



Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 25 Number 7 – July, 2023



July 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:

all games – 299ers only and 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:

Wednesdays, 12:30pm – open pairs

Wednesdays, 12:30pm – 299ers only pairs(if attendance warrants)

Wednesdays, 12:30pm – social plus pairs

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

Online(BBO) bridge available at:

Tuesdays, 6:50pm – 749ers only pairs

Thursdays, 6:30pm – 499ers only pairs

Thursdays, 6:50pm – open pairs

Saturdays, 10:00am – 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 6/6/2023 – residents of Bloomington-Normal only
paid up ACBL members only



- 1 4,863.28 Steve Babin
- 2 3,681.27 Zach Freehill
- 3 3,494.08 Eunice Patton
- 4 3,297.98 Cindy Moore
- 5 2,626.66 Mike Tomlianovich
- 6 2,464.90 Ann Schuyler
- 7 2,447.55 Lori Moore
- 8 1,953.90 Ron Emmett
- 9 1,893.74 Joyce Clay
- 10 1,674.95 Jeff Furler
- 11 1,351.50 Steve Wulfers
- 12 1,272.27 Jeanne Strand
- 13 887.57 Ray Dostal
- 14 885.79 Barb Neuges
- 15 871.52 Dave Freehill
- 16 839.18 Sallie Boge
- 17 748.16 Fred Spitzzeri
- 18 657.46 Larry Ziegler
- 19 603.85 Mary Cralley
- 20 529.17 Chris Zogg
- 21 509.93 John Cralley
- 22 507.84 Rick Dalton
- 23 462.96 Gene Byers
- 24 433.04 Pat Lebeck
- 25 394.23 Marilyn Byers

more players:

- 13,765.05 Chris Benson-LeRoy
- 6,196.62 Larry Matheny-Ft Collins CO
- 5,960.51 Ron Sholes-Springfield
- 5,700.32 John Seng-Champaign
- 4,766.01 Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
- 4,006.75 JoAnn Schroeder-Appleton,WI
- 3,910.33 Terry Goodykoontz
- 3,882.93 Mary Allen-Peoria
- 3,835.41 Carole Sholes-Springfield
- 2,776.92 Georgia Heth-Morton
- 2,723.56 Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
- 2,654.93 Margaret Hansell-Champaign
- 2,576.21 Chuck Young-Peoria
- 2,493.65 John Maloney-Champaign
- 2,100.74 Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
- 1,992.64 Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
- 1,492.77 Wes Seitz-Champaign
- 1,192.37 Bill Strauss-Urbana
- 1,013.71 Darryl Bremner-Clinton
- 1,012.60 Bill Thompson-Ft Myers,FL
- 803.78 Carole Miller-Champaign
- 760.22 Melda Richardson-California
- 722.88 Connie Tucker-Champaign
- 624.90 Lane O'Connor-Naperville
- 616.88 Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
- 613.19 John Ford-Harvard,MA
- 481.70 Rich Hagenhauer-Peoria
- 440.55 Lynn Steffen-El Paso





IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

with Larry Matheny



The next 4 columns appear on the next 4 pages:

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

I think it's safe to say that most declarers love finesses. The experienced player will avoid taking a finesse unless it's the best option available to him. Here's a hand where the obvious finesse wasn't the best choice.

Scoring: Matchpoints (Pairs)

Hand #12 Dir E Vul BOTH	♠ AQ43 ♥ KJ109 ♦ Q2 ♣ 872					
♠ 10987652 ♥ ♦ J106 ♣ KQJ	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ K ♥ 86 ♦ 987543 ♣ 9654	West Pass All Pass	North 3♥	East Pass Pass	South 1♥ 6♥
	♠ J ♥ AQ75432 ♦ AK ♣ A103					

BIDDING: North's 3♥ bid was a limit raise showing 10-12 support points for hearts. South bid what he thought he could make.

PLAY: West led the king of clubs and South was disappointed to find dummy's wasted diamond queen. Looking at two club losers, it seemed declarer must rely on finding the spade king on his left. However, South saw that the spade finesse could be postponed. He ducked the first club and won the second when West continued with the queen. Since East had played discouraging clubs, it was safe to assume West also held the club jack. Next, South played off seven trumps and two diamonds to come down to a two-card ending. Then he led the jack of spades and when West followed with a small one, South knew West's other card was the jack of clubs so he played the spade ace and made the slam. Although the odds were very much against the king of spades being singleton, this "show-up" squeeze proved the finesse to be wrong.

Most N/S pairs went down in this slam. Notice that declarer must duck the first trick for this end position to occur.

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IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

There is no doubt that preempts (either by the opponents or partner) quite often keep you out of your best contract. However, there are times when a preempt allows you to reach a contract that you might not otherwise bid. Take a look.

Scoring: Matchpoints (Pairs)

Hand #13 Dir W Vul N/S	♠ 2 ♥ AQ4 ♦ AQ5 ♣ AK10874					
♠ KQJ9654 ♥ 973 ♦ J6 ♣ 5	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ A10 ♥ J1085 ♦ 109732 ♣ J2	West 3♠ Pass All Pass	North DBL 4♠	East Pass Pass	South 4♣ 6♣
	♠ 873 ♥ K62 ♦ K84 ♣ Q963					

BIDDING: North had a very good hand and made a takeout double over West's 3♠ bid. South wasn't sure whether to defend and take a sure plus score or bid his best suit. Since his pass would have been a final decision, he bid 4♣ in case his partner had a big hand. On his way to 5♣, North cue bid 4♠ to show interest in reaching slam if South had extra values. Definitely at the top of his bid, South promptly bid the slam.

PLAY: West led a top spade and South won the next trick, drew trumps, and claimed twelve tricks. This was in a local game and only one pair bid the slam. Several N/S pairs decided to defend 3♠ doubled and collected +300. The rest of the field ended in 5♣ making six for a score of +620. From North's point of view, it's true that 5♣ could possibly be too high but his hand was too strong to pass 4♣. Suggesting slam on the way to game didn't cost and, as shown above, could certainly gain.

Without the preempt and E/W passing, the auction might begin 1♣ - 1NT - ? and the cold slam would likely be missed. The preempt is a two-edged sword that can work for you or against you.

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IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

Here is another example of why it is so important to remember the auction when you are declarer.

Scoring: Matchpoints (Pairs)

Hand #14 Dir W Vul N/S	♠ 1063 ♥ K974 ♦ J5 ♣ AQ104					
♠ AKQ9 ♥ J102 ♦ 1087 ♣ 972	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ 7542 ♥ A5 ♦ 9432 ♣ 865	West Pass Pass Pass	North Pass 2♣ 4♥	East Pass Pass All Pass	South 1NT 2♥
	♠ J8 ♥ Q863 ♦ AKQ6 ♣ KJ3					

BIDDING: North used Stayman to discover the 4-4 heart fit and bid game.

PLAY: West led the top three spade honors with declarer ruffing the last one. Without giving the problem enough thought, declarer led a low heart to the king and ace. He had to lose another heart trick to finish down one. If he had only remembered the bidding, he would have realized the heart ace had to be in the East hand. If West held that card along with the three top spade honors, he would not have passed. Since the only way to hold his heart losers to one is to find the ace doubleton, he must go to dummy with a club or diamond and lead a low heart toward his hand. When the queen wins, he next plays a low heart from both hands and wraps up his game. This was not difficult.

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IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

When declaring a hand, it is often important to discover the opponents' distribution. This hand shows you can sometimes succeed even when it seems impossible.

Scoring: Matchpoints (Pairs)

Hand #15 Dir W Vul N/S	♠ A75 ♥ 852 ♦ QJ64 ♣ J43	♠ Q108 ♥ J9743 ♦ A5 ♣ A97	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ KJ42 ♥ KQ ♦ 102 ♣ 108652	♠ 963 ♥ A106 ♦ K9873 ♣ KQ	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	West	North	East	South	Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦	1♥	2♦	2♥	3♦	All Pass			
West	North	East	South																			
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦																			
1♥	2♦	2♥	3♦																			
All Pass																						

BIDDING: South gave some thought to passing the deal out but finally decided to try for a plus score. East decided two top honors were as good as three small cards so he raised his partner. A responsive double showing the other two suits would have better described his hand but this pair was not using that convention. South competed to the three level in an attempt to get that plus score.

PLAY: Determined not to give up a trick, West led the ace and another diamond. Declarer was very disappointed as he counted six potential losers. One could be discarded on the jack of clubs but that still meant down one so he regretted his decision to open the bidding. However, after reflecting on the auction, declarer knew East had raised with only two cards so he saw a possible solution. First he knocked out the ace of clubs. Still reluctant to give up a trick, West returned a club. Next declarer ducked a spade. East won and returned the king of hearts but it was too late. South won the ace, played the jack of clubs discarding a spade and then played ace and another spade ruffing in hand. With the black suits eliminated, declarer now led a heart and East was end-played. He had nothing but black cards left and had to allow declarer to discard his heart loser as he ruffed in the other hand. Declarer was lucky to find a defender with that holding but it was the only way for him to succeed.

Note if West had led a heart earlier, East could have unblocked his honor cards and declarer could not make the hand. Making the contract for +110 was the best result N/S. Several pairs passed the hand out while others made 2♥ E/W for +110.



Bloomington-Normal 70% club Years 2022 & 2023 only

2023/6/26	70.35%	Kay Ann Criswell & Becky O'Donnell(social meets duplicate)
2023/6/5	71.25%	Dick Dubroff & Mike Gross(social meets duplicate)
2023/5/11	76.07%	Lori Moore & Cindy Moore(BBO speedball)
2023/5/1	72.62%	Eunice Patton & Steve Babin
2023/4/13	72.22%	Ron Calabrese & Bob Bye(499ers online)
2022/10/27	73.61%	Lynn Steffen & Karen Fox(499ers online)
2022/10/12	75.00%	Chris Benson & Steve Babin
2022/9/26	72.22%	Janet Creek & Mary Jane Linke(social meets duplicate)
2022/9/21	71.25%	Chris Benson & Steve Babin
2022/7/29	70.15%	Lori Moore & Rick Dalton
2022/7/21	73.61%	Chris Zogg & Carolyn Burrell(499ers online)
2022/6/29	81.35%	Marilyn & Gene Byers(749ers online)
2022/6/9	71.43%	Cindy Moore & Jeff Furler
2022/6/6	70.37%	Sharon Martin & Margaret Wolf(social meets 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



#125 – MANAGING THE ENTRIES

	♠ 42 ♥ J97 ♦ JT984 ♣ 872	
♠ 73 ♥ 532 ♦ Q532 ♣ QT94	<i>North</i>	♠ KQJT865 ♥ 4 ♦ K76 ♣ J6
	<i>West</i> <i>East</i>	
	<i>Declarer</i>	
	♠ A9 ♥ AKQT86 ♦ A ♣ AK53	

E-W Vulnerable

<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
2♣	Pass	2♦	3♠
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

After East's 3♠ preempt, South couldn't see a scientific way of bidding his hand so he leapt majestically to 6♥, hoping that Dummy would have a few crumbs for him. After West leads a Spade, a mediocre Dummy appears, now how should Declarer play the hand?

The road to success requires setting up Dummy's Diamonds via two ruffing finesses, playing East to have one or both of the missing Diamond honors.

This line requires three entries to Dummy (two entries for the ruffing finesses, plus one to enjoy the proceeds), and those entries can only come from the trump suit.

That's the general idea, but the devil is in the details. For that line to work, Declarer will be sure to use high trumps for any Diamond ruffs. And Declarer must also pay careful attention to the Heart spots. If, for example, on the first round of trumps, he plays the Heart Six to Dummy's Jack then he can kiss the contract goodbye. It has to be the Six to the Seven, and so on.

With those caveats in mind, the play is simple enough. After winning the ♠A, Declarer cashes the ♦A, crosses to Dummy with a trump (say the Six to the Seven), runs the ♦J around to West's Queen (pitching a Spade), ruffs the Spade return high, and gets to Dummy with another trump. Another Diamond is led, East plays the King and Declarer ruffs (high, of course). Now it's over to Dummy with yet another trump, and the established Diamonds are enjoyed.



#126 – HERO OR ZERO

♠ 75 ♥ A52 ♦ K72 ♣ AJT62	
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♠ K3 ♥ KQT8 ♦ T986 ♣ 853	North West East Declarer	♠ T86 ♥ J643 ♦ QJ3 ♣ Q74
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♠ AQJ942 ♥ 97 ♦ A54 ♣ K9	
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Both Vulnerable

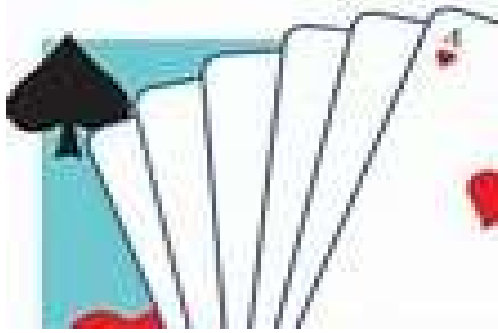
South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

4♠ is an iron-clad contract, and the play is simply a battle for overtricks. Not a big deal if you are playing rubber bridge, but in the world of duplicate bridge, overtricks are important. You are West, do something brilliant!

All the West players led the ♥K (nothing brilliant there), won by Dummy's Ace, after which it was a routine matter for Declarer to lose the Spade finesse. West cashed a Heart, and Declarer won the Diamond shift in her hand. Trumps were drawn, then came the ♣K, the ♣A and the ♣J. When the ♣Q tumbled down, Declarer had 11 tricks.

The resulting -650 was the standard E-W score around the room, except at one table, where West did something wickedly clever. Yes, no doubt you spotted it right away, West ducked the ♠K on the first round of trumps! Of course, Declarer had no way of knowing that West now had the unprotected King, so she crossed to Dummy's ♦K and repeated the finesse. West won the King, cashed a Heart, and shifted to a Diamond and, although Declarer had made her contract, there were no overtricks and her score of +620 was worth zero matchpoints. That diabolical duck by West had persuaded Declarer to waste a valuable Dummy entry on a futile finesse.

However, West's play was not without risk, and he would hardly have been a hero if his Partner's trumps were, for example, Jx or JT_x. But, if that had turned out to be the case, then at least he would have had an amusing story to tell on himself later. And he could no doubt count on Partner's legendary sense of humor as they ruefully scored -680 and zero matchpoints.



#127 – CREATING AN ILLUSION

♠ QJ2
♥ KJT2
♦ Q43
♣ J63

♠ 963 ♥ 74 ♦ KJ865 ♣ 984	North West East Declarer	♠ T85 ♥ A8653 ♦ A7 ♣ T72
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♠ AK74
♥ Q9
♦ T92
♣ AKQ5

E-W Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

In a rubber bridge or team game, this would be a pretty dull deal, with N-S making 10 or 11 tricks in about 30 seconds flat. But in a duplicate bridge game, where overtricks are well rewarded, this dull deal suddenly becomes most interesting!

When this deal was played, all the West players led a Diamond to East's Ace, and a Diamond was returned, South playing the Two on the first trick, followed by the Nine. The West players knew that, if East had two remaining Diamonds, he would have returned the higher one at Trick 2. Therefore, Declarer had the missing Ten, and there was no point in ducking the second Diamond, he had to take his King while he still could. The defense won the ♥A later and it was just 10 tricks for Declarer.

But at one table Declarer created an illusion by playing the Diamond Nine and Ten on the first two tricks. Now West had a chance to go wrong as, in this case, the missing Diamond was the Two. In West's mind, unless Declarer was being diabolically devious (which we know to be the case!), the missing Two was surely with East. So West ducked the second Diamond and sat back, patiently waiting for East to get in and fire back a Diamond. He's still waiting, and it was 11 tricks (and a top board) for Declarer.

In the post mortem West apologized for not grabbing the ♦K while he could, but East could have saved the day. He could count Declarer for 18-19 HCP, leaving only 3-4 for West. That being so, West presumably had the ♦K and no entries, and the defense could never score the long Diamonds. So East must cash the ♥A at Trick 2, making it clear to one and all that the defense must take its three tricks and give up.



#128 – ESCHEWING THE FINESSE

♠ A943
♥ AQJ5
♦ A54
♣ KQ

Both Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	6♣	All Pass

♠ Q86	North	♠ T2
♥ 98	West	♥ T643
♦ KQJ8	East	♦ T632
♣ 9532	Declarer	♣ 876

Your writer cannot recall seeing the word “eschew” other than in bridge books. Football players and golfers never eschew, nor do NASCAR drivers, but bridge players seem to do it all the time. Here, North charges into slam (eschewing Blackwood), now see how Declarer makes her contract.

♠ KJ75
♥ K72
♦ 97
♣ AJT4

6♣ is a fine place to be but, after the lead of the ♦K, Declarer is in danger of losing a Spade and a Diamond. Declarer could take the trump finesse now,

and that is certainly the percentage play when looking only at the Spade suit. Of course, the danger is that, if the Spade finesse loses, Declarer will be down one in a hurry. Declarer can do better by combining her chances in two suits rather than staking everything on luck in the Spade suit.

The right plan is to eschew the Spade finesse and play the ♠A and ♠K. That will be an immediate success if someone has the doubleton Queen but, even if they don't, Declarer has a second string to her bow. Leaving the ♠Q at large, Declarer sets about pitching away Diamond losers. There are two choices ... cash the Hearts hoping for one Diamond pitch from hand ... or cash the Clubs hoping for two Diamond pitches from Dummy. Whichever suit is run, for the contract to make, the defender with the ♠Q must follow three times. Which suit is more likely to succeed?

As the defenders have more Clubs than Hearts, running the Clubs is more likely to succeed. So Declarer wins the ♦A, cashes the ♠A and ♠K, and plays four rounds of Clubs (pitching Diamonds). Making 12 well-deserved tricks. Those Declarers who finessed in Spades, or who ran the Hearts, also get what they deserve, which is only 11 tricks.





Please see schedules on page 1



**AMERICAN CONTRACT
BRIDGE LEAGUE**

— DEALING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES —

