** with Ted Boyd on March 11. NO EXTRA CHARGE

## **Vous Avez La Parole**

No lessons for advancing players are currently scheduled. If you and a group of your fellow players are interested in a lesson on a particular topic, please contact [our lead teacher](#).

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## **Conventional Wisdom**

*This is the second of a series of columns on filling out a convention card. Today, we will talk about the items on the card that are “alertable”. Next week, we will start discussing how to go about filling out your convention card.*

“Alertable” means somebody has to do or say something as soon as the alertable bid has been made. You can know a bid is alertable because it is coloured red on both the online and paper convention cards.

Essentially, bids are alertable when they represent a special partnership understanding that may not be readily understood and anticipated by a significant number of players. There is an almost-infinite number of alertable bids. Some common examples are: **Jacoby two no trump, splinters, inverted minors, two hearts bust bid following partner's 2 club opener, 2 spades transfers following partner's 1 no trump opener, Ogust, new minor forcing, fourth suit forcing, DONT and Cappelletti, and lebensohl.**

With the exception of splinters, bids past three no trump are not immediately alertable, but once the bidding is over the opponents are supposed to be notified of any ace-asking or key-card-asking sequences (delayed alerts).

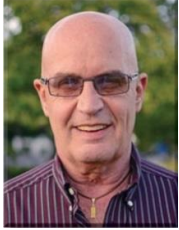
It is important to note that **when you're playing online**, *the person who makes the alertable bid* is the same person who must alert his or her bid. This is done by typing the meaning of the bid on the line underneath the bidding box. The partner of the person who makes an alertable bid does not see his partner's explanation, but the opponents both do.

As an aside, if you are playing online and one of your opponents makes an ambiguous bid, you can ask him or her to explain his bid by clicking on that bid. This makes a little box pop up asking the opponent to elaborate.

**In club games**, it's *the partner of the person who makes an alertable bid* who must say “Alert” and then wait to see if either of the opponents asks for an explanation at their turn to bid. Furthermore, the person who made the alertable bid must act as if he didn't hear his partner's alert and/or explanation (ethically he must not be “woken up” by his partner's alert/explanation if – perish the thought - it turns out that they are on different pages).

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Don't EVER let your printer know  
that you've waited until the last minute  
to print something out and you're in  
hurry because they can sense fear.



## Dear David

### Sneaky Pete

You start out counting your winners

– one club, five spades, and two hearts if hearts split 3-2. Let's assume the hearts split and you have eight tricks. This is the point you begin to think about how to engineer a golden ninth trick. If someone leads away from the ♣K, or you can pull off a miracle in diamonds, your ninth trick will appear.

You win the spade opening lead and lead a small diamond to the 10 and queen. West can end this by leading a club, but he has an “easy” trump lead. (Sometimes you don't draw trumps right away because you want to make it easy for them to lead another trump.) You win the second trump lead and lead the ♦8, which West wins with the king and switches to the ♥Q. You rise with the ace and lead the ♦9. If East plays a small diamond, you throw your club loser. If he plays the ace, you ruff, draw the last trump, cash your diamond (throwing a club), and continue setting up a second heart winner = one club, five spades, two hearts and one diamond.

North Deals NS Vul	♠ AQ10 ♥ A1062 ♦ J986 ♣ A5		
♠ 82 ♥ QJ7 ♦ KQ7 ♣ 98432	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">                     N                      W     E                      S                 </div>	♠ 973 ♥ K3 ♦ A532 ♣ KJ107	
	♠ KJ654 ♥ 9854 ♦ 104 ♣ Q6		
<i>East</i>  pass all pass	<i>South</i>  2♥	<i>West</i>  pass	<i>North</i> 1NT 2♣

The process for all bridge players as they begin declaring a hand involves making a plan that hopefully will end in success. Once you have found a reasonable plan with a relatively simple, straightforward hand such as this, look for hidden gems. If you can think of a reasonable layout that will give you a chance at those valuable overtricks, go for it. Matchpoint overtricks are golden. Only after you have gone through this process do you call for a card from dummy at Trick 1.

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

**No. 133**

♠ Q  
 ♥ 98752  
 ♦ KJ952  
 ♣ 65



♠ AKJ932  
 ♥ J104  
 ♦ A76  
 ♣ A

West	North	East	South
1♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	3♣ <sup>2</sup>	3♣
4♣	4♣	Pass	Pass
Dbf	All pass		

1. Better minor
2. Weak

I was South, declaring a 4♣ doubled contract, and I received the opening lead of the ♣K. I was surprised that my partner showed up with only a singleton spade (albeit a good one). If you were in my shoes, what would you do now?

**SOLUTION**

It is almost certain that you have three heart losers as well as a possible diamond loser. If the trumps break worse than 4-2, the contract is pretty much hopeless - so you need to assume that the trump distribution is not worse than 4-2. If this assumption is true, you can manage to lose no tricks in spades and so you need to turn all of your attention to the problem of how to avoid a diamond loser. You might finesse West for the queen, but that's pretty much a 50% chance. You can do better. Would you prefer a 68% chance?

Provided that the opponents' hearts divide 3-2 (68%), in the fullness of time you will be able to develop one of dummy's long hearts and pitch your diamond loser on it. And - bonus - even if you get an unfavourable heart split (a 32% chance), you can still fall back on the 50% diamond finesse.

So, at Trick 2, lead the ♥J from your hand. One of the opponents will take it and probably lead back another club, which you will ruff.

At Trick 4, lead your ♥10, which will lose, and then ruff the expected club return at Trick 5.

At Trick 6, you can't lead your last heart because one of the opponents will ruff it. Here is the full hand after five tricks.



	♠ Q										
	♥ 987										
	♦ KJ75										
	♣										
♠ 10876	<div style="background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border: none; 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		♠ 54
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ A		♥									
♦ 1084		♦ Q32									
♣		♣ 987									
	♠ AKJ9										
	♥ 4										
	♦ A96										
	♣										

The correct play at Trick 6 is to play a small spade to dummy's ♠Q and then return to your hand with the ♦A at Trick 7. At Tricks 8, 9, and 10, draw all the rest of the opponents' trumps (you got lucky, the trumps were 4-2 as you assumed). Now, everyone has three cards left (dummy should have the ♥98 and the ♦K). At Trick 11, play your last heart. West will have to take his ♥A (which he must have, given his opening bid), and now he will have to lead a diamond to dummy's king and the good heart. Here is the complete hand.

	♠ Q										
	♥ 98752										
	♦ KJ75										
	♣ 652										
♠ 10876	<div style="background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border: none; 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		♠ 54
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ AK3		♥ Q6									
♦ 1084		♦ Q32									
♣ KQJ		♣ 1098743									
	♠ AKJ932										
	♥ J104										
	♦ A96										
	♣ A										

Obviously, the diamond finesse wouldn't have worked. Two chances are always better than one.

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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 January.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	21.49	1	Lori Cole	14.98	1	Casi Zehr	7.95
2	Edith Ferber	10.39	2	Denis Williams	14.45	2	George Rybiak	6.39
3	Neil Jeffrey	9.83	2	Regina Williams	14.45	3	Richard Rybiak	6.08
4	Kathy Russell	9.11	4	Jack Cole	11.50	4	Sharon Nesbitt	6.01
5	Steve Carpenter	8.80	5	Kevin Latter	9.80	5	Doug Fickling	5.94
6	Mike Peng	8.49	6	John Kip	8.91	5	Mark Sherwood	5.94
7	Dave Quarrie	7.49	7	Louise Dawdy	8.26	7	Russel Kerr	5.71
8	Roy Dandyk	7.41	8	Nancy Cattanach	7.91	8	Debbie Miethig	5.42
9	Moira Hollingsworth	7.41	9	David Dennis	7.85	9	Audrey Cook	5.37
10	Margot Stockie	7.09	10	Cheryl Kip	7.70	10	Andrew Widdis	5.32
11	Dianne Aves	6.52	11	Jim Dalgliesh	7.31	11	Kathy Chandler	5.05
12	Ted Boyd	6.04	12	Susan Durance	7.28	12	Stu Cowan	4.69
13	Mary McClelland	5.66	13	Carolyn Baechler	7.24	13	Peter Gaasenbeek	4.59
14	Bob Griffiths	5.21	14	Nanci Phelan	7.20	14	Richard Wehrle	4.17
15	Bruce Roberts	5.20	15	Martin Jones	7.04	15	Don O'Bright	4.17
16	Susan Lawton	4.78	16	Andy Martinek	6.63	16	Phil de Montigny	3.54
17	Cindy Mahn	4.78	17	Cheryl White	6.54	17	Jeannie LeForge	3.42
18	Suzanne Edwards	4.66	18	Rick Arthur	6.26	18	JP Fraresso	3.38
19	John Hanemaayer	4.50	19	Elinor Girouard	6.15	19	Paul Raymond	3.37
20	Wayne Schroeder	4.14	20	Tony Verhoeven	6.09	20	Brian Gaber	3.06
21	Malkin Howes	4.10	21	Judy Beauchamp	5.82	21	Joan Stroud	3.02
22	Diane Jamieson	3.35	22	Vivian McLellan	5.42	22	Randall DeKraker	2.99
23	William Christian	3.09	22	Judy Widdecombe	5.42	23	Robert Darby	2.99
24	David Wilson	3.09	24	Janice Pengelly	5.26	24	Pat Northey	2.68
25	Jonathan Buss	2.98	25	Virginia Alviano	5.04	25	Jane Wilson	2.63

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 are well organized at our **club**.