

Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 24 Number 2 – February, 2022



February 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 - SPECIAL GAMES ANNOUNCED
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 – 299ers 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 1/6/2022 – residents of Bloomington-Normal only
paid up ACBL members only



- 1 4,422.05 Steve Babin
- 2 3,725.52 JoAnn Schroeder
- 3 3,512.43 Zack Freehill
- 4 3,349.29 Eunice Patton
- 5 3,051.37 Cindy Moore
- 6 2,490.35 Mike Tomlianovich
- 7 2,360.89 Ann Schuyler
- 8 2,280.41 Lori Moore
- 9 1,832.72 Ron Emmett
- 10 1,611.48 Joyce Clay
- 11 1,572.73 Jeff Furler
- 12 1,272.27 Jeanne Strand
- 13 1,208.06 Steve Wulfers
- 14 1,161.80 Ivey Weaver
- 15 840.72 Dave Freehill
- 16 817.35 Barbara Neuges
- 17 782.12 Ray Dostal
- 18 760.78 Sallie Boge
- 19 652.17 Fred Spitzzeri
- 20 588.08 Mary Cralley
- 21 514.31 Larry Ziegler
- 22 499.46 John Cralley
- 23 421.12 Gene Byers
- 24 379.03 Chris Zogg
- 25 352.70 Marilyn Byers

Other players:

- 13,255.95 Chris Benson-LeRoy
- 5,881.23 Larry Matheny-Colorado
- 5,773.45 Ron Sholes-Springfield
- 5,541.44 John Seng-Champaign
- 4,485.74 Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
- 3,706.98 Carole Sholes-Springfield
- 3,538.88 Mary Allen-Peoria
- 3,524.26 Terry Goodykoontz
- 2,708.97 Georgia Heth-Morton
- 2,689.15 Pat Carrington-Champaign
- 2,654.93 Margaret Hansell-Champaign
- 2,608.61 Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
- 2,437.11 John Maloney-Champaign
- 2,299.98 Chuck Young-Peoria
- 2,029.65 Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
- 1,767.16 Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
- 1,372.41 Dan Bunde-Urbana
- 1,330.86 Wes Seitz-Champaign
- 1,102.95 Bill Strauss-Urbana
- 868.38 Darryl Bremner-Clinton
- 830.11 Bill Thompson-Ft Myers,FL
- 801.84 Carole Miller-Champaign
- 719.94 Melda Richardson-California
- 620.66 Lane O'Connor-Naperville
- 578.21 Linda Odette-Palisade,CO
- 557.08 Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
- 534.47 John Ford-Harvard,MA
- 509.58 Ron Sinn-Peoria
- 508.66 Connie Tucker-Champaign





IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

with Larry Matheny



#1

It's often easy to reach your best contract when the opponents remain silent, but when there is interference, look out. I can describe this hand with two words: preempts work! Take a look.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #1
 Dlr E
 Vul N-S

♠KJ10954
 ♥3
 ♦
 ♣KJ9832

♠AQ63
 ♥Q1074
 ♦9873
 ♣10



♠
 ♥AKJ986
 ♦A102
 ♣AQ54

♠872
 ♥52
 ♦KQJ654
 ♣76

West	North	East	South
		2♦	3♥
5♦	DBL	Pass	5♥
All Pass			

BIDDING: East opened a weak two bid and South felt his hand was too good to merely overcall. A takeout double followed by a heart bid might work but might also encourage his partner to bid spades. He finally settled on a jump to 3♥ to show extra values and a good suit. Looking at favorable vulnerability, West leaped to 5♦ to put maximum pressure on his opponents. North had values but no hearts and finally decided to double. South closed the auction by rebidding his hearts, a questionable decision since his first bid showed a good suit and North did not raise.

PLAY: West led a diamond and declarer ruffed in dummy. There was no way for South to avoid losing two hearts and a diamond for down one when he was cold for a grand slam in clubs. Without the preempts, North would be able to show both of his suits and at least a small slam would likely be reached.

Note that East-West would be down three in 5♦ doubled for -500. That makes it a good sacrifice over 4♥ which would score +620. Once again vulnerability was an important factor.

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#3

One of the most popular contracts in duplicate bridge is 3NT. It is the game that requires the fewest tricks but, of course, doesn't provide the protection of a trump suit. The successful declarer must carefully count his tricks and mind his entries. Take a look at this hand.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #3 ♠1054
Dlr E ♥762
Vul N-S ♦AK
♣A9832

♠J2
♥QJ
♦J109874
♣K105



♠AK7
♥AK84
♦Q32
♣764

♠Q9863
♥10953
♦65
♣QJ

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

BIDDING: The auction was a standard 1NT-3NT.

PLAY: West led the jack of diamonds and declarer could count only eight tricks. The ninth one could come from a 3-3 heart division (36%) or a 3-2 club division (68%). Knowing the math made the decision easy so he proceeded to develop the club suit. Unfortunately, the opponents were attacking his entries to dummy with their diamond lead. Realizing he needed to lose two clubs tricks in order to gain his ninth winner, he led a low club from dummy at trick two. East won and returned a second diamond to dummy's king. South led another low club keeping the ace in dummy as an entry to the last club. Declarer now had his nine tricks: 2 spades, 2 hearts, 3 diamonds, and 2 clubs.


There is nothing difficult about this hand but several declarers failed in a local club game. Note the alternative play in the heart suit would fail. It is important to know how the outstanding cards are likely to be distributed.

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#4

A finesse can take many forms and the successful declarer will know how to play each suit combination for the most tricks. Take a look at this hand.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #4	♠A932				
Dlr E	♥K8762				
Vul N-S	♦A854				
	♣				
♠K1087		♠Q65	West	North	East
♥109		♥J			Pass
♦103		♦K976	Pass	4♣*	All Pass
♣AQ983		♣107654	All Pass		1♥
	♠J4				4♥
	♥AQ543				
	♦QJ2				
	♣KJ2				

*Splinter

BIDDING: North's splinter bid showed values for game, heart support, and club shortness. South had wasted values in clubs so he signed off in game.

PLAY: West with no attractive lead, started with the heart ten. Declarer saw he had only a spade and a diamond to lose, but this was a pairs game so overtricks were important. His plan was to discard his spade loser on dummy's last diamond. South drew trumps ending in dummy and led a low diamond toward his hand. East ducked and South won. Next declarer ruffed a club in dummy and led another low diamond. This time East won the king and shifted to a spade. It was now easy for South to win, unblock the diamond jack, ruff another club in dummy, and ditch his spade on the ace of diamonds. Making six resulted in a good matchpoint score.

Note that this play in the diamond suit works when the king is in the East hand, or approximately 50% of the time. The alternate play of leading the diamond queen from hand works only 36% of the time when the opponents' diamonds divide 3-3. An opening spade lead will hold declarer to eleven tricks.

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Bloomington-Normal 70% club Year 2021 only

2021/12/10	74.39%	Lane O'Connor & Steve Wulfers
2021/11/10	70.14%	Chris Benson & Steve Babin
2021/11/10	76.25%	Donna Uhlenhop & Jane Franklin(Wed aft limited pairs)
2021/11/1	71.22%	Leonard Wochner & Doug Lamb(Mon eve pairs)
2021/9/18	71.43%	Larry Ziegler & John Ford
2021/8/8	72.38%	Dave & Zach Freehill
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(Wed aft limited pairs)
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

#061 – A THOUGHTFUL LEAD



♠ AQT6		
♥ 76		
♦ T976		
♣ QT2		
♠ 752	<i>North</i>	♠ KJ98
♥ AQ93	<i>West</i>	♥ J854
♦ 854	<i>East</i>	♦ J2
♣ K43	<i>Declarer</i>	♣ 876
♠ 43		
♥ KT2		
♦ AKQ3		
♣ AJ95		

None Vulnerable

	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass	
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass	
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass	

South's 1NT showed 15-17 HCP so, when North invited game with 2NT, South readily accepted with his top-of-the-line 17-point maximum. After this auction, looking at the West hand only, what would be your opening lead?

Against No Trump contracts, conventional wisdom says "Fourth best from your longest and strongest" and, without pausing for thought, many Wests would follow this advice

and lead a low Heart. But that doesn't work out well on this particular deal. Declarer wins the trick, cashes his Diamonds (ending in Dummy), and runs the ♠Q around to West's King. Now the defense cashes the Hearts but that is all they get and Declarer has his nine tricks.

A more thoughtful West might conclude that perhaps a passive lead is required. Thought 1: There is a good chance that the ♥K is to West's right in Declarer's strong hand. If so, then an opening Heart lead will blow a trick. Thought 2: N-S reached game via an invitational sequence, so the contract may be a close-run thing. Why run the risk of handing Declarer his 9th trick with an aggressive lead? Thought 3: Even if it happens that East has the ♥K, it is somewhat unlikely that the suit will provide more than four tricks for the defense. That being the case, maybe the defense can afford to be patient.

So, with no guarantee of success (opening leads really are something of a crap shoot), West guesses to start with the "top-of-nothing" Spade Seven. Let's savor the ensuing carnage! Declarer finesses Dummy's ♠Q (or ♠T), won by East. Back comes a Heart won by West's Queen. Then another Spade, taken by Dummy's Ace (Declarer cannot afford another Heart lead from East). The Club finesse loses, and now the defense reels off a bunch of major suit winners. The bottom line is down four!



#062 – MEA CULPA

♠ T9654
♥ 763
♦ 7
♣ AJ85

Both Vulnerable

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

♠ K ♥ KJ2 ♦ AQT432 ♣ Q76	<i>North</i>	♠ A2 ♥ QT985 ♦ J98 ♣ T32
	<i>West East</i>	
	<i>Declarer</i>	
	♠ QJ873 ♥ A4 ♦ K65 ♣ K94	

When these cards were dealt in a team game, both Declarers played in 4♠. At one table, West led a Club and Declarer eventually pitched her Heart loser on the 13th Club, for 10 tricks. At the other table, West found a Heart lead, and now Declarer did not have the timing to draw trumps and then get rid of the Heart loser. Down one!

That adverse game swing cost the match, and West on the losing team apologized profusely to his team-mates for his unsuccessful Club lead. “No problem”, they politely replied, “opening leads are tough, it was just a guess.” And, on that note, the losers went home, with West resolving to re-read “Opening Leads 101”.

But our eagle-eyed readers will have noticed that the real culprit was South! Yes, indeed, 4♠ can be made even with an opening Heart lead. Declarer wins the ♥A, and instead of playing on trumps he cashes the ♠K, finesses the ♠J, cashes the ♠A, and leads the 13th Club on which he pitches his Heart loser. The defense can ruff that last Club, but whether they ruff with the Ace or the King or the Two, they will sacrifice a natural trump trick. They’ll end up scoring the ♦A, a Club ruff, but only one trump trick. So you can return that book to the library, Mr. West, and buy “Exotic Coups for Beginners” as a birthday present for South.



#063 – THIRD TIME LUCKY

	♠ 2 ♥ KQJT ♦ QT86 ♣ AQJ9	
♠ Q9874 ♥ 75 ♦ K94 ♣ 842	North West East Declarer	♠ KT63 ♥ A64 ♦ A532 ♣ T7
	♠ AJ5 ♥ 9832 ♦ J7 ♣ K653	

E-W Vulnerable

<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West led a Spade and Declarer saw an easy route to 10 tricks. He'd get two Spade ruffs in Dummy, added to which there would be three more trump tricks, the ♠A and four Clubs. Seems too easy, what's the catch?

The play went: ♠A, Spade ruff, cross to the ♣K, Spade ruff, Heart to East's Ace, Club won by Dummy, after which

Dummy's last trump was cashed. "Oops!" said Declarer. There was still an enemy trump out, but Declarer could not get back to hand to draw it. Eventually he ran into a Club ruff and that was down one.

Could Declarer have brought home his game by drawing trumps immediately, planning for just one Spade ruff, with the Diamonds providing the 10th trick? Nope! The play goes: ♠A, ♥K is ducked by East (good play!), ♥A wins the next trick, Spade return is ruffed on the board. It's another "Oops!" Now the defense is a step ahead of Declarer, and will score a Spade trick before Declarer can set up his Diamond winner.

To avoid a third "Oops!" Declarer must go to work on the Diamonds at Trick 2. This subtle change in timing leaves the defense with no winning option, and now it is Declarer who is one step ahead of the game. The first chapter in books on card play invariably says "Draw the defenders' trumps before they start ruffing your winners", and then the remaining chapters are dedicated to explaining the numerous exceptions to this rule. Setting up side-suit tricks early is a common such exception.



#064 – PLAYING THE PERCENTAGES

	♠ AQ8 ♥ 643 ♦ K2 ♣ QJ765	
♠ K963 ♥ 9 ♦ JT9 ♣ AT432	North West East Declarer	♠ T4 ♥ 875 ♦ Q8643 ♣ K98
	♠ J752 ♥ AKQJT2 ♦ A75 ♣	

Both Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
		1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

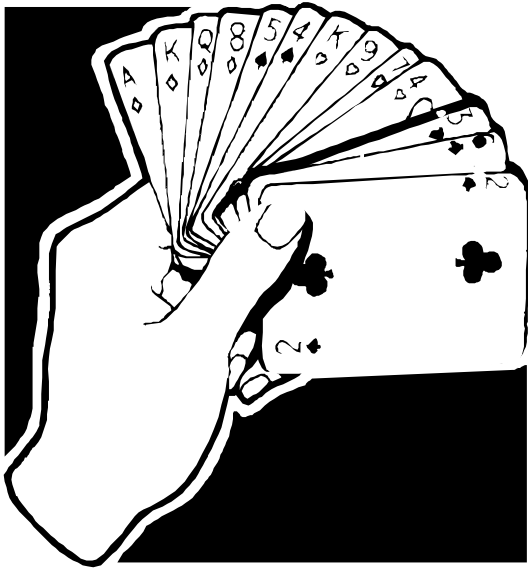
West leads the ♦J and when Dummy goes down you can count only 11 tricks: six trumps in hand, two Diamonds and a ruff in Dummy, and two Spades (regardless of who holds the ♠K). Where's the 12th trick?

To make your contract, you will need to score a third Spade trick. After the ♠Q has been successfully finessed on the first round, how do you play to the second round of Spades? You are doomed to failure if the missing Spades are 5-1 ... and destined for success if the suit is 3-3 ... so what's the play that gives you the best chance when the Spades are 4-2? The two choices are:

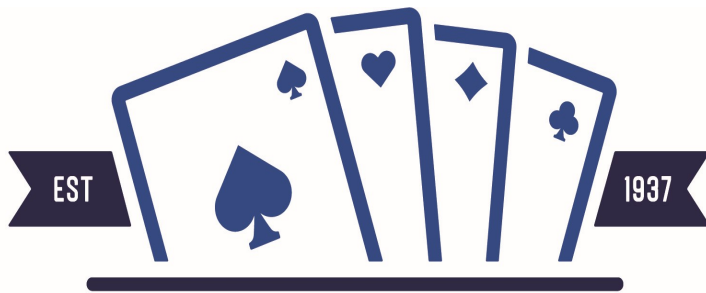
- *Either*, cash the ♠A, hoping that West started with a doubleton King.
- *Or*, lead the ♠J from hand (which West will cover with the King). This caters for East holding the doubleton Ten or doubleton Nine, allowing Declarer's mighty ♠7 to provide the 12th trick!

That should be an easy decision! Kx with West is one winning chance ... Tx or 9x with East is two winning chances. It doesn't need a mathematician to figure out which play is more likely to succeed. After the percentage play brings home the slam, Declarer will avoid saying "My 6♥ was a bit optimistic, but of course I wouldn't have bid it without the Spade Seven". Unless, that is, he wants to infuriate the opponents.





Please see schedules on page 1



**AMERICAN CONTRACT
BRIDGE LEAGUE**

— DEALING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES —