

# Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 23 Number 3 – March, 2021



## March 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 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> – 999ers only 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Saturdays, 11:50am – 299ers only pairs**

**Saturdays, 12:10pm – open pairs**

**Sundays, 6:50pm – mentee-mentor 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> – open 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 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:**

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

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**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 2/6/2021 – residents of Bloomington-Normal only  
paid up ACBL members only



1	4,267.32	Steve Babin
2	3,443.22	Zack Freehill
3	3,397.86	JoAnn Schroeder
4	3,270.30	Eunice Patton
5	2,779.59	Cindy Moore
6	2,388.52	Mike Tomlianovich
7	2,325.54	Ann Schuyler
8	2,161.55	Lori Moore
9	1,795.40	Ron Emmett
10	1,544.14	Jeff Furler
11	1,447.80	Joyce Clay
12	1,272.27	Jeanne Strand
13	1,161.80	Ivey Weaver
14	1,133.49	Steve Wulfers
15	830.65	Dave Freehill
16	708.50	Sallie Boge
17	697.15	Ray Dostal
18	592.69	Fred Spitzzeri
19	583.07	Mary Tweedie
20	561.24	Mary Cralley
21	471.96	John Cralley
22	419.81	Larry Ziegler
23	369.93	Gene Byers
24	339.76	Chris Zogg
25	321.17	Joyce Werner

### Other players:

12,923.70	Chris Benson-LeRoy
5,642.60	Larry Matheny-Colorado
5,514.57	Ron Sholes-Springfield
5,439.18	John Seng-Champaign
4,298.53	Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
3,529.22	Carole Sholes-Springfield
3,374.93	Mary Allen-Peoria
3,330.99	Terry Goodykoontz
2,689.15	Pat Carrington-Champaign
2,670.76	Georgia Heth-Morton
2,654.61	Margaret Hansell-Champaign
2,527.17	Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
2,418.80	John Maloney-Champaign
2,163.59	Chuck Young-Peoria
1,980.90	Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
1,617.79	Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
1,342.48	Dan Bunde-Champaign
1,215.38	Wes Seitz-Champaign
1,029.43	Bill Strauss-Urbana
775.39	Carole Miller-Champaign
768.59	Darryl Bremner-Clinton
721.92	Bill Thompson-Champaign
689.20	Melda Richardson-California
609.76	Lane O'Connor-Naperville
538.57	Linda Odette-Palisade,CO
521.89	Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
468.28	John Ford-Harvard,MA
417.88	Ron Sinn-Peoria
393.08	Connie Tucker-Champaign



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#1 –

Bridge is such a great game because every hand presents a different challenge. The following hand is not that difficult but several declarers failed. See how you would have done.

East-West vulnerable at matchpoints.

Hand #14					
Dlr S	♠75				
	♥53				
Vul E-	♦AKQJ4				
W	♣J853				
		West	North	East	South
♠J109	<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0 auto;">□</div>				1♠
♥AK104		Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
♦87		Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
♣Q1064		All Pass			
	♠AK8432				
	♥Q62				
	♦1093				
	♣A				

**BIDDING:** North's raise to 3♠ pushed the pair into a thin game.

**PLAY:** West led a top heart and switched to trumps. Since they will return another trump when they regain the lead, you will not be able to ruff a heart in dummy. Assuming trumps divide 3-2, how do you play to avoid losing three hearts along with a spade?

Since you can't ruff your losing heart, you could draw two rounds of trump and then play on diamonds. This works if the player who holds the third spade has to follow to three rounds of diamonds. There is a better line: Simply play a low spade from each hand. As long as the trumps are 3-2, there is nothing the opponents can do.

**Hint:** Look for the problem and make your plan before playing to trick one.

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#2 –

To be successful at the bridge table, complete concentration is essential. Obviously it is vital to keep your emotions in check but sometimes that can be difficult. Take a look at this hand.

East-West vulnerable at matchpoints.

Hand #15 ♠A65  
Dlr N ♥A873  
Vul E-W ♦  
♣AK9843

♠K10943  
♥109  
♦Q98432  
♣



♠J72  
♥KQ65  
♦K65  
♣Q102

♠Q8  
♥J42  
♦AJ107  
♣J765

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♥
Pass	7♥	All Pass	

**BIDDING:** Our opponents had just overbid to a slam and brought it home on two finesses. If that wasn't bad enough, East was gloating. As we started on the second hand of three I could tell my partner sitting North was very angry. His splinter bid of 4♦ showed a big hand with diamond shortness and heart support. I realized my diamond king was very likely worthless so I signed off in 4♥. Still agitated, my partner next cue bid 4♠. I knew he must have great hand with a good club suit so I jumped to the slam. However, my partner was not done and gave East a dirty look as he carried on to the grand slam.

**PLAY:** The ten of heart was led and I could only count eleven tricks: 1 spade, 4 hearts, and 6 clubs. I had to assume the trumps were 3-2 and my only other source of tricks would be diamond ruffs in dummy. The problem was lack of entries to my hand. My only choice was to use the club suit so I won the heart lead in dummy and played another to my hand. It appeared West was now out of hearts. I ruffed a diamond in dummy followed by a club toward my hand. I stuck in the ten and closed my eyes. I won the trick as West showed out. I then ruffed another diamond and came back to my hand with the club queen to draw the last trump.


Now it was on to the third hand and East was very angry...

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It is often possible to get a complete picture of the opponents' distribution, but with other hands you must simply go with the odds. Take a look at this hand.

VUL: E-W

SCORING: IMPs

Hand #16	♠AJ105			
Dlr N	♥Q1093			
	♦J8			
Vul E- W	♣KJ2	West	North	East
			Pass	Pass
♠76		Pass	4NT	Pass
♥7542		All		6NT
♦Q9432		Pass		
♣98				
	♠K2			
	♥AKJ			
	♦A765			
	♣AQ103			


**BIDDING:** North passed a hand many people would open. After hearing his partner's 2NT bid showing 20-22 high card points, North invited slam. South knew his opponents at the other table were aggressive bidders so he accepted.

**PLAY:** West led a diamond against the slam. South could count 11 tricks: 2 spades, 4 hearts, 1 diamond, and 4 clubs. With any other lead he could merely concede a spade for an easy 12 tricks. Now he must discover who has the spade queen. To gain as much information as possible and perhaps establish a squeeze position, North ducked the first diamond and won the second. It appeared that West had led from a five card suit headed by the queen. Next declarer played four rounds of hearts and learned West started with four. He needed to keep communications between the two hands so he could only play one round of clubs. With the information available, the odds favored East to hold the queen of spades so declarer led the jack and let it ride. When the jack won, South unblocked the king of spades and returned to dummy with a club. Note the importance of keeping two clubs in dummy. If East covered the jack of spades with the queen, declarer would have to use a club to get back to dummy and then another to return to his hand.

This play could have lost to the queen of spades but the odds favored it being in the East hand. Also note since West held the long diamonds, there was no squeeze.

**Blackwood is one of the most popular and mis-used conventions. It should be used when you KNOW you want to be in slam but want to make sure you are not missing two aces. If the response to 4NT doesn't answer your question, then you probably should not have used it. See how you would have done with this hand.**

**East-West vulnerable at IMPs.**

Hand #17	♠KJ54				
Dlr S	♥AJ5	West	North	East	South
Vul E-	♦1098				1♣
W	♣K53	Pass	3♣	Pass	4NT
		Pass	5♦	Pass	6♣
♠76		Pass			
♥732		All Pass			
♦AK74					1♣
♣10874		Pass	3♣	Pass	4♣
		Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣
		All Pass			

**BIDDING:** North's bid of 3♣ showed four card support and 10-12 high card points. South held a monster hand and knew he was in slam range. In the first auction South asked for aces and after discovering his partner had one, bid the slam. In the second auction, South realized that he could lose two diamonds as well as a heart. He cue bid 4♣ and after his partner cue bid the ace of hearts, South jumped to 5♣. This asked North for either first or second round control of diamonds, the unbid suit. (On the previous round of bidding, North denied the diamond ace when he skipped over the suit to bid 4♥, but he could hold the king or a singleton.) North had an easy pass.

**PLAY:** West quickly cashed the top two diamonds leaving the second South relieved and the first one with an irate partner. Holding a small doubleton in an unbid suit is a danger sign, so remember, if the question is WHICH aces rather than HOW MANY aces, Blackwood may not help.



## **Bloomington-Normal 70% club Years 2020 & 2021 only**

<b>2021/2/19</b>	<b>70.37%</b>	<b>Mary Pat Killian &amp; Rick Dalton</b>
<b>2021/2/11</b>	<b>71.85%</b>	<b>Lori Moore &amp; Mary Allen</b>
<b>2021/1/16</b>	<b>70.28%</b>	<b>Larry Ziegler &amp; John Ford</b>
<b>2021/1/15</b>	<b>71.61%</b>	<b>Mary Cralley &amp; Charles Wiese</b>
<b>2020/12/26</b>	<b>71.11%</b>	<b>Rick Dalton &amp; Grant Brewen</b>
<b>2020/12/21</b>	<b>70.56%</b>	<b>Bill Bulfer &amp; Steve Babin</b>
<b>2020/10/29</b>	<b>70.20%</b>	<b>Lori Moore &amp; Mary Allen</b>
<b>2020/10/3</b>	<b>71.03%</b>	<b>Bill Bulfer &amp; Steve Babin</b>
<b>2020/8/1</b>	<b>70.14%</b>	<b>Eunice Patton &amp; Steve Babin</b>
<b>2020/7/20</b>	<b>72.78%</b>	<b>Cindy Lake &amp; Melissa Paschold(99ers)</b>
<b>2020/7/15</b>	<b>70.30%</b>	<b>Chris Benson &amp; John Seng</b>
<b>2020/6/22</b>	<b>71.99%</b>	<b>Cindy Moore &amp; Mike Tomlianovich</b>
<b>2020/4/23</b>	<b>70.16%</b>	<b>Larry Ziegler &amp; Ray Dostal</b>
<b>2020/1/6</b>	<b>75.00%</b>	<b>Rod Ruder &amp; Doug Lamb(99ers)</b>

## BRIDGE BITES

from: The American Contract Bridge League

By: Brian Gunnell



### #017 – A TRUMP DEMOTION

If you've been following this month's series of articles, then by now you are familiar with trump promotions. They are not so difficult once you get the hang of them, but it takes real talent to organize a trump *demotion*! Observe this tragic E-W performance:

*E-W Vulnerable*

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

	♠ T64 ♥ T832 ♦ 3 ♣ AQJ87	
♠ ♥ AK ♦ Q97652 ♣ T9432	<i>North</i>  <i>West</i> <i>East</i>  <i>Declarer</i>	♠ QJ3 ♥ QJ976 ♦ AJT ♣ 65
	♠ AK98752 ♥ 54 ♦ K84 ♣ K	

Looking just at N-S, playing in 4♠, you can see 3 top losers in the red suits. Of course, when tackling the trump suit, Declarer plays the ♠A first. Most (89%) of the time trumps will be 2-1 and there will be 10 easy tricks. But this deal is in the unlucky 11%, and so Declarer is destined to go down one.

But, no! Here come E-W, galloping to Declarer's rescue! West's opening lead is the ♥K, followed by the ♥A. This sequence of plays cleverly shows a doubleton in the E-W methods (with a longer suit, this pair would lead the Ace first). Then a Diamond switch is won by East's Ace, and a Heart comes back. Declarer ruffs resignedly with the Nine and, when that unexpectedly holds, the jig is up! Declarer now has no trouble working out the trump position, and crosses to Dummy (twice if necessary) to finesse East out of his ♠QJ3. Making 10 tricks!



It was not too smart of West to advertise a doubleton Heart when he had no trumps with which to ruff the third round. And East, knowing the trump situation, might have done better not to play that third round of Hearts (although a suspicious Declarer would surely have smelled a rat if East had *not* done so). So, there you have it, the dreaded trump demotion!

**#018 – SMARTER THAN A SECOND-GRADER?**

We learn to count in first- and second-grade, but somehow this basic skill deserts many bridge players in the heat of battle.

	♠ A832 ♥ Q85 ♦ QJ7653 ♣	
♠ 6 ♥ K63 ♦ K842 ♣ AQ543	North West    East Declarer	♠ 754 ♥ AJ94 ♦ T9 ♣ 8762
	♠ KQJT9 ♥ T72 ♦ A ♣ KJT9	

*None Vulnerable*

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♦	1♥	1♠
2♥	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

West leads a low Heart and East (correctly) inserts the Jack. Two more Hearts are cashed, followed by a trump shift. “Rats!” mutters Declarer, who had been planning to cross-ruff the entire hand, scoring all nine trumps separately. Those ruffs, plus the ♦A, would be enough to fulfill the contract. But, after the trump return, the cross-ruff leaves Declarer a trick short, so it’s time for Plan B.

Our Declarer’s (faulty) Plan B was to set up Dummy’s Diamonds. He won the trump return in hand, cashed the ♦A, then Club ruff, Diamond ruff, Club ruff, Diamond ruff. This line of play required good breaks (such as Spades 2-2 and Diamonds 3-3, or failing that the doubleton ♦K). But Declarer’s luck was out and, as the cards lie, it was impossible to enjoy those long Diamonds.

Our second-graders need no luck, instead they’ll do some counting:

- N-S have 23 HCP, so the other guys have 17
- In the Heart suit East showed up with 5 of those 17 missing HCP
- West opened the bidding and surely has the remaining 12 HCP

Once Declarer realizes that West has the missing high cards (obviously including the ♣A and ♣Q), it’s routine to win the trump return in hand, and take ruffing finesses against West’s high Clubs. Declarer leads the ♠K which is covered by the Ace and ruffed. Back to hand with a trump. Then the ♠J is led, and run around if West declines to cover. When the dust has cleared, Declarer will have scored 5 trumps in his hand, plus two Club ruffs in Dummy, plus two Club tricks, and the ♦A. 10 easy tricks for the second-graders!

**#019 – STUFF THAT DOESN’T HAPPEN**

Last week, our astute Declarer remembered that his opponent had opened the bidding, sensibly deduced that said opponent must have the missing high cards, and then played the hand accordingly. This week's deal is a bit more difficult, as Declarer must be alert to something which did *not* happen!

	♠ 9542 ♥ QT32 ♦ K43 ♣ A4	
♠ 86 ♥ K986 ♦ J952 ♣ JT8	North  West East  Declarer	♠ AK7 ♥ J4 ♦ T76 ♣ Q6532
	♠ QJT3 ♥ A75 ♦ AQ8 ♣ K97	

*E-W Vulnerable*

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

N-S stumble into 4♠ after a Stayman auction and West leads the ♣J. It looks like a simple enough hand, and so it is. Declarer loses two trumps and must avoid also losing two Heart tricks. How would you play the hand?

You win the first trick with the ♣K and lead the ♠Q. East wins that, then cashes his second high Spade, and exits a Spade.

You can cash some minor suit winners if you like but you already have all the information that you need to make the contract a virtual certainty.

What was it which “did not happen”? That’s right, East did not open the bidding! He has already shown up with the ♠AK ... and West’s lead of the ♣J denied the Queen. That gives East 9 HCP, so surely he cannot also hold the ♥K, that would be 12 HCP, and enough to open. So, you cash the ♥A and lead low towards the board. West is an expert and nonchalantly plays low, perhaps while stifling a yawn. But you are having none of that malarkey! You confidently call for the Queen and it’s 10 tricks for the good guys!

## #020 – THE POWER OF DEDUCTION

This deal follows continues the month’s theme of counting the opponents’ HCP.

	♠ ♥ 985 ♦ KJ842 ♣ 98432	
♠ 532 ♥ A764 ♦ AT3 ♣ JT6	North  West East  Declarer	♠ Q764 ♥ QJT ♦ Q75 ♣ A75
	♠ AKJT98 ♥ K32 ♦ 96 ♣ KQ	

*Both Vulnerable*

South	West	North	East
		Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

This is not the most swashbuckling auction ever to appear in Bridge Bites but the deal does provide a test for Declarer’s powers of deduction. Cover up the E-W hands if you would like to test your own powers.

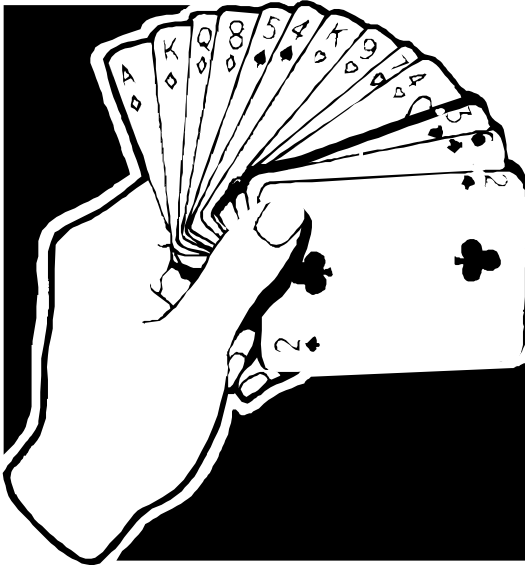
West leads the ♣J won by East’s Ace and it takes half a nano-second for East to find the ♥Q shift. You could duck Hearts twice, hoping that West has the doubleton ♥A, but that would give East 5 Hearts and he would be unlikely to sell out to 1♠ in that case. So, you hopefully play the ♥K, taken by West’s Ace. Two more Hearts are

won by East's ♥JT, then a Club which you win. The ♠A and ♠K are cashed, followed by the ♠J to East's Queen (West following).

Back comes East's last trump, and decision time has arrived! You've already lost 5 tricks, and must avoid the loss of two Diamonds if you are to make your contract. A Diamond to the Jack? Or a Diamond to the King? Do you have your guessing shoes on?

Guess? What guess? Let's reflect upon East's bidding. Oh, that's right, he didn't bid - which is the whole point of this hand. So far East has shown up with ♠A, ♥QJ, and ♠Q. That's 9 High Card Points (HCP). Can East also have the ♦A? Absolutely not! He passed originally, that ♦A would give him 13 HCP and too much for said Pass. So, you lead a Diamond towards the board, West smoothly plays low, and you rise majestically with the ♦K. Making 7 tricks thanks to a little deduction.

Post Script: Upon winning the ♥A, West would have done better to shift fiendishly to a low Diamond, putting Declarer to the test in that suit before all the clues had been collected!



**Please see schedule on page 1**

