

Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 23 Number 9 – September, 2021



September Events

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

1st Monday – Mentor-mentee pairs all other games – open 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, 6:15pm – 99ers only pairs – Mike's Bridge Room – lower level of 1714 Tompkins Dr, Normal
Wednesdays, 12:30pm – open pairs
Wednesdays, 12:30pm – 499ers only pairs
Saturdays, 12:30pm – open pairs

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

Online(BBO) bridge available at:

Tuesdays, 6:50pm – 499ers only pairs
Wednesdays, 6:50pm – open pairs
Thursdays, 6:30pm – 299ers only pairs
Thursdays, 6:50pm – open pairs
Saturdays, 11:50am – 299ers only pairs
Saturdays, 12:10pm – open pairs
Sundays, 6:50pm – mentee-mentor 2nd & 4th – open 1st-3rd-5th pairs

for more information contact one of:

Lori Moore at 309-838-8085

Mike Tomlianovich at 309-825-5823

Eunice Patton at 309-660-2380

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 8/6/2021 – residents of Bloomington-Normal only
paid up ACBL members only



- 1 4,341.25 Steve Babin
- 2 3,595.11 JoAnn Schroeder
- 3 3,464.08 Zack Freehill
- 4 3,316.95 Eunice Patton
- 5 2,950.32 Cindy Moore
- 6 2,445.14 Mike Tomlianovich
- 7 2,349.83 Ann Schuyler
- 8 2,242.66 Lori Moore
- 9 1,809.52 Ron Emmett
- 10 1,550.55 Jeff Furler
- 11 1,528.19 Joyce Clay
- 12 1,272.27 Jeanne Strand
- 13 1,161.80 Ivey Weaver
- 14 1,152.96 Steve Wulfers
- 15 832.43 Dave Freehill
- 16 811.64 Stevie Joslin
- 17 799.96 Barbara Neuges
- 18 744.72 Ray Dostal
- 19 728.78 Sallie Boge
- 20 616.42 Fred Spitzzeri
- 21 583.22 Mary Cralley
- 22 496.03 John Cralley
- 23 487.33 Larry Ziegler
- 24 397.94 Gene Byers
- 25 355.88 Chris Zogg

Other players:

- 13,100.07 Chris Benson-LeRoy
- 5,770.10 Larry Matheny-Colorado
- 5,678.16 Ron Sholes-Springfield
- 5,508.52 John Seng-Champaign
- 4,390.62 Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
- 3,644.56 Carole Sholes-Springfield
- 3,476.17 Mary Allen-Peoria
- 3,442.97 Terry Goodykoontz
- 2,689.15 Pat Carrington-Champaign
- 2,673.25 Georgia Heth-Morton
- 2,654.93 Margaret Hansell-Champaign
- 2,551.44 Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
- 2,429.21 John Maloney-Champaign
- 2,230.82 Chuck Young-Peoria
- 2,002.97 Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
- 1,697.49 Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
- 1,361.61 Dan Bunde-Urbana
- 1,279.97 Wes Seitz-Champaign
- 1,082.15 Bill Strauss-Urbana
- 842.62 Darryl Bremner-Clinton
- 794.60 Carole Miller-Champaign
- 774.63 Bill Thompson-Ft Myers,FL
- 705.35 Melda Richardson-California
- 612.97 Lane O'Connor-Naperville
- 576.14 Linda Odette-Palisade,CO
- 546.98 Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
- 510.89 John Ford-Harvard,MA
- 466.58 Ron Sinn-Peoria
- 464.45 Connie Tucker-Champaign





IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

with Larry Matheny



#1 –

When declaring the hand, it is important to remember the bidding. The auction usually holds information that will help place the opponents' high cards. Here is an example.

Scoring: IMPs

Hand #38
 Dlr E
 Vul N-
 S

♠Q8

♥K108

♦J8643

♣K86

♠75
 ♥QJ53
 ♦K752
 ♣932



♠K42

♥A94

♦AQ109

♣A107

West	North	East	South
		2♠	DBL
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

* natural with 7-10 high card points

BIDDING: Over East's 2♠ bid, South had the values for 2NT but was concerned about holding only one spade stopper. A takeout double normally includes four cards in the other major but South finally decided this was his best call. This partnership uses the Lebensohl convention so North's response of 3♦ showed values. With a weaker hand, North would have bid 2NT relaying his partner to 3♣ and he would then show a weak hand by bidding 3♦. South bid 3NT hoping for help in the spade suit.

PLAY: West led his partner's suit and declarer saw he needed the diamond suit to come to nine tricks. Remembering the bidding, South realized the king of diamonds very likely to be in the West hand. Accordingly, he rose with dummy's queen so that East would not duck the first spade. East could do no more than continue spades and declarer won the third round. It was now safe to enter dummy and take the diamond finesse. Declarer ended with nine tricks (1 spade, 2 hearts, 4 diamonds, and 2 clubs).

Note if declarer played low from dummy on the first trick, East would insert the nine of spades. It would be essential for South to duck this trick. By rising with the queen, declarer would win two

spade tricks if East failed to play his ace.

Copyright ©2007 Larry Matheny.

#2

The SPLINTER bid has been around for quite a while but many players do not take advantage of it. Here is an example of how valuable it can be.

Scoring: IMPs

Hand ♠732
 #39 ♥AQJ1064
 Dlr N ♦954
 Vul N-S ♣3

♠964		♠108
♥83		♥972
♦832		♦Q1076
♣KJ764		♣A1082

♠AKQJ5
 ♥K5
 ♦AKJ
 ♣Q95

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

*Spinter bid

BIDDING: After North's weak two bid, South was interested in slam but concerned about the club suit. He started with a forcing 2♠ call and North took a new look at his hand. North had three card spade support, a good heart suit, and a singleton club. He jumped to 4♣ to show the shortness. That was all South needed to hear. He used Blackwood to confirm they were not missing two aces and then bid the slam.

PLAY: West led a club and declarer quickly wrapped up twelve tricks.

South held a huge hand and might bid the slam without knowing about the singleton club, but just switch North's minor suits and any contract above the four level could be too high.

Copyright ©2007 Larry Matheny.

#3

While the 4-3-2-1 point count system most players use to evaluate their hands is valuable, sometimes you have to look beyond it. This hand is a good example of how big seven high card points can be.

Scoring: IMPs

Hand #40 ♠AK3
Dlr N ♥10542
Vul BOTH ♦109642
♣2

♠J1087652
♥A6
♦
♣9854



♠9
♥3
♦KQJ8753
♣KJ106

West	North	East	South
	Pass	3♦	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦*
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

♠Q4
♥KQJ987
♦A
♣AQ73

*0-3 keycards

BIDDING: After East's 3♦ preempt, South jumped to 4♥. A vulnerable overcall of 3♥ would show a good hand so the jump indicated a very strong hand. North didn't hold many high card points but he had good heart support and controls in two of the outside suits. He also knew his partner should be short in diamonds. Realizing what a good dummy he had, he used Roman Keycard Blackwood to check for the keycards (four aces + heart king) and then bid the slam.

PLAY: Declarer won the spade opening lead and knocked out the ace of trumps. He was later able to discard one club loser on the spade king and ruff the other two in dummy. Most players who held the North hand passed and said "But I only had seven points".

Copyright ©2007 Larry Matheny.

#4

Many players depend too much on the Blackwood convention and would be better off learning other ways to reach slams. However, there are hands where it is a very valuable tool. Here is a good example.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #41	♠J108					
Dlr N	♥J876					
Vul BOTH	♦6					
	♣KJ743	West	North	East	South	
			Pass	Pass	2♣	
♠94	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: inline-block;"></div>	♠732	Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♠
♥KQ53		♥1042	Pass	3♠	Pass	4NT
♦982		♦J103	Pass	5♦**	Pass	5NT
♣Q1092		♣865	Pass	6♣	Pass	7♣
	♠AKQ65		All Pass			
	♥A9					
	♦AKQ75					
	♣A					

*5-7 high card points

**0-3 keycards

BIDDING: When I picked up the South hand I knew slam was likely, perhaps even a grand. In response to my 2♣ opening, partner showed 5-7 high card points with his artificial 2♥ bid. After North showed spade support, the odds were very good that I would be able to establish my diamond suit, ruffing in dummy if necessary. Next I needed to find out if partner held either of the missing kings to take care of my heart loser. Using Roman Keycard Blackwood, my bid of 5NT confirmed we held all of the missing keycards (4 aces + king of spades) and asked for specific kings. After partner showed the king of clubs, I bid the grand slam.

PLAY: West led the king of hearts which I won. I then played the ace of diamonds followed by a diamond ruffed in dummy. I came to my hand with the ace of clubs to ruff another diamond. Next I discarded my losing heart on the king of clubs and played the last spade in dummy. It was then easy to ruff a heart to my hand and draw the remaining trumps.

This hand is an excellent example of how useful the convention can be.

Copyright ©2007 Larry Matheny.



