

Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 23 Number 5 – May, 2021



May 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 – 999ers 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:

Mondays, 6:30pm – 199ers only pairs – ACTUAL START DATE AND LOCATION TBA

Wednesdays, 12:30pm – open pairs

Wednesdays, 12:30pm – 499ers only pairs

Saturdays, 12:30pm – open pairs– ACTUAL START DATE AND LOCATION TBA

Online(BBO) bridge available at times shown above.

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 4/6/2021 – residents of Bloomington-Normal only
paid up ACBL members only



1	4,288.74	Steve Babin
2	3,462.27	JoAnn Schroeder
3	3,443.22	Zack Freehill
4	3,284.80	Eunice Patton
5	2,829.59	Cindy Moore
6	2,414.94	Mike Tomlianovich
7	2,335.42	Ann Schuyler
8	2,188.19	Lori Moore
9	1,795.40	Ron Emmett
10	1,544.14	Jeff Furler
11	1,475.90	Joyce Clay
12	1,272.27	Jeanne Strand
13	1,161.80	Ivey Weaver
14	1,133.89	Steve Wulfers
15	830.65	Dave Freehill
16	718.61	Sallie Boge
17	708.16	Ray Dostal
18	599.64	Fred Spitzzeri
19	596.06	Mary Tweedie
20	571.72	Mary Cralley
21	485.13	John Cralley
22	436.69	Larry Ziegler
23	383.60	Gene Byers
24	341.78	Chris Zogg
25	335.32	Joyce Werner

Other players:

12,959.58	Chris Benson-LeRoy
5,688.15	Larry Matheny-Colorado
5,569.79	Ron Sholes-Springfield
5,468.02	John Seng-Champaign
4,326.26	Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
3,572.29	Carole Sholes-Springfield
3,408.83	Mary Allen-Peoria
3,355.44	Terry Goodykoontz
2,689.15	Pat Carrington-Champaign
2,671.71	Georgia Heth-Morton
2,654.61	Margaret Hansell-Champaign
2,527.17	Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
2,424.70	John Maloney-Champaign
2,189.86	Chuck Young-Peoria
1,988.80	Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
1,637.19	Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
1,351.77	Dan Bunde-Champaign
1,246.24	Wes Seitz-Champaign
1,053.24	Bill Strauss-Urbana
794.65	Darryl Bremner-Clinton
784.63	Carole Miller-Champaign
733.77	Bill Thompson-Ft Myers,FL
696.32	Melda Richardson-California
610.16	Lane O'Connor-Naperville
558.47	Linda Odette-Palisade,CO
533.66	Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
488.21	John Ford-Harvard,MA
432.36	Ron Sinn-Peoria
415.56	Connie Tucker-Champaign





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#1

The splinter bid has been around for a long time but many players fail to take advantage of it. Simply stated, a splinter bid shows support for partner's suit and shortness in the suit bid. Here it is in action.

VUL: E/W
 SCORING: Matchpoints

Hand #22
 Dlr N
 Vul E-
 W

♠ A9
 ♥ KJ85
 ♦ 8
 ♣ AK8762

♠ J10643	□	♠ 752
♥ 107		♥ 6
♦ 5432		♦ AKQ1096
♣ Q4		♣ 1093
		♠ KQ8
		♥ AQ9432
		♦ J7
		♣ J5

West	North	East	South
	1♣	2♦	2♥
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♥
All pass			

*Splinter Bid

BIDDING: After North's 1♣ opening bid, East made a weak jump overcall of 2♦. At unfavorable vulnerability, this showed a very good suit with little else. South had an easy 2♥ call and North, holding extras, jumped to 4♦. This splinter bid showed the values to bid 4♥ as well as a singleton or void in diamonds. That was all South needed to move toward slam. His 4NT call asked for the number of keycards (aces + heart king) and responder showed 0-3. Realizing they were missing one keycard, South settled for the small slam.

PLAY: South lost the first trick in diamonds and was able to claim the rest. To fully appreciate the value of the splinter bid, just visualize North with two small diamonds. Now North would jump to 4♥ over South's 2♥ call and no form of ace asking would help.

#2

I continue to receive questions regarding the splinter bid so here is another example. Remember it shows support for partner's suit along with shortness in the suit bid.

VUL: E-W

SCORING: Matchpoints

Hand #23	♠A10987				
Dlr S	♥K6532				
Vul E-W	♦K106				
	♣	West	North	East	South
♠K6	♠J				1♠
♥104	♥J987	2♣	4♣*	5♣	5♦
♦J954	♦83	Pass	5♥	Pass	5♠
♣AKQ64	♣J109732	Pass	6♣	Pass	6♣
	♠Q5432	All Pass			
	♥AQ				
	♦AQ72				
	♣85				

*Splinter Bid

BIDDING: Little did South know when he opened the bidding how good his 14 high card points would become. After West's overcall of 2♣, North jumped to 4♣ to show spade support with game values and club shortness. Even though the vulnerability was wrong, East could not resist sacrificing in 5♣. South realized his partner must hold some red honor cards to justify his jump to the four level, so he cooperated by cue bidding the ace of diamonds. North loved his hand and made a cue bid in the heart suit. South now slowed the bidding with 5♠ but North wasn't to be stopped and bid 6♣. His first club bid showed a singleton so this promised a void. South signed off in the small slam hoping his spades were good enough..

PLAY: Declarer ruffed West's club lead in dummy. South could see that his only concern was holding his spade losers to one. At trick two declarer led a heart to his hand followed by a small spade. After West played the six, declarer took the safety play by covering with dummy's ten. East won the trick but that was it for the defense. It's nice to bid and make a slam with only twenty four high card points.

A further note on the play: declarer could have led the spade queen from his hand and lost no tricks, but if the KJ6 were all in the East hand, the slam would fail. Notice the safety play works against any distribution of the spade suit.

#3

Most players agree that defense is one of the most difficult areas of bridge. However, using the basic techniques of remembering the bidding and reading the opening lead can help. Take a look at this hand from a team game..

SCORING: IMPs

Hand #24	♠85					
Dlr W	♥1042					
Vul E-	♦AJ52					
W	♣J873					
♣J1074		♠K2	West	North	East	South
♥A9		♥KQJ87	1♦	Pass	1♥	1♠
♦K1063		♦4	Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
♣A62		♣KQ954	3NT	All Pass		
	♠AQ963					
	♥653					
	♦Q987					
	♣10					

BIDDING: I held the South hand and made a light overcall of 1♠. East forced with 3♣ and West bid 3NT. A 3♥ bid by West was an alternative and would have led to a better contract.


PLAY: North led the eight of spades and it was clear he held a doubleton. My partner would have led low from three small and the bidding made it unlikely West had five spades. **REVIEWING THE AUCTION**, partner undoubtedly held one of the missing high honors. If declarer had them all he would have opened 1NT, and without at least three of them, he would not have an opening bid. If partner held either the heart or club ace, we were not going to defeat the hand. However, if he held good diamonds we had a chance. Since I had no other entries to my hand, when declarer called for a small spade from dummy, I won the queen and shifted to a low diamond. This hit pay dirt when declarer played the ten and partner won the jack. North returned his last spade to my ace and I continued diamonds. We ended up with two spade tricks and four diamonds to defeat the hand two tricks. There was nothing difficult about the hand but it was important to realize the spade suit was going to establish two tricks for declarer and only two for us.

At the other table, our partners reached the superior contract of 4♥ losing only two spades and one diamond.

#4

One of the most popular conventions in use today is Roman Key Card Blackwood. This convention treats the king of the agreed trump suit as another ace. This lets you avoid slams when you are missing an ace and the trump king. Another feature is it enables you to ask about the trump queen and that is particularly useful when probing for a grand slam. However, this very valuable tool can sometimes put you in a difficult position. Take a look at this hand.

SCORING: Matchpoints

Hand #25	♠872				
Dlr W	♥KQ109				
E-	♦AKQJ2				
Vul W	♣J				
		West	North	East	South
♠A1096		Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
♥8		Pass	3♥	Pass	4NT*
♦98765		Pass	5♠	Pass	6♥
♣983		All Pass			
	♠KQJ				
	♥AJ7532				
	♦10				
	♣KQ10				

*Roman Key Card Blackwood

BIDDING: There was nothing wrong with the bidding until South used 4NT to ask about keycards. The response of 5♠ showed two keycards plus the queen of spades. Now the partnership was too high and South had no choice but to continue to the small slam. His only hope was that he was off one ace and the king of hearts rather than two aces.

PLAY: The defense quickly cashed their two aces and the slam was defeated.

One solution to this problem is to use 4♠ as the keycard ask when hearts is the agreed suit. Another approach is to use 4♠ as a relay to 4NT allowing you to respond with the number of keycards. If you use this convention, make sure you discuss this problem with your partners.

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To register email

camp@B4youth.org



Bloomington-Normal 70% club Years 2020 & 2021 only

2021/4/15	71.91%	Lori Moore & Mary Allen
2021/3/20	71.11%	Pat Lebeck & Lynn Steffen(299ers)
2021/2/11	70.74%	Lori Moore & Mary Allen
2021/2/19	70.37%	Mary Pat Killian & Rick Dalton
2021/2/11	71.85%	Lori Moore & Mary Allen
2021/1/16	70.28%	Larry Ziegler & John Ford
2021/1/15	71.61%	Mary Cralley & Charles Wiese
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



#025 – FISHING FOR CLUES

As the play-of-the-hand develops Declarer is constantly on the look-out for the clues which will point to the right line of play. But these clues don't always come gift-wrapped, sometimes Declarer must go fishing.

	♠ 5 ♥ QJ63 ♦ AJ7432 ♣ A8	
♠ A98432 ♥ 84 ♦ ♣ T9754	North West East Declarer	♠ 76 ♥ 92 ♦ Q85 ♣ KQJ632
	♠ KQJT ♥ AKT75 ♦ KT96 ♣	

E-W Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Against 6♥, West tries a Heart lead and Declarer draws trumps in two rounds. It's a fine slam but not quite iron-clad. There's a Spade to be lost, and the key to success is not to lose a Diamond. How would *you* play the hand, looking only at the N-S cards?

If Diamonds are 2-1 then Declarer is home free, but suppose that the suit is 3-0. Now, Declarer has a guess. If he thinks that *West* is more likely to hold three Diamonds then he'll play his ♦K on the first round, later finessing against West's Queen if East does indeed show out. Conversely, he'll play Dummy's ♦A first if he suspects that *East* might have the three Diamonds. Which do you choose?

At this point it's a complete guess, so, before playing on Diamonds, Declarer goes fishing. He concedes a trick to the Spade Ace, and let's say that West returns a Club. Declarer ruffs that, then cashes Spades, and reels in a whopper of a clue when East shows out on the third round! Ha! Now Declarer knows that East started with four cards in the majors, and West with eight. The odds have changed dramatically! If one of the defenders has three Diamonds it's surely East. So Declarer plays Dummy's ♦A on the first round, and says a silent "Yippee!" when West shows out. 12 tricks if Declarer delays the Diamond play and first looks for clues in the other suits.

#026 – INTRODUCING DR GOODLEAD

This week we feature a terrific opening lead, found in real life by John Brady of Jacksonville, FL (known to some as Dr Goodlead).

	♠ QJ96 ♥ J974 ♦ 9 ♣ K874	
♠ KT5432 ♥ A5 ♦ A76 ♣ 52	North West East Declarer	♠ ♥ 86 ♦ T5432 ♣ QJT963
	♠ A87 ♥ KQT32 ♦ KQJ8 ♣ A	

N-S Vulnerable

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

Imagine yourself as East, if you will, looking at the N-E hands. West, the good doctor, leads the Spade Ten. A strange-looking lead, don't you think? It's not fourth best, not top of a sequence. Has the doctor's legendary common-sense finally deserted him?

While you are puzzling over that bizarre opening lead, Dummy plays the ♠Q and you gleefully ruff. What next, Mr East? West found a grand opening lead, and life would be even grander if only you could get back to West's hand for a second ruff. If that is to happen, West must have ♦A or ♣A. Any clues as to which?

The opening lead is your much-needed clue. West led an unnecessarily *high* Spade, and is trying to tell you something. Yes, he is advertising the Ace in the *higher*-ranking side-suit! So, after ruffing, you shoot back a Diamond to West's Ace and get your second Spade ruff. Down one!

Doctor G's lead from ♠KT5432 was not without risk, but he saw no appealing alternative, and he reasonably concluded that East had no more than two Spades (due to non-support in the auction). He didn't necessarily expect a void, but singleton was also a possibility (in which case West would later win the ♥A and give East a second-round Spade ruff).

What just happened was a *Suit Preference* signal, whereby, in certain situations, the play of a high card says "I have the higher-ranking suit", vice versa with a low card. This defensive signal is a rare bird on opening lead, it usually comes later in the hand and even then only in specialized situations. Dr Goodlead gave us the caviar, we'll have some meat-and-potatoes examples in later Bridge Bites.



#027 – THREE DEGREES OF BACON

This week's hand features an astonishing defense by West - we'll get to the winning play by degrees.

	♠ AT2 ♥ Q6 ♦ KQJT73 ♣ 84	
♠ 765 ♥ 542 ♦ 54 ♣ AQJ96	North West East Declarer	♠ KQJ93 ♥ A3 ♦ 982 ♣ K73
	♠ 84 ♥ KJT987 ♦ A6 ♣ T52	

E-W Vulnerable

South West North East

Pass 2♠ 3♦ 1♠
3♥ All Pass Pass

E-W did well not to compete to 3♠ (that contract is down one if N-S get their Diamond ruff). Instead, E-W are required to defeat South's 3♥ contract. Will they? West's lead is a Spade, won in Dummy.

In the first degree, you are Declarer. With that running Diamond suit you have loads of winners, but the danger is that E-W will get five tricks first. You can try for a Club ruff in

Dummy, but alert defenders will switch to trumps (being sure to hold up the ♥A until the second round). Nonetheless, at Trick 2, you lead a Club hoping that something good will happen.

In the second degree, you are East, trying to thwart Declarer. Dummy's ♠A wins the first trick, and a Club is led, won by West's Jack. West shifts to a trump, and you have a dilemma:

- If Declarer has the ♣A, and West the ♦A, then the winning defense is to take the ♥A immediately and play another Heart, stopping the Club ruff.
- If Declarer has the ♦A, and West the ♠A, then the winning defense is to duck the first trump, win the next Club, cash ♥A and then a third Club.

To bring home the bacon the defense must go to the third degree. This time, you are West, trying to help East to thwart Declarer. Same start, but instead of routinely winning the ♣J at Trick 2, you do some thinking. Declarer did not play Clubs like someone holding the ♣K, so East surely has that card. In that case you can afford to squander the Ace! This brilliant stroke solves East's dilemma, telling him what he needs to know. How many Wests would find that truly remarkable play? None that we know of!



#028 – WE’VE GOT YOU SURROUNDED

	♠ T9532 ♥ A92 ♦ 8 ♣ KJ32	
♠ J ♥ K76 ♦ KQJ642 ♣ T98	<i>North</i> <i>West</i> <i>East</i> <i>Declarer</i>	♠ 4 ♥ QT85 ♦ T973 ♣ AQ75
	♠ AKQ876 ♥ J43 ♦ A5 ♣ 64	

N-S Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♠	2♦	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Perhaps East should have tried 5♦ over 4♠, that would be a cheap sacrifice if 4♠ is making. Instead, she guesses to defend and must find a nice defensive play if she is to justify her shyness in the bidding.

You are that shy East, so try looking at only the N-E hands. West leads the ♦K, won by Declarer’s Ace. A Diamond is

ruffed in Dummy, followed by a Spade to Declarer’s Ace. Then a Club to Dummy’s Jack and your Queen. What next?

At this point, you cannot play a Club or a Diamond without blowing a trick, so you must shift to a Heart. Which Heart? It seems routine to play a low Heart, but let’s stop and think. If Declarer has the ♥K it won’t matter what you do, so let’s assume that West has the King. If West has the ♥J to go along with that King then you can shift to any old Heart, again it won’t matter. So the case to worry about is the one you see looking at all four hands.

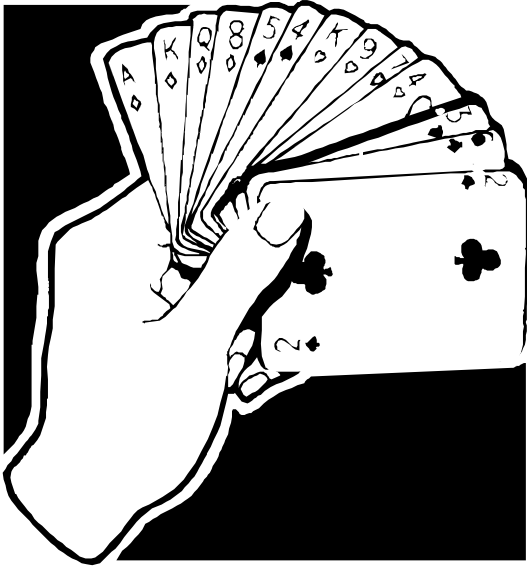
Look what happens if you shift to a low Heart. Dummy plays low, West must play the King, losing to the Ace. That’s only one Heart loser for Declarer. The required shift is the Heart Ten! Your Ten and Eight have Dummy’s Nine “surrounded” and that’s what makes the surprising shift to the Ten the winning play. The Ten is covered by the Jack, King and Ace, after which East’s Q8 sits over Dummy’s 92, providing two Heart tricks for the defense.

Surrounding plays don’t happen every day, and are easy to miss in the heat of battle. But now that you are an expert on the subject you will no doubt spot this one right away:

Dummy T65
West A432 *East* KJ9
Declarer Q87

East’s J9 surround Dummy’s Ten and it is a shift to the *Jack* which is the winning play, picking up the whole suit.





Please see schedule on page 1

