



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

[Website](#)

ALERT – December 26, 2022



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

Of Note This Week at Our Club

- Both of the Friday, December 23 games have been moved ONLINE due to inclement weather. Same start times – please register 15-20 minutes before game time.
 - There will be no games on Saturday, December 24, and Sunday, December 25, for obvious reasons.
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Membership Information

Our club's year runs from July 1 to June 30. The cost of a one-year membership is \$70, but half-year memberships can be purchased as of January 1 at half that cost (that is, \$35).

Unless, like Groucho Marx, you don't want to be a member of any club that will accept you as one of its members, this is the perfect time to join our club. As a member, you get reduced rates on our lessons and our face-to-face games.

- Click [here](#) for more information about how to pay and to fill out the new member form.
 - If you have been a member in the past but your membership has lapsed, you can renew it for \$35 without filling out the form.
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Friday Afternoon Christmas Party

Contributed by Steve Allen

There was a fantastic turnout for the Friday afternoon Christmas party – with eight and a half 499er tables and five 199er tables. A wonderful time was had by all!!!!!! Much thanks to Dave Quarrie for a fun afternoon.



The island and three additional card tables displayed an ample food supply – apparently all calorie-free....

There was so much food that the players were encouraged to leave some for that evening's open game.

Photo Credits: Kathy Russell



The Bean Counter

Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer

Merry Christmas!

If your grandchildren have been bad this year, consider beans instead of coal.

Tuesday Afternoon Après Game

Contributed by Dave Quarrie

Every Tuesday afternoon, some of the day's players repair to a nearby pub, the Bent Elbow, and have a fun time rehashing the day's hands – in particular analyzing what their partner did wrong. ☺ Sometimes discussions (read arguments) become way too noisy to the astonishment of other patrons. Surprisingly some learning of useful pointers also has been known to happen. All are welcome.





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.

This week, the Answer Lady is furthering the discussion initiated last week on forcing and non-forcing bids. This week, an explanation is provided on a more advanced skill, New Minor Forcing (NMF). The hand shown provides a great teaching board, not only around the potential use of NMF, but also several bidding errors incurred by other pairs.

Question

My regular partner couldn’t play in a recent 199er game, so I ended up connecting with a different partner through Pianola. My “new” partner was most helpful and very kindly attempted to introduce me to a new bidding technique that they thought might improve my game: New Minor Forcing (NMF), and felt the hand shown below was a good example of that bidding convention.

15 D	N North	W N E S
	♠ Q1096 ♥ J983 ♦ 86 ♣ AK6	1♣ P 1♥ P 1NT P P P
W West	E East	
♠ AJ4 ♥ Q65 ♦ A7 ♣ J9432	♠ 8732 ♥ A10742 ♦ KQJ ♣ 10	
	S South	
	♠ K5 ♥ K ♦ 1095432 ♣ Q875	1NT W NS: 0 EW: 0

As you can see my partner in West, opened with 1♣. I, in East, had five hearts and ten points so I responded with 1♥. Opener then went to 1NT. I took that as minimal points and with only ten HCP and a singleton in his suit, passed. We ended up with 50% even though we went down one. I see that those who went on to try 4♥ went down two and ended up with bottom boards. The pair that received the best score of 100% made what I thought was an unconventional bid. The player in my seat bid 1♠ at the first opportunity with four spades and then continued with a second bid of 2♥ at the next opportunity. In that situation, Opener then bid 2NT and that is where they played.

So, my question is how should our bidding have gone? Is the convention of New Minor Forcing something I should be using at this stage of my bridge learning? I consider myself to be an emerging newer player.

Answer

Thank you for presenting this interesting hand and accompanying questions. Congratulations are also in order for using Pianola to find a partner. Great job!

Your “new” partner is correct, New Minor Forcing *could* be used to show those five hearts in your hand. That said, I would consider New Minor Forcing (NMF) to be a more advanced convention. It is certainly not essential as a beginning bridge player to incorporate it into your bidding system. One of my regular partners is a skilled bridge player and New Minor Forcing is not in our partnership repertoire. We can be successful without the use of NMF. Having said that, however, here is an outline of how the convention works.

Despite the name, New Minor Forcing allows players to find a fit in a *major* suit. There are specific guidelines around its use. Responder needs a minimum 10+ points in their hand along with five cards in that major suit. Essentially, NMF works like this: once your partner opens a minor, in your case 1♣ and you bid a major, followed by a bid of 1NT by your partner to show minimal values, Responder would bid the other minor at the two-level, in this case diamonds, (2♦ to show five cards in their major). NMF must be **alerted**. On this hand, your partner would know you had five hearts and *should* bid hearts if they have three of them. A brief overview of bidding sequences using NMF is shown below:

- 1♣-P-1♥/1♠-P-1NT-2♦! That 2♦ bid is NMF: it's artificial, says nothing about diamonds, and is forcing.
- 1♦-P-1♥/1♠-P-1NT-2♣! Again, 2♣ is NMF: it's an artificial bid, says nothing about clubs, and is forcing.

In both instances, 2♣ and 2♦ ask partner to further describe their hand.

As Responder has made a forcing bid, Opener must bid and has several rebid options. You and your partner need to make sure you're on the same page when it comes to these rebids.

- Raising Responder's suit, showing three-card support in that suit
- Bidding the other major
- Bidding NT with a stopper in the unbid suit
- Rebidding their original suit if none of the above conditions are met

Responding to your questions, I think you bid the hand correctly based on your level of skill and knowledge. The introduction of NMF can occur later in your learning progression. But let's examine what happened at the other tables. More teachable moments!

One pair used NMF to reach 4♥ but they ended up too high - going down two. The bidding by that pair went 1♣-1♥-1NT-2♦!-4♥. Opener should not immediately jump to a game in hearts as they have only minimum values. Rather, Opener should simply bid 2♥ and allow Responder to further the bidding if appropriate. In this hand, Responder with only 10 points might well pass that 2♥ bid.

Now let's discuss how the pair ended up in 2NT making +1, receiving the top score of 100% while your partner went down 1 in 1NT. Did that really happen? Unfortunately, it did.

As you duly noted, bidding 1♠ with four spades first over the five-card heart suit is definitely unconventional! One should always mention that five-card major suit first over a four-card major suit. If one had five hearts and five spades, or four hearts and five spades, one would mention the spades first then the hearts. With four hearts and four spades you would bid the hearts first (up-the-line), and on this hand that 1♥ bid comes first, not 1♠.

Because the spades were mentioned initially by the 2NT pair, the opponents did not lead a spade to begin the play. Instead, they led a heart, allowing that pair to make the 2NT contract and receive a top score. You and your partner weren't as fortunate in that they were presented with a spade lead. This made it more challenging for Opener to make the 1NT contract. Essentially the 2NT pair benefited from their bidding error which unfortunately sometimes happens in this game of bridge.

TIME YOU LEARNED OUR LESSONS!

With 2023 coming up fast, here is a reminder of our two January five-week courses.

- **Basics of Bridge Defence**, Wednesday mornings, January 11, 18, 25, February 1, 8. Online. \$75 members/ \$85 non-members. Instructor: Stephen Carpenter. Current enrollment: 1. Level: **Novice/Intermediate**. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.
 - **Beginners 1**, Saturday mornings, January 14, 21, 28, February 4, 11. In person. \$85 (includes textbook). Instructor: Sue Moses. Current enrollment: 3. Level: **Beginner**. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.
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Playing Online

Starting in January, on selected Saturday mornings Jack Cole will be offering ONLINE workshops designed for newer players who are wondering what to do next. This first workshop is **for players who want to learn to play duplicate bridge online**. The additional challenges presented by duplicate and the mechanics of playing duplicate on BBO will be explained and demonstrated. Topics will include scoring, stratification, signing up for games, and BBO features that are useful for the newer player. The workshop will conclude with a mini-game. Zoom and BBO will be used.

Subsequent workshops will include: Scoring Matters; Simple Hand Evaluation; and Using the Common Game.

Instructor: Jack Cole

Level: **Beginner/Novice**

Mode: ONLINE

Dates: Saturday morning, January 14, 9:30 am – noon

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

Current Enrollment: 1

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



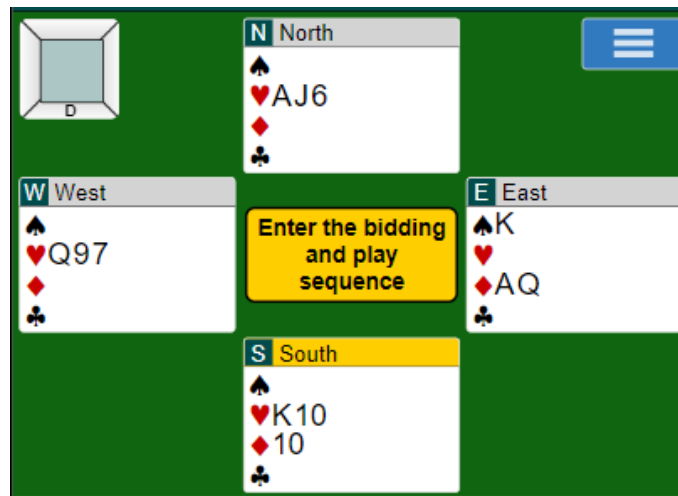


Dear David

Not Always What You Claim to Be

Hi Dave. Can you please write in the Alert about claiming - that you need to detail how you expect to claim, not leaving the rest of the table to figure it out on their own?

Declarer will often claim by showing his cards, without making a statement. If declarer is on lead and his last four cards are the AKQ2 of trumps, there is no problem, because you cannot force declarer to play irrationally just because he failed to make a statement about playing trumps from the top. That being said, there are many occasions that arise where your failure to make a statement about an outstanding trump or specify the order in which you play your suits could end up biting you on the tuchus.



South was declarer. Earlier in the hand he led a diamond to his king which won the trick. With three tricks remaining, declarer tried to claim with the statement “I will cash my diamond and my ♥A and ♥K”, obviously forgetting that his ♦10 was not high. The director was summoned and ruled must follow his statement by leading his diamond. East now claimed the last three tricks. Had South led his ♥K first, he could have finessed the ♥J after East showed out. Indeed, had he made no statement, the director probably would have asked him to make a definitive statement regarding the last three tricks.

This hand came up in an open face-to-face game. A second hand came up in the same game in which declarer tried to claim with five tricks remaining. The claim was valid “if” she played the cards in the correct order. Unfortunately, her brain was smarter than her tongue, because her explanation was incomprehensible. Even though we were entitled to make her play the remaining cards the way she had stated (resulting in an extra trick for us), we decided that she would have gotten it right had she kept playing. It is an admirable thing for someone to save time by making a claim or concession, but a poorly-worded claim or a claim with no statement, often takes more time to resolve. When in doubt, play it out.

A claim should be accompanied at once by a clear statement of the line of play or defence through which the claimer proposes to win the tricks claimed, including the order in which the cards will be played. The player making the claim or concession faces his hand.

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

#102

♠ 432
 ♥ AQ964
 ♦ 62
 ♣ K97



♠ AQ1096
 ♥ 852
 ♦ A
 ♣ A1052

West	North	East	South
			1♠
3♦	3♠	4♦	4♠
Pass	Pass	Dbf	All pass

As South, you are declaring a 4♠ doubled contract and have received the ♥10 opening lead. What should you do?

SOLUTION

Judging by the opening lead, East has the ♥K. So, you should take the first trick with dummy's ♥A and lead a trump. East will play low, and you must insert the ♠9! It will win the trick as West contributes the ♠7. Given East's penalty double, it seems likely that West started with a singleton spade and thus East's remaining spades are ♠KJ8.

You're certain to lose two heart tricks, so you might as well lose them now. It's quite possible that you will be able to establish at least one of dummy's hearts, maybe even two of dummy's hearts if the suit splits 2/3. So, at Trick 3, you lead the ♥8 from your hand. Today, West will follow suit, but you really don't care - since if he originally held a singleton heart and has another trump (doubtful) to ruff in with, you are going to lose these tricks anyway.

East will take his ♥J, and now his best defence is to lead a diamond. You take your ♦A, and at Trick 5 you lead another heart to East's ♥K (West will throw away a useless diamond). Dummy's ♥Q and ♥9 are good now.

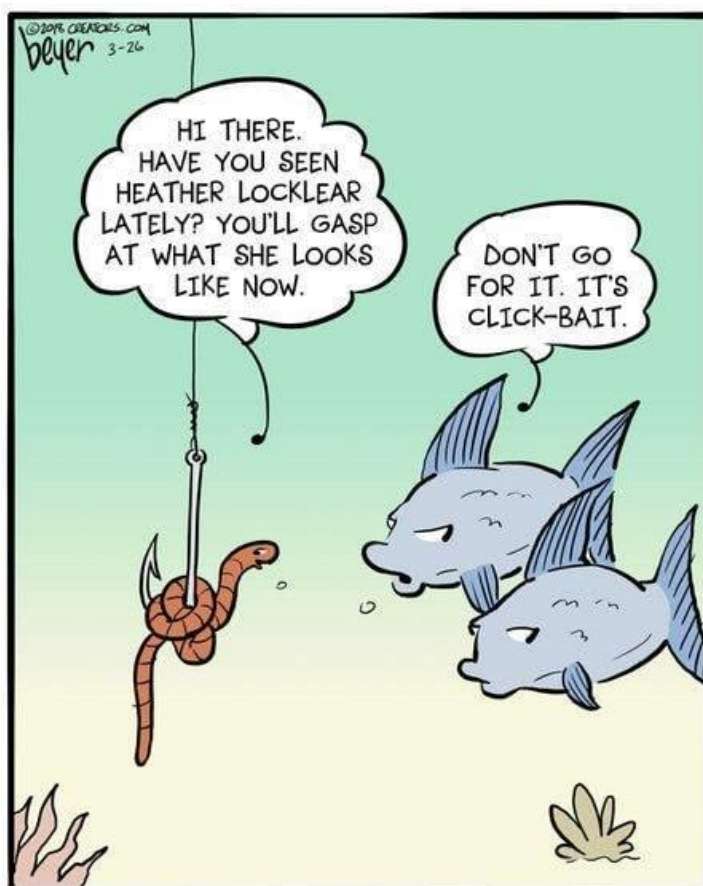
- At Trick 6, East will lead another diamond which you ruff with a small trump, the ♠6.
- At Trick 7, lead a small club from your hand, East will put in the ♣J and you take the trick in the dummy with the ♣K.
- At Trick 8, lead one of dummy's established hearts, putting East on the horns of a dilemma. If he ruffs, you will over-ruff. If he doesn't ruff, you will discard one of your losers. Let's say East ruffs in with his ♠8. You over-ruff with your ♠10. (West again discards a diamond.)
- At Trick 9, you cash the ♣A. Both West and East will follow. At Trick 10, you lead another club. West will take it with his ♣Q while East follows suit.

West has nothing but diamonds left now, so that's what he puts on the table. You ruff it in dummy, East follows suit, and you discard the last club from your hand. Then, you lead another trump from dummy and finesse East one last time. You have lost only three tricks – two hearts and a club – making 4♠ doubled!

Here is the complete hand.

♠ 7	♠ 432	♠ KJ85
♥ 103	♥ AQ964	♥ KJ7
♦ KJ109875	♦ 62	♦ Q43
♣ QJ4	♣ K97	♣ 863
	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> N W E S </div>	
	♠ AQ1096	
	♥ 852	
	♦ A	
	♣ A1052	

You probably wouldn't have made this contract if East hadn't spilled the beans by doubling. Even a fish wouldn't get into trouble if it kept its mouth shut.



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 November.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	Ted Boyd	24.80	1	Suzanne Edwards	12.73	1	Nancy Cattanach	5.83
2	Mike Peng	23.01	2	Martin Jones	11.97	2	Belinda Burt	5.36
3	David Baker	20.77	3	David Dennis	8.19	3	Rick Arthur	5.07
4	Colin Harrington	20.30	3	Barbara Arthur	8.19	4	Chris Beck	4.22
5	Moira Hollingsworth	16.46	5	John Kip	7.68	5	Molly Worden	3.56
6	Cindy Mahn	16.41	6	Kevin Latter	7.55	6	Louise Dawdy	3.51
7	Margot Stockie	15.37	7	Jim Dalglish	6.96	7	Brian Gaber	3.27
8	Edith Ferber	12.62	8	Renate Boucher	6.86	8	M J Hartleib	3.17
9	Liz McDowell	12.55	9	Cheryl Kip	6.84	9	Randall DeKraker	3.14
10	Neil Coburn	12.03	10	Brian Kirkconnell	6.77	9	Robert Darby	3.14
11	Dianne Aves	11.78	11	Stephen Nantes	6.52	11	Jane Wilson	2.70
12	Bob Griffiths	11.40	12	Robert Giilck	6.30	12	Elaine Doyle	2.67
13	David Longstaff	9.36	13	Douglass Grant	6.28	13	Audrey Book	2.62
14	Neil Jeffrey	9.17	14	Bob Livermore	6.25	14	Debbie Miethig	2.50
15	Sandy Graham	8.19	15	Shelley Metcalfe	6.15	15	Ellen Libertini	2.14
16	Stephen Young	7.73	16	Lori Cole	6.07	15	Susan Murray	2.14
17	Wayne Schroeder	6.57	17	Bev Hitchman	5.76	17	Carol Gerber	2.12
18	Mary McClelland	6.04	18	Roy Dandyk	5.31	17	Judy Johnston	2.12
19	John Vandergrift	5.79	19	Steve Allen	5.21	19	Richard Wehrle	2.10
20	Steve Carpenter	5.70	20	Joan Slover	5.16	19	Don O'Bright	2.10
21	Adrian Record	5.62	21	Gordon Hunter	5.10	21	Joan Stroud	2.02
22	Sharon King	5.59	22	Loretta Molodecki	5.09	22	Donna McKay	1.93
23	Scott Hills	5.45	23	Patrick McLaughlin	4.82	23	Jane Rushby	1.76
24	Diane Jamieson	5.22	23	Patricia McLaughlin	4.82	23	Sue Andersen	1.76
24	Bonnie Kains	5.22	25	Nanci Phelan	4.76	25	John Aldridge	1.75

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 have good parties at our **club**.