**Bloomington-Normal 70% club
Year 2021 only**

2021/8/9	70.48%	Mary Pat Killian & Bob Bray
2021/7/28	71.21%	Ray Dostal & Steve Wulfers
2021/7/12	75.83%	Fred Spitzzerie & Zach Freehill
2021/7/11	72.28%	Eunice Patton & Larry Ziegler
2021/7/7	70.83%	David Quigg & Rich Hagenauer
2021/7/7	70.83%	Hank Hoffman & Zach Freehill
2021/6/7	72.00%	Rick Kern & Michelle Tomlin(Mon eve pairs)
2021/5/31	73.26%	Larry Ziegler & John Ford
2021/5/5	70.43%	Chris Benson & David Quigg
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



BRIDGE BITES

from: The American Contract Bridge League

By: Brian Gunnell

#041 – THE DEVIL'S COUP

You could play a lifetime of bridge without pulling off a Devil's Coup, but it's worth a look purely for its entertainment value.

	♠ AT4 ♥ Q954 ♦ KJ96 ♣ A7	
♠ J73 ♥ A872 ♦ T82 ♣ Q54	North West East Declarer	♠ Q8 ♥ JT63 ♦ 753 ♣ J632
	♠ K9652 ♥ K ♦ AQ4 ♣ KT98	

Dummy's ♥Q (even though it is a defense is toast. *If West ruffs low* then last two tricks with the ♠A and ♠K ... *if* and there is now a finesse position indeed!

To bring off this small miracle, West's 3=4=3=3 or 3=5=3=2 and he had to honors. We don't know if that offers 8%, but we are sure that bringing off

It looks like Partner has overbid again because you find yourself in the dreadful contract of 6♠. West cashes the ♥A at Trick 1 and now the success of your slam depends upon losing no trump tricks, missing QJ873. The chances of one defender holding QJ doubleton are pretty remote (8%, actually) and you can do better by *not* drawing trumps.

At Trick 2, you ruff the Heart continuation, cash three Diamonds (ending in Dummy), ruff another Heart, cash ♠A and ♠K, and ruff a Club, reaching this position, with the lead in Dummy:

	♠ AT ♥ Q ♦ 9 ♣	
♠ J73 ♥ 7 ♦ ♣		♠ Q8 ♥ J ♦ J ♣ J
	♠ K96 ♥ ♦ ♣ T	

Do you see how to win the rest of the tricks? Sure you do! You ruff winner!) and, when the ♠T is led, the Dummy overruffs and you score the *West ruffs high* then Dummy overruffs against East's Queen! Devilish

distribution had to be precisely hold one of the missing Spade better odds than the aforementioned the Devil's Coup is so much more fun!



#042 – THE STRIPEASE COUP

	♠ AQ765 ♥ 53 ♦ Q4 ♣ 9854	
♠ JT943 ♥ KQT4 ♦ 65 ♣ A3	North West East Declarer	♠ 82 ♥ 9876 ♦ JT982 ♣ K7
	♠ K ♥ AJ2 ♦ AK73 ♣ QJT62	

We round out our series on bridge coups with a personal favorite.

After West has overcalled in Spades, South finds herself in 5♣, a contract which appears doomed when West's opening lead is the ♥K. Declarer cannot play on trumps immediately because the defense has three cashing tricks ... she cannot pitch her two Heart losers on the top Spades because East will ruff the third round ... and she cannot pitch Dummy's Heart loser on the Diamonds because West will ruff the third round.

But Declarer has a resource, let the striptease commence! Declarer's ♥A wins the first trick, the ♠K is unblocked, then over to Dummy's ♦Q. The ♠A is cashed (Declarer pitching a Heart, of course), and now, when Dummy's ♠Q is played, East must ruff to prevent another Heart pitch. He cannot ruff high (Declarer would pitch the Heart anyway) so he ruffs low and is overruffed. Next, Declarer plays his high Diamonds and this time it is West who is forced to ruff in order to prevent the Heart pitch. West must also ruff low and is overruffed by Dummy.

After those two low ruffs, both defenders have bared down to a singleton trump honor, so Declarer can lead a trump and enjoy the sight of the Ace and King tumbling down on the same trick! This was actually a double Striptease Coup as both defenders were divested of their protective small trump.



#043 – THRUST AND PARRY

East made a couple of fine defensive plays on this deal, but Declarer parried with some good plays of her own, and eventually prevailed.

♠ 652 ♥ Q543 ♦ 42 ♣ QJT3		
♠ KQJT93 ♥ 762 ♦ 5 ♣ 842	North West East Declarer	♠ 4 ♥ A98 ♦ T9876 ♣ A976
♠ A87 ♥ KJT ♦ AKQJ3 ♣ K5		

N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
2♠	Pass	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West's 2♠ was preemptive, showing a 6-card suit and a weak hand. West leads the ♠K, and Declarer ducks the first round, just in case West was being frisky and bid 2♠ on a 5-card suit. The purpose of that "hold-up play" is to make sure that East is out of Spades when he later gains the lead.

Declarer wins the second round of Spades (East pitches a Club), and must flush out East's Aces in order to reach 9 tricks. She leads the ♣K, but East cleverly ducks that,

making his own hold-up play in order to shut out Dummy's Club suit. Declarer persists with Clubs and East wins the second round, then exits with a Diamond. Next comes the ♥K, but again East holds up his Ace, and holds up yet again when Declarer plays the ♥J! East has succeeded in keeping Declarer from reaching Dummy, but only temporarily. Declarer leads another Heart, which East must win. Again, East exits with a Diamond. Declarer cashes the remaining Diamond winners and loses the fifth round to East. East's remaining card is a Club and that gives Declarer her 9th trick. It took a while, but finally, at Trick 13, Declarer reaches Dummy!

Post Script: If Declarer had held three Clubs instead of just two, East would have wanted to duck the second Club and win the third round. How did East know to win the second round instead? His helpful Partner gave him a *count signal*, playing the *Two* on the first round. By playing a *low* Club West showed an *odd* number ... if West had held a doubleton, he would have played his *high* Club to show an *even* number. Nice defense by E-W, albeit in a losing cause.



#044 – CHERCHEZ LA FEMME

If it's not too late already, try looking at just the N-S hands and decide how you are going to play that Spade suit. Where's the lady?

	♠ A873 ♥ QT9 ♦ 985 ♣ K32	
♠ 4 ♥ 876542 ♦ QJT ♣ T65	<i>North</i> <i>West</i> <i>East</i> <i>Declarer</i>	♠ Q65 ♥ AKJ ♦ 72 ♣ AJ987
	♠ KJT92 ♥ 3 ♦ AK643 ♣ Q4	

E-W Vulnerable

<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
			1NT
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

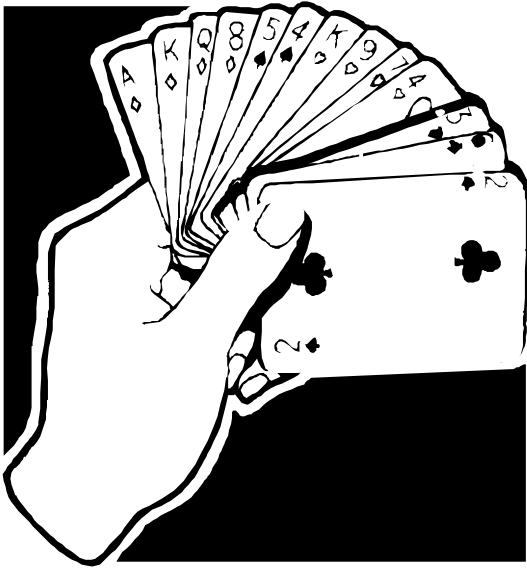
That 1NT opening showed 15-17 HCP, after which the auction inches its way up to 4♠. West leads the ♦Q, which is won by your Ace. You have one loser in each of the side-suits, so to make your contract you must avoid losing a trump trick.

In the play of the Spades you could choose to finesse against West, or to finesse against East, or to play "for the drop" (hoping that the suit is 2-2 or the ♠Q is singleton). The

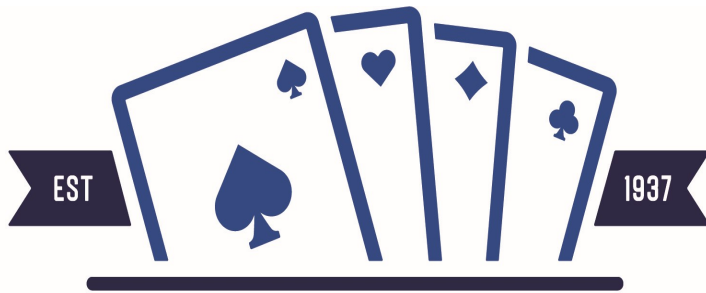
general rule, when holding a 9-card fit, is to play for the drop, all things being equal that is about a 58% chance.

But why settle for 58% when you can have 100%? Yes, it's time for some counting. N-S have a combined 22 HCP, that leaves E-W with 18. West has already played the ♦Q, leaving precisely 15 or 16 HCP in the East hand. As East has already advertised 15-17 he must have all the missing high cards with the possible exception of one of the missing Jacks. So at Trick 2 you lead a Spade to Dummy's Ace and then, when East plays low on the second round, you finesse the Jack with complete confidence. That's 10 tricks for those who count, but only 9 for the rule-followers.





Please see schedules on page 1



**AMERICAN CONTRACT
BRIDGE LEAGUE**

— DEALING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES —