

Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 26 Number 8 – August, 2024



August 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

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

Wednesdays, 12:30pm – social plus

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

See local tournament schedule later in this newsletter.

Online(BBO) bridge available at:

Tuesdays, 6:50pm – 749ers only pairs

Thursdays, 6:50pm – open pairs

2nd Friday, 10am – limited mentee-mentor 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.

Factoid

The number of possible arrangements of a 52-card deck is greater than the estimated number of atoms that make up Earth.



The Bloomington-Normal "Top 25" Masterpoint holders

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



- 1 5,173.00 Steve Babin
- 2 3,737.01 Zach Freehill
- 3 3,668.56 Eunice Patton
- 4 3,486.76 Cindy Moore
- 5 2,744.55 Mike Tomlianovich
- 6 2,582.43 Lori Moore
- 7 2,573.97 Ann Schuyler
- 8 2,162.00 Joyce Clay
- 9 2,043.06 Ron Emmett
- 10 1,718.23 Jeff Furler
- 11 1,449.60 Steve Wulfers
- 12 928.69 Barb Neuges
- 13 902.16 Stevie Joslin
- 14 887.28 Dave Freehill
- 15 873.57 Sallie Boge
- 16 818.65 Larry Ziegler
- 17 815.91 Fred Spitzzeri
- 18 615.55 Mary Cralley
- 19 603.56 Chris Zogg
- 20 596.67 Rick Dalton
- 21 518.10 John Cralley
- 22 517.29 Pat Lebeck
- 23 490.39 Gene Byers
- 24 457.63 Kay Marvin
- 25 419.57 Marilyn Byers

more

- 14,170.83 Chris Benson-LeRoy
- 6,106.64 Ron Sholes-Springfield
- 5,865.72 John Seng-Champaign
- 5,174.88 Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
- 4,912.43 Paul Lindauer-Chicago
- 4,127.59 Mary Allen-Peoria
- 4,065.40 Terry Goodykoontz,Florida
- 4,050.24 JoAnn Schroeder-Appleton,WI
- 3,898.14 Carole Sholes-Springfield
- 2,806.37 Hank Hoffman-East Peoria
- 2,755.46 Chuck Young-Peoria
- 2,654.93 Margaret Hansell-Champaign
- 2,528.29 John Maloney-Champaign
- 2,222.19 Bill Bulfer-East Peoria
- 2,151.13 Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
- 1,569.60 Wes Seitz-Champaign
- 1,258.77 Bill Strauss-Urbana
- 1,173.71 Darryl Bremner-Clinton
- 1,156.21 Bill Thompson-Estero,FL
- 905.65 Connie Tucker-Champaign
- 893.60 Ray Dostal-Independence,IA
- 786.01 Melda Richardson-California
- 714.55 John Ford-Harvard,MA
- 665.97 Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
- 625.63 Lane O'Connor-Naperville
- 607.61 Barry Mayworm-Princeton
- 556.34 Lynn Steffen-El Paso
- 517.71 Rich Hagenhauer-Peoria





IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

with Larry Matheny (in memoriam)



The next 4 columns appear on the next 4 pages:

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY #06-07 with Larry Matheny

It's an unstated rule that if you are going to bid aggressively, you better be a good declarer. That is, of course, if you want to keep your partner. See if you would have brought this contract home.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #7 Dir S Vul N-S	♠ KJ9874 ♥ AJ4 ♦ J106 ♣ 7		West North East South	
				2NT 4♠ 6♠
♠ 6 ♥ K1076 ♦ Q82 ♣ 109854	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ 105 ♥ Q53 ♦ 754 ♣ QJ632	Pass 3♥* Pass Pass 5♥ Pass	All Pass
	♠ AQ32 ♥ 982 ♦ AK93 ♣ AK			

*Jacoby Transfer

BIDDING: After hearing his partner's opening bid of 2NT, North thought that slam was possible if South had a great spade fit. This partnership uses both Jacoby and Texas transfer bids, so South decided to transfer with 3♥ and then raise his partner to 4♠ to show a 6+ card suit with invitational slam values. With no slam interest, he would just transfer to 4♠ and pass. When South jumped to 4♠ showing a great hand and four card support, North cooperated by cue bidding the ace of hearts. This was all the encouragement South needed to bid the slam.

PLAY: After West's bold lead of a low heart, declarer could count only eleven tricks. It was clear the extra trick would have to come from the diamond suit. He could finesse East for the queen but he saw a slightly better play. After winning the heart ace and drawing trumps, he played the ace and king of diamonds hoping the queen would drop. Failing at that, he next played his two club honors discarding dummy's last diamond. South then ruffed a diamond in dummy and was delighted to see the queen appear. He then entered his hand with a spade to discard one of dummy's low hearts on the good diamond. He conceded a heart and had his twelve tricks.

Note this line of play in the diamond suit loses only to QXXX or longer in the East hand. Also, note that without an opening heart lead, declarer would have an easy play for the slam by taking the diamond finesse. When it lost, he could discard dummy's low hearts on the club king and the fourth diamond. The opening lead dictated the correct play in the diamond suit.

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY #06-08 with Larry Matheny

The old saying goes, "The five level belongs to the opponents", and while that is usually true, sometimes it pays to be up there yourself. Here is an example from a recent tournament.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #8 Dir N Vul N-S	♠ 105 ♥ K72 ♦ A8 ♣ 1087543					
♠ J963 ♥ J ♦ QJ109632 ♣ K	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ AQ874 ♥ 109 ♦ K54 ♣ QJ6	West 4♠	North Pass 5♥	East 1♠ All Pass	South 4♥
	♠ K2 ♥ AQ86543 ♦ 7 ♣ A92					

BIDDING: After East opened the bidding, I leaped to 4♥ in an attempt to buy the contract. However, West continued on to 4♠ and my partner found a good raise to 5♥.

PLAY: West led the queen of diamonds that I won in dummy. I expected the spade ace to be on my right but I still had two club losers. One solution was an elimination play. At trick two I led a spade from dummy and East hopped up with the ace. As I expected, he continued with a second diamond that I ruffed. Next I drew two round of trumps followed by the spade king. With spades and diamonds eliminated, I played a low club from my hand. West won the king and had no choice but to play a diamond or a spade allowing me to ruff in dummy and discard my losing club. Making five was a very good result.

It was important to avoid ruffing the diamond until the spade was played because an astute defender in the East chair may have spotted the pending club end-play and exited with a club after winning the spade ace. Also note that it would not help West to discard the club king on the second trump to avoid the end play. I still had an entry to dummy to allow me to lead the ten of clubs to finesse East. And, if the outstanding clubs were 2-2, I would only have one club loser. And finally, if either opponent held the KQJ of clubs, I was going down. This was a fun hand.

Copyright ©2007 Larry Matheny.

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY #06-09 with Larry Matheny

It's often a good idea for declarer to immediately draw trumps but sometimes that has to wait. Here is a good example.

Scoring: Matchpoints

Hand #9 Dir N Vul E-W	♠ K10865 ♥ J7 ♦ AK5 ♣ AQ4	♠ 97 ♥ 653 ♦ J9732 ♣ J82	♠ 3 ♥ Q84 ♦ Q10864 ♣ 7653	<table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table>					♠ 97 ♥ 653 ♦ J9732 ♣ J82	West North East South	1♠ Pass Pass 3♦ DBL All Pass

BIDDING: My partner in the North chair opened 1♠ but holding only four hcp I passed. With so many spades it was dangerous for West to enter the bidding but he didn't want the auction to die at the one level. My partner held extra values with support for the other two suits so he doubled asking me to bid. My 3♦ bid closed the auction.

PLAY: West played the top two heart honors followed by a third round. I discarded a club from dummy and won with the queen in my hand. It seemed likely that most of the outstanding high cards would be in the West hand so I led a spade toward dummy. West rose with the ace and exited with another spade. I won the king in dummy discarding a club from my hand. Next I ruffed a spade in my hand as East discarded a club. This meant West had started with ten major suit cards and East was very likely to hold a lot of trumps. I then led a club to dummy's queen followed by the ace. I then led another spade and East, now down to nothing but trumps, played one in front of me. I over trumped and ruffed my last club with dummy's ace as East helplessly under-ruffed again. I then played the king of diamonds and watched West show out. My last two cards were the Q10 of diamonds and East was finished. He started with five trumps and never scored a trick. Making four earned all of the matchpoints. It's clear that leading trumps early would have been a bad idea.

Also note that perhaps West would have been better off passing 1♠.

Copyright ©2007 Larry Matheny.

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

As declarer it is important to be able to place the opponents' high cards. The bidding and the play of the hand will often provide the information you need. Here is a good example.

Scoring: IMPs (team)

Hand #10 Dlr N Vul E-W	♠ 9752 ♥ AKQJ ♦ J104 ♣ 42	♠ J1086 ♥ 985 ♦ AQ2 ♣ K87	West 1♣ All Pass	North Pass DBL	East Pass 1NT	South Pass 2♠
---	------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------	------------------------------------	------------------------------------

♠ A ♥ 1076 ♦ 853 ♣ AQJ965	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ KQ43 ♥ 432 ♦ K976 ♣ 103
------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------

BIDDING: This was a routine auction with both sides bidding strongly in their attempt to buy the contract. Perhaps East should have taken another call but instead decided to defend.

PLAY: West made an aggressive lead of the club ace. After receiving encouragement from his partner, West continued with a second club. After winning the king, East shifted to a low heart. With two clubs lost and at least one diamond to lose, declarer had to keep his trump losers to two. Before tackling trumps, declarer decided to find out more about the hand by leading the diamond jack from dummy. East covered with the queen and South won the king. It was now clear that West must hold the spade ace for his opening bid. Since this was a team game with overtricks of little value, South next played a low spade from his hand. While this may seem unusual, the only time declarer will lose three spade tricks is when the suit divides 4-1 (or an unlikely 5-0). Since West was marked with the ace, a low spade from hand protected against the ace being singleton.

South ended up losing only five tricks to score +110. Note that E-W would be down one in 3♣ for -100. Of course, West could have passed the hand out for an even better result.

Copyright ©2007 Larry Matheny.



Bloomington-Normal 70% club Year 2023-24 only

2024/7/22	70.83%	Eunice Patton & Jeff Furler
2024/7/15	77.44%	Jackie Schmidt & Kay Ann Criswell(social meets duplicate)
2024/7/1	75%	Gaye Hoselton & Bob Bray(social meets duplicate)
2024/5/29	72.49%	Cindy Moore & Jeff Furler
2024/5/20	71/05%	Helen Basehore & Gaye Hoselton(social meets duplicate)
2024/4/29	70.24%	Steve Wulfers & Steve Babin
2024/4/8	72.28%	Tom Teeters & Steve Wulfers
2024/4/3	70.14%	Cindy Moore & Jeff Furler
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



#21 – VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

Forgive the grandiloquent title, we are not talking here about Lewis and Clark, nor the HMS Beagle, nor even Christopher Columbus. We merely refer to Declarer's intelligent (but hardly epic) play of the ♠K in the following deal:

♠ K9
♥ 854
♦ QT
♣ QJT842

♠ Q84	<i>North</i>		♠ 73
♥ JT7	<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>	♥ AKQ2
♦ 9652			♦ A874
♣ 975	<i>Declarer</i>		♣ A63

♠ AJT652
♥ 963
♦ KJ3
♣ K

E-W Vulnerable

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

Just in case it happens to be a really useful clue, we should point out that East's 1NT showed 15-17 HCP.

The defense cashes three Hearts, then East shifts to the ♦A followed by a low Diamond. How do you play the trump suit?

All things being equal, you would play a Spade over to the King, and then finesse the Jack on the way back. This might seem even more appealing when you remember that East opened 1NT and therefore has most of the missing HCP. But remember also that East has already shown up with ♥AKQ and ♦A. That's 13 HCP. So you can see that if East has the ♣A that gives him 17 HCP and no room for the ♠Q ... and if East does not have the ♣A then he *must* have the ♠Q for his 1NT opening.

What's needed here is a so-called "discovery play" before tackling trumps. After winning the Diamond return, you play the ♠K in order to smoke out the Ace. When East shows up with that card, he's up to his maximum quota of 17 HCP, and now it's a certainty that *West* has the ♠Q. That being the case, you ruff East's Club return and take an immediate finesse of the ♠9! The ♠K is now cashed, then back to hand with a Club ruff (fortunately there is no overruff from West). The remaining trump is extracted and it's 8 tricks for those who did some counting and discovering!



#22 – COUNTING THE HAND

This week we start a series of hands where the key to success is counting the opponents' distribution, in each case turning a guess into a sure thing.

♠ AJ94 ♥ QJ94 ♦ Q ♣ Q542	<i>North</i>	♠ K3 ♥ K3 ♦ J9874 ♣ A876
♠ Q8 ♥ T72 ♦ AKT653 ♣ T9	<i>West</i> <i>East</i> <i>Declarer</i>	
	♠ T7652 ♥ A865 ♦ 2 ♣ KJ3	

E-W Vulnerable

South West North East

 2♦ Dbl 4♦

4♠ Pass Pass Pass

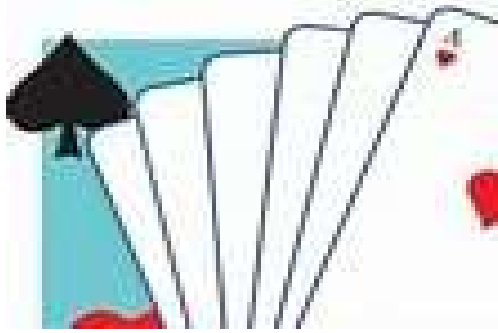
West's 2♦ was a Weak Two, showing less than opening values and a 6-card suit. East further crowded N-S by jumping to 4♦ and South tried 4♠. The good news for E-W was that they had bounced N-S into a poor contract, the bad news was that South makes her contract if she does a little counting.

West leads the ♦A and shifts to the ♣T. East wins the Ace and returns the suit, vainly hoping that West can ruff. But Declarer's King wins the trick, then comes the ♠A, and a second Spade won by East. Declarer wins the Club continuation in Dummy, and leads the ♥Q which East declines to cover.

What next?

Three tricks have been lost and Declarer must bring in the Heart suit for no losers if she is to make her contract. She can either play a low Heart to the Ace, hoping that East has started with doubleton King ... or she can lead the Jack, hoping to squash West's doubleton Ten and set up the Nine. There's no need to guess this one. West has six Diamonds for his 2♦ bid, and has shown up with two Spades and two Clubs. That leaves three Hearts! So, Declarer plays a *low* Heart from Dummy and, sure enough, the King pops out of East's hand.

Of course, if East had known that Declarer would be so unsporting as to count out the distribution, then he would have covered the Queen with the King and given Declarer a guess for the ♥T.



#23 – AN AFTERNOON NAP

♠ Q432
♥ J
♦ AKQT2
♣ J53

E-W Vulnerable

South West North East

1♦ 3♠

4♥ Pass Pass Pass

♠ AKQ742	North	♠ AKJT965
♥ 7432	West East	♥ 65
♦ 753	Declarer	♦ J64
♣ AKQ742		♣ 9
	♠ 87	
	♥ AKQT98	
	♦ 98	
	♣ T86	

East's 3♠ bid was preemptive, showing a long suit (usually 7 cards) and a weak hand, its purpose being to make life difficult for the opponents. And so it does, pushing N-S into an ugly 4♥ contract which has 5 top losers.

West cashes his three Clubs and then, for want of better, shifts to a Diamond. Dummy wins that, and draws trumps. It was fortunate for Declarer that West started with no Spades, otherwise he would have been

down two in a hurry. But now, if Declarer can bring home the Diamond suit, both of those Spade losers will disappear and this rotten contract will actually make! Do you play Diamonds from the top (hoping that they are 3-3 or that East has Jx)? Or do you finesse the Ten (playing West to have Jxxx)?

It may be tempting to think "East has seven Spades and West has none, therefore West is more likely to have Diamond length" But that's only part of the picture and Declarer will count the whole hand. East started with seven Spades, two Hearts, and one Club, that much we know. This leaves three Diamonds, no more, no less! So Declarer confidently plays the Diamonds from the top and the Spade losers are thrown off. It pays to count in this game!

It also pays to stay awake. Yes, you noticed, the defense was fast asleep! East must ruff the third Club, just in case West has no Spades. Now the Spades are cashed and it is down two. And let's also mention that West should have helped his dozing partner by leading a *low* Club at Trick 3. *That* will wake him up!



#24 – A HOLD-UP PLAY

♠ A83
♥ 432
♦ QT9
♣ KQ85

♠ KQ6 ♥ AQ86 ♦ 4 ♣ J9763	North	♠ JT952 ♥ JT95 ♦ 876 ♣ T
	West East	
	Declarer	

♠ 74
♥ K7
♦ AKJ532
♣ A42

N-S Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♦	Dbl	Rdbl	1♠
3♦	Pass	3NT	4♥
5♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

After N-S reached 3NT, East, figuring that his side had a profitable sacrifice, offered his partner a choice between 4♥ or 4♠. This pushed N-S to the perilous contract of 5♦, which, as you will see, Declarer is about to bungle.

Against 5♦ West leads the ♠K, won by Dummy's Ace and trumps are drawn. Declarer can count 10 top tricks, but where is the 11th? Not the ♥K as West needs the ♥A to justify his Takeout Double. That means that a 4th Club trick is required. Are Clubs 3-3? Let's count the hand. East bid both majors and is no doubt at least 4-4 in those suits. He also showed up with 3 Diamonds. That leaves two Clubs at most. But would East bid so much with 4=4=3=2 distribution and virtually no HCP? No, it seems more likely that East is 5=4=3=1 and, if so, Declarer must hope that East's Club is the Jack or Ten or Nine. She cashes the ♣A and, seeing East's Ten, prepares to take an impressively deep finesse of the Eight on the second round!

Well counted for 11 tricks except for one tiny detail. That's right, West can also count and he inserts the Nine on the second round of Clubs. Now Declarer is locked in Dummy with no safe way back to his hand (if he plays a Spade, East will be sure to win and fire a Heart through). Down one.

Declarer's play was flawless right up to the point where he called for Dummy's ♠A at Trick 1. Instead, he must hold up the Ace and win the second round. That way, later in the play, he can get safely back to hand with a Spade ruff and take that second Club finesse. Yet another contract bites the dust because of hasty play at Trick 1.





Please see schedules on page 1



**AMERICAN CONTRACT
BRIDGE LEAGUE**

— DEALING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES —