



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

[Website](#)

ALERT – November 28, 2022

ALL GAMES ARE ONLINE UNLESS DESIGNATED **F2F**.

Coming Events

- Friday, November 25, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) (\$8 members/ \$10 non-members) F2F**
- Friday, November 25, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) (\$8 members/\$10 non-members) F2F**
- Saturday, November 26, 1:00 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5**
- Sunday, November 27, 10:00 am, **499er game (18 boards) BBO\$5**
- Monday, November 28, 9:00 am, **499er game (18 boards) BBO \$5**
- Monday, November 28, 10:00 am, **Intermediate Bridge Lab (\$8 members/ \$10 non-members) F2F**
- Monday, November 28, 12:30 pm, **99er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5**
- Monday, November 28, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) BBO\$5**
- Monday, November 28, 7:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) BBO\$5**
- **Intermediate Bidding, Part 2 lesson, F2F**
- Tuesday, November 29, 12:30 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5**
- Tuesday, November 29, 1:00 pm, **open game (24-28 boards) (\$8 members/ \$10 non-members) F2F**
- Wednesday, November 30, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) BBO\$5**
- Wednesday, November 30, 6:45 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5**
- Wednesday, November 30, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) BBO\$5**
- Thursday, December 1, 9:30 am, **99er game (18 boards) BBO\$5**
- **Thursday, December 1, 9:30 am, 499er game (18 boards) BBO \$5** **NEW**
- Thursday, December 1, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$8 members/ \$10 non-members F2F**
- Thursday, December 1, 6:30 pm, **Beginners 2 Lesson F2F**
- Thursday, December 1, 7:00 pm, **999er game (24 boards) BBO\$5**

NEW

New Thursday Morning Online 499er Game

We are offering a new Thursday morning online 499er game, starting November 24. This game will start at 9:30 am and consist of 18 boards.



Christmas Parties

Please mark your calendars for the following Christmas parties.

- [Saturday, December 10, noon potluck lunch, 1:00 game time, Guelph Bridge Club](#)
- Tuesday, December 13, noon potluck lunch, 1:00 pm open game time, GRBC
- Friday, December 16, noon potluck lunch, 1:00 pm 499er game time, GRBC

The sign-up sheets for the GRBC parties have been posted at the club. Those who wish to attend either party but can't sign up in person should email [Dave Quarrie](#).

A Terrible Mistake

The Alert made a dreadful mistake last week when it listed our players who were in the money at the Niagara Regional – in that these fine players were inadvertently left out. Our abjectest apologies.

- **Bruce Roberts and William Christian**, 5th in A, Wednesday Open Pairs
 - **Kathy Russell, Neil Jeffrey, Sharon Boyd, Susan Lawton, and Mary McClelland**, 3/4, Wednesday-Thursday KO
 - **Cindy Mahn, Liz McDowell, Stephen Young, Tom Ramsay**, 3/4, Wednesday/Thursday KO
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Liz McDowell had a full house in our teaching room last Monday morning – 20 intermediate players having fun while they learned.



Nametags

As we return to in-person games and lessons, especially if you're still masking, it is an excellent idea to wear your nametag. If you don't have a nametag but would like one, send an email to clubmanager@grandriverbridgeclub.com. The cost is a modest \$7.



Our Club Manager is Stepping Down

Jim Dalgliesh is stepping down as our club manager effective January 9, 2023. Two of Jim's colleagues penned the following in an inadequate attempt to do tribute to what Jim has contributed to our club over the years.

Contributed by Kevin Latter

Jim Dalgliesh came to Canada from Scotland as a child of nine with his family. After education, he became an accountant and spent his career in financial administration in the health care system in Ontario.

He was 40 years in Sault Ste Marie, where he met and married Judy and raised two children. In 2008 he came to K-W with his job, and then happened upon GRBC when we were at Gage Avenue in 2012, joining our club as a beginner. So began his involvement in the club. Within less than a year he became treasurer and subsequently club manager, a post he has held for more than eight years.

Jim has consistently demonstrated honesty, integrity, and dedication to the club. He has been the "go to" guy for almost everything, and if he could not answer a club question directly, he knew where to re-direct the enquiry for the answer. Congenial and low-key, he has been a member, supporter and promoter of the club through early development and two location changes. In short, his contribution has been invaluable.

In characteristic Jim fashion, he has committed also to assisting the person(s) who will take over the club manager position.

From my point of view as one of Jim's several partners, he is, not surprisingly, much as he is in life. In general, he is easy to be happy with, although he is not above letting me know when I mess up. We do have a post mortem routine which we usually go through the next day, and it is there that we discuss: the goods, the bads, and the NOFs (not our faults). We have been to a few tournaments over the years, although neither of us is inclined to travel to the more distant events.

Here's a tournament anecdote from Stratford some years ago. Jim and I had each about 100 masterpoints at the time. Jim was team captain and put our entry in. In the first four games we got thrashed, losing only one of the matches by less than double figures. As I didn't think we were that bad, I approached the desk and asked which bracket we were in. I discovered that we were in a much-higher bracket because of Jim's penmanship. He had written that our collective masterpoint total was <500p, but Jim's squiggly 'p' looked like another zero and so they thought we had <5000p. Too late to do anything about it.

So, we struggled on through the next three matches expecting to get thumped some more, but actually won two of the matches and lost the other only narrowly. Thereafter, Jim was never appointed team captain ever again – but at the end of the long day we had a good laugh on the drive home in the snow, with a story to tell later.

Contributed by Malkin Howes

I first met Jim when he wandered into our Gage Avenue premises about ten years ago. I had heard that he was an accountant and, as the club's treasurer at the time, I was looking for a successor. So, I hurried over to Jim and introduced myself and then immediately asked him if he would take over from me as treasurer. Jim hesitated for a minute and then said okay. That's Jim for you in a nutshell – unflappable and agreeable.

So, Jim took over from me as treasurer, and not long afterwards he took on the club manager role as well.

Thus, it was Jim who was at the helm when we moved out of Gage Street into our temporary quarters at 55 Franklin, thence into our next temporary home in the basement of the Dare building, and finally into our current premises. Throughout, Jim paid the bills, poured oil on all the ruffled feathers, oversaw all the redecorations and reinstallations and refurbishings, presiding over everything with the calm of a genial Buddha.

And of course, not long after we were settled into our current home and everything was ticking along like a Swiss watch, Covid hit. Jim brought us through Covid as well, visiting the club every week and keeping things ready for re-entry two years later – which, predictably, he managed to bring about by means of a gradual and safe re-opening, a process that continues to this day.

So, what does a club manager do, I hear you ask. Here is a partial list.

- ✓ Monitors and responds to phone messages, snail mail, and email
- ✓ Maintains an inventory of office and game supplies, replenishing as necessary
- ✓ Orders name tags
- ✓ Sets and chairs management team meetings, writes up notes, and follows up
- ✓ Attends board meetings and follows up on action items
- ✓ Photocopies forms as needed
- ✓ Orders textbooks for lessons
- ✓ Organizes ACBL sanctions and communicates instructions to game directors
- ✓ Handles complaints
- ✓ Documents club policies and procedures and terms of reference
- ✓ Maintains door key control
- ✓ Purchases fixed assets as needed
- ✓ Periodically replaces defibrillator pads and battery
- ✓ Manages main door unlocking for out-of-hour events
- ✓ Recruits volunteers
- ✓ Liaises with Dare and Penske

This last item is Jim's absolute favourite by the way, especially when it comes to parking issues. He just loves getting raked over the coals by Dino every time one of our players parks in a Penske space.

In summary, Jim has dedicated something like 15 or 20 hours a week for more than eight years to our club. In case you are wondering, Jim does this all for free. We owe him a huge debt of gratitude.





Beginners 2

Here is a photo of this fall's crop of Beginner 2 students in our teaching room. From left to right: Sue Moses (teacher), **Grace Skanes**, **Kathleen Harris**, **Daryn Anderson**, **Louise Bell**, **Ches Warren**, and **David Bell**. Missing: **Mary Warren**. Photo credit: Cheryl Kip

One of these students, **Grace Skanes**, describes her introduction to beginner lessons as follows.

So, you want to play bridge? Well, there's a club that gives lessons. I sign up. I'm on my way. Who am I kidding?
I walk into the club room. There are 50 tables, maybe more. Do that many people play bridge?! Well, can't be so hard! We're ushered by all the tables and into a small intimate room. The wall is lined with hand-written charts. Nothing familiar. Then the instructor gives us a book. Good heavens, there's a textbook?!? Am I in the right place?
Our instructor begins talking about hands, suits, trumps, and tricks. Hey, I can do this! I used to play auction!
Not so fast.
The instructor goes around to look at the players' hands.
"Grace" she says. "You're holding your cards upside down".
"I always hold them that way", I say.
I look at the bottom, not the top. Uh oh. I try to correct the position of the cards in order to look at the top and they fall all over the table and onto the floor. So much for the correction. I can't do it. I go back to my usual way of looking at the bottom.
Our instructor continues. We talk about hand evaluation, opening bids, declarer points, and dummy points. I'm quite lost.
The instructor and new friends at the table encourage and help! We play some hands and lo and behold my partner and I get nine tricks! I want to play some more! I think I am learning something. It's very small yet. However, I have joined up for part two!
I really enjoy the company. Maybe I'll learn and enjoy the game. However, if I never learn to play bridge, I'm having a lot of fun trying!!

How to Use Pianola's Partner Finder Feature

Say you would like to play in next Wednesday's game but you don't have a partner. You can use our Pianola Partner Finder! All you have to do is log into Pianola (app.pianola.net) and click on **Partner Finder** along the top. Sometimes there are already players waiting for a partner there, and you can contact them if they're interested in the same game as you. Failing that, you can create your own ad by clicking on **Create a Partner Finder Advert** and following the breadcrumbs.

Occasionally, the program will tell you that you don't have access, in which case you should email the club manager who will fix you up.



The Bean Counter

Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer

Every so often, requests are made to the B-counter to have an expense claim, a lesson refund, director pay, or whatever ... sent to them as an e-transfer. The short answer is “no-can-do”.

The longer answer is “sorry, no-can-do”. The reason why is twofold.

1. The GRBC bylaw stipulates that any outgoing payment method must bear the signed approval of two different signing officers. You will have noticed that if you have ever received a cheque from the treasurer. Dual signatures protect the club from bad evil money handlers.
 2. Canadian banking institutions do not support any secondary handling of an e-transfer request prior to sending. The next time you perform an e-transfer yourself, look for the button called “pass this along to a second person for approval”. Right ... it doesn't exist. Interac is a solo act.
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Volunteers Do Not Necessarily Have the Time – They Just have the Heart

Our club would not exist were it not for our volunteers. Or perhaps a better way to put it would be to say that if our club paid everyone the true value of their services, we would have to charge something like \$40 a game. Which is another way of saying that our club would not exist without its volunteers.

We are currently experiencing a higher-than-expected turnover in our volunteers – not too surprising since many of them have been doing their jobs for seven or eight years. So now Uncle Sam needs YOU.

Specifically, we are looking for someone to take on the following roles.

Volunteer Co-Ordinator: we need someone to recruit and co-ordinate volunteers. For more information, contact [Sue Moses](#), our retiring Volunteer Co-Ordinator.

Librarian: we need someone to look after our growing collection of bridge books, jigsaw puzzles, and light reading books. For more information, contact [Jim Dalgliesh](#).

Photographer: we need someone to take photos of special and not-so-special happenings at our club. For more information, contact [Jim Dalgliesh](#).

That was an easy board to explain, because E/W had the better outcome in all four suits and No Trump (called *strains*). It gets a little more complicated if the teams compete. Consider this DDA (I won't bother showing the actual hands, because they don't really matter).

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	7	4	5	9	7
S	7	4	5	9	7
E	6	8	8	4	6
W	6	8	8	4	6

Par Score: 140
Par: NS 3♠

What are the best scores in the suits and NT, with N/S vulnerable? Seven tricks in ♠'s (for 70) for N/S, eight tricks in ♦'s (90) for E/W, eight tricks in ♥'s (110) for E/W, nine in ♠'s (140) for N/S, or seven in No Trump (90) for N/S. Of these, **the best is 140 for N/S playing 3♠'s, so that's Par.**

At GRBC, there were five different contracts bid. Two pairs played 3♠'s and both made an extra trick, scoring a top. Two other N/S's bid 4♠'s, and went down. One East played 2♦'s, a West played 3♥'s, and one unfortunate North ended up in 2♥'s, for a bottom board.

This is still pretty easy; work out the best scores in each of the five strains (♣♦♥♠ and NT), and the largest one determines Par. But there is one more wrinkle, because all players making "their best possible bid" includes the possibility of undertrick penalties, and then doubling. Consider this DDA, with **N/S vulnerable**, and West dealing.

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	4	9	9	3
S	2	4	9	9	3
E	8	8	3	4	7
W	9	8	4	4	7

Par Score: 100
Par: W 4♣x-1

Applying the analysis of the five strains, first we see something weird. In ♠'s, North can take three tricks as declarer, but South can take only two as declarer; while East can take eight, but West can take nine. Why the difference? The location of the first lead is the difference. Sometimes any lead provides a finesse, or it finds partner's or the opponents' void, etc., and that's what happens here, in multiple strains. That's also why there seem to be only 10 tricks when playing No Trump. This board has two voids, and the lead makes a **huge** difference.

It seems like Par should be either 3♥'s or 3♠'s (140, the best score) for N/S, **but it's not.** At our table, E/W was bidding both minors, while N/S had found their ♥'s. We all competed up to South's 3♥ bid. West reasoned that down one not vulnerable would cost **50** points, or **100** points if doubled - a better score than the **140** they would lose in 3♥, so West sacrificed to 4♣'s – their "best possible bid" in this situation. Now, North *could* bid 4♥, but should go down one, and being vulnerable, would lose **200** points if doubled. North's "best possible bid" is to instead double 4♣'s, and score **100, and that is Par for this board. Not 140, just 100.**

Factoring in vulnerability and doubles is a little complicated to do at a glance, which is why we thank DDA for doing it for us. **And why should we care about Par?** Because it's a way to measure your bridge progress. If you are consistently scoring Par or better, then you are bidding and playing well. You are not always getting a top score, but you will be doing the best that can be expected with the cards you're dealt, against expert bidders. Your hands and your score will be "well matched".



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! If you have a question, please write to me at suzan2420@yahoo.ca. You don’t need to send me the actual deal – just tell me the game date and board number and I can take care of the rest.

Question

As relatively new players, my partner and I often have problems making decisions around how high to compete in the bidding. As an example, here is a hand we played while practising against the robots on BBO.

After opening the bidding, my partner bid a negative double to show her hearts, and I responded at the three-level to show a fit. After the robots raised to three spades, with seven HCP my partner passed, a decision that made sense to us when reviewing the hand later, but evidently not to almost everyone else who played the hand and chose to raise to four hearts, leaving us with a bottom board!

Clearly, we missed something here. Neither the law of total tricks nor HCP totals seemed to support a decision to bid on to the four-level in hearts. Would this mean most people raised as a sacrifice? Most people made the contract, so I'm not sure if we missed something from the bidding or not. I'm thinking maybe it's something to do with distribution that we are not taking sufficient account of maybe, but regardless it feels like we are missing some tools from our armoury when dealing with these competitive hands.

We'd be grateful for any hints in approaching this type of situation. Thanks so much for your help!

D 8	N	W N E S
	♠ 3 ♥ AQ73 ♦ K93 ♣ AJ1086	P 1♣ 1♠ X 2♠ 3♥ 3♠ P P P
W	E	
♠ 1065 ♥ 10 ♦ Q74 ♣ KQ9742	♠ AKQ874 ♥ K85 ♦ 52 ♣ 53	
	S	
	♠ J92 ♥ J9642 ♦ AJ1086 ♣	
		3♠ E NS: 0 EW: 0

Answer

Dear players of the robots! So nice to hear from both of you again and for sharing this challenging hand.

This is a tricky hand to bid, and as newer players I would certainly not feel bad about bidding only to the three-level, allowing your opponents to bid on to 3♠, and consequently receiving a poor score. I have made a similar decision myself and ended up with a poor score.

If we look at it in a slightly different light, we can determine why bidding on to 4♥ might be worth a try. North opened 1♣, East overcalled 1♠, and South doubled (a negative double to show exactly four hearts). West raised the spades, and North bid 3♥ to show support for hearts with four hearts. Of course, East wasn't going to be content to let you play in 3♥ and so it bid 3♠. Those nasty robots!

I would suggest a number of factors would influence any decision to bid on to the 4♥ level.

1. South has five hearts, not just the four that the negative double would indicate. Rather than using a negative double after East overcalls 1♠, South should bid 2♥. That shows at least a five-card suit. With four hearts in North's hand, bidding to 4♥ becomes much feasible. North knows that you have nine hearts between the two of you, with only four hearts in the opponents' hands.
2. South's hand is more powerful than the seven HCP would suggest. South, yes you have only seven HCP, but you have a distributional hand with five hearts and five diamonds and a void in clubs. Yes, clubs is the suit that North bid, but if he has nice clubs declarer would be able to discard potential losers elsewhere or ruff the clubs. So essentially South's hand is worth more than the seven HCP noted.
3. You are not vulnerable, so even if you go down one or two, it would be a better score of only -50 or -100 – as opposed to letting the opponents make three spades for +140. So yes, North and South might be potentially sacrificing by bidding on to four hearts. As it turns out, four hearts was a successful contract.
4. The last factor I would like you to think about is what each of the hands contains. Try to visualize it in your mind. East overcalled spades and then rebid them, promising at least six spades, West raised in spades promising at least three. Total nine spades. South has three spades, leaving North with at most one spade. As a result, N/S have only one spade loser.

So, on a hand like this consider bidding on to four hearts, for all the reasons above. Don't let those robots push you around!

Best of luck.



Team Leagues

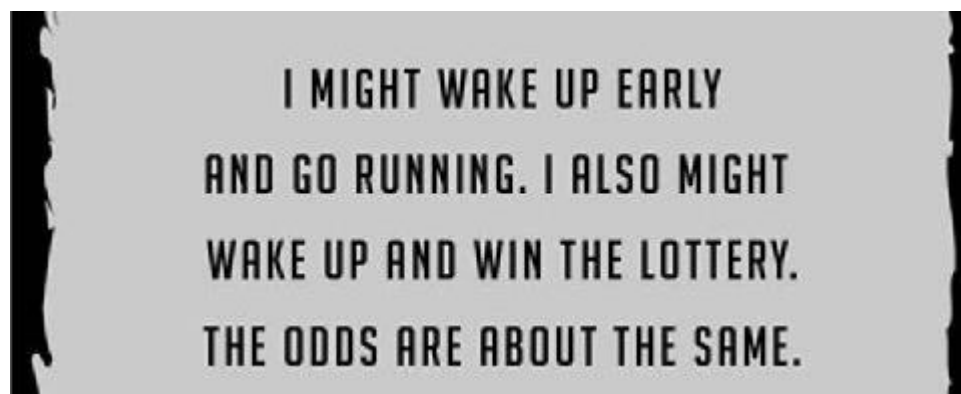
On selected Sundays, a group of our players come to the club to play in our team leagues. Most bridge players like team games best of all – they provide lots of chances to socialize, plus they're terrific fun! Photo credit: Mike Peng

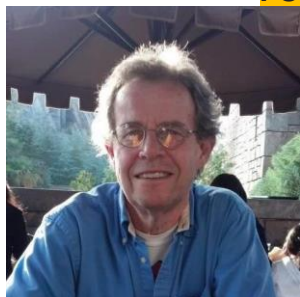
Top Master Point Earners at our Club

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 October.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	30.41	1	Suzanne Edwards	10.37	1	Nancy Cattanach	6.46
2	Mike Peng	23.79	2	Roy Dandyk	8.50	2	Rick Arthur	4.30
3	Margot Stockie	20.76	3	Martin Jones	8.46	3	MJ Hartleib	4.30
4	Cindy Mahn	18.87	4	David Dennis	7.61	4	Chris Beck	4.01
5	Edith Ferber	13.36	5	Brian Kirkconnell	7.43	5	Louise Dawdy	3.56
6	Liz McDowell	13.27	6	Stephen Nantes	7.24	6	Debbie Miethig	3.32
7	Ted Boyd	12.22	7	Douglass Grant	6.93	7	Molly Worden	3.13
8	Moira Hollingsworth	13.27	8	Bev Hitchman	6.79	8	Brian Gaber	3.11
9	Colin Harrington	11.96	9	M L Benjamins	6.73	9	Belinda Burt	3.07
10	Dianne Aves	11.06	10	Kevin Latter	6.44	10	Elaine Doyle	2.98
11	Stephen Young	10.99	11	Sue Peterson	5.90	11	Jane Wilson	2.89
12	Neil Coburn	9.50	12	Barbara Arthur	5.74	12	Audrey Cook	2.80
13	David Longstaff	9.13	13	Jim Dalgliesh	5.69	13	Joan Hartviksen	2.28
14	Malkin Howes	9.08	14	Joan Slover	5.64	14	Ruth Veder	2.26
15	Bonnie Kains	7.80	15	Robert Giilck	5.60	14	Sandra Willoughby	2.26
16	Bob Griffiths	7.79	15	Joe Blake	5.60	16	Carol Robinson	2.23
17	Kathy Russell	7.52	17	Shelley Metcalfe	5.55	16	Trent Robinson	2.23
18	Sharon King	7.03	18	Bob Livermore	5.48	18	Ellen Libertini	2.11
19	Steve Carpenter	6.67	19	Renate Boucher	5.44	18	Susan Murray	2.11
20	Jen V-Woodward	6.29	20	John Kip	5.18	20	Valirie Binkle	2.10
21	Wayne Schroeder	6.17	21	Andy Martinek	4.76	21	Donna McKay	1.99
22	Neil Jeffrey	6.10	21	Salvatore Pace	4.76	22	Randall DeKraker	1.90
23	John Vandergrift	5.89	23	Steven Allen	4.70	22	Robert Darby	1.90
24	Diane Jamieson	4.99	24	Cheryl Kip	4.68	24	Don O'Bright	1.85
25	Bruce Roberts	4.64	25	Lissa Lowes	4.62	24	Richard Wehrle	1.85





Not a Stripe-Tailed Ape Double

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

East Deals	♠ A 8 6 3											
Both Vul	♥ A J 10 5 4											
	♦ A K 9 5											
	♣ —											
♠ 10 9 5		<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		♠ K Q J 7 4
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♥ Q 8 6 3			♥ K 9 7									
♦ 2			♦ 8									
♣ A K J 5 4			♣ Q 8 7 2									
	♠ 2											
	♥ 2											
	♦ Q J 10 7 6 4 3											
	♣ 10 9 6 3											

West	North	East	South
		1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	Dbl	3 ♣	3 ♦
4 ♠	5 ♦	Dbl	All pass

This is another hand from a pairs game.

I was South. East opened 1 ♠, and I decided to wait and see. West bid 2 ♣ and my partner doubled. When East raised to 3 ♣, I was unsure of how to handle this hand. Partner had implied diamond support - we could go a long way in diamonds - but both opponents have shown decent hands.

I was certain that this auction was far from over, so I chose to tread lightly and tried just 3 ♦ over 3 ♣. Now, West woke up and jumped to 4 ♠. I immediately thought that I should bid at least 5 ♦, but before I had the chance to do that, I saw that my partner had beaten me to the punch - 5 ♦ was already on the table, in front of my partner.

East paused to think after the 5 ♦ bid. I presumed that he was considering a bid of 5 ♠, in which case my choice would have been whether or not to try 6 ♦. But East surprised me with a double, and I was happy to pass, avoiding the six-level decision. 5 ♦ doubled was passed out. West led the ♣A and partner put down the perfect hand. I didn't have to draw trumps until all four of my losing clubs had been ruffed in dummy, and so 13 tricks came in easily. A diamond lead would have made me work a little harder, needing to set up partner's fifth heart for a discard, but there would still be 13 tricks.

If my partner had held kings and queens in the major suits instead of aces, life would have been much harder for me. Aces opposite singletons make life easy for those with a long trump suit. Was I outsmarted by a wily East who doubled to keep us out of our cold slam? This could have been a stripe-tailed ape double. I doubt it though.





Dear David

A Clear Suit-Preference Signal

Almost everyone frequently uses count signals and attitude signals. A lesser-used, but frequently-important signal is called suit preference. When your partner does not need to know count or attitude, it is time to show what you think about the other suits. Throwing a high card professes interest in the higher-ranking suit and throwing a low card professes interest in the lower-ranking suit. Always be aware that a suit preference signal is only a PREFERENCE. It is not a demand that partner lead the suit she prefers, it says only that she likes one suit more than the other.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> 15 D </div>	N North ♠ KJ4 ♥ ♦ QJ832 ♣ A10643	W N E S P P P 3♥
	W West ♠ 1072 ♥ K98 ♦ AK1094 ♣ 52	E East ♠ A983 ♥ A43 ♦ 75 ♣ KJ98
	S South ♠ Q65 ♥ QJ107652 ♦ 6 ♣ Q7	3♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0

West leads the ♦K and switches to the ♠10. Declarer wins the ♠Q and leads a high heart to the ♥K. The ♣5 is won by the King, and East leads the ♠A and another spade, hoping to give her partner a ruff. Declarer leads a diamond from dummy to ruff in her hand in order to continue drawing trumps, leading to this.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> 15 D </div>	N North ♠ ♥ ♦ QJ ♣ A1064	W N E S P P P 3♥
	W West ♠ ♥ 98 ♦ A1094 ♣ 2	♦ 8 ♦ 7 ♥ 2
	S South ♠ ♥ Q10765 ♦ ♣ Q	3♥ S NS: 2 EW: 4 Select cards to play for all 4 players

Here is my rule for suit preference signals: throw only cards 10 and below as suit-preference signals. Unnecessarily throwing an honour card promises the lower touching honour and enough strength in the suit that it cannot cost a trick. However, rules are made to be broken. Knowing that partner is winning the ♥A next, you want to make it clear to her that she should lead the 13th spade, in case she is thinking of lazily leading a club. Following the “rule”, the ♦10 should suffice. However, why use a hammer when a sledgehammer is available. Throw the ♦A. Wake up, girl!



Stratifications – What Can They Do for You?

Contributed by Allen Pengelly, Lead Director

If you have as many masterpoints as Dave Baker, the answer is “Nothing at all”.

Well, thinking about it, this is not even true. Stratifications encourage more people to come out and play in a game, which then leads to more awards for the players who do well in that game. For the rest of us players, stratifications offer the chance to gain masterpoint rewards in a game where we may be considered to have less experience than the competition, and without penalty if we do happen to finish in the top 40% of the overall game.

What is not usually understood is that the masterpoint awards for stratification are the same as if the lower stratification were playing in their own game with all of the players in the higher stratifications removed. So, if in a given game (going one direction) there are four ‘A’ Strat teams, four ‘B’ Strat teams, and four ‘C’ Strat teams, then the players in Strat ‘B’ would get a chance of winning overall rewards (12 teams) or winning strat ‘B’ rewards (eight teams). Strat ‘C’ teams would have the chance of winning either of the two previous rewards or points for doing well in Strat ‘C’ (four teams).

When calculating the reward given, the masterpoints you can win are calculated for doing well in each individual stratification, and you are given the greater amount of masterpoints (the awards are not cumulative).

So, what does that mean for the average player? It means that even though a game may seem to have an upper masterpoint bound that is above your experience level you should still come out and play! There is no better learning experience than to observe how more experienced players play, and you will have the added benefit of winning masterpoints if you do better than the teams with a comparable amount of experience.

In an article as short as this, it is impossible to explain all of the intricacies of the MP award system and stratification. But, if you do have any questions, please feel free to write me at apengelly@golden.net and I will be pleased to answer your more in-depth questions.

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

#100

♠ 652
 ♥ KQ543
 ♦ J63
 ♣ 73



♠ AQ983
 ♥ 72
 ♦ AQ107
 ♣ A4

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Dbl	Pass
3♣	Pass	Pass	3♠
Pass	Pass	4♣	4♠
All pass			

You, South, are declaring four spades and have received the opening lead of the ♣K. Plan the play.

SOLUTION

You have two sure losers, a heart (♥A) and a club (♣Q). So, you can afford to lose only one more trick in the other two suits. This is going to be tricky, given your holes in those suits - the ♠KJ10 and the ♦K. The opening lead strongly suggests that the ♣K and ♣Q are in the West hand (5 HCP), leaving only 13 HCP unaccounted for. It is almost certain that most or all of them are in the East hand, for sure the ♦K and the ♠K.

You would like to finesse East in both spades and diamonds, but you have only one entry to the dummy. Which suit will you finesse in? Let's see which finesse has a bigger potential pay-off.

You are missing the ♠KJ10. Even if you lead a spade from the board and your ♠Q wins, you are still certain to lose at least one trump. In other words, you have zero chance of losing no spade tricks.

But if you lead the ♦J from the dummy and it holds, you can finesse again and potentially take four diamond tricks. For this to happen, East has to hold three or less diamonds.

So, 0% versus 35%. Hmm. Of course, you must finesse the diamonds instead of the spades. However, before you finesse in diamonds, you need to draw trump lest someone ruff in. There is no advantage to ducking the opening lead (and in fact, there is a danger that East will switch to hearts and make you spend your dummy entry prematurely), so you take your ♣A at Trick 1.

Now, you have decided that you are going to play the spades from your hand but how should you tackle them? You have already established that East must have the ♠K. The only way that you can lose only one spade trick is if East has the doubleton king (and that's not too much of a stretch given East's take-out double). So, at Trick 2 cash the ♠A, and at Trick 3 lead a small spade from your hand. On this day on this deal, the ♠K appears.

East's best defence at this point is to lead a club, which his partner will take with his ♣Q and then lead a heart. West should take his ♥A and continue hearts. As a result, your dummy entry gets used up before you can draw the last trump. As a result, you have to tackle the diamond suit right away, even though there is still one trump outstanding. Now your only chance is that the opponents' diamonds are split 3/3.

So, you lead the ♦J from dummy. East's best defence is to duck, so you continue diamonds from the dummy and put in your ♦10. It holds! Now draw the last trump and cash your winning diamonds. Making four!

Let's face it, you were pretty lucky in that you had to find the ♠K doubleton and the ♦K tripleton in the East hand. You can still pat yourself on the back though - for finding the only safe path through the minefield. Here is the complete deal.

	♠ 652										
	♥ KQ543										
	♦ J63										
	♣ 73										
♠ J104	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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>		N		W		E		S		♠ K7
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♥ 86		♥ AJ109									
♦ 984		♦ K52									
♣ KQ1096		♣ J852									
	♠ AQ983										
	♥ 72										
	♦ AQ107										
	♣ A4										

And that will teach your opponents to push you into a making game that you weren't going to bid!

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 are very grateful to Jim Dalgliesh at our **club**.