

# Bloomington-Normal Bridge Newsletter

Volume 27 Number 3 – March, 2025



## March 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.**

**Online(BBO) bridge available at:**

**Tuesdays, 6:50pm – 749ers only 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 2/7/2025 – residents of Bloomington-Normal  
paid up ACBL members only



- 1 5,353.29 Steve Babin
- 2 3,758.02 Eunice Patton
- 3 3,743.15 Zach Freehill
- 4 3,606.05 Cindy Moore
- 5 2,802.49 Mike Tomlianovich
- 6 2,728.23 Lori Moore
- 7 2,672.16 Ann Schuyler
- 8 2,308.66 Joyce Clay
- 9 2,095.77 Ron Emmett
- 10 1,773.88 Jeff Furler
- 11 1,514.55 Steve Wulfers
- 12 944.60 Barb Neuges
- 13 908.39 Larry Ziegler
- 14 897.57 Sallie Boge
- 15 888.32 Dave Freehill
- 16 848.14 Fred Spitzzeri
- 17 647.01 Rick Dalton
- 18 632.02 Chris Zogg
- 19 626.07 Mary Cralley
- 20 557.57 Pat Lebeck
- 21 528.07 John Cralley
- 22 523.15 Kay Marvin
- 23 505.32 Gene Byers
- 24 365.28 Joyce Werner
- 25 346.08 Glee Cumbow

## More players:

- 14,447.89 Chris Benson-LeRoy
- 6,138.00 Ron Sholes-Springfield
- 5,984.11 John Seng-Champaign
- 5,283.27 Leonard Kaufman-Peoria
- 5,008.44 Paul Lindauer-Chicago
- 4,269.78 Mary Allen-Peoria
- 4,178.54 Terry Goodykoontz,Florida
- 4,064.84 JoAnn Schroeder-Appleton,WI
- 3,899.49 Carole Sholes-Springfield
- 2,850.60 Chuck Young-Peoria
- 2,810.73 Hank Hoffman-Morton
- 2,654.93 Margaret Hansell-Champaign
- 2,551.36 John Maloney-Champaign
- 2,356.87 Bill Bulfer-Peoria Heights
- 2,199.94 Marilyn Stickel-Lacon
- 1,845.97 Camilla Rabjohns-Peoria Hgts
- 1,614.07 Wes Seitz-Champaign
- 1,282.12 Bill Strauss-Urbana
- 1,272.42 Darryl Bremner-Clinton
- 1,210.51 Bill Thompson-Fortmeyer B,FL
- 1,011.72 Connie Tucker-Champaign
- 893.60 Ray Dostal-Independence,IA
- 798.62 Melda Richardson-California
- 759.11 John Ford-Harvard,MA
- 702.88 Kirk Kimmel-Peoria
- 661.62 Barry Mayworm-Princeton
- 625.89 Lane O'Connor-Naperville
- 625.77 Lynn Steffen-El Paso
- 589.59 Martha Schuster-Peoria
- 554.09 Rich Hagenhauer-Peoria





# IMPROVE YOUR PLAY

with Larry Matheny (in memorium)



**The next 4 columns appear on the next 4 pages:**



## **Bloomington-Normal 70% club Year 2024 only**

<b>2024/12/22</b>	<b>78.97%</b>	<b>Cheris Larson &amp; Cindy Moore(virtual club mentee-mentor)</b>
<b>2024/11/4</b>	<b>71.53%</b>	<b>Cindy Moore &amp; Mike Tomlianovich</b>
<b>2024/10/29</b>	<b>71.25%</b>	<b>Donna Uhlenhop &amp; Jane Franklin(social meets duplicate)</b>
<b>2024/9/9</b>	<b>70.00%</b>	<b>Mike Tomlianovich &amp; Steve Babin</b>
<b>2024/9/2</b>	<b>72.62%</b>	<b>Cindy Moore &amp; Mike Tomlianovich</b>
<b>2024/8/28</b>	<b>70/83%</b>	<b>Chris Benson &amp; Steve Babin</b>
<b>2024/8/26</b>	<b>71.05%</b>	<b>Clarene Arnold &amp; Jerry Grandon(social meets duplicate)</b>
<b>2024/7/22</b>	<b>70.83%</b>	<b>Eunice Patton &amp; Jeff Furler</b>
<b>2024/7/15</b>	<b>77.44%</b>	<b>Jackie Schmidt &amp; Kay Ann Criswell(social meets duplicate)</b>
<b>2024/7/1</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>Gaye Hoselton &amp; Bob Bray(social meets duplicate)</b>
<b>2024/5/29</b>	<b>72.49%</b>	<b>Cindy Moore &amp; Jeff Furler</b>
<b>2024/5/20</b>	<b>71/05%</b>	<b>Helen Basehore &amp; Gaye Hoselton(social meets duplicate)</b>
<b>2024/4/29</b>	<b>70.24%</b>	<b>Steve Wulfers &amp; Steve Babin</b>
<b>2024/4/8</b>	<b>72.28%</b>	<b>Tom Teeters &amp; Steve Wulfers</b>
<b>2024/4/3</b>	<b>70.14%</b>	<b>Cindy Moore &amp; Jeff Furler</b>
<b>2024/3/13</b>	<b>76.04%</b>	<b>Chris Benson &amp; Steve Babin</b>
<b>2024/3/5</b>	<b>72.22%</b>	<b>Clindy Lake &amp; Terry Huebsch(749ers)</b>



## IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

While there are many conventions to help you reach the best contract, sometimes using them can be fatal. Take a look at this one.

Scoring: Matchpoints (Pairs)

<p>Hand #35 Dir E Vul N-S</p>	<p>♠ 102 ♥ K8 ♦ KQJ83 ♣ AJ96</p>		<p><b>West</b>   <b>North</b>   <b>East</b>   <b>South</b></p>		
				Pass	1♥
<p>♠ KJ9876 ♥ ♦ 62 ♣ Q10853</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	<p>♠ 54 ♥ J109532 * ♦ 104 ♣ 742</p>	<p>2♥ DBL Pass 3♦ Pass 4♣</p>	<p>2♠ Pass Pass Pass</p>	<p>Pass 3♠ 6NT</p>
	<p>♠ AQ3 ♥ AQ764 ♦ A975 ♣ K</p>		<p>All Pass</p>		

\*Michael's Cue bid

**BIDDING:** West's cue bid showing spades and a minor certainly started something. North doubled to deny heart support but show a good hand. East ran to 2♠ and hoped for the best. With no clear direction, South passed to see what North would do next. After hearing 3♦ from his partner, South forced again with a cue bid. North next showed clubs and South leaped to the slam to protect the spade queen from the opening lead.

**PLAY:** West guessed to lead a low club won by South's king. Declarer could count eleven tricks and was fairly confident from the bidding that the hearts would break badly. However, West was marked with both the spade king and the club queen so an endplay might be possible. First, declarer played the top three honors confirming the bad heart break. Next, he played all five diamonds and with the lead in dummy, was down to this ending: North: ♠102 ♣AJ South: ♠AQ3 ♥7. West was doomed; his last four cards were: ♠KJ ♣Q10. Declarer could play ace and another spade for a club return or the ace and another club for a spade return. Either way, declarer would make his slam. Without the revealing 2♥ cue bid, declarer might have tried to make the contract by taking the spade finesse.

This is not to say you should not use the Michael's cue bid or other tools, but rather realize that like the preempt, they are double-edged swords which may cut you. Note 7♦ can be made only if played by South. A heart lead would defeat it if declared by North.

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## IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

It's so important to listen to the bidding. While this may seem simple and obvious, it is surprising so many people listen but do not hear. Take a look, or rather, a listen.

Scoring: Matchpoints (Pairs)

Hand #36 Dir W Vul N-S	♠ AK108 ♥ J7 ♦ KJ3 ♣ KQ72					
♠ 2 ♥ AK962 ♦ AQ875 ♣ 105	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ QJ97 ♥ Q8 ♦ 942 ♣ AJ83	<b>West</b> 1♥ 2♦ 3♦	<b>North</b> DBL 2♠ 3♠	<b>East</b> RDBL Pass DBL All Pass	<b>South</b> 1♠ Pass Pass
	♠ 6543 ♥ 10543 ♦ 106 ♣ 964					

**BIDDING:** North had a very good takeout double and East redoubled to promise ten or more HCP. South properly took a preference to spades and West's 2♦ bid showed a red two-suiter with no extras and no particular desire to defend. North wasn't done and competed to 2♠. East was tempted to double but passed knowing West must make another call. After West bid 3♦, North loved his hand and bid one more. East knew what to do and 3♠ doubled became the final contract.

**PLAY:** It's too gory to describe the details but declarer ended up with only five tricks for down four and -1100. North was heard to say "But, I had 17 HCP, I had to bid again". Let's do the math that North should have done at the table: (approx. numbers) West:13 HCP, North: 17 HCP, East:10 HCP, South: well, that doesn't leave South with any, does it? North must know as soon as the redouble is made that his partner is broke. This is a terrible case of a player bidding his hand without LISTENING to his partner.

Note that East could (and perhaps should) have doubled 2♠ but he had faith that his partner would take another call. Auctions with the redouble should be discussed thoroughly with your partners.

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## IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

The 4-3-2-1 point count system is used by most people to evaluate their hands, but this doesn't help when it comes to the intermediate spot cards. This hand is a good example of their importance.

Scoring: Matchpoints (Pairs)

Hand #37 Dir N Vul E-W	♠ J1092 ♥ AK54 ♦ A83 ♣ 72	♠ K5 ♥ QJ6 ♦ 1075 ♣ KQ1083	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ 8643 ♥ 87 ♦ QJ942 ♣ A9	<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>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>All</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	West	North	East	South		1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥	All	Pass	♠ AQ7 ♥ 10932 ♦ K6 ♣ J654
West	North	East	South															
	1♦	Pass	1♥															
Pass	2♥	All	Pass															

**BIDDING:** The auction was straight forward. South thought about trying for game but decided to take his plus score. West might have ventured an overcall but the vulnerability convinced him to defend.

**PLAY:** East overtook his partner's king of club and led one back. South ducked the nine of clubs but West won with the ten to play a third round. His play of the queen requested a spade return. (A low club would have asked for a diamond return.) Declarer saw no good choice and finally ruffed with the four. East over-ruffed and obediently returned a spade. Now South had another dilemma: should he be talked out of the spade finesse or go up with the ace? Since this was a pairs event and overtricks were important, he played low but West won the spade king. Now another club gave declarer yet another option. He finally ruffed low and East gleefully won the heart eight. Declarer still had another trump to lose and ended up down one.

Declarer had two ways to make this contract. He could ruff the third club high or he could have refused the spade finesse. A wily defender will often give false signals attempting to persuade declarer to take (or refuse) finesses so perhaps it wasn't that clear the spade finesse was going to lose. Notice the value of the heart eight; if it had been in dummy rather than the four, declarer would have had no problem.

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## IMPROVE YOUR PLAY with Larry Matheny

Some hands have such wild distribution it's difficult to know what to bid. Here is one such hand that paid off when both partners took aggressive views.

Scoring: Matchpoints (Pairs)

Hand #38 Dir W Vul N-S	♠ A7 ♥ KJ86542 ♦ K987 ♣						
♠ 83 ♥ AQ10973 ♦ 654 ♣ 108	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	♠ QJ10962 ♥ ♦ QJ103 ♣ 754	<b>West</b> 2♥ Pass	<b>North</b> Pass 6♣	<b>East</b> Pass All Pass	<b>South</b> 5♣	
	♠ K54 ♥ ♦ A2 ♣ AKQJ9632						

**BIDDING:** North couldn't believe it when he heard a 2♥ bid on his right but passed hoping his partner would make a takeout double. South didn't know what was right but finally leaped to 5♣. Now it was up to North to determine how valuable his cards were to his partner. A jump to a vulnerable game at the five level showed a very good hand so he finally decided his spade ace and diamond king were great cards and bid the slam. He understood his heart cards would not help his partner.

**PLAY:** West led the spade eight and declarer saw his only loser was a spade trick. However, the bidding suggested East might have length in spades and diamonds so a squeeze was possible. The play was easy. He won the spade ace and ruffed a heart to his hand. He then ran his eight clubs and East could not protect both pointed suits and eventually surrendered peacefully. Bidding six and making seven was an excellent score.

There is no doubt North took a gamble raising with a void but he had confidence his partner would have an exceptionally strong hand to bid 5♣. Note that South was reluctant to double at his first opportunity because he was concerned his partner may pass and an eight card club suit certainly doesn't suggest defending.

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## BRIDGE BITES

from: The American Contract Bridge League

By: Brian Gunnell

### #49 – MANAGING THE ENTRIES

This week's hand comes from a duplicate bridge event, where the method of scoring generously rewards making overtricks.

♠ AKT9 ♥ Q ♦ 987 ♣ T9764		
♠ Q832 ♥ AT75 ♦ T43 ♣ KQ	<i>North</i>  <i>West</i> <i>East</i>  <i>Declarer</i>	♠ J7654 ♥ 832 ♦ KJ52 ♣ J
♠ KJ964 ♥ AQ6 ♣ A8532		

#### *E-W Vulnerable*

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

Can you make 10 tricks after a low Diamond lead? Our title is one clue, and we'll also say that West is a slippery cove, and that the play in Clubs is crucial. Alright, that's enough clues, now please make 10 tricks.

Our Declarer managed only 9 tricks. He won the Diamond lead, cashed the ♣A and conceded a Club, playing low from the board both times. West won the second Club and persevered with Diamonds. Declarer correctly ducked and took the next Diamond, hoping that the defender with the ♥A was not the

one with the 13<sup>th</sup> Diamond. Then Declarer led to the ♥Q but that rascally West ducked the trick! This fine play meant that Declarer could not score a second Heart trick ... with ♠T97 on the board and ♠853 in hand there was only one entry back to hand when two were needed (one to knock out the ♥A, the other to get back to the Heart winner). Making only 9 tricks.

West made a good play by ducking the Heart but Declarer did not have to give him a chance to shine. On the first two rounds of Clubs, Declarer should play Dummy's ♣9 and ♣T. Now, with ♠764 on the board and ♠853 in hand, there *are* two entries to hand, and also one back to the board later, with which to reach the ♠AK. Careful management of the entries nullifies West's clever duck and brings in that valuable overtrick.



## #50 – RIGHT-SIDING THE CONTRACT

	♠ 53 ♥ 3 ♦ 964 ♣ AQ98432	
♠ AQJ962 ♥ JT2 ♦ K532 ♣	North West East Declarer	♠ T87 ♥ 98764 ♦ T87 ♣ 76
	♠ K4 ♥ AKQ5 ♦ AQJ ♣ KJT5	

### N-S Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
	1♠	3♣	Pass
6NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

As can be seen, 6♣ (played from the North side) is down one in a hurry after East's opening Spade lead. So South sensibly bid 6NT to "right-side" the contract, putting West on lead and protecting the ♠K. Against 6NT, West leads the ♥J. Can you make 12 tricks?

Declarer can count only 11 top tricks and can be sure (from the bidding) that the ♦K and ♠A are both with West. Does that mean that 6NT is destined to fail? Actually, no, because Declarer can organize an end-play. Declarer wins the opening Heart lead, cashes the other Heart winners and rattles off 7

Clubs. West's last three cards will presumably be ♠A and ♦K5, and Declarer will come down to ♠K and ♦AQ. Now, West is thrown in with a Spade and must lead a Diamond, giving Declarer her 12<sup>th</sup> trick. That pretty ending is known as a Strip Squeeze.

**Post Script:** West might have thwarted the squeeze by coming down to ♠AQ and ♦K, but an astute Declarer will suspect that West has the ♠Q for his opening bid and will play to drop the ♦K instead of trying the Spade throw-in. A more thoughtful West will bare the ♦K early in his discards, and will also pitch away the ♠Q and ♠J, coming down to the fiendishly devious ♠A6 and ♦K! Nobody would fault Declarer for now assuming that West started life with 5=3=5=0 distribution, and for misguessing the end-game as a result. Wicked defense, Mr West!



## #51 – SIDE-SUITS FIRST

In our first bridge lesson we are taught to draw the defenders' trumps early in the play, lest they start ruffing our winners. We then spend the rest of our lives discovering (sometimes painfully) that there are exceptions to this rule.

♠ J74 ♥ A9765 ♦ 92 ♣ AKJ		
♠ Q532 ♥ K832 ♦ Q4 ♣ QT2	North	♠ AKT986 ♥ Q4 ♦ KT753 ♣
	West      East	
	Declarer	
♠ ♥ JT ♦ AJ86 ♣ 9876543		

### E-W Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
		1♥	1♠
2♣	2♠	3♣	4♠
5♣	Dbl	All Pass	

With extreme distribution around the table (or at least in the S-E corner), it's not unusual for the bidding to keep on going until someone finally says "Enough already, I double you!" Here, West questions South's ability to make 11 tricks in Clubs.

After ruffing the opening Spade lead, one (faulty) plan would be to ruff a couple of Diamonds, but that would set up a natural trump trick for the defense (two, as it happens, because the suit splits 3-0). The winning plan is

to set up the Hearts, and some trumps must be kept in reserve in order to provide Dummy entries later in the play. It's OK to play a trump to the Ace at Trick 2, and then the play continues: Spade ruff; ♥J losing to East's Queen; Diamond shift won by the Ace; ♥T is run around; Club to Dummy; ♥A is cashed (pitching a Diamond); Heart ruff; Club back to the board. Now another Diamond is pitched on the long Heart and Declarer has her 11 tricks (7 trumps, 3 Hearts and the ♦A). Not a difficult hand for those who didn't use up Dummy's trumps before tackling Hearts.

**Anyone for 4♠?** Yes, that's another contract where it doesn't pay to draw trumps immediately. In this case it is the Diamonds which must be established early, and Declarer goes down if he ruffs the opening Club lead and then draws three rounds of trumps. Instead the play goes: Club ruff; ♠A; Diamond to the Queen; Heart to the Queen; lose a Diamond. Now Declarer is in control and loses just two red Aces and a Diamond overruff.



## #52 – PAYBACK TIME

In recent Bridge Bites, our West has been a bit of a pest, frequently coming up with dastardly plays which make Declarer's life difficult. This week we are delighted to report that West makes a slight slip and becomes the victim.

♠ J975
♥ 872
♦ J96
♣ A95

♠ A	North	♠ T3
♥ JT	West	♥ Q6543
♦ AKQ84	East	♦ 753
♣ Q8732	Declarer	♣ JT4

♠ KQ8642
♥ AK9
♦ T2
♣ K6

### E-W Vulnerable

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

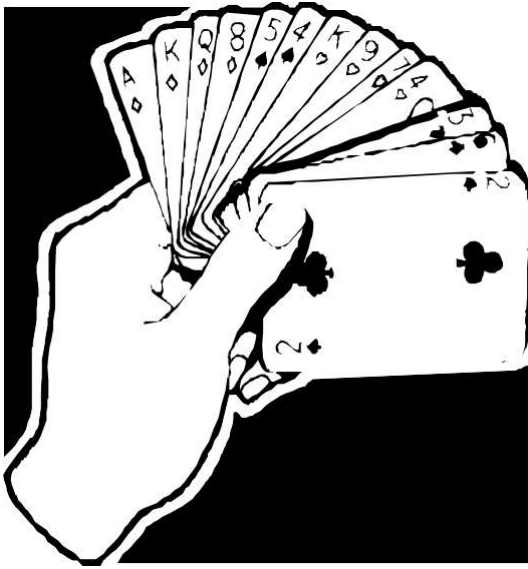
Perhaps South was a little boisterous in the bidding, a more prudent player would have merely invited game. But making seemingly impossible contracts is one of the joys of the game, and your job is to make 10 tricks after West plays three rounds of Diamonds.

It looks pretty grim, doesn't it? Two Diamonds have already been lost, the ♠A is another loser, and there appears to be an inescapable Heart loser. Down one? No, it's too soon to give up! Declarer has a long-shot route to success, which requires that West started with the singleton trump Ace and

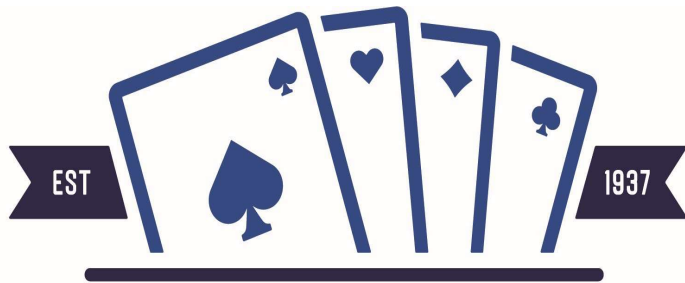
no more than two Hearts. Step 1 is to cash the top Clubs and ruff a Club. Step 2 is to cash the ♥A and the ♥K. Now, Step 3 is to exit with a trump. Let's relish West's discomfort! Declarer's fine play has eliminated all of West's safe exit cards. With nothing left but Diamonds and Clubs, whatever West plays will give Declarer a ruff and discard ... he'll ruff the return in one hand and discard the "inescapable" Heart loser from the other. Making 10 tricks!

You see where West went wrong, of course. He needed to cash the ♠A early in the play (before the third round of Diamonds). Now, the elimination play does not work, and Declarer will eventually be down one.





**Please see schedules on page 1**



**AMERICAN CONTRACT  
BRIDGE LEAGUE**

— DEALING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES —