



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

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ALERT – May 10, 2021

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 April.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	34.88	1	Stephen Nantes	17.33	1	Salvatore Pace	15.95
2	Margot Stockie	21.15	2	Brian Kirkconnell	15.87	2	Noah Pace	10.21
3	Cindy Mahn	20.96	3	Casey Baron	12.11	3	Virginia Alviano	6.86
4	Robert Griffiths	20.01	4	Suzanne Edwards	11.53	4	Susan Kerrigan	6.22
5	Liz McDowell	18.30	5	Kathy Russell	11.43	5	Mary Lynn Benjamins	6.12
6	Mike Peng	17.57	6	Barbara Arthur	11.05	6	Belinda Burt	6.05
7	Moira Hollingsworth	15.83	7	John Hanemaayer	10.78	7	Ginny Scott	5.92
8	Edith Ferber	14.89	8	Sue Moses	10.74	8	Kathleen Burns	5.87
9	Bruce Roberts	14.81	8	Brenda Semple	10.74	9	Marg Sanderson	5.82
10	Colin Harrington	14.67	10	Paul Latimer	9.51	10	Patricia Malvern	5.77
11	Dianne Aves	11.66	11	Shelley Metcalfe	8.39	11	Martin Jones	5.50
11	David Wilson	11.66	12	Karen Whitworth	8.37	12	Joan Slover	5.25
13	Tom Ramsay	11.55	13	Janet Howell	7.20	13	Aggie Udvari	5.23
14	David Longstaff	11.29	14	David Dennis	7.07	14	Isabel Hetherington	5.22
15	Ted Boyd	11.07	15	David Embury	6.94	15	Robert Somerville	5.11
16	Sandy Graham	10.78	15	Roy Dandyk	6.94	15	Ginny Marshall	5.11
17	Kandis Smith	10.20	17	Jake Liu	6.92	17	Elinor Girouard	4.82
18	Stephen Young	9.67	18	Kevin Latter	6.50	18	Barb Neibert	4.72
19	Pat McMillan	9.50	19	Ted Kennedy	6.32	19	Jeannie Leforge	4.43
20	Mary McClelland	9.19	20	Brian Silva	5.68	20	Christine Baron	4.37
21	John Moser	8.88	21	Lynda Burnett	5.62	21	Diana Spearn	4.21
22	Neil Jeffrey	8.19	22	Cheryl Kip	5.53	22	Nancy Cattanach	4.13
23	Malkin Howes	8.06	22	John Kip	5.53	23	Joe Blake	4.10
24	Susan Lawton	7.40	24	Sue Voll	5.42	23	Steven Allen	4.10
25	Peggy Pearson	7.25	25	Dave Leitch	5.08	25	Reinhold Kauk	4.09

Staking Your Claim

Contributed by William Christian

If you play in one of the GRBC virtual club games, you will receive regular encouragement to "claim if you can". The reason why the director wants you to claim is to speed up the game. Claiming is explicitly permitted under the Laws of Bridge.

When we are playing face to face at the club, the declarer (or defender) who makes a claim for a certain number of tricks must spell out his or her line of play. If the opponents don't agree that declarer will win the number of tricks he or she claims, the director must be called.

Online is different in practice, though the same in theory. There is a little box in the bottom left-hand corner of the playing screen which gives you the opportunity to spell out your proposed line of play. Unfortunately, unless you're a really fast and concise typist, it will probably be easier and quicker just to play the hand out.

If you make a claim online, it should, in my view, be a very clear claim. Say I've got five high trumps in my hand. I claim five tricks. No problem and a time saver. On the other hand, if I claim and put down a hand that depends on a cross-ruff or something else vaguely complicated, my opponents will possibly spend more time trying to figure it out than if I had just gone ahead and played the hand out.

So, my suggestion is to claim only if the tricks you are claiming are totally clear. Playing on-line with the robots is different. Dumb as posts in many ways, the robots can count like the little robots they are. Recently I was in a slam. After winning the first trick, I claimed 11 more tricks, making. In less than the blink of an eye, the robots accepted and we were on to the next board.

So, if you're playing against the robots (or Tom or Dave), claim as early as you can. They will quickly grasp your line of play and accept or reject your claim. If, however, you're playing with mere mortals, claim when you are sure that the opponents will be able to understand your claim easily.

After all, the whole point of claiming is to save time.



Self-Driving Bicycles

Click [here](#) to watch an amazing video that unveils the next technological innovation.



Rookie Ramblings – Invitational Bids by Opener

Contributed by Cindy Mahn

An **invitational bid** invites partner to bid on to game (or slam) if he has extra values. It suggests a game but denies the necessary strength to insist on it. Last week, Jane told you about non-forcing bids. An invitational bid is a non-forcing bid by definition.

We are going to assume that the opponents have passed throughout the auction.

Here is one example of an invitational bid. When responder raises opener's suit (1♥ 2♥ or 1♠ 2♠), he is telling his partner that he has between 6 and 10 points. This could include distributional points (shortness in any other suit). Opener is not forced to bid again and should do so only if he is still interested in the possibility of there being a game – in the full knowledge of his partner's point range.

There are many different types of game invitations (well, of course there are!), but opener needs to have extra values beyond a minimum opening bid to search for game. These extras could be strength (high-card points) or distribution (a good second suit or extra length in the trump suit with shortness elsewhere).

You will need to make an agreement with your partner which types of invitations you wish to play. Here are three of the most popular methods.

- **Simple Raise Game Try** The bidding has gone 1♥ 2♥ 3♥. Here your partner is trying to tell you he has extra values in the outside suits but is looking for decent hearts from you. Four hearts including an honour or three decent hearts like KJx or Axx or QJx would be enough to bid game.
- **Natural Bid Game Try** The bidding has gone 1♥ 2♥ 3♣. The 3♣ bid shows a decent side suit, usually five cards in length. Partner will accept the game invitation with a good fit, perhaps honour xx. Without a good fit in clubs, responder will bid 3♥.
- **Help Suit Game Try** The bidding has gone 1♠ 2♠ 3♦. Your partner is telling you that she is interested in a game but needs help in diamonds. Typically, she will be holding a three- or four-card suit headed by one of the top three honours – Qxxx(x) Kxxx(x) KJx(x) Axx(x). If you have 0-2 losers in this suit, go to game. A void has no losers, a singleton has one, and a doubleton has two, so they all qualify. These holdings have two losers - xx Jx Qx QJx Kxxx Axx – so again, go to game. With three losers (Jxx or xxx), sign off in three of the suit.

Remember, there is NOT a game in every hand, but if there is one – as bridge players we hate to miss it!



Dirty Tricks

There's a brand-new feature documentary about bridge called Dirty Tricks that just had its world première at the Hot Docs Festival in Toronto. Dirty Tricks offers an inside look at the world of competitive bridge, exposing a massive cheat scandal. Click [here](#) for more information and to view the trailer.

Thanks to Mark Obermeyer for the tip.

LESSONS NOT YET LEARNED



Inferences

It's not too late to sign up for this workshop. There are only six people signed up for this workshop, which is a real shame, since it's a very worthwhile lesson!!!!

Level: Intermediate

Instructor: Malkin Howes

Date: Monday, May 10, 2021, 9:30 am - noon



Playing in our Newcomer Games (19er & 49er)

It's not too late to sign up for this workshop.

Level: Beginner

Instructor: Jack Cole

Date: Thursday, May 13, 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm



Locating the Opponents' Queens

Let's set the scene. You are in 3NT. You have eight tricks and thus need one more trick in order to make your contract. In your hand, you have ♥AT5 and on the board you have ♥KJ6. You can thus finesse either opponent for the queen of hearts - if only you knew who had it.

This workshop will show you how to go about locating missing queens (hint: you have to be able to count to 13). The participants will declare up to 12 hands, in the course of which they will need to locate at least one missing honour.

Level: Novice

Instructor: Malkin Howes

Date: Wednesday, May 19, 2021, 9:30 am - noon

How to Register and Pay

- Click [here](#) for more information about and to register for our workshops (\$20 for members, \$25 for non-members).
 - Click [here](#) for information about how to pay for your lessons (scroll down).
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More Drury Adventures

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

Board 21	♠ A 10 4 2										
North Deals	♥ K 9 4 2										
NS Vul	♦ 8 5 4										
	♣ 8 2										
♠ ----	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; 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		♠ K Q 8 7 5 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ A 10 8		♥ 6									
♦ A K 6 3 2		♦ Q 9 7									
♣ Q 7 6 4 3		♣ A K 10									
	♠ J 9 6										
	♥ Q J 7 5 3										
	♦ J 10										
	♣ J 9 5										

Some of us have been known to occasionally open 'light' after we have learned that our partner has passed. Our partner can use the Drury convention to ask if our hand is a full opener or did we stretch it.

Today, N/S passed throughout, and East opened 1♠. West, with a very nice hand started with 2♦. This was intended as a simple 2/1 bid which the pair played as a game force.

This hand came up late in a tiring session. Somehow East got it in his head that his partner had initially passed and that his own 1♠ bid had been in third seat. If all this had been the case, then the 2♦ bid would be Drury promising four-card spade support with close to an opening bid. East was full value for his opener and had to show this to his partner with a bid other than 2♠ (which, playing Drury would show a sub-minimum opener). He might have bid 3♠, but in the end he chose to bid 3♣, showing that he had a full opener with values in clubs.

At this point, West thought about investigating a club slam, but in the end did the lazy thing and bid what should be an easy 3NT.

East was having none of this. He thought his partner's earlier bid promised had promised four spades, so on he went to 4♠.

That's an odd sequence, thought West. It sounded as if East had about seven spades with a side club suit. West was not about to pass 4♠ or bid a meek 5♣, so he jumped right to what he hoped they could make, 6♣.

That's an odd sequence, thought East. Finally, he reviewed the whole auction and noticed that his partner's bid could not have been Drury since his partner had not been a passed hand. So, 6♣ was passed out.

East only had to ruff one heart in his hand to make his club slam.

East & West had staggered into a very good club slam when the field was playing in 3 No Trump. But it was hard to be proud of a sequence in which neither partner knew what the other was trying to say.

Click [here](#) for a write up on two-way reverse Drury, as played by E/W.

 **Even a stopped clock is right twice a day.**



NEWER PLAYERS - SAVE THESE DATES

If you are a newer player (fewer than 20 master points), then you should plan to play in our first 19er game on **Thursday, May 20** at 6:30 pm.

And if you haven't yet played in one of our online games yet and are feeling a bit nervous at the prospect, then you should definitely plan to attend Jack Cole's workshop on **Thursday, May 13**, at 6:30 pm. You can register [here](#). And the one-time-only-special-offer non-member price for this workshop is \$20 (click [here](#) for information on how to pay).

While all of our teachers work hard to make their lessons enjoyable, the real fun of bridge is playing in games. We look forward to seeing a lot of our newer players at our inaugural 19er game on Thursday, May 20 at 6:30 pm. An added bonus is that Al Pengelly has agreed to sit in on the first few games and help you get your feet wet (but not too wet)!

There was an error in the registration confirmation email about the date and time of the Playing in Our Newcomer Games workshop. Jack Cole's workshop will take place on **Thursday, May 13 from 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm.**

PLEASE NOTE THAT BOTH THE NEWCOMERS WORKSHOP AND THE GAMES WILL RUN FROM 6:30 PM UNTIL 9:00 PM.



Change to The Number of Boards

Contributed by the Virtual Club Committee

We have received increasing feedback that playing a large number of boards makes the games too long when you are online. Consequently, starting Monday, May 10, all Monday-to-Friday games 499er and above will be 24 boards. There will be no change to other games.

FOR ADVANCED PLAYERS



Dear David

Rules Are Meant to Be ... Followed

I received this hand from a player who opened 2♦ with one of the best weak-two hands you will ever see. The unfortunate distribution caused her to be unfairly punished for making a good bid. That's bridge. Her other question was whether North should count extra for the diamond void and open the bidding.

D

N North
 ♠ QJ853
 ♥ Q1064
 ♦
 ♣ AJ84

W West
 ♠ AK97
 ♥ J9
 ♦ 63
 ♣ Q9763

E East
 ♠ 4
 ♥ AK832
 ♦ K10952
 ♣ 105

S South
 ♠ 1062
 ♥ 75
 ♦ AQJ874
 ♣ K2

Enter the bidding and play sequence

	W	N	E	S		W	N	E	S
W		P	P	2♦	2♣		P	P	2♦
P	P				P	P	2♠	P	P
					P				
W	N	E	S		W	N	E	S	
		P	P	1♦			P	P	P
2♣	P	2♥	P		W	N	E	S	
P	2♠	P	P				2♥	2♠	
P					1♣	1♠	P		
					P	P			

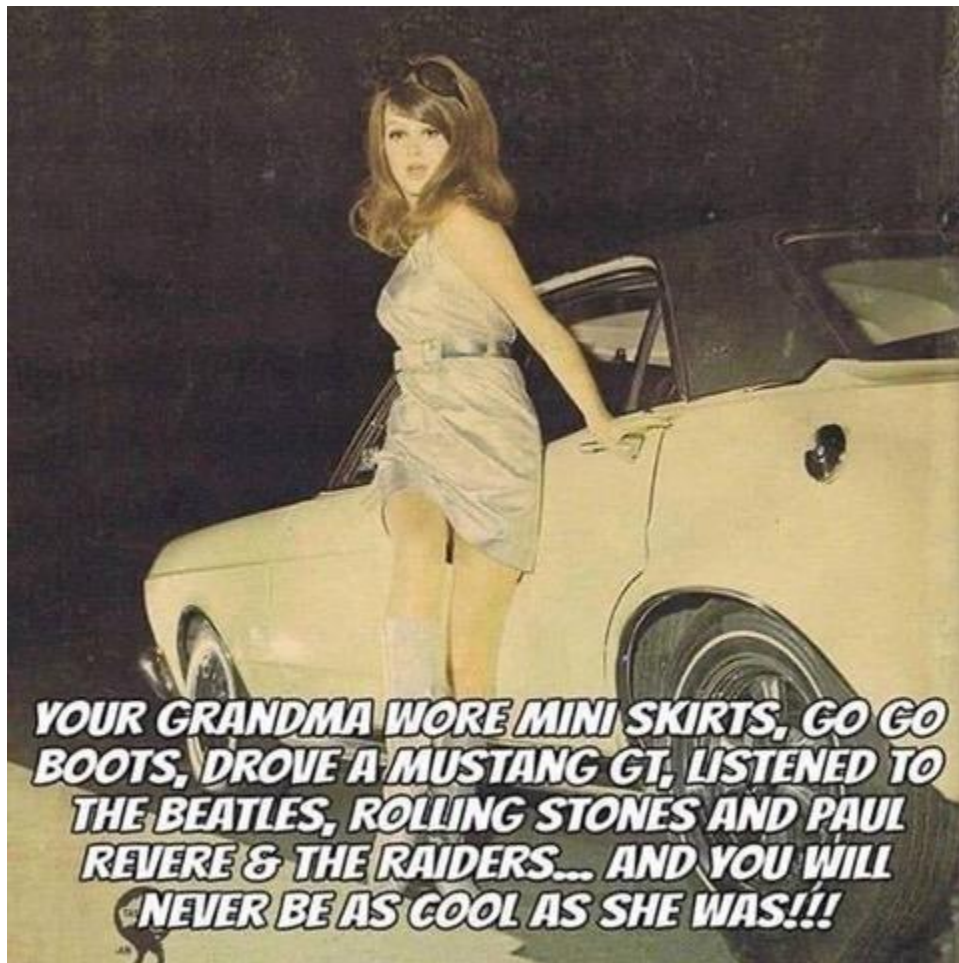
Here is the hand and the six auctions that occurred. It is curious to note that all four players had exactly 10 high-card points, yet the hand was never passed out. Here are my rules for what constitutes an opener:

- 1) 13 high-card points.
- 2) Any 12 that does not have 4333 distribution (maybe some 4333 with nice spots).
- 3) Any 11-point hand with a singleton.
- 4) Any 10-point hand with a void.

When I started playing bridge almost a half-century ago, the first rule was the only rule. A sound opening bid would lead to an exchange of information, which in turn would lead to the best contract. However, bridge in the 21st century has become a bidder's game. Weak opening bids and overcalls disrupt the flow of information.

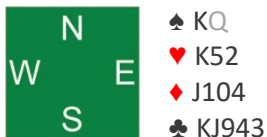
Only one North thought they had an opener. Two players opened 1♦ and two opened 2♦ in third seat. One even opened 1♣ in fourth seat with a terrible hand. The declarer who opened 2♦ with a maximum went down two (for a bottom score), wrecked on the rocks of distribution. The spade declarers made between seven and nine tricks. On another day, declarer might make as many as 10 tricks in spades with only 20 high-card points.

I really can't find fault with any of the auctions that occurred. If I was North, I would open 1♠. If instead I was East, I would bid 2♠ over 1♠, which is the Michaels convention showing five hearts and a five-card minor. This will cause N/S to get to at least 3♠, which will not be a happy ending for them. Bid 'em up!



FOR INTERMEDIATE PLAYERS

Jake's Challenges (#21)



♠ KQ
♥ K52
♦ J104
♣ KJ943

♠ AJ1032
♥ 6
♦ Q6532
♣ 72

West North East South

2H Pass 2NT¹ Pass

3H² Pass 4H All Pass

1. OGUST (asking about strength and quality)
2. Good hand (8+HCP) and bad suit (lower than three of top five honours)

You are sitting South, defending West's four hearts contract. Your partner led the ♠9, Dummy played the ♠Q, and you took the trick with your ♠A. What now?

SOLUTION

On first glance, it appears that you should lead trumps in an effort to prevent Declarer from ruffing his spade losers in Dummy. On second glance, however, you will find that this is not the case.

The tip off is Dummy's long club suit. It looks like a fragmented suit, but it could turn out to be a very strong suit indeed if Declarer happens to have the ace or queen of clubs - a scenario that is quite possible given that Declarer showed at least eight HCP in the bidding. What if Declarer holds the queen of clubs and the ace of diamonds? If this is the case, when Declarer gets the lead he can set up Dummy's club suit and throw away his losing diamond on Dummy's good clubs - thus robbing you of a trick that is rightfully yours.

So how can you foil Declarer's evil plans? You need to attack the diamond suit right away in order to set up a possible diamond winner for your side. That way, when your partner gets in with his ace of clubs (if he has it), he can cash his diamond king (if he has it) before it evaporates on Dummy's good clubs. If your partner doesn't have these cards, this costs you nothing. If you look at the full hand (below), you can see what will happen if you lead a trump at Trick 2. Declarer will take the trick with his ace of hearts and then lead his ♣Q at Trick 3. Your partner can take his ace of clubs all right, but now leading a diamond does no good - because Declarer can take his ace of diamonds, go to the board with the ♠K (or with ♥K if you have ducked the first trick), and cash Dummy's two good clubs, throwing away a losing diamond and a losing spade from his hand. Now the only loser Declarer has left is a trump trick.

♠ 984
♥ Q109
♦ K87
♣ A1065

♠ 765
♥ AJ8743
♦ A9
♣ Q8



♠ KQ
♥ K52
♦ J104
♣ KJ943

♠ AJ1032
♥ 6
♦ Q6532
♣ 72

The moral of the story is that alarm bells should go off when you see a long, possibly-cashing side suit in dummy. This is a sign that it may be urgent to set up/cash your own side suit winners.

Grand National Teams

The good news is it's not too late to register for this contest if you're in Flight A (fewer than 6000 masterpoints) or Flight C (non-lifemaster under 500 masterpoints). The winners of each flight will represent our district in the North American finals, to be played online in July 2021. Click [here](#) for more information. The deadline for registration is May 11.



We Have a Surprise for You at the End of May!

On Saturday and Sunday, May 29 and 30, our club is hosting special unit-wide games. The details are still being discussed, but please "Save the Date" and start looking for partners/teammates. Stay tuned for more updates on our website and in the Alert. Saturday's format will be two virtual sessions (sign up for one or both), and Sunday will be a virtual Swiss Team competition with a break for lunch. Be sure to get lots of practice in the next few weeks, as there are going to be **Silver** masterpoint awards and some great prizes.

Coming Virtual Activities

- Friday, May 7, 12:30 pm, **99er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Friday, May 7, 1:00 pm, **499er game (26-28 boards) \$5**
- Friday, May 7, 7:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards) \$5**
- Saturday, May 8, 1:00 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Sunday, May 9, 10:00 am, **499er game (18 boards) \$5**
- **Monday, May 10, 9:30 am, Inferences Workshop**
- Monday, May 10, 12:30 pm, **49er game (18 boards @ 8 minutes) \$5**
- Monday, May 10, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Monday, May 10, 7:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Tuesday, May 11, 12:30 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Tuesday, May 11, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, May 12, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, May 12, 6:45 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, May 12, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, May 13, 9:30 am, **99er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, May 13, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- **Thursday, May 13, 6:30 pm, Playing in Our Newcomers' Games Workshop**
- Thursday, May 13, 7:00 pm, **999er game (24 boards) \$5**

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 [Cheryl Kip](#), our membership lead.

We have fun in **spades**.

We play with all our **hearts**.

We treat our members like **diamonds**.

We don't make premature claims at our **club**