

Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 23 Number 1 – January, 2021



January Events



Bloomington-Normal Duplicate games at the First Christian Church located at Jefferson and Lee streets near downtown Bloomington starting at 11:00AM:

All games cancelled due to COVID-19. Please play at Bridge Base Online(BBO) at these times:

Mondays, 11:50am – 199ers only pairs

Mondays, 12:10pm – open pairs

Tuesdays, 6:50pm – 499ers only pairs

Wednesdays, 6:50pm – open pairs

Thursdays, 6:30pm – 299ers only pairs

Thursdays, 6:50pm – open pairs

Fridays, 11:50am = limited pairs – mentee-mentor 1st & 3rd – 499ers only 2nd, 4th, 5th

Saturdays, 11:50am – 299ers only pairs

Saturdays, 12:10pm – open pairs

Sundays, 6:50pm – mentee-mentor 2nd & 4th – open 1st-3rd-5th pairs

Contact Lori Moore at 309-838-8085 for more information.

Mike's Bridge Club schedule – ALL games at Centennial Christian Church, 1219 E. Grove St, Bloomington, unless otherwise noted:

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Mondays, 12:10pm – open pairs

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Fridays, 11:50am = limited pairs – mentee-mentor 1st & 3rd – 499ers only 2nd, 4th, 5th

Saturdays, 11:50am – 299ers only pairs

Saturdays, 12:10pm – open pairs

Sundays, 6:50pm – mentee-mentor 2nd & 4th – open 1st-3rd-5th pairs

Contact Mike Tomlianovich at 309-825-5823 for more information.

All game results are posted online: <http://live.acbl.org/>

All games sanctioned by the American Contract Bridge League.



The Bloomington-Normal "Top 25" Masterpoint holders

**As of 12/6/2020 – residents of Bloomington-Normal only
paid up ACBL members only**



1	4,240.53	Steve Babin
2	3,443.22	Zack Freehill
3	3,359.29	JoAnn Schroeder
4	3,255.23	Eunice Patton
5	2,735.67	Cindy Moore
6	2,362.85	Mike Tomlianovich
7	2,321.79	Ann Schuyler
8	2,137.91	Lori Moore
9	1,795.40	Ron Emmett
10	1,544.14	Jeff Furler
11	1,3406.16	Joyce Clay
12	1,272.27	Jeanne Strand
13	1,161.80	Ivey Weaver
14	1,127.76	Steve Wulfers
15	830.65	Dave Freehill
16	696.86	Sallie Boge
17	689.61	Ray Dostal
18	580.07	Fred Spitzzeri
19	573.67	Mary Tweedie
20	551.36	Mary Cralley
21	464.68	John Cralley
22	389.98	Larry Ziegler
23	347.37	Gene Byers
24	338.89	Chris Zogg
25	321.17	Joyce Werner

Other players:

12,891.44	Chris Benson-LeRoy
5,594.93	Larry Matheny-Colorado
5,450.39	Ron Sholes-Springfield
5,403.78	John Seng-Champaign
4,251.66	Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
3,478.58	Carole Sholes-Springfield
3,356.55	Mary Allen-Peoria
2,689.15	Pat Carrington-Champaign
2,654.61	Margaret Hansell-Champaign
2,650.26	Georgia Heth-Morton
2,527.17	Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
2,417.05	John Maloney-Champaign
2,137.45	Chuck Young-Peoria
1,975.88	Marilyn Stickel-Laon
1,589.63	Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
1,327.02	Dan Bunde-Champaign
1,178.43	Wes Seitz-Champaign
985.77	Bill Strauss-Urbana
770.36	Carole Miller-Champaign
742.62	Darryl Bremner-Clinton
701.78	Bill Thompson-Champaign
672.66	Melda Richardson-California
604.59	Lane O'Connor-Naperville
509.89	Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
507.02	Linda Odette-Palisade,CO
442.09	John Ford-Harvard,MA
397.30	Ron Sinn-Peoria
372.20	Connie Tucker-Champaign



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#1 –

We continue to look at the scoring differences in matchpoint events compared to rubber bridge or team games. Emphasis is placed on reaching game in either notrump or the majors. A minor suit game will often result in a poor score. See how you would have done with this hand.

East-West vulnerable at matchpoints.

Hand #6 Dlr S Vul E-W	♠ QJ52 ♥ <="" td=""> J10732 ♦ <="" td=""> 65 ♣ A9	West — pass (all pass)	North — 1♥	East — pass	South 1♦ 3NT
♠ A8 ♥ K865 ♦ 82 ♣ Q10754	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>				
	♠ 10943 ♥ A94 ♦ 73 ♣ J863				
	♠ K76 ♥ Q ♦ AKQJ1094 ♣ K2				

BIDDING: Playing in a pairs event, South gave no thought to rebidding his diamonds but headed right to 3NT.

PLAY: West led his fourth best club won by declarer. South knocked out the ace of spades and had eleven tricks when West continued clubs. As always, there were pairs in 5♦ also making eleven tricks but their score of +400 was below average. Those in 3NT scored either +430 or +460. This is not rubber bridge.

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Defense is perhaps the most difficult part of bridge. Each card you play should convey some information to your partner. If you are not careful, you may allow declarer to take tricks that should be yours. See how you would have done with this hand.

East-West vulnerable at matchpoints.

Hand #7	♠10743				
Dlr S	♥J97				
Vul E-W	♦K104				
	♣J106				
♠95		♠Q2	West	North	East
♥5		♥A1062			South
♦QJ9852		♦763	Pass	3♣	Pass
♣Q842		♣A975	(all pass)		4♣
	♠AKJ76				
	♥KQ843				
	♦A				
	♣K3				

BIDDING: The South hand is close to a 2♣ opener, but it is usually easier to show a two-suiter by opening at the one level. This partnership plays a jump to 3♣ by North as a weak hand containing four spades. Holding such a good hand, South was disappointed but settled for game.

PLAY: I was sitting West and chose my singleton heart for the opening lead. South was still in love with his hand and told the table he had hoped for slam. My partner won the heart ace and returned the deuce of hearts for me to ruff. This was a SUIT PREFERENCE situation and the deuce was a request for me to return the lower remaining suit. If my partner had wanted a diamond returned, he would have led the heart ten, and with no preference, he would have chosen his middle heart. East won my club return and promptly gave me another heart ruff to defeat the contract. North was very polite to his partner merely asking, "Slam?".

The opportunities to show suit preference are numerous. Remember every card you play has a meaning.

#3 –

Here is another look at defensive carding principles. Most people use attitude as the primary signal when following to partner's lead. With this understanding, a high card asks for a continuation and a low card suggests a switch or indicates no strength in the suit. See how you would have done with this hand.

East-West vulnerable at matchpoints.

Hand #	♠K43					
8	♥K8					
Dlr N	♦K4					
Vul E-W	♣A98642					
♠85		♠972	West	North	East	South
♥QJ5		♥A10962		1♣	1♥	1♠
♦987652		♦AQ3	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
♣73		♣105	(all pass)			
	♠AQJ106					
	♥743					
	♦J10					
	♣KQJ					

BIDDING: After East overcalled with 1♥, South showed 5+ spades with his 1♠ bid. With only a four card suit, South would have made a negative double. North had an easy raise and South went on to game.

PLAY: In response to his partner's overcall, West led the queen of hearts. Hoping for a continuation, declarer played low from dummy. East immediately saw the danger in dummy's long club suit and signaled with the heart deuce that he did not want the suit continued. West made the obvious switch to diamonds and the contract was defeated. It is easy to see that if West had continued with a second heart, declarer would win any continuation, draw trumps, and discard his remaining red cards on the club suit. In fact, East would have to cash the diamond ace at trick three just to prevent the overtrick.

There was nothing difficult about this hand. Just remember that every card you play sends a message. Don't be mechanical; watch the cards.

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#4 -

Executing a squeeze is one of the most exciting plays in bridge. Some are difficult but some are not. See how you would have done with this hand.

East-West vulnerable at matchpoints.

Hand # 9	♠AKQ2					
Dlr S	♥982					
Vul E-W	♦AJ8					
	♣A32					
♠J1093		♠85	West	North	East	South
♥KQJ76		♥53				1NT
♦1075		♦432				
♣10		♣987654	Pass	6NT	(All pass)	
	♠764					
	♥A104					
	♦KQ96					
	♣KQJ					

BIDDING: A small slam based strictly on high cards requires around 33-36 points. With fewer points you stop in game and with more you investigate a grand slam. On this hand, after South opened 1NT, North counted his high card points and bid the slam.

PLAY: West led the king of hearts and declarer could count 11 tricks: 3 spades, 1 heart, 4 diamonds, and 3 clubs. The 12th trick would have to come from spades. It appeared that declarer needed the outstanding spades to divide 3-3, but there was another solution. If the person with the long spade suit also held length in hearts, he could be squeezed. One of the parameters of most squeeze positions is that you must not leave an "idle" card in the opponent's hand. Therefore it is necessary to duck the first heart and win the continuation. After winning the second heart, declarer played four diamonds and three clubs forcing West to make a discard from a holding of : S-J1093 H-J. Whichever card he chose to discard would give declarer his 12th trick.

It is important you see that the first heart must be ducked for the squeeze to work.

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**Bloomington-Normal 70% club
Year 2020 only**

2020/12/26	71.11%	Rick Dalton & Grant Brewen
2020/12/21	70.56%	Bill Bulfer & Steve Babin
2020/10/29	70.20%	Lori Moore & Mary Allen
2020/10/3	71.03%	Bill Bulfer & Steve Babin
2020/8/1	70.14%	Eunice Patton & Steve Babin
2020/7/20	72.78%	Cindy Lake & Melissa Paschold(99ers)
2020/7/15	70.30%	Chris Benson & John Seng
2020/6/22	71.99%	Cindy Moore & Mike Tomlianovich
2020/4/23	70.16%	Larry Ziegler & Ray Dostal
2020/1/6	75.00%	Rod Ruder & Doug Lamb(99ers)

BRIDGE BITES

from: The American Contract Bridge League

By: Brian Gunnell



#009 – A DOUBLE ORDER OF DUCK

	♠ K74 ♥ A987 ♦ A9743 ♣ Q	
♠ QJT3 ♥ 4 ♦ JT6 ♣ T8652	North West East South	♠ 9865 ♥ 53 ♦ Q8 ♣ A9743
	♠ A2 ♥ KQJT62 ♦ K52 ♣ KJ	

None Vulnerable

South West North East

1♦ Pass
 1♥ Pass 2♥ Pass
 4NT Pass 5♥ Pass
 6♥ Pass Pass Pass

West leads the ♠Q and, when Dummy goes down, Declarer can see that his 6♥ contract is quite hopeless. The ♣A must be lost and there is no way to avoid a Diamond loser. Declarer will win the opening Spade, draw trumps and then cash the ♦K and ♦A before conceding the third round of Diamonds. When West wins the ♦J, he will quickly shift to a Club, and East's ♣A scores the setting trick before

Declarer's Clubs disappear on the long Diamonds. Down one.

But that's not what happened! It's true, looking at all four hands, that 6♥ *should* go down, but West was looking at only two hands. Taking advantage of that, Declarer came up with a truly brilliant deception. He ducked the opening lead in both hands! The defense can now cash the ♣A to beat the contract, but it never occurred to West that his partner might have the ♣A and not the ♠A. So, naturally enough, West persisted with Spades. Imagine West's surprise when Declarer's Ace won the second Spade trick! Next, trumps were drawn, a Diamond was pitched on the ♠K, the ♦K was cashed, then the ♦A, and a Diamond was ruffed. Now there were two good Diamonds in Dummy, on which Declarer was able to pitch his losing Clubs. Making 12 tricks!

A most unusual hand! Declarer started out with an inescapable loser in Diamonds and another in Clubs. But, thanks to that lovely first round double duck, he ended up losing a Spade but nothing else!

#010 – A PRACTICE FINESSE

The humble finesse is the first thing we learn, and we also learn that some finesses win, some lose. Later we learn that some finesses are purely for practice and serve no useful purpose. Here is a case in point.

	♠ QJ965 ♥ KJ97 ♦ A2 ♣ AQ	
♠ 843 ♥ ♦ KJ983 ♣ J9875	North West East South	♠ ♥ Q65432 ♦ QT4 ♣ KT63
	♠ AKT72 ♥ AT8 ♦ 765 ♣ 42	

Both Vulnerable

South West North East

1♠ 2NT Dbl 5♣

Pass Pass 6♠ All Pass

West's 2NT was the "Unusual No Trump", showing both minors, and North eventually plunged (some would say recklessly) into slam. West leads a Club, your job is to make 12 tricks.

A Diamond loser is unavoidable, so you must guess the whereabouts of the ♥Q if this slam is to make. And then there is the small matter of the Club suit. Do you take the finesse? Surprisingly, it's not necessary! We've already

determined that you need to bring in the Hearts, and if that is the case then the 4th round of Hearts can be used to pitch the Club loser.

OK, you hop up with the ♣A, and draw trumps, ending on the board. Who has the ♥Q? Surely East! West's bidding showed both minors (usually 5-5) and later he played three Spades. That doesn't leave room for many Hearts! So, Declarer runs the ♥J around and West predictably shows out. Another Heart finesse, the ♥A is cashed, over to the ♦A, then the Club loser goes on the ♥K. Making 12 tricks, losing just a Diamond.

Getting the Heart suit right did not require rocket science. Realizing that the Club finesse was not needed? Not so obvious. The winning train of thought was: I must lose a Diamond ... so I cannot lose a Heart ... if I don't lose a Heart then I can park the losing Club on the 4th round of Hearts.

#011 – FINESSES ARE EASY

Of course they are! You just lead towards the AQ or KJ or some such holding, and, when fate is kind, an extra trick materializes. But, if they can, experienced players will avoid the whims of fate, as in this deal.

	♠ JT765 ♥ 652 ♦ A7 ♣ AT8	
♠ 98 ♥ QJT7 ♦ KJ6 ♣ Q652	North West East South	♠ 4 ♥ 983 ♦ QT9852 ♣ K97
	♠ AKQ32 ♥ AK4 ♦ 43 ♣ J43	

Both Vulnerable
South West North East
 1♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
 4♠ All Pass

West leads the ♥Q, and Declarer can see a certain loser in Hearts and another in Diamonds. So, if 4♠ is to make, then Declarer must avoid losing two Clubs. Any ideas?

One way to play Clubs (after drawing trumps) is to finesse the Ten, hoping that West has the King *and* the Queen. That's somewhat unlikely (around 25%). Another possibility is to finesse the *Eight*, and later finesse the Ten, hoping that West has K9 or Q9. That's a 37% chance. Or, Declarer might

run the Jack, giving himself the extra chance that West might neglect to cover with his honor.

Which finesse will you choose? The correct answer is that you don't care for *any* of these finesses, you much prefer the 100% method! Draw trumps, cash the red suit winners and exit with a Heart (or a Diamond). The defenders can take their Heart and Diamond tricks but now their goose is cooked. If they lead another red card then Declarer pitches a Club loser from one hand and ruffs in the other hand (the so-called "ruff and sluff"). And if they break open Clubs then Declarer will lose only one trick in the suit. Yes, finesses are easy, especially when you can avoid taking them!

#012 – ONE FINESSE TOO MANY

It's great when our finesse works, but against a cunning opponent, when we try that same finesse a second time, we sometimes get an unpleasant surprise.

	♠ J ♥ QJT ♦ T97 ♣ AJT954	
♠ 862 ♥ K953 ♦ 865 ♣ Q87	North West East South	♠ 73 ♥ 872 ♦ K432 ♣ K632
	♠ AKQT954 ♥ A64 ♦ AQJ ♣	

N-S Vulnerable

South West North East

2♣ Pass 3♣ Pass

3♠ Pass 3NT Pass

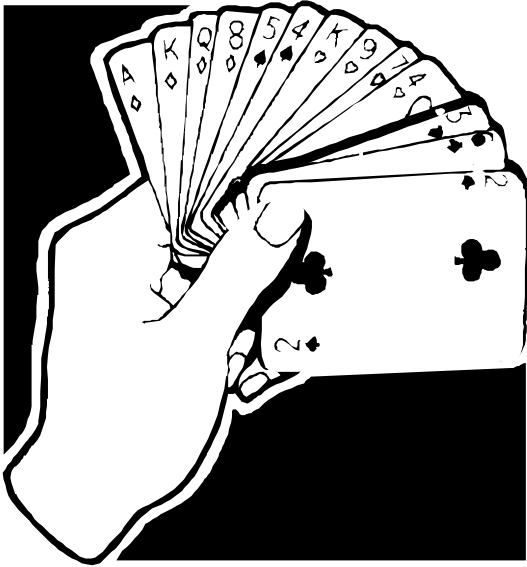
6♠ All Pass

After that artificial (and strong) 2♣ opening, the rest of the auction was natural. West leads a trump against your slam, how do you propose to make 12 tricks?

It may be too late already, but let's do this one without peeking at the E-W hands. The opening trump lead has knocked out your entry to Dummy, and you must use that entry to take one of those red suit finesses. Which one?

Surely it must be right to finesse in Hearts because, if that loses to West, you'll have a Heart entry back to the board for the Diamond finesse.

So, the ♥Q is led from the board and it holds. Yippee! Now Dummy's ♣A is cashed (pitching a Diamond) and the winning Heart finesse is repeated. Oops! This time that dastardly West fellow produces the King! Even worse, Declarer now has no way of avoiding a Diamond loser also. Down one! When the first Heart finesse worked, Declarer took his eye off the ball. He must realize that a second Heart finesse is unnecessary. After the ♥Q wins, the 100% safe line is to cash the ♣A (pitching a *Heart*), ruff a Club high (just in case there is an overruff in the cards), then draw trumps and give up a Diamond.



Please see schedule on page 1

