



Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 26 Number 4 – April, 2024



April 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 – social meets duplicate pairs 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 – 4/10 – Royal STaC

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

Wednesdays, 12:30pm – social plus

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

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 3/7/2024 – residents of Bloomington-Normal only
paid up ACBL members only



- 1 5,098.14 Steve Babin
- 2 3,737.01 Zach Freehill
- 3 3,627.53 Eunice Patton
- 4 3,411.88 Cindy Moore
- 5 2,704.32 Mike Tomlianovich
- 6 2,527.18 Ann Schuyler
- 7 2,517.92 Lori Moore
- 8 2,069.57 Joyce Clay
- 9 2,013.39 Ron Emmett
- 10 1,695.04 Jeff Furler
- 11 1,409.77 Steve Wulfers
- 12 920.79 Barb Neuges
- 13 887.28 Dave Freehill
- 14 858.43 Sallie Boge
- 15 797.97 Fred Spitzzeri
- 16 758.05 Larry Ziegler
- 17 606.74 Mary Cralley
- 18 582.66 Chris Zogg
- 19 580.16 Rick Dalton
- 20 510.45 John Cralley
- 21 489.49 Pat Lebeck
- 22 487.00 Gene Byers
- 23 415.02 Marilyn Byers
- 24 406.69 Kay Marvin
- 25 365.28 Joyce Werner

more players:

- 14,021.45 Chris Benson-LeRoy
- 6,391.72 Larry Matheny-Ft Collins CO
- 6,073.25 Ron Sholes-Springfield
- 5,793.63 John Seng-Champaign
- 5,068.13 Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
- 4,825.70 Paul Lindauer-Chicago
- 4,043.48 JoAnn Schroeder-Appleton,WI
- 4,050.66 Mary Allen-Peoria
- 4,019.23 Terry Goodykoontz,Florida
- 3,898.14 Carole Sholes-Springfield
- 2,793.45 Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
- 2,704.04 Chuck Young-Peoria
- 2,654.93 Margaret Hansell-Champaign
- 2,506.93 John Maloney-Champaign
- 2,139.01 Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
- 2,126.61 Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
- 1,549.49 Wes Seitz-Champaign
- 1,244.90 Bill Strauss-Urbana
- 1,139.36 Darryl Bremner-Clinton
- 1,119.86 Bill Thompson-Estero,FL
- 893.60 Ray Dostal-Independence,IA
- 845.61 Connie Tucker-Champaign
- 785.38 Melda Richardson-California
- 679.71 John Ford-Harvard,MA
- 646.78 Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
- 625.63 Lane O'Connor-Naperville
- 576.74 Barry Mayworm-Princeton
- 512.27 Rich Hagenhauer-Peoria
- 500.12 Lynn Steffen-El Paso





IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

with Larry Matheny



The next 4 columns appear on the next 4 pages:

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY #48 with Larry Matheny

Competing over the opponents' 1NT opening bid can be dangerous but it is often advantageous to interrupt their auction. There are many popular conventions available to show different types of hands and you should discuss these with your partner. Of course, every now and then you have one that doesn't work quite so well. Take a look at this one.

Scoring: Matchpoints

<p>Hand #48 Dir E Vul E-W</p>	<p>♠ K8752 ♥ 9 ♦ Q87654 ♣ 6</p>	<p>♠ 1043 ♥ Q10853 ♦ K ♣ Q1085</p>	<p>♠ AQJ6 ♥ 62 ♦ AJ1032 ♣ KJ</p>
		<p>♠ 9 ♥ AKJ74 ♦ 9 ♣ A97432</p>	

West	North	East	South
		1NT	2♥*
DBL	Pass	Pass	3♣
DBL	3♦	DBL	4♣
DBL	All		
	Pass		

* Hearts and a minor

BIDDING: East opened an off-shape 1NT and South was eager to show his two-suited hand. West could not believe his good fortune and made a penalty double. South was not concerned and cheerfully bid his second suit asking his partner to take a preference. Again West doubled and North had a difficult decision. He fell from grace by introducing his own six-card suit and East had an easy double. South finally retreated to his longer suit and 4♣ doubled became the final contract.

PLAY: West made the nice lead of the five of clubs and South could only manage five tricks for down five and -1100 points. South muttered, "At least we weren't vulnerable". North also muttered something under his breath. South really should compete with his hand, particularly at favorable vulnerability, but he just ran into a buzz saw. This hand is an argument against playing the "stolen bid" convention. Playing that convention, a double by West would say "he took my bid" which would be a transfer to spades. The penalty double is a valuable tool to give up.

Note that East-West do not have game and without interference, might have ended up playing 2♥.

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY #49 with Larry Matheny

A good declarer will take his time before deciding how to play a hand. Sometimes a simple solution is difficult to see. Try your luck with this one.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #49
 Dir E
 Vul E-W
 ♠ 7652
 ♥ QJ53
 ♦ AKQ10
 ♣ 4

♠ QJ10
 ♥ K876
 ♦ 83
 ♣ Q952



♠ 94
 ♥ A42
 ♦ J952
 ♣ K876

♠ AK83
 ♥ 109
 ♦ 764
 ♣ AJ103

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

BIDDING: North-South had a standard auction to reach the 4♠ contract.

PLAY: It is often correct to lead a trump when the opponents have bid two suits and ended in a third. Declarer might need to cross-ruff (trump cards in both hands) to succeed. Following this logic, West led the queen of spades. Several declarers counted six losers: one spade, two hearts, and three clubs. They won the first trick and tried to ruff clubs in dummy. Entries back to the South hand were scarce and most declarers failed by one trick. This is really a very simple hand to play. Look at the contract from the North hand. Assuming the trumps behave, you only have to lose one spade and two hearts. If necessary, you can ruff the last diamond in the South hand.

This practice of only looking at the contract from declarer's hand is a frequent mistake.

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IMPROVE YOUR PLAY #50 with Larry Matheny

Executing a good play at bridge is very rewarding, but it can be hazardous to your health to brag about it. Here is a good example:

Scoring: Matchpoints

<p>Hand #50 Dir N Vul N-S</p>	<p>♠ J943 ♥ Q853 ♦ A4 ♣ J53</p>	<p>♠ 75 ♥ 2 ♦ QJ765 ♣ Q10982</p>	<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></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5♦</td> <td>5♥</td> <td>All</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	West	North	East	South		Pass	Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦	5♥	All	Pass
West	North	East	South																
	Pass	Pass	4♥																
Pass	Pass	4NT	Pass																
5♦	5♥	All	Pass																
<p>♠ KQ62 ♥ J ♦ K10832 ♣ K76</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	<p>♠ A108 ♥ AK109764 ♦ 9 ♣ A4</p>																	

BIDDING: I was sitting South with a very nice hand and after my partner passed and East passed, I opened 4♥. My hand was perhaps too good for this bid but I wanted to make it difficult for the opponents to enter the auction. Unfortunately, East competed with 4NT showing both minors. After West took a preference to diamonds, my partner ended the auction with 5♥. Note the vulnerability made it easier for East-West to compete.

PLAY: West led a diamond and I counted three possible losers, two spades and one club. I needed to find one of the spade honors in the East hand but after she showed length in both minors, it was very likely that West held them both. My solution was to attempt an elimination play. I won the diamond ace and ruffed dummy's other diamond in my hand. I then drew trumps in one round and played ace and another club. West won with the king and played another club which I trumped. Now I only had to lead a trump to dummy and pass the jack of spades. West won but was end played. He had to lead a spade or give me a sluff and a ruff allowing me to discard my other spade loser. I thought, "I love this game".

At dinner between sessions I casually asked my friend her result on the hand and she said, "West led the king of spades so I was able to discard my losing club on dummy's fourth spade and made six. What did you do"? I took another bite and said, "Okay, what about the next hand". I thought, "I hate this game".

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY #51 with Larry Matheny

When defending you must stay alert and be aware of declarer's game plan. If not, you could allow a bad contract to succeed. Take a look at this one.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #51 Dir N Vul E-W	♠ 876 ♥ AJ ♦ AQ73 ♣ AJ32					
♠ KQ1094 ♥ Q1083 ♦ J4 ♣ Q9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ A2 ♥ K97642 ♦ K1092 ♣ 8	West All Pass	North 1NT	East Pass	South 3♣*
	♠ J53 ♥ 5 ♦ 865 ♣ K107654					

*Weak

BIDDING: My partner in the North chair opened 1NT and I bid 3♣ to show a weak hand with a long suit. The opponents wanted to enter the auction but the unfavorable vulnerability scared them off. Note they can make 4♥.

PLAY: West led the king of spades and East overtook with the ace to play a second one. West captured the second and third round of spades and after seeing East's encouraging signal of the heart 9, switched to a low heart. I had lost three tricks and still had two possible diamond losers. I rose with the ace of hearts and drew trumps in two rounds. I then ruffed dummy's last heart to my hand to lead a low diamond. West played the four and I let my five run around to East. He won the trick but was end played. He must return a diamond into the AQ or give me a sluff and a ruff to discard the other losing diamond from my hand.

I'm sure you have noticed that West erred by not playing his jack of diamonds on my five. He knew I had no more spades or hearts so his partner would be in bad shape after winning the first diamond. The play of the jack leaves me with two diamond losers and I'm down one. If I held the diamond nine or ten in either hand, the end play could not be prevented. Those spot cards are important. Also note that East must hope his partner holds the heart queen and duck when the jack is led from dummy. If he plays the king, he will be end-played into returning a diamond or concede a ruff/sluff. Defense is not easy.



Bloomington-Normal 70% club Year 2023-24 only

2024/3/13	76.04%	Chris Benson & Steve Babin
2024/3/5	72.22%	Clindy Lake & Terry Huebsch(749ers)
2023/12/4	71.43%	Dick Dubroff & Mike Gross(social meets duplicate)
2023/11/19	73.41%	Darryl Bremner & Kirk Kimmell
2023/9/30	73.01%	Sallie Boge & Barry Kurz
2023/9/30	70.00%	Dick Dubroff & Mike Gross(social meets duplicate)
2023/9/25	72.33%	Chris Benson & John Seng
2023/9/18	70.33%	Cindy Moore & Terry Goodykoontz
2023/8/28	77.70%	Dick Dubroff & Mike Gross(social meets duplicate)
2023/8/21	70.51%	Steve Babin & Paul Lindauer
2023/8/6	70.63%	Cindy Moore & Steve Babin
2023/7/31	70.37%	Dawn Laffey & Joni Newberg(social meets duplicate)
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)



BRIDGE BITES

from: The American Contract Bridge League

By: Brian Gunnell

#5 – IT PAYS TO COUNT

	♠ 852 ♥ KQ ♦ AKT98 ♣ 742	
♠ KT ♥ 8642 ♦ Q76 ♣ AK93	North West East South	♠ J94 ♥ A975 ♦ J3 ♣ QJT8
	♠ AQ763 ♥ JT3 ♦ 542 ♣ 65	

Before seeing the auction, imagine that you are South, playing in 2♣. Looking just at the N-S hands, how would you tackle the trump suit? The percentage play to avoid a second loser is to cash the Ace (a precaution against West having the singleton King), then cross to Dummy and lead towards the Queen. That gets the job done whenever East has the King and it is doubleton or tripleton. As you can see, that is not a success on the actual hand. Declarer loses two trump tricks and ends up going down one. Now let's replay the hand, this time bearing in mind the auction.

<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♠	Dbl	2♣	All Pass

West leads the ♣A and East plays the Queen (showing the Jack). Clubs are continued and you ruff the third round. Next, you cash the ♠A, and lead a Heart which East wins. A Heart comes back, won on the board, and it's time to lead a Spade. Is there any reason for Declarer to be inspired now and play a *low* Spade from hand? Yes, there is! Declarer needs only to remember West's Double of 1♠ and do some counting. West has 7 points in Clubs, a maximum of 3 in Diamonds and none in Hearts. That's not enough for his bidding! He surely has the ♠K and Declarer's only chance is that West started with King doubleton. Such an easy hand for those who take the trouble to do a little counting.



#6 – DELIGHTFUL DECEPTION

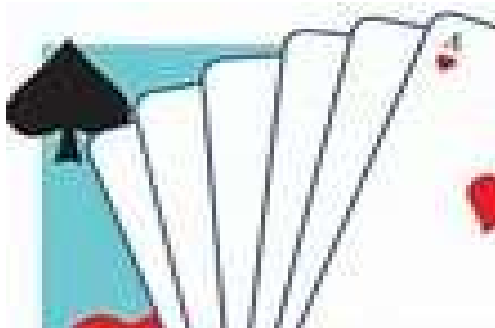
The game of bridge is enriched by many beautiful plays and stratagems, and we all love to talk about our latest Trump Coup or Double Squeeze. But even that pales into insignificance when compared to the fun we get from hoodwinking the opponents with a deceptive play. There's nothing a bridge player enjoys more than a little bit of larceny!

	♠ 652 ♥ 874 ♦ A654 ♣ A64	
♠ AKJ ♥ 6532 ♦ JT9 ♣ 987	North West East South	♠ 43 ♥ QT9 ♦ Q873 ♣ JT53
	♠ QT987 ♥ AKJ ♦ K2 ♣ KQ2	

The N-S auction goes 1♠-2♠-4♠. West leads ♦J and when Dummy goes down it's apparent that the success of the contract depends upon not losing three Spades and one Heart. It's a simple hand, wouldn't you say? Declarer wins the Diamond lead in Dummy, and finesses the ♠T, losing to West's Jack. Oh, well, now there are three sure trump losers and Declarer uses Dummy's sole remaining entry to take the Heart finesse. That works, and it's 10 tricks for Declarer, losing just three trumps.

Rewind! That was easy for Declarer, but only because West made it so. On the first round of trumps, when Declarer finessed the ♠T, a more wily West would have played the Ace (or King)! This doesn't cost anything as West still scores three trump tricks eventually. Now, a bamboozled Declarer crosses to Dummy for the last time and repeats the Spade finesse (which he

"knows" will work), rather than take the Heart finesse (which may not work). Beating 4♠ by one trick? A fine result! The look on Declarer's face when the second Spade finesse loses? Priceless!



#7 – AN OLD RUSE

Here's a neat deception, but, alas, it won't work against modern signaling methods.

None Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

♠ 54 ♥ 7542 ♦ AQJT ♣ Q93		
♠ KT86 ♥ KT86 ♦ 542 ♣ K4	North West East South	♠ J932 ♥ AJ3 ♦ 976 ♣ 865
♠ AQ7 ♥ Q9 ♦ K83 ♣ AJT72		

Against 3NT West leads his 4th-best Spade. East's Jack is taken by Declarer's Queen, then a Diamond to Dummy and the losing Club finesse. At this point West can count 9 or 10 tricks for Declarer, via 2 Spades, 4 Diamonds and 3 or 4 Clubs. West's only hope for defeating 3NT is that the defense can cash 4 Hearts. Bingo! He shifts to a low Heart and it's down one.

The Two! West leads a low Spade, as before, but this time Declarer wins East's Jack with the Ace! Yes, really! Declarer doesn't need a second Spade trick, but he does want to avoid a Heart shift that extravagance in the Spade suit is just the way to do it. Later, when West wins his ♣K, he's likely to be duped into assuming that East has the ♠Q and will lead another low Spade. 10 tricks!

The Antidote! Twenty or thirty years ago, this sneaky ruse worked every time, but nowadays there is a defensive antidote. It involves East telling partner whether or not he likes that opening Spade lead. When Declarer leads a Diamond at Trick 2, East can signal with the Nine (high means "I like your opening lead"), or with the Six (low means "I don't"). On the actual deal, East plays the discouraging Six, alerting West to Declarer's shenanigans. That signal is called a Smith Echo and is a common agreement among tournament players. For more on this, please Google "smith echo for dummies". No offense, dear readers, it's merely a search which takes you to a most helpful article.



#8 – A LITTLE WHITE LIE

On defense, sometimes a little white lie is necessary in order to point Partner in the right direction. No more clues, here's your problem:

♠ K86 ♥ KQ6 ♦ KQJT6 ♣ 76	
Dummy	♠ 9732 ♥ T982 ♦ A8 ♣ 843
West	East
South	

None Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♥	2♣	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

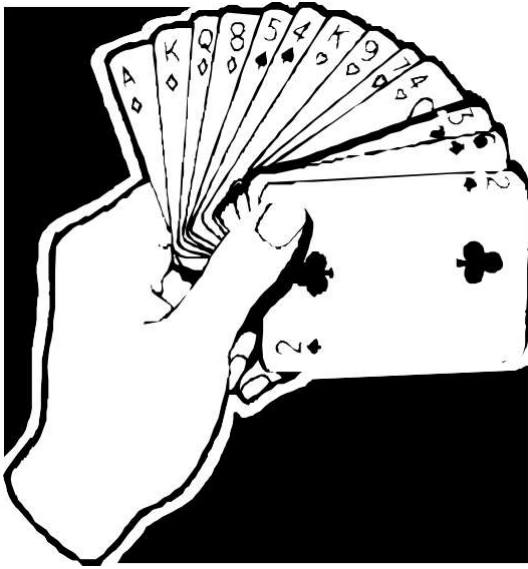
You are sitting East, trying to beat 4♥. Partner leads the ♣A. Where can you find four defensive tricks? No doubt Declarer has the ♠A and the ♥A for that opening bid, so at first glance it may appear that the best the defense can do is to take its two Club tricks and the ♦A. Any ideas for an extra trick? OK, now that you've solved the problem, the full hand:

	♠ K86 ♥ KQ6 ♦ KQJT6 ♣ 76	
♠ QJT5 ♥ --- ♦ 7432 ♣ AKT95	Dummy	♠ 9732 ♥ T982 ♦ A8 ♣ 843
	West	East
	South	
	♠ A4 ♥ AJ7543 ♦ 95 ♣ QJ2	

That's right, at Trick 1 East false-cards with the ♣8, showing a doubleton! East's plan is to conjure up a trump trick out of thin air. Look what happens! West next cashes the ♣K, and East completes his fake high-low. Then West plays a third round of Clubs and who can blame Declarer for ruffing that trick high in Dummy? Obviously he doesn't want to get overruffed by East, and, anyway, squandering that high trump costs nothing if the trumps are 3-1 or 2-2. But they are 4-0, so East gets a trump trick and it's down one!

It was necessary to fool Partner as well as Declarer. If East had signaled honestly in Clubs, then, at Trick 3, West would no doubt have shifted to the ♠Q, hoping that East has the Ace and trying to grab a couple of Spade tricks before they disappear on the Diamonds.





Please see schedules on page 1



**AMERICAN CONTRACT
BRIDGE LEAGUE**

— DEALING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES —