



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

ALERT – October 9, 2023

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

Looking Ahead

- ♥ All of our F2F games from now until Saturday, October 14 are **Club Appreciation games** = extra masterpoints, no extra charge.
- ♥ **No Saturday morning 99er game**, Thanksgiving Weekend (October 7)
- ♥ **No Monday morning bridge lab**, Thanksgiving Day (October 9)
- ♥ **Card Combinations workshop**, Friday, October 13, 9:30 am - noon
- ♥ Saturday, October 14, [12th Annual Ray Millie Memorial Tournament in Guelph](#)
- ♥ All of our online games during the week of October 15 are **Club Appreciation games** = double black masterpoints, no extra charge
- ♥ The Answer Lady will be giving a **mini-lesson on cue bid responses** at the bridge lab on Monday, October 16.
- ♥ [90th Western Ontario Sectional Bridge Tournament](#), London, October 21-22
- ♥ [Spooktacular Buffalo Regional](#), Tuesday, October 24 - Sunday, October 29
- ♥ [Instant Matchpoint Game at the Guelph Club, Wednesday, Oct. 25, 1:00 pm](#)
- ♥ **Intermediate Bridge Lab**, 6:30 pm, Thursday, October 26
- ♥ The F2F games during the week starting October 29 are **Club Championship games** = extra masterpoints, no extra charge.
- ♥ [Niagara Regional](#), Tuesday, November 7 – Sunday, November 12



Congratulations....

to the following local players who earned masterpoints at last weekend's tourney in Brampton.

- **Anita Hanson and Barb Neibert**, 3rd in A, NLM/499er Saturday Pairs
- **Mary Lynn Benjamins and Valirie Binkle**, NLM/499 Saturday Pairs
- **Robert Griffiths and David Baker**, 7th in A, Saturday A/X Pairs
- **Moira Hollingsworth and Neil Jeffrey**, Saturday A/X Pairs
- Steven Norris, Debby Ingram, **Stephen Carpenter**, and **Fred Young**, B/C/D Swiss Teams
- **David Baker**, **David Longstaff**, **Mike Peng**, and **Robert Griffiths**, 3/4 in A, A/X Swiss Teams
- **Dianne Aves**, **Bruce Roberts**, **Moira Hollingsworth**, and **Sharon King**, A/X Swiss Teams
- **Margot Stockie**, **Kathy Russell**, **Diane Bourdeau**, and **Edith Ferber**, A/X Swiss Teams



Barbara Seagram and Alex Kornel

Barbara and Alex will be at our club to play in the open game on **Tuesday afternoon, October 17**. Why not come along and play that day? Barbara and Alex will be delighted to meet you and get to know you. We are expecting players of all levels to participate....

Marketing Lead

We are looking for someone to join the management team as our marketing manager. This individual would be responsible for ensuring an effective internal and external communication strategy and for increasing our table counts and membership. Ideally, the new marketing manager would have a background in marketing, but this is by no means a requirement. Our manager, [Doug Grant](#), would welcome expressions of interest.

The remuneration is the thanks of a grateful nation.



First Tuesday Evening Online Swiss Teams was a Success!

Our club has started an online Swiss Team Game on the first Tuesday of each month. Last Tuesday, we had 10 teams participating including two teams from the Bridge Club of Niagara (BCoN) some of whom found out about us when they played in our Golden Horseshoe Challenge on September 24. BCoN hosts similar online team games on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, and you are most welcome to play in them.

The winners of the inaugural Swiss Team Game were Mike Peng, Robert Griffiths, Adrian Record, and Jennifer Verdam.

Please arrange your team for our next scheduled team game on November 7.

Autumn Instant Matchpoint Game

The Guelph Club is excited to announce that it will be participating in the ACBL's Instant Matchpoint Game on Wednesday, October 25, at 1:00 pm. All section top awards will include one gold masterpoint, with additional masterpoints being 50% red/black. There will be two sections: open and 0-750. The entry fee is \$11 members/ \$13 non-members.

Instant matchpoint games are scored in advance, such that you will learn your result as soon as you have played each hand. If you haven't played in this type of game before, you'll be pleasantly surprised at how much fun it is!

Click [here](#) for more information.

Bulletin Board Boss

Sharon Boyd has volunteered to be our first Bulletin Board Boss – responsible for keeping our boards timelier and more dynamic. Sharon has two requests of our readers: she would like to hear from you regarding the sort of content you would like to see on the boards, plus she would really appreciate receiving material to put on the boards. One idea: would you like to have a bulletin board where you can post material about non-bridge charities and clubs and activities of your own? Please write to Sharon [here](#).

On Track...  ...To Online



AND THE WINNER IS... Week 3 of our **online playing draw** has dealt our next winner, and it is **Elinor Girouard!** Elinor (and her partner, plus 11 other pairs) started the month off right by playing in our "lucky" 499 game on Sunday morning, October 1! We had **153** entries this week, to win a \$30 gift card from places like Timmies or the LCBO. Every time a current GRBC member

plays in one of our online games, their name goes into the draw. Play with us on BBO by Tuesday, and the next winner could be you!





Member Profiles

Mark Sherwood and Doug Fickling

Contributed by Anita Hanson

For today's profile, you get a twofer! Please meet Doug Fickling and Mark Sherwood, both newcomers to GRBC.

They are being profiled together because they joined together and because they have basically been attached at the hip for almost 40 years. The two first met at Mutual Life, where they worked as software developers — the first job for both of them after graduating from university (both from Western, though they did not know each other there). They were later headhunted (together), and began new jobs (together) at Bluegill Technologies. Since that time, they have held several other positions at various local start-up companies... together, for all but five or six years.

They began playing bridge socially some time ago, with their wives and a number of friends, as well as on their own at casual clubs, and (of course) came to love the game. They decided (together) while still working to take up more competitive play after retirement. That retirement happened for both of them within the last year, and other longtime friends, GRBC's Joe Blake and Steve Allen, convinced them that our club was the place to be.

And we are glad to have them, though even as very recent members these two have already taught us a valuable lesson: never underestimate the newbies! They are killing it.

Doug began life in London ON, and Mark in England, but both have lived in the KW area since that first job at Mutual Life. Doug and his wife Sandra have three children, who have provided them with two grandchildren, while Mark and wife Dianne are dinks (dual income, no kids - which has helped fund another enthusiasm — travel. Both couples have travelled extensively (together) and will soon be off to Australia and New Zealand.

Both are golfers as well, and Mark also has a passion for music — every kind of music (except, he says, for one — Doug's favourite, which is Country and Western). And Doug, when not playing bridge or golfing or travelling, is a Shriner! — keep an eye out for him in his fez and curly shoes next time you're watching a local parade.

When asked for favourite bridge tips, both offer advice that is pragmatic rather than technical. From Mark: Try to remember the important things — like what conventions you use, and what contract you are in.

And from Doug: Don't play with your spouse!

These two are friendly and affable and lots of fun, so next time you run into Mark and Doug, please welcome them to our club... just don't expect to outsmart them at the bridge table.



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.

Question

Hello Answer Lady, would you please comment on the bidding on this hand. My partner was sitting North and opened the bidding with 1♦, East passed and I bid 2♥ to show a good hand and four hearts. West passed and North took us to game in 4♥. We successfully made 4♥, but according to the double dummy, 3NT is the best contract and would receive the highest score. How should we have bid this hand to get to 3NT? Should I have bid 1♥ or 1♠ rather than 2♥? A group of newer players.

The screenshot shows a bridge hand interface. At the top left, a red and white card with the number 5 is displayed. The hand is divided into four quadrants: North (N), West (W), East (E), and South (S). The bidding sequence is shown in the center: 1♦ (North), Pass (East), 2♥ (South), Pass (West), 4♥ (North), Pass (East), Pass (South). The Double Dummy Analysis table is located in the bottom left corner.

	♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	7	9	10	9	9
S	7	9	10	9	9
E	8	4	3	4	4
W	8	4	3	4	4

Answer

Hello group of newer players. Thank you for sharing this hand and its related questions.

First off, let's have a review of what that Double Dummy Analysis (DDA) indicates. It was highlighted in an earlier Answer Lady column but worth repeating. *The double dummy result is the number of tricks the declarer will win when all four players can see all 52 cards, and each player always plays to their best advantage, i.e., with no errors, the correct lead, and best defence. A complete DDA consists of 20 results: each of the four players (NSEW) as declarer playing in each of the five potential contracts.* On this hand one can see the Double Dummy Analysis in the bottom left-hand corner of the hand and, yes, 3NT played by either North or South is a making contract.

The key word here is potential. That's not to say you should be in that contract. Using Standard American bidding guidelines, the contract should be 4♥. That is what North/South bid and made on this hand because they have a heart fit. The DDA shows that N/S can make both 3NT and 4♥, and since 4♥ is worth 620, while 3NT is worth only 600, 4♥ is better.

First, let's review the bidding. North opened the bidding with 1♦, South wishing to show a strong hand, at the first opportunity bid 2♥. Using the guideline of "slow arrival" South should not jump to 2♥, but instead should bid 1♥. Any bid of a new suit by Responder is forcing, and thus there is no danger that North will pass. Slow arrival (as a refresher) suggests that Responder also with opening points to Opener's similar opening points should not rush, but rather bid slowly. Game will be found in the right contract using slow arrival. In addition, a 2♥ bid promises greater length in hearts, at least five of them, and South's hand has only four hearts. Fortunately, in this case North had four hearts, but what would transpire if North didn't have support for hearts?

The readers asked if 1♠ should have been South's first bid. Using the principle of bidding "up the line", South should mention the hearts first rather than the spades. Bidding 1♠ instead of 1♥ shows either a five-card spade suit (with or without a four-card heart suit) or else no four-card heart suit and will complicate the bidding process. North/South may never find their heart fit. If South had four hearts and five spades, yes a 1♠ bid over 1♥ would be the preferred bid, but with four-four, bid up the line showing hearts first. If North had only three hearts but four spades, they would then bid 1♠ and the spade fit would be found.

After that 1♥ bid, North should bid 2♥, showing four hearts. Now South, with their opening points, knows that game is a strong possibility and would bid 4♥.





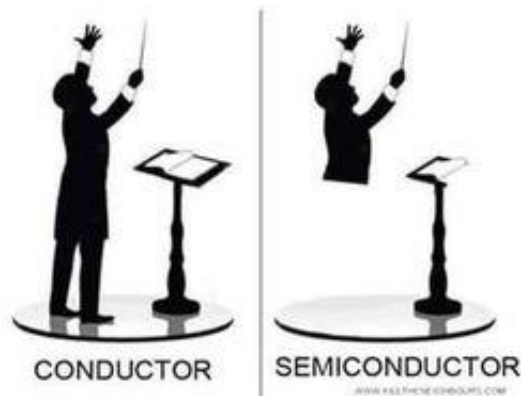
Bean There Done That

Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer (GrandRiverBridgeClubTreasurer@gmail.com)

Eighty-eight-year-old Elvis Presley is still alive. A club member saw him at Rona last weekend. Isn't it peculiar how a rumour that started in 1978 can still be believed today? There are false rumours going around about the state of GRBC's finances. People believe we are hemorrhaging money and that we'll declare bankruptcy in a few years.

As George H.W. Bush said in 1998: read my lips: **We are in really good financial shape.** Volunteers perform the lion's share of the work to run this club. Gotta love free labour! This reduces our costs substantially. We meet all of our financial obligations every month. With your continued support playing in our bridge games, we often have extra money month after month. Will we be around in five years? Damn tootin'!

I recognize that the statements posted at the club, and found in your Annual Meeting package, suggest otherwise! So next week's alert will try to explain why. By the way, Elvis is not alive. Thank you. Thank you very much.



Time You Learned our Lessons!

Still in the Cards

- **Card Combinations** workshop. Friday, October 13, 9:30 am – noon. Instructor: Stephen Carpenter. ONLINE. Cost: \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Current Enrollment: 6. Level: **NOVICE**
- **Hand Evaluation** workshop, Friday, November 3, 9:30 am – noon. Instructor: Malkin Howes. In our teaching room. Cost: \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Current Enrollment: 1

Click [here](#) to register.

Continuing

- **Newcomer bridge labs** every Monday morning, 9:00 am – 11:30 am, except on holiday Mondays (no lab on Thanksgiving Day, October 9). Mini-lesson on **cue bid responses** by The Answer Lady on Monday, October 16 – no extra charge! \$8 members/ \$10 non-members.



Responding to Invitational Bids

This workshop follows on from the Hand (Re)-Evaluation workshop on November 3. The participants in that workshop learned that the initial hand evaluation usually changes as the bidding progresses.

This workshop will look at what you should be thinking about when your bidding partner invites you to game – in both no trump and suit contracts – including the use of help suit game tries. The participants in this workshop will play up to 16 hands where they have to decide whether or not to accept their partner's invite.

Regular partners may find it beneficial to attend this workshop as a pair.

Instructor: Malkin Howes

Level: **Intermediate**

Venue: In our teaching room

Date: Friday, November 10, 9:30 am – noon

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

Current Enrollment: 0

Click [here](#) to register.



Dear David

The Operation was Successful but.....

On this hand, you will have to sift through a lot of information in order to come to the correct solution. Your reward for solving this problem will be a top board.

♠ Q 2
 ♥ A K 10 8 6
 ♦ K Q 10 8 6
 ♣ 7

You are in third seat with everyone vulnerable. The auction begins – pass by partner, 1♣ on your right. Most players play some sort of system that allows them to show a two-suited hand over an opening bid. For example: 1♠-2♠ would show five+ hearts and an undisclosed five+ minor suit, or 1♠-2NT would show at least five cards in both minor suits. The problem with many conventions is that players often don't have any clearly-defined limits about when to use them. If you show your two suits using one of the above methods on all hands that have as few as nine points or as many as 19 points, your partner will not know how to proceed. Try playing the two-suited hands as less than an opener (in which case you will pass your partner's response) or a strong opener (in which case you will bid again after your partner's response). With a two-suited hand and opening points (such as the hand above), start with the higher-ranking suit (hearts) and hope to get a chance to bid diamonds later. LHO bids a 1♠ and partner briskly jumps to 5♥! Tom Ramsay would describe the 5♥ bid as "Hearts like this (holding his hands three feet apart) and points like this (holding his hands two inches apart)". RHO briskly bids 5♣. Here is the auction so far.

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		pass	1♣
1♥	1♠	5♥!	5♣

You carefully consider the probable result of sacrificing in 6♥, but it looks like at least down three for -800. Since your partner has already accomplished her mission of kicking up the opponents a level, you prudently pass and LHO briskly bids 6♣, passed back to you. I am a little annoyed that everyone but me has "briskly" bid their hands. However, it does suggest that they are reasonably confident in their assessment. It sounds like at least one opponent has a heart void and my diamonds may produce only one trick. What about 7♥? Even down five for -1400 is cheaper than 6♣ making for -1430.

After a lot of math and soul-searching (not briskly), I go for the unusual sacrifice at the seven-level. I went down only three instead of four after a mis-defence for -800. After declarer plays spades correctly, we are only entitled to one diamond trick in 6♣. I'm quite pleased with myself until I see the results. It was a three-table game. One pair was in 6♥ (undoubled!) and the other table was in 4♣. I could only take solace in the fact that we were destined to get a bottom once they bid 6♣. I lied at the beginning when I said you would be rewarded....

Dir: E 1
 Vul: Both ♠ K J 10 9 8
 ♥ ----
 11 ♦ A 9 7
 14 4 ♣ K 6 4 3 2
 11

♠ Q 2	♠ 4 3
♥ A K 10 8 6	♥ Q J 9 7 5 4 2
♦ K Q 10 8 6	♦ J 4 3
♣ 7	♣ 9

♠ A 7 6 5
 ♥ 3
 ♦ 5 2
 ♣ A Q J 10 8 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♥	1♠	pass	1♣
pass	6♠	5♥!	5♠
7♥	dbl	pass	pass
		all pass	



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

No. 123



♠ 7
 ♥ 9
 ♦ A854
 ♣ J1097532

My partner, North, dealt and opened a standard 1NT (15-17 HCP). After East passed, what should you bid?

SOLUTION

Most people would look at their five measly HCP and decide to transfer their partner to 3♣ and leave him there. However, there is another way to value your hand. You may find my LUT (Look-Up-Table) helpful.

Points	12	17	21	25	29	33	37
Contracts	1C/D/H/S	1NT/2C/D/H/S	2NT/3C/D/H/S	3NT/4H/4S	5C/5D	6C/D/H/S/NT	7C/D/H/S/NT

Using this table, all you need to do is add up your and your partner's points and bid whatever the table says. For example, if you discover that you and your partner have 25+ points between you, bid a game for sure. If you have a combined 33+ points, shoot for slam. In bridge, of course, there are few 100% guarantees, but you will find this LUT a very useful guideline.

I hasten to add, however, that when I talk about points, I mean *aggregated* points (aka playing points or playing value or hand power, whichever term you wish to use). Aggregated points include high-card points, distribution points, length points, and honour sequence points.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, let's count points for your (humble?) hand.

- High-card points: **5** (the ♦A and the ♣J)
- Distribution points: **6** (two singletons, 3 + 3)
- Length points (extra trumps): **2** (allocate one point per card to all cards exceeding the golden fit of eight cards). Assuming your partner has three clubs, then you and your partner have ten clubs between you, **2** (10 - 8).
- Sequence points (♣J109): **1** (one point for each three-plus card honour sequence).

With a total of 14 aggregated points, your hand's playing power in clubs is way more than appears on the surface. Together with your partner's points (15 ~ 17), you have 29+ points in total, which is enough to make five clubs. Transfer your partner to clubs and then raise him to 5♣! If your partner blames you for being too aggressive, tell him it's the fault of the LUT. If your partner doesn't buy that, tell him it's my fault. 😊.

Here is the full hand.

♠ A109
 ♥ AJ543
 ♦ 106
 ♣ AQ6
 ♠ K6432
 ♥ K10872
 ♦ 732
 ♣
 ♠ QJ85
 ♥ Q6
 ♦ KQJ9
 ♣ K84
 ♠ 7
 ♥ 9
 ♦ A854
 ♣ J1097532



As you can see, the LUT offers a money-back guarantee to you on this hand, as 5♣ is ice cold. Is the table too complicated for you to remember? If so, KISS it – reduce the table down to this single column.

25
3NT/4H/4S

The columns on either side can easily be calculated by adding or subtracting **four** points step by step. Each step of four points is roughly the equivalent of an ace = one trick apiece. For example, add two aces to a four-spade-makeable hand and now you can probably make six. Another example: subtract two aces from a 3NT-makeable 25-point hand (leaving you with 17 combined points) and now you can probably make only 1NT. This could be the reason why the Standard American system designer recommended that you open 1NT with a 17-point hand 😊.

In computer science, a lookup table (LUT) is an array that replaces runtime computation with a simpler array-indexing operation. The savings in processing time can be significant, because retrieving a value from memory is often faster than carrying out an "expensive" computation or input/output operation.



Only in Canada

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 September.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	26.47	1	Lynda Burnett	8.90	1	Russel Kerr	6.09
2	Cindy Mahn	14.84	2	Lori Cole	7.79	2	Sharon Nesbitt	4.94
3	Mike Peng	12.94	3	Jim Dalgliesh	7.24	3	Randall DeKraker	4.77
4	Ted Boyd	12.94	3	Elinor Girouard	6.35	4	Mark Sherwood	4.72
5	Edith Ferber	12.68	5	Janice Pengelly	6.04	5	Doug Fickling	4.33
6	Robert Griffiths	10.05	6	Sue Moses	5.82	6	Rick Arthur	3.44
7	Moirra Hollingsworth	9.37	7	Bob Giilck	5.61	7	Jane Wilson	3.18
8	Margot Stockie	7.86	8	Jack Cole	5.59	8	Audrey Cook	3.13
9	Roy Dandyk	7.74	9	Andy Wilson	5.40	9	Paul Raymond	2.78
10	Stephen Young	7.48	10	Cheryl White	4.98	10	Pat Northey	2.62
11	Suzanne Edwards	7.07	11	Kim Wakeford	4.66	11	Judy Johnston	2.43
12	Scott Hills	6.77	12	Nancy Cattanach	4.60	11	Carol Gerber	2.48
12	Ed Hills	6.77	13	David Dennis	4.54	13	Sonja Miner	2.41
14	Malkin Howes	6.10	14	Anita Hanson	3.92	13	Debbie Miethig	2.41
15	Kathy Russell	6.00	15	Molly Worden	3.55	15	John Aldridge	2.34
16	John Hanemaayer	5.42	16	Barbara Arthur	3.45	16	Joan Stroud	1.94
17	Neil Coburn	5.12	17	Donald Rieger	3.34	17	Don Slowinski	1.91
18	Wayne Schroeder	4.26	17	John Kip	3.34	17	Ben Cornell	1.91
19	Neil Jeffrey	4.17	17	Peggi Rieger	3.34	19	Brian Gaber	1.90
20	Liz McDowell	3.93	20	William Sherman	3.28	20	Peter Gaasenbeek	1.88
21	Bonnie Kains	3.65	21	Bev Hitchman	3.09	21	Nancy Kennedy	1.82
22	Steve Carpenter	3.52	22	Regina Williams	3.01	22	Sandra Kendall	1.70
23	Bruce Roberts	3.41	22	Denis Williams	3.01	22	Denise Doff	1.70
24	Paul Latimer	3.25	24	Millie McQuillin	2.93	24	Sheila Charters	1.68
25	Tom Ramsay	2.95	25	Jim Mathers	2.92	25	Kathy Chandler	1.63

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**.
 Some of us use a LUT at our **club**.