



# Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 24 Number 6 – June, 2022



## June 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:**

**1<sup>st</sup> 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 – Mike's Bridge Room – lower level of 1714 Tompkins Dr, Normal**

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> – open 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 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 5/6/2022 – residents of Bloomington-Normal only  
paid up ACBL members only



- 1    4,504.67 Steve Babin
- 2    3,805.43 JoAnn Schroeder
- 3    3,552.47 Zach Freehill
- 4    3,364.85 Eunice Patton
- 5    3,113.45 Cindy Moore
- 6    2,528.19 Mike Tomlianovich
- 7    2,373.83 Ann Schuyler
- 8    2,332.67 Lori Moore
- 9    1,856.59 Ron Emmett
- 10   1,684.62 Joyce Clay
- 11   1,586.03 Jeff Furler
- 12   1,272.27 Jeanne Strand
- 13   1,231.17 Steve Wulfers
- 14   1,161.80 Ivey Weaver
- 15   846.41 Dave Freehill
- 16   844.62 Stevie Joslin
- 17   839.50 Barbara Neuges
- 18   807.21 Ray Dostal
- 19   788.29 Sallie Boge
- 20   676.15 Fred Spitzzeri
- 21   593.22 Mary Cralley
- 22   543.70 Larry Ziegler
- 23   503.12 John Cralley
- 24   432.39 Gene Byers
- 25   413.62 Chris Zogg

## Other players:

- 13,357.00 Chris Benson-LeRoy
- 5,969.92 Larry Matheny-Ft Collins CO
- 5,846.70 Ron Sholes-Springfield
- 5,562.60 John Seng-Champaign
- 4,567.78 Len Kaufman-Peoria
- 3,752.87 Carole Sholes-Springfield
- 3,618.01 Mary Allen-Peoria
- 3,602.37 Terry Goodykoontz
- 2,715.28 Georgia Heth-Morton
- 2,689.15 Pat Carrington-Champaign
- 2,654.93 Margaret Hansell-Champaign
- 2,652.29 Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
- 2,446.88 John Maloney-Champaign
- 2,357.82 Chuck Young-Peoria
- 2,047.18 Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
- 1,835.90 Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
- 1,381.68 Wes Seitz-Champaign
- 1,373.91 Dan Bunde-Urbana
- 1,108.31 Bill Strauss-Urbana
- 884.43 Bill Thompson-Ft Myers,FL
- 883.96 Darry; Bremner-Clinton
- 802.93 Carole Miller-Champaign
- 733.63 Melda Richardson-California
- 624.15 Lane O'Connor-Naperville
- 572.87 Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
- 553.66 Connie Tucker-Champaign
- 551.82 John Ford-Harvard,MA
- 546.12 Ron Sinn-Peoria





# IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

with Larry Matheny



#1

As declarer, when you discover one opponent has six cards in a suit and the other only two, it is usually correct to finesse the player with length for a specific card. However, sometimes you can avoid the finesse altogether. Take a look.

Scoring: Matchpoints (pairs)

**Hand #13** ♠ K876    ♠ 3  
**Dir N**    ♥ K97    ♥ 1052  
**Vul E-W**    ♦ K82    ♦ AQJ9643  
              ♣ AJ8    ♣ Q10

West: N ♠ AQJ8643    South: ♠ 3♥  
              ♦ 7                                ♣ K5

Pass                                ;    4NT

Pass    5♥            Pass    6♥

All Pass

**BIDDING:** South had an easy 3♥ call over East's preempt and after his partner raised, used Roman Keycard to discover North had two of the three outstanding keycards (4 aces + heart king). South bid the slam hoping his partner had very little wasted values in diamonds.

**PLAY:** West led the ten of diamonds followed by a second one ruffed by declarer. It looked like South would have to take the club finesse in order to discard his spade loser, but first he decided to find out more about the hand. After drawing trumps, he played the ace and king of spades and ruffed dummy's last diamond. He now had a count on the opponents' hands. East originally held one spade, three hearts, seven diamonds, and therefore only two clubs. That made the odds 6-2 that West held the club queen. But the finesse was unnecessary. Declarer merely played the rest of his hearts and came down to the AJ8 of clubs in dummy and the spade 9 and K5 of clubs in his hand. He next played the club king followed by the five. When West followed to the second club, declarer knew the remaining card in West's hand was the spade queen so it was easy to play the club ace dropping the doubleton queen in East's hand.

Of course if West held the club queen, he would be squeezed in the three-card ending. The successful declarer will always look for ways to avoid taking a finesse.

## #2

The ability to preempt the opponents is a valuable tool. However, a lot of partnerships take this to an extreme with their "destructive" style. Sometimes the results are not what they had hoped for. Take a look at this hand.

Scoring: Matchpoints (pairs)

<b>Hand #14</b>	♠ J	♠ KQ985
<b>Dlr W</b>	♥ Q75	♥ K10
<b>Vul none</b>	♦ KJ862	♦ 75
	♣ AQ107	♣ J942
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>South</b>
2♠	AJ9864st A9	6♥
All Pass	D♣ K63	

**BIDDING:** This E/W pair use very light preemptive bids as indicated by West's 2♠ opening. North was aware of this style and made a somewhat light takeout double. East leaped to the four level in an attempt to further muddy the waters. Not wanting to be pushed around, South bid the slam hoping his partner held no more than one spade.

**PLAY:** Declarer ruffed the second spade, took the heart finesse, and quickly wrapped up twelve tricks. Not surprising, holding only 25 HCP no other N/S pair reached the slam. E/W took their zero in stride and moved to the next table ready for the next hand. Such tactics are not uncommon in matchpoint (pairs) events, but those using ultra light overcalls, opening bids, and preempts must pre-Alert their opponents before the round begins.

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### #3

Bridge is a fascinating game because it offers so many different challenges. Here is a hand that is interesting for the declarer as well as the defenders.

Scoring: Teams (IMPs)

<b>Hand #15</b>	♠ K82	♠ 105
<b>Dir E</b>	♥ J843	♥ AK9752
<b>Vul none</b>	♦ QJ764	♦ 8532
	♣ 10	♣ 4
<b>West</b>	N	<b>South</b>
	♦ 9	5♣
	♣ AKQJ8763	

All Pass

**BIDDING:** It's difficult to know exactly what to bid with the South hand, but in a recent team game I jumped to 5♣ over the weak 2♥ bid. I wanted to jam the auction as much as possible and, of course, hoped to make the contract.

**PLAY:** West led a top diamond and then switched to a heart. I ruffed the heart, led a club to dummy's ten, and played the diamond queen pitching a spade loser. West won and returned a spade which I won in my hand. I drew trumps and went to dummy with a spade to discard my remaining spade loser on the jack of diamonds. That was easy.

If West starts with a heart lead instead, the hand can still be made. You simply ruff and lead a diamond. West must win and the play develops as with the diamond lead.

However, the defense can prevail. If West starts with the unlikely opening lead of a spade and then plays a second one at his next opportunity, I can no longer make the hand. It looks like West can be squeezed in spades and diamonds, but the second spade breaks it up. So while it's usually right to lead your partner's suit or try first to cash an AK, sometimes it doesn't work.

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#### #4

This hand is another example of avoiding finesses. Take a look.

Scoring: Teams (IMPs)

<b>Hand #16</b>	♠ Q52	♠ 4
<b>Dlr S</b>	♥ 3	♥ A7652
<b>Vul none</b>	♦ 764	♦ KQ108
	♣ J109762	♣ Q54
<b>West</b>	North	South
	♥ KQ8	
	♦ A	2♣
	♣ K3	
Pass	2♦	4♠
All Pass		

**BIDDING:** This partnership shows controls (aces and kings) in response to a 2♣ opener. The 2♦ response denied an ace and promised zero or one king so South knew game was high enough.

**PLAY:** West led the jack of hearts won by East. A spade was led at trick two and if declarer like finesses, here is his first opportunity. This would lose to the king and later South would have to guess the club finesse to make the hand. However, this declarer thought it unlikely East had underled the spade king so he rose with the ace. Next he played the diamond ace followed by the king and queen of hearts pitching two diamonds from dummy. With the red suits stripped, he now threw West in with the spade king. West had to either lead a club or give declarer a sluff and a ruff.

Of course South can always make the contract by guessing clubs, but that is a 50% proposition. If East made a sneaky play of a spade away from the king at trick two, you still make the hand with a club guess.

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**Bloomington-Normal 70% club  
Year 2022 only**

2202/6/6	70.37%	Sharon Martin & Margaret Wolf(social to duplicate)
2022/5/25	72.62%	Glee Cumbow & Jim Kalmbach(299ers)
2022/4/26	70.24%	Rick Dalton & Rob Husband(499ers online)
2022/4/25	72.40%	Chris Zogg & Zach Freehill
2022/4/11	72.50%	Lori Moore & Rick Dalton
2022/4/11	70.00%	Ann Rybolt & Pam Graves(social meets duplicate)
2022/3/28	71.30%	Dick Dubroff & Mike Gross(social meets duplicate)
2022/3/21	75.00%	Mike Gross & Zoe Freeman(Mon eve pairs)
2022/3/14	72.22%	Mike Gross & Michelle Tomlin(Mon eve pairs)
2022/1/24	72.22%	Cheris Larsen & Mike Gross(Mon eve pairs)
2022/1/17	71.88%	Margaret Wolf & Dick Dubroff(social meets duplicate)



# BRIDGE BITES

from: The American Contract Bridge League

By: Brian Gunnell



## #073 – A TWO-EDGED SWORD

♠ T762	
♥ 43	
♦ Q654	
♣ Q64	
<i>North</i>	
♠ J4	
♥ 85	
♦ K9832	
♣ J975	
<i>West</i> <i>East</i>	
<i>Declarer</i>	
♠ AQ98	
♥ KQJ976	
♦ J	
♣ K2	

♠ K53
♥ AT2
♦ AT7
♣ AT83

### E-W Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
	Pass	Pass	1NT #
2♥	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♥	All Pass		

# 15-17 HCP

West boldly competed to 3♦, but South pushed on to 3♥, a precarious contract which depended on playing the Spades for one loser. Given the apparent lack of entries to Dummy, that was likely to be problematic.

West led his 4<sup>th</sup> best Diamond and, as this was the Three, it was clear that West had led from a five-card suit. East won his Ace, and Declarer ruffed the Diamond continuation. Before drawing trumps, Declarer played the ♣K, hoping to force an entry to Dummy. But E-W were up to the challenge. West followed with the Club Nine, the start of a high-low count signal, telling East that West had started with an *even* number of Clubs. Armed with that information, East could duck the trick, safe in the knowledge that Declarer was not trying to sneak through her singleton King. Then Declarer played the ♥K losing to the Ace, ruffed the Diamond return, and drew the remaining trumps.

The play in the Diamond suit had made it clear that West started with the ♦K, so East needed to hold the ♠K to make up his 15-17 HCP. Should Declarer play ♠A followed by a *low* Spade (hoping that East had started with Kx)? Or ♠A followed by the *Queen* (hoping that West had started with Jx)?

How was Declarer to know? West's Club count signal (which had helped East to find the correct play when the ♣K was led) was a two-edged sword, as it also gave away the distribution to Declarer. By now West was known to have started with five Diamonds, an even number of Clubs (surely four), and two Hearts. That left two Spades, and Declarer's only chance was to play ♠A followed by the Queen, hoping that West had started with ♠Jx. Making 9 tricks!



## #074 – READING THE LEAD

	♠ AJ7 ♥ 8543 ♦ 876 ♣ AJ9	
♠ Q42 ♥ QJ962 ♦ KJ2 ♣ Q7	North West      East Declarer	♠ 8 ♥ K7 ♦ AQ9543 ♣ 6543
	♠ KT9653 ♥ AT ♦ T ♣ KT82	

### Both Vulnerable

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

East's Weak Two shows 5-10 HCP and a 6-card suit. N-S cruise into 4♠, West leads the ♦2 won by East's Ace, then a low Diamond, ruffed by Declarer, West following with the Jack. Looking just at the N-S hands, what can you deduce from the play so far? And how do you play the hand?

The bidding tells Declarer that East started with six Diamonds and West with three. If West had KQx he would have led the King ... if East had ♦AK he would have played the King on the first trick ... therefore (unless there is some fiendish false-carding going on) West started with ♦KJ and East with ♦AQ.

Who has the ♠Q? Generally speaking, Declarer would play the Spades from the top, playing for the drop of the ♠Q in one or two rounds. This line is a slight favorite over the alternative of finessing (one way or the other) against the Queen. But the odds changed when East showed long Diamonds (leaving less room in his hand for Spade cards), so here Declarer correctly decides to cash the ♠K and finesse the ♠J on the second round.

That's the first guess successfully negotiated, now where is that ♣Q? Declarer cannot be sure, so she plays ♥A and another Heart, hoping to learn more, and on the second Heart East wins his King. At this point Declarer can be fairly certain that East started with 1=2=6=4 distribution. As East has four Clubs to West's two does that make East more likely to hold the Queen? Not in this case! East has shown up with 9 HCP, there's no room left in his 5-10 hand for the ♣Q. So, Declarer plays West for that card and, thanks to a little counting, she brings home her vulnerable game with an overtrick.



#075 – DIFFERENT CONTRACT, SAME PLAY

♠ KQT54	
♥ KQ63	
♦ 987	
♣ 8	

♠ 9876	North	♠ A
♥ J8	West	♥ T9752
♦ 52	East	♦ A643
♣ QT765	South	♣ KJ2

♠ J32
♥ A4
♦ KQJT
♣ A943

**Both Vulnerable**

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♠	1♥	Dbl
		Pass	??

After this beginning the contract might reasonably be 3NT (played by South) or 4♠ (by North). Let's dispose of the 3NT contract first, because this one our readers will make in their sleep. West leads a Club, Declarer holds up until the third round (in case the Clubs are 5-3), and makes her contract when both enemy Aces are with the short Clubs. Nine nervous tricks!

Now watch *North* declare 4♠ and see where he goes wrong. East (aggressively) leads a Club, and Dummy's Ace wins the trick. Then a Spade is conceded to East's Ace and the Club continuation is ruffed by Declarer. Next, trumps are played but Declarer comes unstuck when the suit is 4-1. East will get in with the ♦A and persist with Clubs, at which point Declarer will have lost trump control. Down one!

North should have taken a leaf out of the No Trump playbook. That hold-up play in Clubs, which is almost routine when playing No Trump, can also work in a suit contract. North can win the opening Club lead with Dummy's Ace but, when East gets in with the ♠A and continues Clubs, the correct play is to refrain from ruffing immediately. When a third round of Clubs is played, North must ruff, but West never gets in again to do damage with his Club winners. What's good for No Trump is also sometimes good for suit play!



## #076 – DUPLICATE DECISION

♠ 543 ♥ K3 ♦ QT965 ♣ KQ5	
♠ 876 ♥ A6 ♦ A42 ♣ J9732	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>North</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>West</i>      <i>East</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Declarer</i></p>
♠ AK2 ♥ 9842 ♦ KJ83 ♣ A4	

### None Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

In most forms of bridge, Declarer's main objective is to make the contract, with overtricks being only a secondary consideration. But in duplicate bridge scoring (aka matchpoints) overtricks loom large and it is not unheard of for Declarer to risk the contract in search of an overtrick. Here is a case in point.

South opens a 15-17 No Trump, North raises to game, and West leads a Club. Declarer wins that trick and knocks out the ♦A. Back comes a Club, at which point there are nine tricks for the taking in the shape of two Spades,

four Diamonds and three Clubs. Is it time for Declarer to fold his tent, claim nine tricks and move on to the next hand? Not necessarily!

The matchpoint player is always looking for that extra trick. Is there one? The only possibility is in Hearts, but leading towards the ♥K (before cashing nine tricks) is not without risk, and it's possible that East will take Dummy's King with his Ace and that the defense will then cash three or four more Heart tricks, defeating the contract.

Is it just a 50-50 shot? No, the odds favor going for the overtrick. Half the time the ♥A will be onside and Declarer gets his overtrick and a good score. And even when the ♥A is offside it's unlikely that the defense will then run the suit, because (a) the Hearts may be blocked (picture West with QT<sub>x</sub> or J<sub>x</sub> or similar holdings, or East with AQT or AJ or the like); (b) even if the Hearts are not blocked, the defense may do the job themselves (for example, East may hold AQJ<sub>x</sub> and not realize that, after winning the ♥A, he must return a *low* Heart). It's a case of "Heads Declarer wins, tails she loses only occasionally".





**Please see schedules on page 1**



**AMERICAN CONTRACT  
BRIDGE LEAGUE**

— DEALING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES —