

The Kibitzer



Spring 2021 | Volume 68, Number 1



Kibitzer Roundtable Discussion

CHIPReverseMortgage 
by HomeEquity Bank



Mortgages for Retirees

Are you 55 years of age or older? Did you know there is a simple way to supplement your income using your home's equity?

A reverse mortgage will give you access to up to 55% of the value of your home tax-free. The best part? No more monthly mortgage payments and you don't have to sell your home!

We're here to help.

If you would like to learn more about how a reverse mortgage can benefit you, please call 416-989-1000 or email me at info@askross.ca - I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have and provide you with more information so you can make the right choice for you.



Experience you can trust.



Ross Taylor & Associates

P: (416) 989 1000

E: info@askross.ca

W: www.askross.ca



As I write this note it is just a few days after Groundhog Day (the day), but it sure feels like Groundhog Day (the movie). Our saving grace as bridge players is good ol' BBO. Hope you're getting in lots of practice in the virtual club games and/or the robots and/or with friends in the Casual section.

I'm excited about our new look. If you can access the flip.it link, then you can replicate reading the Kibitzer as you would a regular-sized magazine, one that you hold in your hands. However, we'll still post a pdf at www.unit166.ca Half-size Kib no more—we're all grown up!

The Kib now features a regular crackerjack crew of contributors! Still on board are **Bob Griffiths** and **David Turner**; they will continue to write with a focus on players' experience levels—Bob for newer players and David for advancing. Their love of the game spills on to the page; can't thank them enough for taking the time to write.

And now we can add a few more regulars. The new columnists include **David Colbert**, *Bridge by the Numbers*; **John Rayner**,

The Bridge Teacher; **Janet Galbraith**, *Bridge History*; and a revolving rotation of awesome Canadian juniors in a new column called *Canadian Juniors*. First up is **Bo Han (Bruce) Zhu**, and we shall soon hear from **John Dong** and **Albena Vassileva**, three excellent players and writers. Trust me on this—you'll see.

Thanks to **Brian Gray** for broaching the topic of safety plays. We don't often look for safety plays at matchpoints, but they are worth adding to your knowledge base when you playimps.

Our cover story developed over the past couple of months as **Mike Cafferata**, **Steve Mackay**, **Morrie Kleinplatz**, and **Roisin O'Hara** kindly took time to answer all my questions on all things bridge. All four are on track to be future Grand Life Masters and it could not happen to four nicer people. Thanks to Bert Eccles and Jonathan Steinberg for suggesting that these great players get a little exposure.

Continuing with our regular feature on *Celebrity Bridge Players* (page 9) we have **Bernadette Morra**, editor-in-chief of FASHION

magazine. Like many of us, Bernadette stuck with learning bridge just long enough to get hooked. My *quid pro quo* idea is that FASHION will reciprocate by having a bridge column, but...don't hold your breath. (Maybe in the '60s when we dressed better, haha.)

Finally, we have **Katie Thorpe** (page 40) as our guest *What I Have Learned* columnist this issue. Katie is one of Canada's best all-time players, and she has learned a treasure trove of lessons and tips. Fun fact: Katie's grandmother was born a "Rainbow," as in the surname. (All this time watching Randy Rainbow videos on YouTube, it never occurred to me that Rainbow is an actual surname.)

Hope you like the new look and size. Feel free to drop me a line with a suggestion, or, even better, an article!

Andy Stark
andy.kibitzer@gmail.com
 647 530 1360

On the cover, clockwise from top left: Mike Cafferata, Steve Mackay, Morrie Kleinplatz, and Roisin O'Hara

CONTENTS

Editor's Note.....	3	ARTICLES THIS ISSUE:	
Unit 166	5	Celebrity Bridge Player: Bernadette Morra.....	9
Unit 238	6	Kibitzer Roundtable Discussion	12
Unit 246	6	Katie Thorpe:What I Have Learned.....	40
Unit 249	7		
Unit 255	8	CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE:	
Cheryl Barlow.....	43	Robert Griffiths	26
Unit 166 Ace of Clubs and Mini-McKenney results.....	44	David Colbert.....	28
Kibitzer information	4	David Turner.....	30
		John Rayner	32
ADVERTISERS THIS ISSUE:		Bo Han (Bruce) Zhu.....	34
AskRoss – Mortgages for Retirees	2	Brian Gray.....	37
Expedia Cruises.....	8	Janet Galbraith.....	38

The Kibitzer Information

The Kibitzer is available online at www.unit166.ca, every three months: February, May, August, and November. Readers are invited to share their email addresses with the ACBL so that they may receive notification The Kibitzer is ready for viewing.

Advertisers: Please proofread your ad to ensure all the dates, times, prices, and other important details are to your liking. We will print what you send us and only edit for typos and grammar.

KIBITZER ADVERTISING RATES:

Full Page \$180; 1/2 Page \$110; 1/4 Page \$70; 1/8 Page \$40
(All plus HST)

Please send to Andy Stark, andy.kibitzer@gmail.com

KIBITZER ONLINE: <http://unit166.ca>

IMPORTANT KIBITZER DATES:

Issue:	Deadline:	Posted online by:
Summer 2021	Apr. 15	May 15
Fall 2021	July. 15	Aug. 15
Winter 2021	Oct. 15	Nov. 15
Spring 2022	Jan. 15	Feb. 15

Kibitzer Editorial Policy

The Kibitzer is published to promote bridge and to inform members of ACBL Units 166, 238, 246, 249 and 255 about tournaments and special events, as well as to entertain with deals and articles of interest. It is also a forum for the exchange of information and opinion among the members. Opinions expressed in articles or letters to the Editor are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Unit Boards of Directors or the Editor. The Kibitzer reserves the right to edit or exclude submitted material.

PRESIDENT / TREASURER: [ANDREW RISMAN](#)

Toronto tel. (647) 286-1576

VICE PRESIDENT: [DARLENE SCOTT](#)

Oakville tel. (905) 257-0304

TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR: [DARLENE SCOTT](#)

Oakville tel. (905) 257-0304

PUBLICITY / KIBITZER LIAISON: [DAVID McCRADY](#)

Toronto tel. (416-293-1837

EDUCATION LIAISON: [ELAD BARAK](#)

ELECTIONS / NOMINATIONS: [DAVID McCRADY](#)

Toronto tel. (416) 293-1837

YOUTH BRIDGE: [MICHAEL YANG](#)

Scarborough tel. (647) 818-1516

AWARDS CHAIR: [DAVID A.F. ELLIS MD FRCSC](#)

Toronto tel. (416) 399-7272

CVBA: [DENISE DONOVAN](#)

North York tel. (416) 614-6754

COBA: [MIKE KAMMERMAYER](#)

Oakville tel. (905) 561-5193

At-Large Board Members:

[CHARLES BOND](#)

[SHEILA XU](#)



As the Awards Chair of Unit 166, I am pleased to announce that Andy Stark is the 2021 Kate Buckman Award winner for Unit 166. Not only due to his great work in upgrading the Kibitzer with content and appearance but also with his extensive work with students. We look forward to the day when we can have live tournaments and we can properly honour him together.

~ David Ellis

OTHER OFFICIALS

SECRETARY / ELECTRONIC CONTACT: [DEBRA KESTENBERG](#)

Toronto tel. (647) 514-3221

TOURNAMENT SANCTIONS / MEMBERSHIP CHAIR:

[MARTIN HUNTER](#)

Mississauga tel. (905) 510-0411

I/N CO-ORDINATOR: [STEVE OVERHOLT](#)

Etobicoke tel. (416) 621-0315

INVENTORY CONTROL: [JOHN McWHINNIE](#)

Hillsburgh tel. (519) 308-0088 cell. (647) 639-3935

DISTRICT DIRECTOR (ACBL): [FLO BELFORD](#)

tel. (905) 876-0267

ZONE DIRECTOR (CBF): [SUSAN COOPER](#)

AUDITOR: [GARY WESTFALL](#)

Brampton tel. (905) 791-4239

KIBITZER EDITOR: [ANDY STARK](#)

Toronto tel. (647) 530-1360

WEBMASTER: [MARTIN HUNTER](#)

Mississauga tel. (905) 510-0411

Unit 166's website now has a link for all Unit 166 teachers. If you want to promote your lessons for free please contact our webmaster, Martin Hunter at martinhunter@rogers.com with a brief description of your lessons and your contact info, including a web link if you have one.

To view the following reports and meeting minutes, please click on unit166.ca then click on the appropriate link in the left column.

- August 29, 2020 Board of Director Minutes
- January 4, 2020 AGM Minutes
- Engagement Letter (PDF format) + Financial Statements for FYE2020 (excel format)

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Saturday May 8, 2021 at 9a.m. via video conference.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UNIT 238

PRESIDENT: Millie Wood Colton
tel. (705) 674-3677, *cell.* (705) 662-8813
email. milliewoodcolton@gmail.com

VICE-PRESIDENT: John Biondi
tel. (705) 478-7781
email. dymondace1@yahoo.com

TREASURER: Cheryl Mahaffy
email. jc.mahaffy@fibreop.ca

SECRETARY: Fiona Christensen
tel. (705) 673-8478
email. fionamchristensen@gmail.com

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR: Marc Langevin
email. marc.langevin@fibreop.ca

I/N COORDINATOR: Sue Hemmerling
email. hestia@eastlink.ca

BOARD MEMBER NORTH BAY: Paul Bourassa
tel. (705) 493-1148
email. paul.bourassa200@gmail.com

BOARD MEMBER SUDBURY: Chantal Barnhart
tel. (705) 562-4829
email. pokerjunkie7@hotmail.com

BOARD MEMBER TIMMINS: Bob Pawson
tel. (705) 268-2610
email. bobpawson1@yahoo.ca

BOARD MEMBER NEW LISKEARD: Alan Young
tel. (705) 563-2996
email. youngalan1234@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UNIT 246

PRESIDENT: Linda Lord
5930 17th Sideroad RR 1, Schomberg, ON, L0G 1T0
tel. (905) 939-8409 *email.* linda@unit246.com

TREASURER: Susan Beals
34 Falling River Dr., Richmond Hill, ON, L4S 2R1
tel. (416) 433-2292

SECRETARY: Phil Smith
99 Oakwood Cres., Peterborough, ON, K9J 1N2
tel. (705) 749-9307 *email.* phil@unit246.com

EDUCATION COORDINATOR: Marilyn Maher
5274 Whipoorwill Lane, RR1 Washago, ON, L0K 2B0
tel. (705) 242-4059 *email.* marilyn@unit246.com

REGIONAL CHAIR: Linda Lord
5930 17th Sideroad RR 1, Schomberg, ON, L0G 1T0
tel. (905) 939-8409 *email.* linda@unit246.com

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR: Linda Lord
5930 17th Sideroad RR 1, Schomberg, ON, L0G 1T0
tel. (905) 939-8409 *email.* linda@unit246.com

SPECIAL EVENTS: Paul Campbell
47 Herrell Ave., Barrie, ON, L4N 6T7
tel. (705) 734-0287 *email.* paul@unit246.com

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:

Irfan Ashraf
email. irfan@unit246.com

John Montgomery,
408 - 35 Blake St., Barrie, ON, L4M 1J8
tel. (705) 627-2443

Doug Darnley
1525 Sandhurst Cres., Pickering, ON, L1V 6Y5
tel. (416) 258-1331 *email.* doug@unit246.com

Medhat Fawzy
18 Price St., Richmond Hill, ON, L4S 1C8
tel. (416) 428-9034 *email.* medhat@unit246.com

Dale MacKenzie
18 Tomlin Court, Barrie, ON, L4N 6H1
tel. (705) 739-3293 *email.* dale@unit246.com

RECORDER: Paul Thurston
18 Mount Grove Crescent, Wellington, ON, K0K 3L0
email. tweedguy@gmail.com

OTHER OFFICIALS

WEBMASTER: Greg Coles
tel. (705) 534-1871 *email.* greg@unit246.com

SUPPLY MANAGER: Joel Usher
928 Ferrier Ave., Lefroy, ON, L0L 1W0
tel. (647) 515-4775

Unit 246 Items of Interest

(Visit www.unit246.com for details)

- 1st time members of the ACBL can apply to the Unit 246 Board for a \$20 rebate for their 2nd year of ACBL membership
- Bridge teachers can list their services on the Unit 246 website free

President: Tom Ramsay
65 Bayberry Drive Unit C08, Guelph, ON, N1G 5K8
tel. (519) 265-1767 email. tandrumsay@yahoo.com

Vice-President: Ewoud Van Goch,
2495 Skinner Street, Windsor, ON, N9H 2R5
tel. (519) 915-5674 email. ewoud@live.ca

Secretary: Jennifer Verdam-Woodward
35536b Huron Road, Goderich, ON, N7A 3X8
tel. (519) 440-9346 email. jenvw@hurontel.on.ca

Treasurer: Jed Drew
55 Fairs Cres., Tillsonburg, ON, N4G 5W2
tel. (519) 842-8786 email. jed.drew@gmail.com

Webmaster: Tom Jolliffe
18 Cadeau Terrace, Unit 10, London, ON, N6K 4Z1
tel. (519) 639-2206 email. tom.jolliffe@rogers.com

Tournament Coordinator: Ted Boyd
58 St. Andrews St., Cambridge, ON, N1S 1M4
tel. (519) 740-9614 email. boydst1945@gmail.com

Membership Chair: Raj Seth
1228 Rocco Drive, Sarnia, ON, N7A 0C1
tel. (519) 491-1433 email. Rseth88@hotmail.com

IN Coordinator + Education Liaison: Hazel Hewitt
PO Box 2461, 84 Church St. South, St. Marys ON, N4X 1A3
tel. (519) 284-3482 email. h.hewitt@rogers.com

Director at Large: Louise Caicco
402-75 Albert St., London, ON, N6A 1L7
tel. (519) 434-4041 email. mclcaicco@gmail.com

Supplies Coordinator: Pat Simpson
1852 Lakeland Ave, Sarnia, ON, N7X 1G3
tel. (519) 542-9469 email. ptsimpson@cogeco.ca

Other Officials:
Auditor: Gary Westfall
38 Mallard Crescent, Bramalea, ON, L6S 2T6
tel. (905) 791-4239 email. gwestfall@rogers.com

The Unit 249 Board has decided to cancel the July Regional in Kitchener and all of our 2021 Sectional tournaments. We are hopeful that face to face bridge will return in the fall, but our tournament chairs have to work with venues and hotels months in advance of the tournament dates, and we did not feel it safe. We are working on a plan to hold unit wide games on BBO on the dates of our tournaments.

Gim Ong, District 2 Director on the ACBL's board of directors, began his term 1/1/2021 replacing Paul Janicki, who had served our district well for several terms on the ACBL Board. Unfortunately, Gim has resigned his position due to health reasons. As first alternate, Flo Belford will be taking on the role of D2 Director on a temporary basis.

~ Tom Ramsay



Unit 249 Nominations!

In accordance with the Unit 249 Constitution, Unit 249 will hold an election in June 2021 to fill ten (10) positions of Director at Large on the Board of Directors for the unit.

The positions are for a two-year term.

For a nomination form, please contact Jennifer Verdam-Woodward asap by emailing her at jenvw@hurontel.on.ca

Nominations must be received not later than April 17, 2021.

LATE NOMINATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

PRESIDENT: Wiebe Hoogland
36 Carmine Crescent, St. Catharines
email. wbyren@bell.net

VICE PRESIDENT: Steve Calcott
17 Third Avenue, St. Catharines
email. sbcalcott@gmail.com

SECRETARY: Dena Jones
4020 Mountainview Rd Beamsville
email. dena.jones@icloud.com

TREASURER: Kathy Morrison
67 Colbeck Dr, Welland
email. kmorrison37@icloud.com

TOURNAMENT CO-ORDINATOR: Claude Tremblay
280 Johnson St Niagara-on-the-Lake
email. claudet@cmtmc.ca

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: Heather Beckman
309 Nassau St Niagara-on-the-Lake
email. hbeckman@niagaratreehouse.com

EDUCATION CHAIRS: Heather Beckman & Steve Calcott
I/N CO-ORDINATORS: Heather Beckman & Steve Calcott
Webmaster Dena Jones

DISTRICT 2 REPRESENTATIVES: Wiebe Hoogland and John Mackay

ACBL ELECTRONIC CONTACT: Wiebe Hoogland
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: Heather Beckman

15 Day Spanish Passage Cruise




PRINCESS CRUISES
come back new®

An Exclusive Bridge Group November 15–30, 2021

Join Bridge Director Peter Tuttle and your cruise host Michelle Murphy on the beautiful Enchanted Princess sailing from Barcelona to Fort Lauderdale. Ports of call include Mallorca, Cartagena, Malaga, Gran Canaria, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Azores Islands as well as eight Bridge Days at sea.

Your cruise includes drinks, wifi and gratuities onboard this Medallion Class ship.

Prices starting at \$2,535 per person including taxes.

For information contact Michelle at 519-933-5662 or mimurphy@expediacruz.com

Book by March 2 for free upgrade & specialty dining

C: 519-933-5662 O: 519-850-7766

1735 Richmond Street North
London, ON
mimurphy@expediacruz.com

 **Expedia Cruises**
Air, Land & Sea Vacations

Celebrity Bridge Player: Bernadette Morra



Bernadette Morra is this issue's celebrity bridge player. Bernadette is the editor-in-chief of FASHION magazine and is an avid student of the game, having taken up bridge just a couple of years ago.

Kib: Did you play any card games as a child? If so, which ones were your favourites?

Bernadette: Yes! Go Fish, Crazy 8s, Rummy, Gin Rummy. And there was a very big 9-5-2 moment at Lawrence Park C.I. when I was in Grade 12. We played every lunch hour and spare. I enjoyed them all.

Kib: And then what drew you to bridge?

Bernadette: Growing up, Saturday night was bridge night in our house. My dad was a trumpet player and was almost always working on Saturday nights. So "the bridge girls" would come over – Doreen, Estelle and Alice – and out would come the gin. I would come downstairs to dead silence and a fog of cigarette smoke. This went on for years.

After I quit FASHION magazine in 2016, and had decompressed for a year or so, I wanted a challenge. I was always curious about bridge. It seemed very mysterious to me when I was growing up - like a secret language. So I decided to sign up for bridge lessons at The Toronto Lawn Tennis Club. After the first lesson I wished I had signed up for the Ping Pong club instead. But the good news was, I met my partner Jane Taylor that first day.

Kib: What were your first impressions of our game?

Bernadette: My first, second, third and enduring

impressions of bridge are all the same: it's difficult, confounding and oddly beguiling.

Kib: Right? Bridge is like golf that way. We're masochistic in that we come back to it, even after disappointing results. What drew you back in those early days?

Bernadette: What drew me back was the hit my self-esteem would take if I had given up. Walking away would have been too easy. In fact, I started the lessons with two friends who did not continue on. I was determined to not let bridge get the better of me.

Kib: Since your first lessons and game, is there anything else you find fascinating about the bidding or card play or defense?

Bernadette: I am so impressed by how ultimately elusive this game is. How one can study, discuss, practice and play and yet – there are so many variables involved that there are still new, unforeseen circumstances that arise. There is something magical about

something that is so unpredictable. Of course, this is also what makes it so frustrating, especially for a perfectionist like me.

Kib: How do you find bridge players, in general?

Bernadette: It's so interesting to see how people's personalities emerge in bridge. The control freaks, the laid back dudes, the risk takers, the entitled, the know-it-alls (who don't)... Jane and I are both pretty easy-going and we click with like-minded players.



Bernadette Morra

Kib: Do you have a memory of something you did well at the table, like a well-played hand or solid defense?

Bernadette: I bid and made a grand slam (with some coaching) at a supervised play game. I never would have bid to that level as I'm too conservative and timid for that. I marvel at players who have the guts to push into slam territory. Not recklessly, but who just have the confidence (and experience) to recognize the situation and take the risk.

Kib: Tell us about your job as editor-in-chief of Fashion magazine.

Bernadette: I am very lucky to be doing what I'm doing, especially at this stage. Many in the media business feel they need young talent to attract a younger audience (which is what advertisers want). I don't disagree, but experience counts for a lot, especially when it comes to navigating rough waters, like during COVID.

On a day-to-day basis, I'm sort of the conductor who helps oversee the "orchestra" of writers and art people. I give everyone a direction to work towards and ensure the final result is harmonious. And then I deal with the sales and marketing teams to make sure we are attractive to advertisers, and work with upper management on overall strategy. It's a role that benefits from lots of experience – which I have!

Kib: What other publications have you worked for?

Bernadette: I started by freelancing as a fashion writer for Canadian Press wire service in the '80s, and also wrote for Flare magazine. I was hired on staff at the Toronto Star in 1988 and was there for 20 years, first as fashion writer then fashion editor. I was hired at FASHION in 2009 and stayed till 2016. I then freelanced for The Globe and Mail, NUVO and Experiences – Bombardier's private jet magazine. I was lured back to FASHION in 2019.

Kib: Did you know early on you wanted to be a writer?

Bernadette: I always wanted to be in media, but I initially wanted to be a pop music critic. It was an editor at Canadian

Press who steered me into fashion. And he was right.

Kib: Speaking of music, as soon as we get the all-clear, is there a band or artist you would like to see perform live?

Bernadette: I'm hungry for any kind of live performance now. I especially miss the ballet and I often think how mentally challenging it must be to stay in top form when there are no live performances on the horizon.



Kib: Where did you study?

Bernadette: I have a BA from the University of Toronto in Criminology and Sociology. That's a long story. My parents kind of forced me to go to U of T, so I just took what I liked, which was mostly psychology and sociology. Somehow, I wound up with a criminology degree. After that I did a media writing program at Sheridan College. It taught writing for film, TV, print and radio. I loved it.

Kib: Do you find your job to be stressful? If you have a stressful day at work and then a bridge game or lesson that night, is bridge a relief or added stress?

Bernadette: Sometimes. But bridge is a total relief. You have to be completely in the moment and can't think about anything else. I come out of a bridge session cleansed from work and other worries. It's therapeutic.

Kib: There was a time (once upon a time), when bridge players actually dressed up to play. What is your assessment of how bridge players dress these days?

Bernadette: I love that question! Bridge players aren't into labels and logos like fashion people are – it's so refreshing! And I loved the hints of the old dress-up days I would see at our games at The Lawn - the fine jewellery and Hermes scarves. We had a Christmas bridge party in 2019 and one of the men came in a dark green velvet smoking jacket. It was epic.

Kib: There are maybe four people remaining in the bridge world who could model for Fashion magazine: Jan Fox, Sybil Saunders, and I'm blanking on the other two. I'm talking super classy dressers. They're truly bridge-playing

fashionistas. Would you ever consider doing a two-page spread in Fashion magazine on chic-dressing bridge players? Or is that a quick no-go?

Bernadette: LOL! I will have to look into that. We are #FASHIONforall ages, sizes, genders, ethnicities, and orientations. So, you never know!

Kib: Do you see any parallels between bridge players and folks in the fashion world or are these two opposite types of people?

Bernadette: I would say that their passions are different but there are a variety of personalities in each group. I would be more interested to know how bridge players categorize themselves. Is there a distinction between hard-core players and others like me who will likely never become so devoted? Maybe I'm just going to wind up a mediocre "Saturday night girl" like my mom and her friends. And that's fine with me. Minus the gin, though. I have no idea how they could play bridge under the influence!

Kib: Please tell us about your partnership with Jane Taylor.

Bernadette: One of the blessings of learning bridge is meeting Jane. She sat to my right on the first day of my first

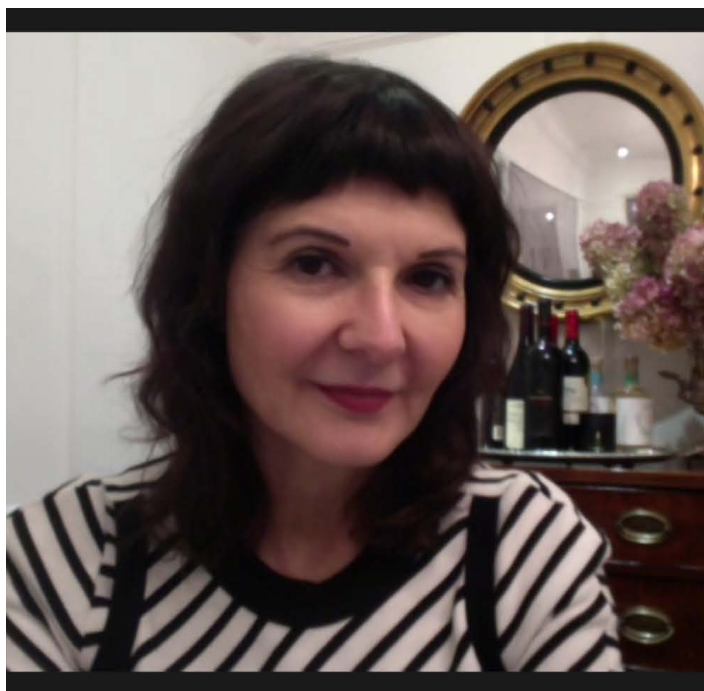
lesson. As my friends dropped out, she and I started playing together. We are totally in synch in our playing level and our frustrations. And she is as patient with me as I am with her. We are muddling through together. I don't think I could do it without her.

Kib: And, when not working, when not playing bridge, what else do you like to do?

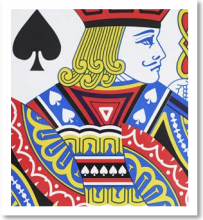
Bernadette: Aside from wife-ing and mother-ing, I love reading and I belong to a small but fabulous book club. I also belong to Partners in Art, a group that supports local contemporary artists and offers studio visits and other educational sessions. And I am a patron of the National Ballet of Canada.



Bernadette's pick of fashion-y playing cards



Bernadette and her regular partner Jane Taylor met recently online for a Zoom chat and photo



Kibitzer Roundtable Discussion

The Kib sat down with four illustrious Ontario bridge players: Mike Cafferata, Morrie Kleinplatz, Steve Mackay, and Roisin O'Hara, to chat about all things bridge.

Kib: Let's start at the beginning, or even just before the beginning. How were you drawn to bridge, and what memories do you have of your first lessons?

Mike: My parents played rubber bridge with friends in the late '50s. My father taught bridge to supplement his income. Those were my first lessons.

Morrie: My family loved games and puzzles, and I inherited that. One day I was watching a foursome in the McGill common room when one of them had to leave for class. Another guy said to me, "Sit down." I said, "I don't know how to play," and he said, "Don't worry about it. Just sit." I did, and when I held my first hand, he looked over and said, "Just bid 1♥!" I did, and I was hooked. I never took lessons, but I read like crazy and bought an Autobridge set (is anyone else old enough to recall that?) and practiced on that.

Steve: My parents played with another couple and I used to watch but I had no idea what they were doing; I was 10 or so at the time. In early University days, Peter Cronin took me aside and said he would teach me the game. Not only that, he said he knew about a fancy bidding system that was used by some Italians and that is what we were going to learn. I guess I had heard of Charles Goren, but it seemed pretty cool that we were going to adopt an Italian system. Peter taught me five rules and for quite a while, those were the only rules I knew.

1. 13-16 points and a 5+card major, open that major
2. 13-16 points and more cards in the majors than in the minors (so, either 4-4 or 4-3 in the Ms for those who are counting), open 1♦

3. 13-16 points and more cards in the minors, open INT
4. All hands with 17 or more points, open 1♣.
5. 13-16 points and a long minor, open with 2 of that minor.

That was it, the sum total of my bidding knowledge, but it seemed like fun. Maybe later I'll mention an early hand that I enjoyed, based on Peter's ideas.

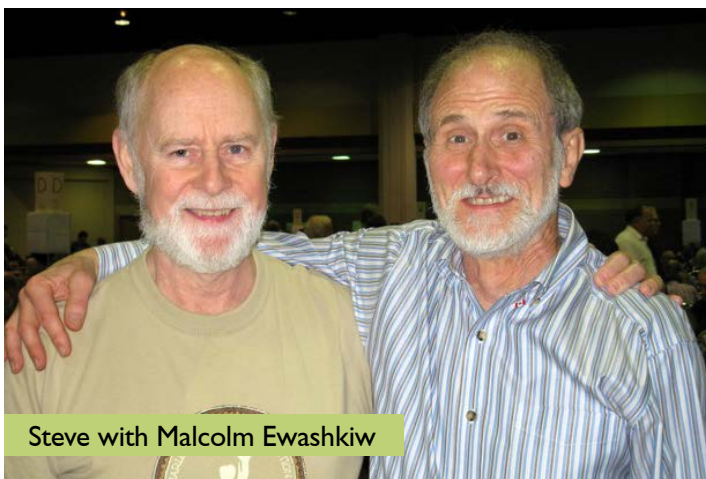
Roisin: Paul and I learned to play while watching his mom, dad, brothers and sister play after Sunday dinner. They would pull out the card tables while Paul and I were left sitting there alone wondering what the big attraction was with this card game. They shared all they knew with us and with basically no knowledge of any conventions we ventured off to try out our luck at Kate Buckmans.



Paul and Roisin O'Hara

Kib: How about your first duplicate game? Where did you play? With whom? Were you nervous? How did you do?

Roisin: Paul and I played at Kate Buckman's when she was located at the Muir Park Hotel. We were very young, and everyone couldn't have been nicer. We played in the open games so we could learn from the experts in the room. We asked lots of questions and players gladly offered their expertise. Our goal was to not finish last and to get at least a respectable score. We were totally hooked and couldn't wait for 7:30 to roll around so we could play again the following day. Some Friday nights we would duplicate at Kate's and then go upstairs with our friends to play rubber bridge at Hanka's until three in the morning. She would make coffee and sandwiches and we would just play, not for money, but just for the love of the game.



Steve with Malcolm Ewashkiw

Steve: University of Toronto had a bridge club and one evening a week, games were held at Hart House. I don't remember my first game, but it probably was with Peter Cronin or with Bill Steele (who also had been indoctrinated into Peter's system). I don't recall how it went other than to say that the game seemed to be a lot of fun and it was obvious that there was a lot to learn. It was also obvious that most of the people there knew more than us even though we had these magnificent five rules. One person that stands out in my memory was John Laskin. He was willing to pass on tips to novices and - in really clear English - he explained the concept of a limit raise. A year or so later, I found myself the declarer during a par contest (difficult prearranged hands where you have to find a good bid or a good play). At about trick four, John Laskin (who was on defense) pointed out that I had messed up a criss-cross squeeze. Criss-cross squeeze? I had no idea what a squeeze

was, but I did know that it was harder for a defender to visualize what was going on than for a declarer. After the hand was over, John explained it to us, and I was really impressed.

Morrie: I remember my friend Larry asking me whether I wanted to play at the McGill duplicate club. I had no idea what that was, but I agreed. We came in third and won something like .04 Masterpoints. I did learn quickly and could hold my own in the club. I seem to remember being more excited than nervous.

Mike: My first duplicate games were at the Hart House bridge club with Andy Altay. We didn't know anything. All the best players sat North-South at tables 1 through 5. It was like murderer's row of the 1927 Yankees. At least it was the same for all the East-West pairs. It was 50 years ago; I don't remember how we did. Strange, I remember shooting 135 in my first golf game.

Kib: Who were some of your early partners and mentors? Looking back, how special were they? What is something you remember learning back then that still applies today?

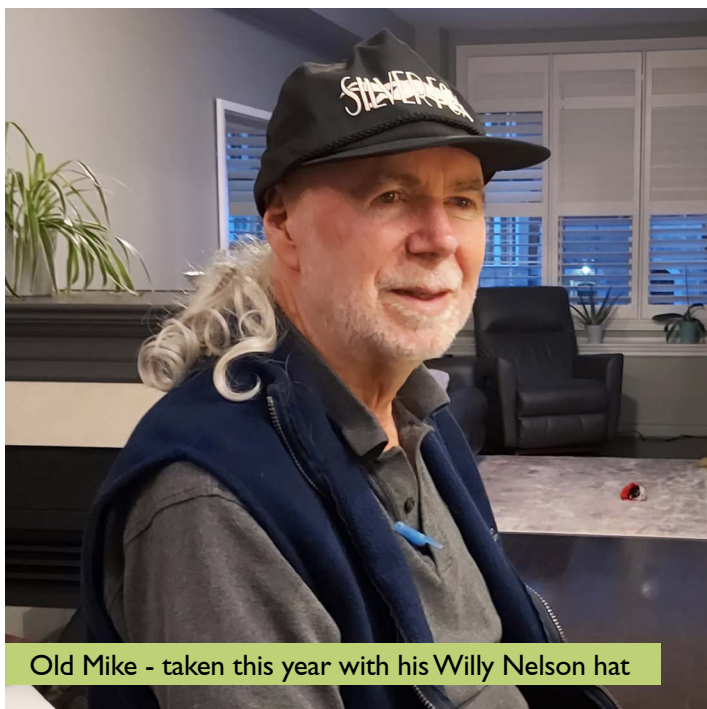
Morrie: My first serious partner was George Mittelman. There was an incredible group of young players in Montreal, including George, Eric Kokish, Joey Silver, Peter Nagy, and Boris Baran. National directors Sol Weinstein and the late Henry Cukoff both got their starts directing the McGill club games. Eric was already a serious student of the game and had invented the Montreal Relay when barely out of his teens. He habitually brought a notebook and pen to games, and in his impeccably neat handwriting would document points to raise after the session. Koach was born! One of the things these guys brought was a confident attitude. I remember Eric being asked to play by a local Life Master, and we were somewhat in awe, as that was still an uncommon designation. Afterwards Eric made it clear that he was unimpressed.

On another occasion, after we had won a Sectional in which we had beaten some well-known and established players, I was telling George how thrilling that was for me. I still recall George's reply: "Morrie, we can hold our own with the best in the world." Of course, it wasn't long before George did exactly that.

One other memory that tickles me. When Eric and I were in the B.A. programme at McGill we were in a course

mandated for all the Arts students: Faculty 300. It was one of the last of the great Liberal Arts courses, and they actually assigned seats in a giant auditorium and took attendance of about 3000 students! Eric and I sat together, and once a month brought in the latest Bridge World so that we could do the Challenge the Champs. I still get a kick out of it when I see his name as the moderator.

Mike: I met most of my early partners at U of T. We played bridge in the University College cafeteria. We also played poker, Kings & Hearts there. There was quite a collection of future stars of the game: Mike Shoenborn, Andy Altay, Alex Kissin, Abe Greenspan, Linda Lee, Katie Thorpe, and John Guoba.



Old Mike - taken this year with his Willy Nelson hat

Roisin: In the beginning Paul and I played as partners but then we met new friends like Gerry Wood, Rene Becker, and Eiji Kujirai, and we played with each of them over the course of time. We all loved going over the hands every night in the quaint little bar in the lobby of the Muir Park. We all had to be up for work the next morning, but we stayed until every hand was discussed and mulled over. After playing for about two years and wanting to get to the next level we asked George Mittleman to coach us. He taught us about the importance of balancing, and I remember his exact words: “There’s a lot of swine out there.” So, don’t sell out at the two level.

Steve: Some years after Hart House, I learned a bunch of new ideas about bidding from Mike Cafferata. Among them, the “Walsh” system. Best though, I learned from Mike, just by his example, how to play the game in a sportsmanlike way, how to treat partners and opponents alike, kindly and with respect.

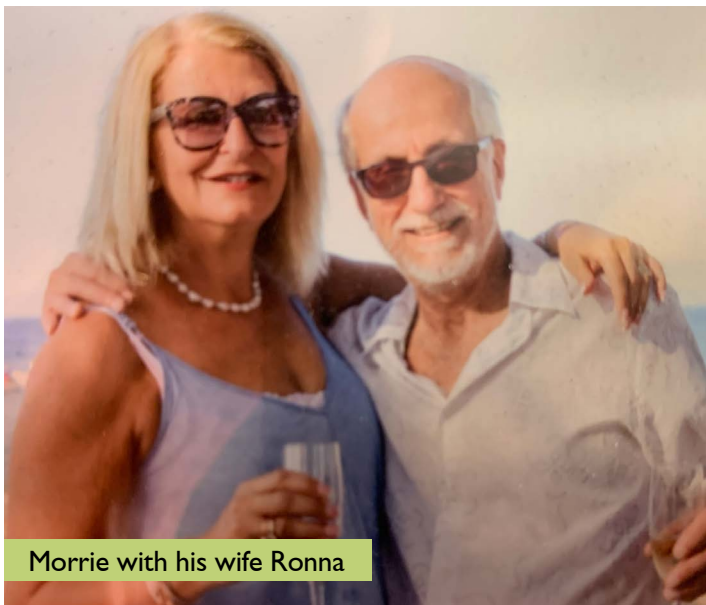
Kib: How would you assess your own level of “competitiveness” and drive to succeed? We all know that certain type who is a tiger at the table, but calm and perhaps charming away from the table? Are you that type or pretty even keeled both at and away from the table?

Steve: To me those two things are completely different. Competitiveness: pretty close to zero. When first exposed to bridge, I found it interesting for the same reasons that I think attracted many others. It seemed to be a difficult and challenging game that required problem-solving using different types of reasoning and thinking skills and a little bit of math. Pretty early I could see that it would help if you could count up to thirteen. Drive to succeed: yes, because there was so much to learn, so many skills you needed to develop. Sure, you were happy if your scores at your local duplicate club improved, not because you were beating others, but only because that meant you were improving yourself.

Roisin: I was drawn to bridge because I loved the competitiveness and the challenge of the game. There is a certain rush when you sit down to play in a high-level game. That is when my competitive juices really begin to flow. I am a firm believer in the words of Rixi Markus, “The player who lacks the courage to back his judgment and take a risk is doomed; caution may sometimes protect him from disaster, but he will never be a winner; no matter how experienced, he must always remember that there is much to learn.”

Mike: I have always been competitive at whatever I did. Bridge was not my only interest in my younger days. I played competitive badminton for years and won a couple of city championships. I met my future wife, Anne, at badminton tournaments. We coached badminton teams for rival schools. Ray Lee, Steve MacKay & Andy Altay got me interested in squash. All of these sports I played to win. I practiced athletic pursuits and read bridge books and magazines. I don’t play badminton, squash or tennis anymore. I have lost contact with all my friends from those sports, BUT I still have friendships from the bridge world from 50 years ago. I remember one evening I was playing in a team

league at The Regal Bridge Club. It was the last year it ran. There were only six teams in the league but as I looked around the room, I noticed it was the same people from 40 years ago. There is an old British quote, something like: "Friends and lovers come and go but we will always have bridge." And now I also have golf.



Morrie with his wife Ronna

Morrie: I have always been highly competitive. Part of maturing as a bridge player has involved, for me, learning how to enjoy the game even when I'm not winning. And I do indeed have a strong drive to succeed at anything I do. Again, age has mellowed me some, and I can take defeat in stride. I tend to be happy if I've played well, even if that hasn't resulted in victory. And I'm more forgiving of myself when I miss the 2-foot putt. A few years ago, I was playing in the Nationals against a top team. Both sides bid to a grand and I had a claim at trick 11, but I took a losing finesse instead. My teammates were wonderful, and after the appetizer I was able to relax for the rest of the dinner.

Kib: How are you coping these days with playing online? When we do get the all-clear to return to the table will you be one of the first to play at the club? How much more do you think you'll appreciate Regionals and NABCs, or do you think you'll play less often face-to-face?

Mike: Online bridge is a Godsend. I'm almost playing too much bridge. I miss face-to-face bridge and will go back in a heartbeat. Online bridge is great but there is the cheating uncertainty, the lack of time to really think, the lack of asking

the opponents a question. Yeah, I know I can chat online, but by the time I have typed, one finger at a time, the round could be over.

Morrie: I too will very much look forward to getting back to the Sectionals, Regionals and Nationals. I find that I have not set up many games on BBO but stick to the robots. One reason is that the games are short and can fit in between other activities. Another is that the robots are extraordinarily polite; I've only been told off once by a robot and I no longer play with him as a partner.

Kib: I know that robot. I refuse to play with him. So rude.

Steve: I think I am repeating what the others have said. I also almost never played online (before COVID) but now, it is all we have. No criticism of BBO, but no, I don't enjoy it nearly as much as face-to-face, for lots of reasons. In one respect it is actually an improvement over live bridge. You self-alert . . . and only to your opponents. Granted, often you know your partner has alerted simply because of the extra time they have taken but you don't know what they've explained. In that respect, it's almost as good as playing with screens. Sure, I miss the social contact, the traveling, the visiting other cities. How much I will play down the road - if we ever get back to something resembling "normal" - I don't know.

Roisin: Prior to the pandemic I had played very little on BBO. Now I can't imagine life without it. I worry about the clubs surviving and encourage others to support their clubs online.

I really miss the camaraderie of sitting down at a table and socializing between rounds with the players. Jackie Syer always makes everyone feel so welcome that it creates a big family atmosphere. I also miss travelling to Regional and National tournaments throughout North America and can't wait to feel the cards in my hands again.

Kib: Which player, in all of bridge history, do you think was the best? Do you think you try to model your game after that player?

Roisin: The number of great players and influencers that I have drawn from since I began playing is too numerous to list. From a short list: Rixi Marcus, The Blue Team, Terrence Reese, and Canada's "Bridge Warriors" Murray and Kehela; they made an indelible mark on my early development. Rixi

Marcus in particular was one of my earliest mentors, having read her book “Common Sense Bridge” 1972 in the early ‘80s. She was a strong, independent, intelligent woman who played a game dominated by men and became the equal of all the great players. “Courage, Boldness, and Humility” were the keynotes of Rixi Markus’s approach to bridge. I have spent my bridge life trying in some small way to emulate these qualities.

Morrie: I don’t know that I would consider any one player the best. But I find I have the most admiration for Zia. I so enjoy his combination of brilliant play, creative imagination, and bon vivant demeanor. It is always fun to play against him, even if he’s racking up the IMPs. I have often had good success playing my weakest suit in notrump and letting the opponents walk into the trap and open up the other suits for me. That is a classic Zia ploy.

Steve: Morrie mentioned Zia. How can you ignore his skill, his imagination, his charisma, the way he has been an ambassador for the game? Hard to ignore Hamman’s concentration and skill. As Roisin said, the list of greats is long. I’m not much of a reader; I’m sure all the other contributors have read far more than I have. Hard to ignore both the skill and the work put in by Meckstroth and Rodwell. Hard to ignore the skill of players like Helgemo, like Geoff Hampson, like Tim Seres, like Kerri Sanborn, like George Mittleman, like Sami Kehela. I’m just throwing out a few random names - names that others might not think to mention.



Retired Mike with wife Anne

Mike: I played against many great players but never formed an opinion on who is the best. Looking at masterpoints and successes, it is probably Meckwell. Partnerships in life and bridge are very important. I was a high school teacher and I work with bridge beginners now. Learning is best when you have lots of repetition. You need a good memory to be a good student or a good bridge player. Kokish had a saying that I pass onto my group of beginners: “Any agreement is better than no agreement at all.”

Kib: What’s your favourite “exotic” convention or treatment that you love to play and even introduce to other players?

Morrie: I don’t even play this convention with any of my partners, but it has always struck me as elegant and exotic: the Bluhmer, which is a jump that says, “My hand just got better because I have no wasted values in this suit.” For example, you hold: ♠Axx, ♥10xxx, ♦KJx, ♣Qxx, and the auction goes:

Partner	You
1♣	1♥
1♠	1NT
2♦	3♥

Kib: It’s funny you bring up the Bluhmer, Morrie. I was trying to think of an example of a Bluhmer the other day. So in your sequence you are bidding 3♥ to say, “Although I have four hearts, all my values are in your suits--what do you think now, partner?” Is that correct?

Morrie: Exactly. It’s in effect as if partner has splintered and you have no wasted values in their short suit.

Mike: Graduated Responses to a Grand Slam Force. In 1982, Dave Colbert and I were in Biarritz for the world championships. I held: ♠KQxxxx ♥AQJ10x ♦Ax ♣void and opened 1♠. Dave raised to 2♠ and I bid 3♥, game try. Dave raised to 4♥ so he must have ♥Kxxx. I bid 5NT, Grand Slam Force in spades. He responded 6♣, “I have the A or K of spades and extra length.” I figured I could throw Dave’s diamonds away on my long spades as long as I play in 7♥. So, I jumped to 7♥ and Dave was on the same wavelength and passed. 325 matchpoints out of 340. Big field. By the way it wasn’t enough to qualify us for the finals, but George Mittleman & Diana Gorden won the Mixed Pairs that year.

Roisin: Over the years the Bridge World has provided a

cornucopia of really interesting ideas and treatments. One treatment in particular is doubling a cuebid of your opening/overcall bid. It occurs with a high level of frequency which is the gold standard of any convention. Many times you may have opened or overcalled with a weak holding eg. ♠J10xxx and partner dutifully leads your suit with ♠Kx or ♠Ax which never results in a good score.

Let's say you open 1♠ and your LHO bids 2♥. Your RHO bids 2♠ to show a limit raise or better in hearts. Instead of using the double to ask partner to lead your suit which they will do anyway, use the double to *warn partner off the lead*. Double the cuebid with ♠Q8653 ♥92 ♦AKJ10 ♣A94. Conversely, when you pass, it is a green light for your partner to lead your suit.



Joy Phillips, Steve, and Debbie Bennett

Steve: The list is endless. I happen to like fit-showing jump-shifts in competition and by a passed hand. Mike Cafferata taught me this trick. The evolution of the (bidding side of the) game in the last 40 or 50 years is extraordinary. The players well before that had great card-play skills and great bidding judgment (no substitute for these), but they came to the table with a hammer and a saw. Today's players come to the table armed with a whole arsenal of power tools. Sure, craftsmen many years ago made incredible furniture with just a hammer and a saw and a chisel but ... to compete at the higher levels these days, you need a few tools.

When Sami Kehela played with Cecile Fisher many years ago, he wrote at the top of their CC, under General Approach,

“bows and arrows.” He knew they were entering the fray against opponents armed with heavy artillery while they were bringing to the table nothing but a bow and a few arrows ... well, OK, maybe a little bit of skill.

One of my favourite tools, hardly new now, is Splinter bids. I remember avidly reading Monroe Ingberman's series of three or four articles, when he first introduced this concept to bridge readers, way back in the 60s. I have a long list of my own new ideas, but this is hardly the space to show them. I will only say that I believe that the most important thing is NOT to introduce new ideas to any partner unless you are quite sure that that partner is ready, willing, and able to accept them.

I will mention one “system” I really like and really enjoy. Six or seven years ago, when I was playing with Ray Jotcham, he gave me a two- or three-page summary of KERI and suggested we play it. KERI was invented by Ron Klinger, an Australian expert. It is a system for bidding over INT. Period. Ron published a book, about 135 pages, the whole book dealing with nothing other than bidding over INT. There are not many people who have read as many bridge books as Ray has. After a few months of trying Ron's methods, I found them really interesting and actually then read Ron's book. It is a masterpiece of logic and organization and system analysis. I then created a summary for Ray and myself. Seventeen type-written pages. A lot to remember when those pages do not contain one bridge hand (bridge hands do take up space). Notes on bidding methods should NEVER contain any bridge hands.

Kib: Playing with you or against you at the table, I know everyone on our panel has high ethical standards and is probably saddened and/or disgusted by the recent events in the bridge world of players getting caught (or confessing to) cheating. Do you have any thoughts on the topic of cheating you'd like to share? Eg., if someone gets caught “self-kibitzing” should they be banned for 5 years? 10 years? Life?

Steve: Sad seems like a good word. We all would like to think that the challenges in the game itself would be enough to keep people engaged and interested. We all would like to think that people would try to improve and try to do their best, not by dishonest means, but by hard work (reading, learning about play and defensive skills, devising or learning about better bidding methods). We all know that egos can be a motivation to do better (by whatever means) and we all know that money can be a motivation to do better (by

whatever means). I have no idea whether “professionals” cheat more often than “non-professionals” but we all know that (financial) greed can be a big motivator. I suppose there are other motivations which lead some to cheating but, to me, they are all sad. Finally, we all know it is much easier to cheat online than it is to cheat at a real table. The simple answer I guess is cheating is cheating. One sentence for all? If we think circumstances can be different, I don’t know how to weigh them differently. Sorry, but I will abstain from being judge or jury.

Mike: Thanks Steve that was well put. I have been a judge and jury many times and agree that circumstances are different. A top player caught cheating sets a bad example to newer players and should be treated harshly.



Roisin with husband Paul and two grandchildren

Roisin: It is sad, Steve, because cheating damages the game we all love. Our numbers are dwindling as it is—do we really want to turn off future players? Unfortunately, cheating has become universal in all sports and pastimes (including bridge) over the years and it is driven solely to gain some advantage over your opponent. More recently (pre-Covid) there have been a string of cheating allegations against many top-flight professional players who have devised many ingenious ways to cheat. The players are dealt with by their bridge organizations; they are suspended, and their reputations can never be truly rehabilitated. Is that enough? In major professional sports there are significant monetary penalties. Should that be proposed as a deterrent?

Bridge is a beautiful game and when I try to explain it to people who have never played it before, I refer to it as the Rolls Royce of all games. Pre-pandemic, organized cheating at bridge was relatively rare. With the onset of the pandemic and the closure of bridge clubs and the suspension of tournaments, BBO has opened up the floodgates for potential cheating and there is no solution. I guess for now we just have to soldier on and continue to play and enjoy the time we devote to the game we all love.

Morrie: The old-fashioned saying, “Money is the root of all evil,” seems to apply here. Cheating has always been a concern, but it seems clear that the growth of professionals for hire has created a whole new incentive that threatens the integrity of the game. It is especially disheartening to discover that players with enormous talent and skill would violate the trust placed in them by their peers and by those who look up to them for instruction and inspiration.

I too feel inadequately experienced to opine on the proper penalties; but I am grateful to those who have taken on this onerous task. I’m especially grateful to Boye Brogeland for having had the courage to force the issue past the tipping point. Hopefully there will never be a return to the denial and enabling and downright cowardice that allowed cheaters to violate our game with impunity.

Steve: I would just like to echo Morrie singling out Boye Brogeland. Yes, many have been working hard on this sad issue but Boye stands out as a real hero to me.

Kib: On a lighter note, let’s talk about some of the joy and fond memories the game has brought. What anecdote or two can you share that you recall was fun or funny or hilarious or just amusing? For example, I once left my girlfriend’s house just west of Stratford to get to the Mississauga-Oakville 1:00 pm game, without a partner. I was planning to play with the director. These were the days before cell phones. I broke land speed records to get there for 12:58 only to arrive to the room quiet, everyone playing. “Am I too late?” “Yes,” the director said, “game time is 12:30.”

Mike: In the 90s I had qualified in two events in the world championship in Albuquerque. The team and my wife went on a cable car ride. In the parking lot as I was leaving there was a giant spider walking across our path. I stopped and everyone got out to take pictures, even my wife Anne who is afraid of spiders. Well, she kneeled down behind the spider

for a photo. I calmly said, "You know spiders can jump, they do have 8 legs." Anne jumped up to new heights with only two legs.



Steve and Morrie have Zeke Jabbour surrounded!

Morrie: When I was still learning the game in Montreal, we often had late night kitchen bridge games. I was partnered with Mittelman against Kokish and A.K. Simon. George opened the bidding 1♠, Eric passed, and I raised to 2♠. After some scrambling, Eric and A.K. diagnosed a psych and found their 5-4 spade fit at the 4-level. They needed to pick up the ♠Q, and naturally Eric played me for 3 or 4 of them. It was a shock to him, and one of my treasured memories, when I showed out on the second round.

Another kitchen bridge story. I was playing with a partner who I will call Harry (not his real name). Harry was a great guy, very expressive at the table, and not too swift at bridge. We had an auction in which we held the hearts and they the spades and we pushed them all the way to the 5-level. Holding ♥AKQJxx and a side void, I underled my honours. Dummy came down with three little hearts and, as declarer studied the dummy, Harry was grimacing and shaking his head as if tragedy had just struck. Declarer finally played low, and Harry's 10 won the trick! Fantastic, I could now get a ruff if Harry led back my void. But Harry burst into a huge smile and... shot back a heart.

One more: In the early 70s, Cliff Bishop, a colorful great from Detroit would come to Windsor on Thursday nights and run our club game. One week my partner couldn't make it and Cliff agreed to play. We filled out our card and when it came to doubles Cliff took one look at me and said, "Forget negative doubles - everything penalty." We sat down

and the first hand out of the board went 1♣ by Cliff, 1♥ by vulnerable RHO, double by me. 800 and a top.

Steve: OK. How can I not take this opportunity to show Peter Cronin's system in action? It was an inter-collegiate tournament, held in Rochester if I remember. I drove us there. Mike (the Shoe) was in the car along with my partner, Bill Steele. On the way there, our radio program was interrupted by a voice saying there had been gun shots in Dallas. Moments later, the voice came back saying the President's motorcade had been shot at and the President may have been wounded. And, finally, minutes later . . . "President JFK has been killed." You remember these things. Students had come from some distance. Everyone was stunned. They held two minutes of silence . . . and then the tournament carried on, as planned. Here was a hand:

Bill	Steve
♠ x x	♠ K x x
♥ Q	♥ K J 10 x
♦ 10 9 x x x	♦ Q
♣ A K x x x	♣ Q J x x x

Re: Cronin's five rules, you will remember that I (East) had a clear opening bid of 1♦, as the majority of my cards were in the majors, with no 5-card major. Bill bid 2♣. A simple and honest soul, I bid 3♣. Bill now showed his lovely diamond support, 3♦. That didn't seem like a good place. What else could I do but bid 3NT?

The opening lead was a gift: a heart. I was still alive. North won the ace and, not surprisingly, looking at dummy, continued hearts. Although I knew nothing about this game, I suspected that the only reason South had not led a spade was because he had the ace and maybe the queen as well. But I still had only eight tricks. Could I get South to switch to spades? I won the jack, trying to tell the world that I also had the king. I traveled to dummy with a low club to the ace and led a diamond. Maybe South would win and shift to spades, giving me my ninth trick. No, small from North, queen, small. Even I could figure out the diamond position. Now, nine tricks. You can guess the rest. Why abandon this promising line? Two more hearts, four more clubs, ending in dummy, and another diamond towards my hand. As suspected, king, spade from me, ace, and LHO was left with the ♠AQ. +630.

Loud call for the director! Having found three of the eight tricks they were entitled to (4+1+3), they weren't exactly

pleased. He listened patiently and concluded that we had explained everything thoroughly and honestly. I remember thinking this seemed like quite a fun game. Anyone for the Italian Cronin club?

Roisin: I was playing in the Easter Regional Knockout in Toronto with John Doucette. We were a first-time partnership out for an enjoyable afternoon of bridge. We managed to scribble a card together when Jeff Meckstroth and Eric Rodwell sat down to play us. We looked at each other and thought well this should be fun. A few local club players sat down to kibitz, one of them being a student of mine.

The match went well, and Eric turned to us and said, "Thank you for giving us a game; most people give up against us." At this point my student leaned into the table with such pride and announced to the top players in the world, "Don't you know who she is?" Obviously she didn't know who they were! I was mortified but Eric smiled, and everyone had a good laugh.

A couple of weeks ago I was playing with Joanne Pooley in Stephen's Bridge Club Mentorship game. We arrived in a 4♣ contract that was bid well by my partner.

Joanne	Roisin
♠ A Q J 7	♠ 10 x x x
♥ A K Q J 10 x	♥ x
♦ x x	♦ J x x x
♣ J	♣ Q x x x

North led the AK of diamonds followed by the AK of clubs. Joanne ruffed the club return and thought for a while. Dummy was a little light on entries, so she proceeded to ruff her good heart to reach the dummy and take the spade finesse. It worked, so she ruffed another good heart and repeated the finesse. Spades broke and she chalked up +620 and a top.

It was a pleasure watching someone who had only played bridge for two years plan out the play and execute it.

Kib: David Turner has written an article in this issue on the topic of underleading an ace versus a suit contract. As a bridge teacher I see my students do it all the time, often to their peril. Do you have any stories of a well-timed (or ill-timed) underlead of an ace?

Roisin: Underleading aces on the opening lead against a suit contract is something that should not be recommended for players who are still advancing, until they understand the rationale for making such daring (risky) plays. There are some situations that may call for such plays.

For example, say the auction goes:

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

You are West and hold: ♠Axxxx ♥Ax ♦xxx ♣AQxx. Partner has at most two-card support. So, you underlead your ♠A and hope to find ♠Kxx in dummy and partner with ♠Qx. Declarer with ♠Jxx will play low. Your partner wins the ♠Q and returns a spade to your ace and then gets a ruff.

On a lighter note, I think all of us have a similar story to Morrie's where we have underled AKQxxx in hopes of getting a ruff in a side suit only to have partner win the J and fire back our suit!



Jonathan Steinberg with Steve

Steve: Of course, I have to agree with everything Roisin said. Usually, it is dangerous and often dead wrong, but sometimes the bidding tells you that there is some chance that the layout will be exactly as you hoped. I do remember playing with Jim Priebe when the World Championships

were held in Montreal and I remember doing it three times in one session! I was lucky. Every time the king was in dummy, Jim had the queen. And the jack was either in dummy or in declarer's hand. Once was against Martin Hoffman and I had doubled his 3♣ contract. Had he guessed correctly, he would have made his contract, but he had to figure out which kind of idiot I was, and he guessed wrong.

Morrie: I don't recall the exact hands, but two stand out. I was playing against Jake Morgan in a regional in Detroit and they had an auction with some cue bidding, ending in slam. The auction called for the suit that declarer could not cue bid, and I immediately underled my ace. Jake thought about it for at least 5 minutes and finally played the K from Kxx in dummy and Jx in his hand. Later I asked Jake about how he had decided. At first, he said, "Trade secret." When I pushed him on it, he finally said, "It was how quickly you led; with the Q you might have thought longer."

Kib: Interesting. David Turner's article details the opposite logic used by Zia in this very scenario.

Morrie: The second was in 2015. Steve and I, along with four teammates, had won an exhausting 0-10,000 marathon in the New Orleans NABC. I was going to relax and kibitz on the Sunday when Marjorie Michelin asked me to be a sixth on her Sunday Swiss team. Bridge players don't say "No," so there I was playing with Tom Breed against Mike Cappelletti and a client when they bid to the 5-level. I underled my ace to partner's Q, back to my ace, and a ruff for partner. No one said a word as the cards were put back in the board and the next board started. That silence felt like the best compliment I could imagine.

Mike: I remember playing with Dave Colbert when he underled his ace of diamonds twice through dummy and I twice refused to play my ♦K when dummy held ♦QJ10. It is easier now to underlead aces with our sophisticated suit preference signals.

Kib: Eddie Wold, in his acceptance speech at the Hall of Fame ceremony a few years ago, said, "I would give up every trophy I've ever won if I could go back in time and learn the game of bridge all over again." Do you share that sentiment? How do you feel about the game of bridge in your life? What if it wasn't there?

Morrie: I read that quote and absolutely relate to that sentiment. If I read it correctly, I too miss the tremendous

sense of discovery and excitement and growth that accompanies the early phase of learning the game. The Buddhists use the concept of Beginner's Mind, and I think that refers to the same thing: the openness and lack of preconception that allows one to encounter experience with wonder and delight. I sometimes keep that early phase as a model with which to approach other aspects of my learning in life.

To paraphrase Voltaire, "If bridge didn't exist, I would have to invent it."

Mike: If there were no bridge in my life, I don't think I would have travelled to as many interesting cities or locales. My wife and I wouldn't have driven to Albuquerque for the worlds or Halifax for the CanAt and I wouldn't have met all my friends at any of the northern Ontario cities. It is the bridge friends I would miss the most. They are still with me today.



Roisin gardening in her backyard

Roisin: Over the many years, I am not sure that there could ever be another pastime that was as fulfilling and so full of memories as bridge. A whole new world of bridge friends and acquaintances emerged who are still a large part of our lives today and are considered family. The summers touring the USA playing in as many regionals as we could afford. The best part of many of these excursions was that we were usually accompanied by our dear friends, the Stephens, the Hidis, and the Lerner. Travelling together, playing bridge, sharing our tragedies and triumphs all in a spirit of social

bliss. Like Eddie Wold mused in his acceptance speech, we would love to be able to do it all over again.

Steve: I really like the answers that the others gave. There is still so much to learn, and I still enjoy the sense of discovery. Whether you are learning new ideas from others or inventing new ideas yourself, it is still fun - childlike fun. As I mentioned earlier, the game is still evolving, and new ideas continue to crop up. "Bidding theorists" continue to build better mousetraps. I don't feel a need to start the journey over; it is still as interesting as it was at the beginning. And, as Mike said, we have the gift of friendships and travel to interesting places.

Kib: The game welcomes one and all - lay folk and professionals alike. However not everyone has a penchant for the game. I've seen successful businesspeople think they will master bridge only to drop the game entirely after repeatedly not 'getting it.' What do you think determines one's success in the game? Card sense, developed in childhood? Logic? Drive? Focus? A combination?

Steve: Surely all these factors or qualities can help, can play a role. I will add teachers to that list: not teachers who teach beginners to memorize but teachers who teach beginners how to think. Yes, a certain amount of memory work (a huge amount in fact) is necessary at the beginning of a beginner's journey, to lay a foundation, but I don't think memory work is very helpful unless it is accompanied by reasons why. And of course, basic skills at the beginning and very few fancy conventions.

"Card sense" is so difficult to define. Maybe early exposure to card games can help a bit but I don't think very much. Those who have that "whatever it is" will enjoy card games, will play them, and will do well at them. But it is hard to teach. It is easier to teach bidding (the cards) than playing (the cards).

Concentration and focus. Many have written about this (Zeke Jabbour comes to mind.) All the good players have it. Maria K, from her brief whirl in the world of poker, would tell you that there is no place for multi-tasking. There are so many variables I'll just mention one more: How you treat your partner (and teammates) is critical. Is the "chemistry" positive or negative? This is most critical to the newcomers, those starting to learn the game. Are they encouraged or discouraged by their early "teachers?"

Roisin: Like any sport or pastime, the earlier you start the easier it is to program the muscle memory and in bridge, the cognitive neural pathways required to learn and succeed. Having said that, Paul and I never picked up a bridge hand until we were 23 years old. But as kids we learned and played a variety of card games and other sports which helped give us a foundation for learning bridge later, a far more complex game.

There is another aspect of early childhood learned behavior that does not come naturally to everyone and that is your competitive drive and fearlessness. These two qualities are important if you wish to succeed at most sports and in this context, being a good bridge player. So "card sense" encapsulates a lot of qualities but not any one in particular: endurance, logic, competitive drive and intuition. In combination you have the makings of a good bridge player.

What comes next is up to the individual, but it requires an enormous work ethic and dedication to a single goal: the mastery of the game. Unfortunately, in bridge "mastering" the game is a never-ending lifelong pursuit of continuous improvement.



Fredericton 1980 KO winners: Dave Colbert, Mike Cafferata, Mike Kenny, and Michele Lorber

Mike: You need tunnel not peripheral vision. You need a good memory. You need to trust your partner and teammates and distrust opponents. You need to find a partner of equal ability. You need to watch better players and play against better players. You need to read, read and read some more.

Morrie: I find this a rather elusive and mysterious creature, and I am often surprised at players I know to be highly intelligent, but who will never get beyond mediocrity, and

others who are bright but not extraordinarily so who excel at bridge. I do think all the above factors play a role; but I will add one: the ability to delay gratification. Unlike chess, which can be learned in 10 minutes, bridge involves a somewhat painstaking process, with a fair amount of frustration in acquiring the complex skills necessary to even play the game. Those who become good at it must suffer at least for a while before they can move to a higher level.

Kib: What's left for you? Do you have any specific goals you don't mind sharing? Win a certain number of masterpoints? Win a Canadian championship? Win a World's? Or be the local club's guru? Or just keep playing and see where the game takes you? (All noble pursuits by the way).



Sheldon Kirsch and Morrie after their 2008 victory in the Levintritt Silver Ribbon Pairs

Morrie: I do want to attain Grand Life Master. I'd also like to advance to the quarterfinals or beyond in a Spingold or Vanderbilt. I'm not good enough - without hiring pros - to realistically expect to go beyond that, but I would be happy to get that far.

It would also be a thrill to represent Canada in the Worlds.

One more: I've had a class of the same nine students for the last three years. I love them all, and I would be thrilled for each of them to reach their goals, be it to win a Sectional or become a Life Master, or to accomplish anything else that brought him or her satisfaction.

Steve: No. As I said at the beginning, playing the game is its own reward. Trying to solve all the puzzles the game throws at you. I do happen to enjoy trying to make the mousetraps better. If a "system analyst" were trying to install a new

(computer) system for a customer, what would be the first question the analyst would/should ask the customer? Surely, it should be: "What do you want the system to do for you?" Maybe the customer would say things like track inventory, track sales, track profits, track performance of products and people, measure the effects of advertising, etc. Creating a bidding system should start with the same question. Getting your priorities right. Then the fun begins. Designing a system to accomplish all the things you want it to accomplish (without conflicts) is no easy job, but it's a fun job.

The better your opponents are, the more fun the game is. Playing in the "bigger" events is more fun. Playing on the world stage is fun. Playing in Canadian Championship events is fun. ACBL National events are fun.

Perhaps a goal would be to write a book about the meta-language of bridge bidding as opposed to the language of bridge bidding. I borrow the term meta-language from speech pathology. I think teachers who are trying to teach advancing students should spend more time on meta-language, the meaning that sits above the concrete or specific language of bidding. It may take a few years to learn the basic language, the basic rules of bidding. But then, the real journey begins. Then, attention has to be shifted and focused on higher levels of meaning - meaning which is always dependent on context. Usually these (higher levels of meaning) are more important and sometimes they can be quite difficult, but I will give just one very basic example which I am borrowing from David and Audrey's bridge books for beginners. (It is hard to imagine bridge books that are more clearly written!) David and Audrey use the metaphor of traffic signals. Green lights, amber lights, red lights. Starting with very beginning bids (eg. 1x - 2x) they teach that whatever a bid's specific meaning (the basic language), their students must learn to think about whether that bid is forcing (green), or invitational (amber), or an end to the auction (red) - one simple example of meta-language or meta-meaning. Years later, these students will still be asking that same question, but in more complicated scenarios. They may even have to consult Eric Kokish to find out whether a pass is forcing (!), whether it is loaded with all sorts of higher and richer meaning! Meta-meaning is inherent in all bidding sequences and situations. Context changes it. Students who think about it and discuss it with their partners will be better off and will enjoy their journey more.

Mike: I have accomplished everything I can at bridge. I've

lost a step or two and play in fewer tournaments. My only goal is to reach 10,000 masterpoints. I think that would make me a Grand Life Master as I have a Canadian Championship. I play with good friends and try to play as well as I can. I still hate to lose. I play with beginners and try to improve their game so they will enjoy bridge more. "Bridge has been berry berry good to me." I want to give back.



Roisin (in sunglasses) with Joan Stephens, Robin Stephens, and Margaret & Fred Lerner

Roisin: Philosophically, "What's left for you?" can be broken down into many streams of thought. The simplest answer is to just keep playing the "beautiful game" and enjoy the bountiful joy that it brings to us all. Soccer is considered the beautiful game because "it gives you a feeling of joy and passion," much like bridge does. The more complex answer is to continue to grow as a player and a partner and to compete against all players at all levels with the goal of perfection. But everyone realizes that perfection can be fleeting and includes not only personal perfection but partnership perfection. Lastly, bridge is like "food for the brain." As age demographics tell us, people (players) are getting older. In many studies and anecdotally, people who play bridge retain superior cognitive function in their later years.

So, here's to a long and healthy life, playing bridge.

Kib: Lightning round. Short answers only please. What's your favourite Ontario Sectional?

Roisin: Toronto Labour Day Sectional.

Morrie: Sarnia.

Mike: Barrie.

Steve: Maybe now, the same as Roisin.

Kib: Why that one?

Roisin: It is well attended.

Morrie: It's within reasonable driving distance from Windsor, where we have no Sectional.

Mike: I have a cottage there.

Steve: And, for the same reason.

Kib: What is a bad habit that partner has that grates on your nerves?

Steve: Resulting.

Mike: Talking too much at the table.

Morrie: Drawing trumps too soon.

Roisin: Overthinking.

Kib: What part of the game do you take the most pride in-- bidding, declarer play, or defense?

Mike: Defense.

Morrie: Bidding.

Roisin: Defense.

Steve: All, for different reasons. I enjoy playing a hand well perhaps because I know there are so many ways that I could be a better declarer.

Kib: After declaring a bridge hand, from whom would you most like to hear these words: "That was well played."

Roisin: Bob Hamman.

Mike: Meckstroth.

Steve: How about Jan Jansma?

Morrie: Tim Seres (if he were still alive).

Kib: Who do you admire in the bridge world?

Morrie: Zeke Jabbour.

Mike: Elyn Batko.

Steve: Zia.

Roisin: Audrey Grant.

Kib: Why?

Morrie: He has been incapacitated for some time now; but his blend of old-fashioned gentlemanliness, brilliant skills, wry sense of humor (the title of his Bulletin column - “Winsome and Loathsome” is a good example), and warmth have made him a unique contributor to the game.

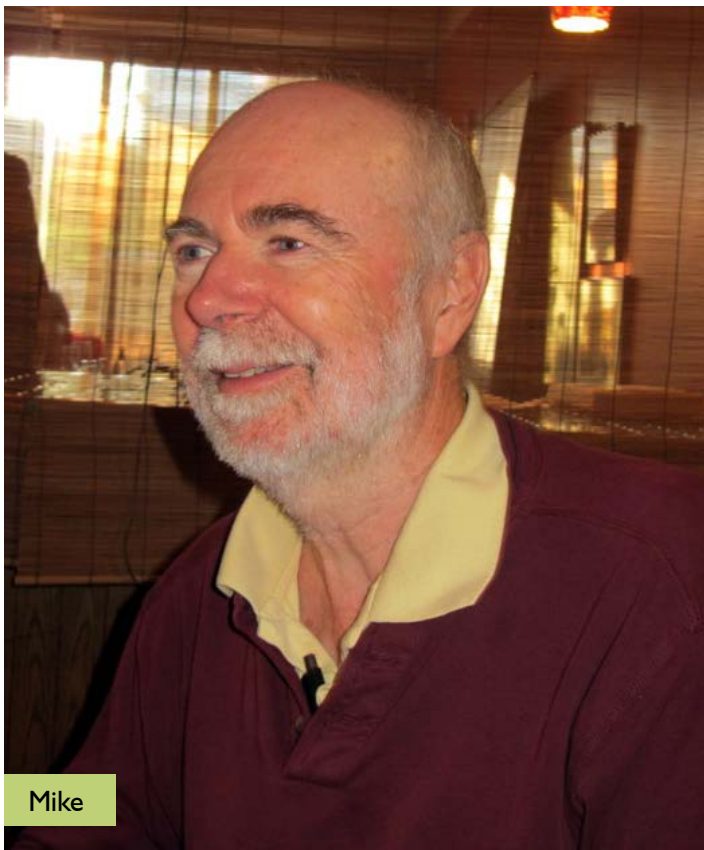


Mary Hadian and Steve

Steve: Charisma. Friendliness. Incredible ability to construct what is going on quickly and, equally quickly, find ways to deflect opponents from best plays.

Roisin: She has so many wonderful attributes, but it is her kindness toward others that stands out to me.

Kib: Thank you, Mike, Morrie, Steve, and Roisin: “Here’s to a long and healthy life, playing bridge!”



Mike

Mike: She never loses her cool, even if with me when I am out of line. She is always a lady.





For Newer Players

By Robert Griffiths

Shouldn't down 6 be a bottom?

I was West and dealt and passed. North passed and my partner opened 1♦. South threw a wrench into the works with a bid of 4♣. Who knew she'd have 16 hcp as well as a big bag of clubs?

I looked at my queen and jack and thought: "3 HCPs in my hand, passed hand on my left, and preempt on my right; my partner must have a very good hand." In any event, I passed, North passed and my partner thought: "Passed hand on my right, preempt on my left; my partner must have a few values." So he doubled, giving me a chance to show where my values were.

What should I bid over 4♣ doubled? I'd like to get partner to bid his best major, but there's no room for that. I decide that 4♦ is least likely to lead to big trouble. I am thinking that if I bid a major and the opponents compete to 5♣, I don't want my partner going on to 5 of the major.

Board 13
West Deals
Both Vul

♠ 9 7 4 2	♠ A K 6 3
♥ J 10 9 7	♥ K 3 2
♦ Q 9 3	♦ A 7 6 2
♣ 7 2	♣ 9 5
♠ 5	
♥ A Q 6 4	
♦ 5	
♣ A K Q J 10 6 3	

North doubled my 4♦ bid which was passed back to me.

If I thought we were making 4♦, I would happily pass and enjoy a big plus score (+710). So a redouble here says to partner, "Get us out of here!"

It's unusual to make an SOS redouble of your own bid but I try that, assuming that partner will understand and bid his major. He does understand and bids 4♠ which is passed out.

4♠ was not a fun contract to play. South cashed 2 clubs then shifted to the ♦5, covered by the 9, jack and ace. Partner

had a tiny glimmer of hope: 4♠ was not doubled, so perhaps the spades were going to split 3-2. So, he cashed the ♠A and ♠K, discovered the 4-1 split and exited with a diamond.

North won, drew all of our trumps and North and South had a bit of an accident playing out all of their winners and my partner happened to make the 13th trick with his ♥K. This was our fourth trick so we were down just 6, scoring -600.

We didn't think the fourth trick would matter until we noticed that many of the NS pairs bid and made 3NT with overtricks; our -600 for down 6, vulnerable fit in neatly between the pairs that defended 3NT with overtricks (-630 or -660) and those who defended part scores (-130).

An unusual preempt disrupts the bidding of both sides: the opponents and the preemptor's side.

Bob Griffith's achievements in competitive card playing began early. When just a teenager, he shocked competitors in the Willowdale Legion's annual Euchre Tournament. People wondered, "Who was that mysterious stranger?" as he walked away with the coveted 3rd place award. This was followed by weekends of glorious victories at the Waterloo Student Village Common room where the raucous bridge games went on all weekend, often to the annoyance of the football watchers. Bob is now retired from being an air traffic controller.

An early endplay

After West's pass, North opened with a strong 2♣ bid. East jumped in with 3♦. I was South and passed, just waiting. Back to North who bid 3♥. East was persistent, this time bidding 4♣. I have a very good hand opposite a demand bid in hearts and wish I could cuebid one of the minors. I can't do that and decide to invite slam with a 5♥ bid.

North bid the heart slam, leaving East on lead.

Board 17
East Deals
EW Vul

	♠ A J 7 4	
	♥ A Q 7 5 2	
	♦ A Q	
	♣ A 7	
♠ Q 9 8		♠ 10 6
♥ 10 9 6 3		♥ —
♦ 9 8 3		♦ K J 10 5 4
♣ K 6 2		♣ J 10 8 5 4 3
	♠ K 5 3 2	
	♥ K J 8 4	
	♦ 7 6 2	
	♣ Q 9	

East led the ♣J, covered by the Q, K and A.

At trick 2, North led the ♥A and East discarded a club. Declarer can handle a 4-0 trump split, but to make his contract, he needs the spades to behave. So, he carries on with a spade to the king and a spade back to his jack, happy to see East follow suit with the ♠10. After 4 tricks, East's hand is an open book---he can have nothing but minor cards left, most likely having been dealt 5 of one and 6 of the other.

There is a hard way to make this contract and an easy way. The hard way is to play the first ten tricks, carefully watching East's discards and play accordingly: if East is down to one club and the king and another diamond, then throw him in with the club and win the last two diamonds on East's diamond return. If East is left with the ♦K and two clubs then declarer should win his two diamonds, then lose the last club.

But my partner found a much easier way: at trick 5 he led the ♣7. If he wants a club trick, East is forced to win this, but on winning the trick, he is stuck

for a lead. A diamond gives away his winner there so he tried a club allowing North to ruff on the board and throw away his only losing diamond. For this early endplay to work, East had to have started with 5 or 6 clubs headed by the J10. This is reasonable on the bidding and opening lead.

It is rare to be able to learn so much about an opponent's hand after four tricks but it was fun being dummy and watching my partner pull this one off. By losing the club at trick 5, while dummy still has trumps available, Declarer did not have to risk East's being able to fool him with his discards up to trick 10.



Preempting our way into trouble

After East's pass, I was South and opened 2♣. This is a Precision opening bid promising 11-16 HCP and at least 5 clubs. The bid is intended to be mildly preemptive, showing partner my values and making it harder for the opponents to get into the fray.

West was not impressed. He simply doubled, just as he would if I had bid 1♣. My partner bid 4♣, hoping to make it harder for the opponents to find their major.

After this start, East chose to believe his opponents; he doesn't really have the values to bid over 4♣ but assumed that if we were trying to talk him out of bidding, he should bid. So, he tried 4♠.

Back to me, it seems to me that 4♠ will likely be a success for the opponents,

so I choose to bid 5♣, sacrificing against their game.

Board 22
East Deals
EW Vul

♠ A Q 8 5	♠ 10 6
♥ A Q 8 3	♥ 6 4
♦ J 6 5	♦ A K 9 7 3
♣ 10 7	♣ J 8 6 3
	♠ K 7 3 2
	♥ K J 9
	♦ Q 10 8 4 2
	♣ 2
	♠ J 9 4
	♥ 10 7 5 2
	♦ —
	♣ A K Q 9 5 4

The contract was doubled, of course and we went down 2, losing 2 spades and 2 hearts for -300 and a bottom board. Turns out we can defeat 4♠ by leading clubs at every opportunity. Eventually East runs out of trumps. We

will score 2 clubs, (one at trick one and one at trick 13), plus our two diamonds.

Readers with eagle eyes may notice that we can defeat 4♠ another way, but it takes a special defence. I can lead the ♣4. My partner will win his jack, cash the ♦A and ♦K before giving me the setting trick with a diamond ruff. That wasn't going to happen. I've tried underleading holdings like AKQxxx before; that's when I find dummy with the singleton jack and partner with 10xxxx.

Ed. Note: *For more tales of woe and triumph with the underlead of an ace, be sure to read David Turner's column and the cover story in this issue.*



Bridge by the Numbers

By David Colbert

Numbers. They are everywhere in bridge. Some of us rely on them, some of us prefer not to. Think of point count, scoring, probabilities. And surely we are honed in on the number 13! It plagues us when we miscount trump ... 13 to open... I know one thing: when I am tiring and trying to decide how to bid, the number guidelines I have learned are the easiest thing to rely on. A single number. Do I have it or

not? With experience we learn to rely on judgment more and more, but the old numerical guideposts keep most of us on the straight and narrow. I am going to write a few articles that reflect my experience in this regard, with the intention of guiding players of all levels using number keys that have served me well and are not generally known.

I will start with low numbers and work

up. Don't worry, 37 is as high as it goes. (Once "I" had 28 HCPs but the board was turned wrong. I was in the CNTC playoffs in Montreal. Mike Cafferata, my partner, got to bid it). As you read the following, keep in mind that I am a disciplined but aggressive bidder. To me, it is more fun and interesting to play that way. If you are too cautious you will generally get down-the-middle results more.

David Colbert won the Canadian Championship in 1993 and has represented Canada three times internationally. He is a retired math teacher, and now indulges in his passions for bridge, running and cryptic crossword puzzles. Pre-COVID, he played at the Etobicoke Bridge Centre, where he also gave a monthly talk for advanced players and ran a weekly hand analysis session after the limited and open games that was well attended by intermediate players. These days he continues to mentor some intermediate players and, at the request of some who used to attend his weekly sessions, he is running a bi-weekly online intermediate seminar on 2/1, as well as playing regularly on BBO.

I have a number of point count recommendations. To start with, high card points: HCP. You can adjust in your own way if counting distribution and length, i.e., as the dummy, you might add **1 point** for a doubleton, **2 points** for a singleton, **3 points** for a void.

3 points: this is my minimum for making a weak jump raise of partner in competition.

♠Q1075 ♥64 ♦10753 ♣943 is fine, especially if the vulnerability is good for us. But, red vs. red – why not? (As long as partner has read this article, too.) I am promising a weak hand; I must keep my promise. At about 7 points I become too “strong” for this bid.

3 points is a good minimum for responding at the one-level to partner’s minor opening when you have a 5-card suit and are not vul. So, respond 1♠ with ♠QJ953 ♥876 ♦1062 ♣95

Also, if partner opens 2♣ and RHO bids something – anything at all – a double indicates that you have **3 points** or fewer. You didn’t know this?

4 points: never pass a 1m opening (1♣ or 1♦) with an ace. Sometimes we have to open 1♣ because opening 2♣ and then bidding 3♣ with 23 points and 5 clubs makes it very tough to find a 4-4 major fit. An ace is worth more than 4 points. Milton Work knew this when he

invented the 4-3-2-1 system long ago, but he knew human beings needed to have something simple to rely on.

4 points is a good minimum for a weak two bid in one of the 2 prime positions at favourable vulnerability: white vs. red dealer or white vs. red third seat. ♠KJ10975 ♥93 ♦84 ♣652 is perfectly good to me as I have good spot cards in my suit. J109 is surely worth more than 1 point.

5 points: don’t respond to partner’s 1M opening with 5 points unless you have 3-card support for their suit. ♠A92 ♥108 ♦9764 ♣10865 is okay to raise 1♠ to 2♠ as I have probably 2 tricks for partner.

5 points: If you have a 6-5 distribution, we say “6-5 come alive!” which means bid a lot. I have told the people in my lessons to “just add 5 points when you have a 6-5.” Many have done this and reported back to me that it seems to raise the value of the hand in a way that has worked out well. It somehow justifies bidding more. Try it!

6 and 7 points are key numbers. If partner makes a reverse – which should show 17 or more – and you have 6 or 7 points, it is good to show, using an agreement, that your original response was weak. Because if you have 8, you probably have enough to bid game. The recent Larry Cohen article in the Bulletin had a method for

this. Others use Ingberman: a bid of 2NT shows 6 or 7.

With **6 or 7 points** you don’t have to bid if partner opens and RHO doubles. You can pass.

With **6 or 7 points** I find it really helpful to not respond INT over partner’s 1♣ opening. Why? Because I probably won’t make INT if partner has opened with 12 and they lead their 5-card suit. Play that 1♣-INT shows 8-10. If you have 6 or 7 and no major, just bid 1♦, or raise clubs.

With **6 or 7 points** you are generally too weak to respond INT to partner’s takeout double. Just bid your longest suit.

I never balance at the one level – i.e. (1♠) P (P) ? – with 7 points or fewer. I have found that the math doesn’t work; usually opener thanks you for giving her another bid! Just let them play it. But be a tiger with 8 points, unless you have length in their suit.

8 points... one of my favourites. Pass INT by partner with 8 points and no 5-card suit (a 5-card suit is often an extra trick). I know that 17+8 is 25, but partner is 3 times as likely to have 15 points as 17. And playing in 2NT with 23 and going down will happen to you too often. I pass with ♠Q964 ♥J83 ♦A752 ♣J8.



For Advancing Players

By David Turner

Trick Cycling

The editor asked me if I'd be interested in writing an article about – wait for it – underleading aces at trick one against suit contracts. I said I'd be pleased to do so, as I definitely have something to say on the topic.

First, an explanation of 'Trick Cycling.' This is an old-fashioned English bridge term for doing "fancy" things in the bidding or play, rather than sticking to the straight and narrow; underleading aces is definitely included in this derisive term, due to...

Risks of the ace underlead

1. The ace goes away: the most common fear. Dummy has a stiff, declarer has the king (or queen! - see next point). Or dummy has Jxx and declarer has Kx, and his small card goes away on a side suit. Or dummy's singleton is the king!
2. Partner won't expect it and may do the wrong thing. You underlead your ace fourth, dummy has three low, and partner, holding KJ10 makes the standard expert play of the ten, to see whether declarer has Axx or AQx (this helps count the hand and figure out where the defence should go later for tricks). Oops. Declarer just won their Q from Qxx.

3. It will resolve declarer's guess when he holds KJ in hand and small cards in dummy.

4. It will give away the suit if partner has QJx and declarer the king.

There is clearly significant potential downside to underleading your ace ... so why do it?

Possible benefits of an ace underlead

1. Dummy has Kx and declarer has the jack. Since ace underleads are relatively rare, declarer may misguess the situation, and play low, to allow partner's queen to score. The same reasoning applies if dummy has the KJ and declarer two or three small.
2. To get to partner's hypothetical king or other entry card, so that partner can (a) lead through declarer's vulnerable holding, or (b) give you a ruff in another suit. Note the underlead is only necessary if dummy or declarer has a singleton in the suit – otherwise leading the ace might work just as well. You take your ace first, then play to partner's king.
3. To engineer a ruff for partner either immediately (partner holds Kx) or later (partner holds two small and the partnership has an early trump entry).

4. Because other suits seem more dangerous (rare) and the king rates to be behind you (in dummy) if the declaring side has it.

What should declarer do if they suspect an opening ace underlead?

1. Look carefully at LHO. Do they look tricky?
2. Play dummy's highest spot card if leader has bid the suit. I once won dummy's doubleton 9 at trick one when opening leader was trying to reach partner for a ruff. His partner had the 8.
3. (Complicated): Look at the hand overall and assume a different lead. If your teammate leads a different suit, would their declarer have any alternative to playing the king from dummy to make the hand (for instance Jxx opposite Kx)... If not, there is more reason to play the king to avoid a possible negative swing.

Here are three personal situations to illustrate the thrills and the sorrows of trick cycling.

Situation 1 – The Best

The scene: The 1987 world championships, the Bermuda Bowl, in Ocho Rios Jamaica. Our Canadian team is doing well, so our round robin match against Pakistan was broadcast

David learned bridge in junior high. He played his home-grown “Practical Relay Club” system with Greg Carroll through the early 2000s, playing in the 1987 Bermuda Bowl in Ocho Rios Jamaica, and narrowly missed winning another CNTC championship the previous year. Playing with John Gowdy, David won the Canadian Seniors in 2017 along with old friends Michael Schoenborn and Fred Lerner. David worked for TD Bank as a Securities and IT executive but is now retired, living with his wife Beth, 5 cats, and a dog in lovely Niagara-on-The-Lake, where they refinish and update old furniture.

on VuGraph, and my partnership played against Zia! Towards the end, I felt we were doing very well in the match against him and his partner when they bid rapidly to a heart slam with Zia on play and me on lead. I was relatively sure that dummy had the $\diamond K$ and I had $\diamond Ax$, so it seemed like the right time to underlead the diamond ace – a very risky proposition! I was wracked with indecision: “I’m pretty sure it’s right to underlead, but it’s against *Zia*, on *VuGraph* ... and if it’s wrong, I’ll either be taken for an idiot, or a show-off ... *sigh* ...” Finally, I did it ... and dummy arrived with $\diamond Kx$ - good! Zia studies a moment and calls “low” and my partner goes into the tank! Oh no! He doesn’t suspect I’ve done it, and he’s going to duck. Finally, 30 seconds later he plays the queen! He returns a diamond, one down! I’m two pounds of sweat lighter when Zia says to me, “A diamond lead was normal on the auction...I should have guessed you had the ace after it took you so long”

Situation 2 – Seemed like the worst at the time

The scene: A close CNTC final match against a very good opposing team including legend Eric Murray. The estimable opponents (not Murray) reached $6\diamond$ after my LHO had opened $1\spadesuit$ and responded $5\diamond$ to Blackwood. My partner, who had shown hearts and clubs in the auction, led the $\heartsuit 2$, and dummy arrived with a million

diamonds and the singleton $\heartsuit 5$. I played my singleton 3 , and declarer the 4 . Dummy’s singleton $\heartsuit 5$ won the first trick in a diamond slam! It turns out that partner had a spade void and the $\heartsuit AK$ and was trying to get me on lead for his ruff, and that my LHO had opened $1\spadesuit$ with 5 spades and 6 hearts! The true tragedy occurred when I subsequently won an ace, and my mild-mannered partner voiced an unpleasant epithet in front of 30 kibitzers ... we had had two aces to cash all along, and they made it! And, subsequently, they went on to the world championships instead of us. Sad, but a great story nonetheless.

Situation 3 – The all-time Worst

The scene: the Japanese national team finals, played as a complete round robin. Our team is doing well, but the opponents bid to what seems to be a close slam. The hand screams for an ace underlead so I reluctantly underlead my ace and await the dummy with considerable trepidation (another drawback to the underlead: it takes years off your lifespan). Sure enough, Kx arrives in dummy. Declarer with $J10x$ misguesses, partner wins the queen and returns the suit – one down! So why the all-time worst? Declarer took *literally* 15 minutes to play to trick one! (My theory of why: 1. He thought I looked tricky, but 2. He was the only other *gaijin* (non-Japanese) player in the event and was

busy figuring out how he could justify playing the king to his teammates if it was the wrong play – “Were you showing off to the other *gaijin*?” – see my agony against Zia above). The other worst part of course was me trying to look just the right amount of aggravated as time wore on ... “How annoyed would I look if I held the queen and not the ace? More annoyed than this, right?”

To recap: if you’re going to underlead your ace at trick one:

1. Have understanding partners / teammates
2. Have some Pepto-Bismol nearby
3. Try not to look tricky (or write articles about ace underleads)

A successful ace underlead *is* a wonderful feeling ... be sure to read the cover story in this issue for more stories of this ilk.





The Bridge Teacher

By John Rayner

Modern uses of the cue bid raise

In the next few issues of the Kibitzer, we are going to explore the various ways by which the cue bid of the opponent's suit can be used in helpful ways.

The cue bid after our side opens 1♥ or 1♠

Opener	Opponent	Responder
1♥	Pass	???

Most of us have good agreements in place when Responder is able to support partner's major in an uncontested auction which might include Jacoby 2NT and Bergen raises.

Opener	Intervenor	Responder
1♥	2♣	???

When our Opponent has intervened with an overcall, two additional calls have become available to Responder – the negative double and the cue bid of Intervenor's suit. In this case that cue bid is 3♣. The cue bid will be the call made by Responder with almost all hands with support for hearts and "limit raise or better" values, which means a good 10, 11, 12 support points including short suit values. *Responder can have more than limit raise values, but if that is the case, Responder will always be planning to go to game.* Since the cue bid is used with all good supporting hands, that frees us up to somewhat change our raising structure in the following way.

Opener	Intervenor	Responder
1♥	2♣	???

2♥ 6-9 (poor 10) support points. Usually this will be made with 3-card support.

3♣ The cue bid response showing a limit raise (or better). Responder will have 3 or more hearts.

3♥ Because the cue bid raise is made with all good hands (limit raise or better) this is no longer a limit raise. Instead let's call this a "mixed raise" showing 6-9 support points with 4 or more hearts and usually includes a short suit asset (doubleton, singleton or void).

If we are 4-3-3-3, we can always take it back a notch and simply raise to 2♥. Some play that the raise to 3♥ as purely preemptive with 4+ hearts. For most of us this "mixed raise" treatment should work quite well.

4♥ A classic preemptive raise to game. Responder will have 5+ hearts, lots of shape and few high cards.

Opener	Intervenor	Responder	Advancer
1♥	2♣	3♣	Pass
???			

Opener always assumes that Responder has a limit raise.

3♥ This is Opener's attempt to sign off opposite a limit raise.

4♥ Opener expects to have a good play for game opposite a limit raise.

3NT Opener is offering up a choice of games (rare).

Other rebids by Opener are best played as showing interest in slam.

Opener	Intervenor	Responder	Advancer
1♠	2♦	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	???	

Pass = limit raise only

4♠ = better than a limit raise (without slam interest)

John Rayner is one of Canada's top bridge teachers. Currently a resident of Toronto, and teaching at various clubs, John owned and operated the Mississauga-Oakville Bridge Club, now known as MOBridge, where he taught hundreds of students for 35+ years. John has won the Canadian Open Teams once (with Mike Roche in 2011) and the Canadian Senior Teams twice (with Nader Hanna in 2018 and 2019). The "Rayndear" (his BBO username) has represented Canada at international events on numerous occasions.

Quiz time. Neither side is vulnerable. What do you bid as Responder with each of the hands?

Opener	Intervenor	Responder	Advancer
1♠	2♣	???	
1) ♠ K J 3	♥ A 5 3	♦ 8 7 6	♣ J 5 4 2
2) ♠ Q J 4 3	♥ A K 3	♦ 5 4 3 2	♣ 9 7
3) ♠ K 7 5 3 2	♥ 3 2	♦ J 10 9 5 4	♣ 5
4) ♠ A 5 3 2	♥ 3 2	♦ K 7 5 3	♣ 9 7 6
5) ♠ K Q 4	♥ A K J 2	♦ 3 2	♣ 5 4 3 2
6) ♠ A 10 5 3	♥ K 2	♦ 7 6 5 4	♣ 9 7 5
7) ♠ Q 10 4 3	♥ Q 5 4	♦ Q 4 3	♣ Q 3 2
8) ♠ Q 10 7 6 5	♥ 2	♦ K 8 6 4 2	♣ 5 3
9) ♠ K 7 5 4	♥ 6	♦ K 9 7 6	♣ 8 6 5 4
10) ♠ K Q	♥ A 3 2	♦ 5 4 3 2	♣ 8 6 4 3

Suggested answers:

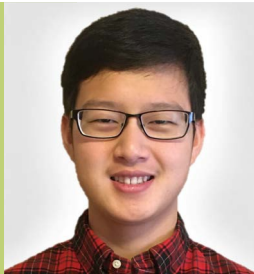
- 1) 2♠ - usually just 3 spades
- 2) 3♣ - a limit raise (or better); we have 11 support points
- 3) 4♠ - a preemptive raise to game
- 4) 3♠ - our mixed raise, always 4+ spades and usually a ruffing value
- 5) 3♣ - a limit raise or better; with this hand we are planning to then bid 4♠ if Opener rebids 3♠
- 6) 3♠ - our mixed raise
- 7) 2♠ - with this very "soft" 8 points and no ruffing value, let's not make a mixed raise to 3♠ - there is always room for judgment on our part
- 8) 4♠ - just do it; most often the Law of Total Tricks will back up our action
- 9) 3♠ - another mixed raise
- 10) 2♠ - we don't have the expected 3-card support, but this feels right

The cue bid after our side opens 1♣ or 1♦

Opener	Intervenor	Responder
1♦	1♥	???

The principles remain pretty much the same as over our 1♥ or 1♠ opening. Responder's cue bid (2♥) shows a limit raise or better of diamonds and usually 5+ card support. Responder has of course denied having four or more spades. If our side ends up declaring, we will be almost certainly end up playing in diamonds or notrump.

John has been teaching on Monday afternoons from 4:00–5:30 on Zoom since October of last year. If you are interested in learning more about his online lessons, please visit his website at johnraynerbridge.com



Canadian Juniors

By Bo Han (Bruce) Zhu

We all know that the regularity of 2020 was irregularity. Perhaps that was how I, a junior with few accolades, sat face-to-face (virtually) across from a certain distinguished bridge player with 16 NABC titles at the bridge table in an expert field playing IMPs.

After a brief 30-minute chat to discuss systems before game time in which you agree to 2/1, upside-down count and attitude, Reverse Smith, 4th best leads against NT, and 3rd or 5th against suit contracts, this is the third hand in: Vulnerable vs nonvulnerable, you pick up:

♠ 6 3
♥ A J 9 8 6 3
♦ J 6 4
♣ Q 8

Playing against fellow 2/1 playing opponents, the auction proceeds:

You	LHO	Partner	RHO
	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♥	Pass	INT	Pass
Pass	2♣	All pass	

You lead the ♠6, and dummy (LHO) shows up with:

<p>You</p> <p>♠ 6 3 ♥ A J 9 8 6 3 ♦ J 6 4 ♣ Q 8</p>	<p>Dummy</p> <p>♠ J 7 4 2 ♥ Q 4 ♦ Q 9 8 ♣ 9 7 5 2</p>
---	---

Dummy plays the ♠2, partner plays the ♠9, and declarer wins with the ♠A. Declarer then plays the ♣3, you win the ♣Q

while everyone follows low. You then play the ♠3 to partner's ♠8 (showing an original odd number) and declarer's ♠K.

Declarer plays another low club and partner wins the ♣10. Partner cashes the ♣A while declarer follows with the ♣K and you pitch an encouraging ♥3. Partner draws dummy's last trump with the ♣J as declarer discards a low diamond, and you discard a discouraging ♦6.

At trick 7, partner plays the ♥10. Declarer and you play low as dummy's queen wins. Declarer calls for the ♦Q which is covered with the king and declarer wins his ace in hand. Declarer now plays a high spade from hand. You have five cards left. What do you discard?

<p>You</p> <p>♠ ♥ A J 9 8 ♦ J ♣</p>	<p>Dummy</p> <p>♠ J 7 ♥ 4 ♦ 9 8 ♣</p>
---	---

Declarer's shape must be 4333 in that order: declarer showed up with only three clubs, partner showed three spades leaving declarer with four, and declarer would not be leading the ♦Q into his now bare ♦A. Declarer has shown up with ♠AK, ♦A, and ♣K, and so far from the play, you can give him the ♠Q and the ♥K, resulting in ♠AKQx ♥Kxx ♦Axx ♣Kxx. If you keep the ♦J now, declarer may be able to throw you in later and force you to lead into his ♥Kx. But if you throw away the ♦J now and declarer has the ♦10, you would have just handed him the contract: four spades, one heart and three diamonds.

So, you play the ♥8. Declarer then plays his last spade towards the jack in dummy. What do you pitch now?

Bo Han (Bruce) is currently pursuing a B.S. in Computer Engineering at Georgia Tech. His bridge accomplishments include winning two bronze medals in the 2019 World Youth Open Championships (WYOCs), representing Canada twice in the World Youth Team Championships (WYTCs), winning the 2018 YNABC teams, being awarded the 2020 King of Bridge, and finishing in the overalls of several NABC+ events. From 2016-2019, he has organized a free summer bridge program for youths in the GTA.

Now throw away the $\diamond J$! This is the last time declarer can reach dummy, and even if declarer does have the $\diamond 10$, you are trading one diamond trick for one heart trick. On this hand, partner actually had the $\diamond 10$, so after declarer plays two more rounds of spades and leads a diamond, partner wins with the $\diamond 10$ and sends back a heart into your $\heartsuit AJ$ – down two. The full deal:

	Dummy	
	$\spadesuit J 7 4 2$	
	$\heartsuit Q 4$	
	$\diamond Q 9 8$	
	$\clubsuit 9 7 5 2$	
You		Partner
$\spadesuit 6 3$		$\spadesuit 9 8 5$
$\heartsuit A J 9 8 6 3$		$\heartsuit 10 7$
$\diamond J 6 4$		$\diamond K 10 5 2$
$\clubsuit Q 8$		$\clubsuit A J 10 6$
	$\spadesuit A K Q 10$	
	$\heartsuit K 5 2$	
	$\diamond A 7 3$	
	$\clubsuit K 4 3$	

A few boards later, all-vul., you pick up:

$\spadesuit 10 6 5 3$
 $\heartsuit Q 10$
 $\diamond A 9 7 5 2$
 $\clubsuit 7 6$

The bidding:

You	LHO	Partner	RHO
	$2\diamond^*$	Pass	$2NT^{**}$
Pass	$3\spadesuit^{***}$	Pass	$3NT$
All pass			

* Flannery (4/5+ in the majors), 10-15 HCP

** Asks shapes

*** 4 spades and 6 hearts



Playing fourth best leads, you lead the $\diamond 5$, and here is what you see:

	Dummy
	$\spadesuit Q J 9 4$
	$\heartsuit A K J 8 6 4$
	$\diamond 8 4$
	$\clubsuit 2$
You	
	$\spadesuit 10 6 5 3$
	$\heartsuit Q 10$
	$\diamond A 9 7 5 2$
	$\clubsuit 7 6$

Dummy plays the 4, partner contributes the $\diamond J$, and declarer wins with the $\diamond K$. Declarer cashes the club ace as partner follows with the jack. Declarer plays the $\clubsuit Q$ from hand, dummy pitches a heart and partner wins with the king. Partner now plays the $\diamond 3$ to declarer's queen. Do you win or duck?

What do you think declarer has? Partner has thrown the $\clubsuit J$ under the $\clubsuit A$. There is a chance he started off with the $\clubsuit 10$ and is just false-carding, and if he is, what you do does not matter much (even if you set your diamonds up, you have no remaining entry). But in the case that partner is out of clubs, we would know 12 of declarer's cards from partner's $\diamond 3$ return: $\diamond KQ106$ and $\clubsuit AQ1098543$ of clubs. If declarer has an entry into his hand, the defense is over.

Knowing so, we win the $\diamond A$ and play back the $\spadesuit 6$, consistent with methods from a bad holding, to alert partner to hop up with the $\spadesuit A$ if he has it. Indeed, partner contributes the ace and down goes declarer's $\spadesuit K$. Later, declarer does have the chance to throw us in with hearts, but he does not know that. Instead, he plays hearts from the top with the hope of establishing a ninth heart trick. Down one. Here was the full deal:

	$\spadesuit QJ94$	
	$\heartsuit AKJ864$	
	$\diamond 84$	
	$\clubsuit 2$	
$\spadesuit 10653$		$\spadesuit A872$
$\heartsuit Q10$		$\heartsuit 97532$
$\diamond A9752$		$\diamond J3$
$\clubsuit 76$		$\clubsuit KJ$
	$\spadesuit K$	
	$\heartsuit --$	
	$\diamond KQ106$	
	$\clubsuit AQ1098543$	

Sooner than you would have liked it, the event ends. You enjoyed the time and your distinguished partner compliments you for your astute defense. Who was your partner?



Geoff Hampson





Safety Plays

By Brian Gray

My article on Safety Plays has been divided into two parts. Part 1, on trick development with limited entries, appeared in the Winter 2020 issue of the Kibitzer. Part 2, presented here, deals with hold up plays.

Hold Up Plays - keeping the dangerous opponent off lead

Contributor David Bird is a prolific British bridge writer having written over 130 books. He is the bridge correspondent to the Mail on Sunday and the London Evening Standard. Bird is also a regular contributor to several magazines including his humorous column, "Bridge with the Abbot" which is featured monthly in the ACBL Bridge Bulletin.

I contacted David Bird and asked him to send a message to Brother Xavier and The Abbot at the St Titus monastery. The Abbot replied, "Here is a safety play that you can use:"

♠ 10 8 6	♠ J 9 4 2
♥ K Q J 10 5	♥ 8 6
♦ J 7	♦ Q 10 8 3 2
♣ Q 8 7	♣ 10 6
♠ A Q 5	♠ K 7 3
♥ 7 4 3	♥ A 9 2
♦ K 6 4	♦ A 9 5
♣ K 9 5 2	♣ A J 4 3

West	North	East	South
pass	3NT	all pass	INT

West leads the heart king. Declarer holds up the ace until the third round to break the link between the two defenders. He has 8 tricks on top and must develop a ninth trick without allowing West (the danger hand who can cash two more hearts) on lead. He plays the ace of clubs and leads the club 4 to dummy's 9. The safe East hand wins and declarer makes nine tricks. The safety play would fail only if West holds ♣Q10x. I understand all the monks at St Titus are doing just fine. There is no internet Server; they are connected to a Higher Power!"

Another famous name in the bridge world is Larry Cohen. He is a writer, teacher, and winner of 25 North American Bridge Championships. Larry also writes a monthly column in the Bulletin titled "The Real Deal."

Larry writes, "The Rule of 7? Rules - Schmules. There are too many 'Rules of #x%' out there. I prefer the Rule of Thinking. If you must know the Rule of 7 was designed to tell declarer in notrump how many times to hold up. For example, say he gets a heart lead, and this is the heart suit:

Dummy	Declarer
♥4	♥A 8 7 5

The rule says to total up your hearts (you have 5) and subtract from 7. That leaves 2, which is how many times you should hold up. Now let's forget that rule (I never use it) and try some good old logic instead.

♠ 9 8 2	♠ K 10 3
♥ Q 10 6 2	♥ 4
♦ 7 4	♦ K Q J 10 9 8
♣ 9 5 4 2	♣ A 7 6
♠ A Q J 7	♠ 6 5 4
♥ A 8 7 5	♥ K J 9 3
♦ 6 5 2	♦ A 3
♣ 8 3	♣ K Q J 10

Against 3NT, West leads their fourth best ♥2.

The Rule of 7 says to hold up twice (7-5 = 2) but the Rule of Thinking says to win the first heart and so not to hold up at all.

From the lead of the deuce, declarer knows the hearts are splitting 4-4. Not only does that make a hold-up play irrelevant, but it gives the defence a chance to switch to a devastating club to defeat the contract. Winning the first trick produces 9 tricks. On this deal, the winning play is to hold-up zero times."

Larry concludes: "I always prefer thinking and logic to rules. The Rule of 7 told you the wrong information nearly every time. With it, you would have robotically held up twice on each hand. In real life, the correct play is to hold up 0, 1, 2, or even 3 times. This should put the Rule of 7 into 'Rule of Heaven.' Maybe the 'Rule of Graveyard' is a better phrase."

Hot off the press! The dynamic duo of Barbara Seagram and David Bird are at it again! Great bridge and COVID advice are in their latest endeavour, Play It Safe.

A request. I need your help! I'm writing a humour book titled Bridge Bloopers. We've all been there. Tell me a story (anonymously, of course) and

have a good laugh!

Have you ever...

- had your partner open the bidding with a Double?
- redoubled your partner's double?
- asked to see your opponent's convention card and later find out he handed you your partner's card by mistake?
- reached a 4♠ contract and had double vision because the same card (the ♠A) was in both the dummy and your hand?

I have experienced all these embarrassments and more! Please send your favourite blooper(s) to me at brianrgray@rogers.com Also, feel free to check out my website: www.bridgebeginnermentor.ca



Bridge History

By Janet Galbraith

A long and winding road – where our hobby came from

Ever wonder how we ended up holding those thirteen cards in our hands? Playing cards have an origin shrouded in mystery but are generally thought to have come from Asia. Chinese literature refers to them in the 10th century, but problematically, the same word for playing cards (paper tiles) was

used for dominoes, so it is not known what games were played and with what materials.

Cards first appeared in Italy and Spain in the 1370s, likely coming from the Mamluk dynasty, which was centred in Egypt. Those cards often displayed gold coins, polo sticks, swords and goblets. Cards were hand-painted and therefore expensive - they spread across Europe as a pastime for the rich. Decks were of various sizes, from 30-100+ cards, and the pictures on them

represented the interests of the person who commissioned them. Acorns, bells, flowers, stars and birds were some of the more popular options. In the early 1400s, Germans invented wood-block printing, which significantly reduced the cost of production and card playing spread to the masses. In the 1480s, costs were further reduced when the French introduced painting with stencils. This process resulted in the simplified suit marks seen today on international decks of cards and cheap production eventually smothered the

Janet Galbraith is a Diamond Life Master who learned to play bridge in Toronto eons ago, but who now lives and works in Calgary, where she is a research librarian. Janet competes as often as she can in Canadian national women and mixed team events, and she yearns for the day she can retire and play more bridge!

production from other countries. The 52-card deck was also standardized. Those of you who play in French will recognize that the suits were called *piques*, *coeurs*, *carreaux* and *trefles*. The French also created the red and black suit colours we have today, and patterns were put on the backs of cards to cover up smudges that would mark cards and allow cheating.

Playing cards crossed over to England, likely from Belgium, where card makers had fled to avoid French taxes. The English opted to use the current names of spades (from the Spanish *spado* for swords), hearts, diamonds and clubs (from the Spanish *basto*) to refer to the suits. We should all count ourselves lucky to have a diamond suit, since the English word for *carreaux* at the time was lozenge!

It is also to England that we owe the elaborate design work found on the Ace of Spades. In the 1800s, under the Stamp Act, every deck of cards had to be stamped to prevent tax evasion and the Ace of Spades had to be specially printed.

Court cards (face cards) got a standardized look from Belgian sources around this time, and also became two-ended so players would not have to turn the cards around. Throughout the evolution of the deck, court cards were always male, until the Germans introduced a Queen card. At one time,

the French associated each court card with a real person, so the four kings represented David, Charlemagne, Alexander, and Caesar Augustus.

Further improvements came from American manufacturers – Jokers were introduced in the late 1800s as “best bowers” from the game of euchre, and to help poker players so they would not have to fan their cards, the New York Consolidated Card Company (NYCC) patented the corner indices we see today in 1875 and appropriately called the decks Squeezers.

Now that we have our deck of cards, how and why did we come to play bridge?

Most of us can confidently say that bridge is derived from whist. True enough. But there were a lot of steps involved. Whist is a trick-taking game developed in England, first called Trump in the 1500s, then various other names until it was called Whist in the 18th Century. Whist always has a trump suit, determined by turning up the last card dealt to the dealer, and is considered the first step on the way to modern bridge.

Step two, Russian whist, or *Biritch*, is where the corrupted word bridge comes from. It was also called *Khedive* in Greece and Egypt and became popular on the French Riviera in the late 1800s. It was also known as bridge

whist and added the ability of the dealer or their partner to declare a trump suit or no trumps, by use of the word *biritch*. In this version, the dummy was exposed face up. The earliest rules were printed in 1886. Step three was called Auction Bridge, which added trick scoring and bonus and penalty scoring.

We now get to the hero of our story, Harold S. Vanderbilt. While on a cruise from Los Angeles to Havana in 1925, he suggested adopting some principles from a popular French game called *Plafond*. Only tricks that a player had bid and made would count toward game, and vulnerability factors and slam bonuses were added.

In 1927, the Whist Club of New York issued official rules using the scoring table that he invented and in 1928 Vanderbilt established the Vanderbilt Cup for an annual national championship. *Plafond* and whist faded in popularity, and the rest is history!





What I Have Learned

By Katie Thorpe

Of course, it depends on the auction, **but anytime they jump to a slam it is best to lead aggressively.** Or anytime they have struggled to get there—that's the time to attack.

Sami Kehela told me long, long ago that to win **you need to make fewer mistakes than the opponents. I've never forgotten that.**

All partnership discussions should be after the match/session, with one exception. If a misunderstanding happened in an auction that might well happen again, I'm OK with saying "until we can discuss it, this auction means this." I generally mark a "D" on my scorecard for hands to review later.

At the table, **I like my partners to be pleasant, calm, and as expressionless as possible.** I love playing with screens since I'm personally not as good with being expressionless.

Bridge players are all different, but they are all smart people.

And for the most part they are very accepting of others from all walks of life and of all ages. I've always found it fascinating to find out what bridge players do for a living - there are many people with backgrounds in law, information technology, maths and sciences. But there are also those who teach, nurse, run small

businesses, breed dogs. Several are brilliant musicians.

Until recently I would have said, "I cannot imagine my life without bridge in it," and I still can't imagine it totally gone from my life. **But I can imagine no longer playing competitively. It's hard to keep the brain cells functioning as well as I'd like. More gardening and more genealogy!**

I believe you can be a tiger at the table without being rude to anyone. There are many examples - Bob Hamman, Sami Kehela, Bart Bramley, Steve Weinstein, to name just a few.

To be fair, Eric Murray may have occasionally provoked Sami!

Playing against people who are rude to their partners is annoying and distracting, so naturally I do not like it. I'll say something once, like ask nicely for no conversation. Rarely have I called the director when opponents have persisted.

I've always wanted to win but not by being difficult at the table to either partner or the opponents, and I have avoided playing with partners who are difficult. I suspect I was never truly competitive enough to reach the highest levels.



Marty Kirr and Katie

Katie Thorpe retired in 2012 from programming and database support at various insurance companies. Nowadays, Katie is a passionate gardener and attributes her love of gardening to her dad who worked for Agriculture Canada for almost 30 years, so she grew up with plants and gardens. As for her other hobby – genealogy – Katie grew up with her paternal grandparents present, and they often talked about their youth and their extended families. So, one day 25 years ago or so, she thought, “Maybe I’ll check out Granny’s family - that should be easy as her surname was Rainbow.” It turned out there were way more Rainbows in England than one might expect! And then she was hooked – doing genealogy for all her family lines plus John’s – just another puzzle and logic game.

Naturally losing in a final is difficult but I’m pretty fatalistic so once it is over, it’s done. I’ll mope for a little while, usually until after the second glass of wine. Perhaps a bit longer depending on the margin and how I played.

I was extremely lucky when I started playing organized bridge. I played duplicate at Kate Buckman’s back in the early 70’s, and after a short time, Kate kicked me out of the novice game (0-20) and made me play in the Open. I think I had about 2 masterpoints! Anyway, after the games lots of us trooped off to Fran’s for burgers and beer and went over all the hands. John Sabino, Mike Schoenborn, David Lindop, Doug Dearborn, John Cunningham, and others. **Those sessions were invaluable.**

I also shared a house with Andy Altay, Mike Cafferata and others – lots of impromptu discussions there, too. **Of course, when John Carruthers and I became a couple in 1974, I also gained a bridge coach!**

I never did keep a lot of hand records and of those I’ve kept, I can’t say I’ve looked at them, other than immediately after the session.

Looking back, I have some favourite bridge memories. Winning the COPC with John Carruthers is up



Lesley Thomson, Sondra Blank, Ina Demme & Katie Thorpe made it to the 2015 Wagar Round of 8

there. Also, finishing runner-up at Maastricht in 2000.. Being elected to the CBF Hall of Fame. Coming back in the last session from 40-odd down to win the CSTC by 1. All wonderful memories. **But the biggest thrill was winning the CWTC that qualified us to play in the Olympiad in Seattle in 1984 – my first invitational world championship. I don’t think I came down from that high for weeks.**

Regarding the way bridge is played around the world..there are some distinct differences, and it pays to be aware of them when competing against those from other countries.

Most Europeans lead far more passively than North Americans in my experience – which is by the way mostly in team matches, not matchpoints. They are much more likely to lead from three or four small when there is no standout lead.

Also auctions that seem standard to North Americans may well have subtle differences and it is wise to ask, especially in competitive auctions. **When it comes to expertise and efficiency a key element every bridge player must have is the ability to focus and shut out distractions – external or internal.**



The Canadian Women's 1988 Venice Cup team: Katie Thorpe, npc George Mittelman, Sharyn Reus, Mary Paul, Francine Cimon, Dianna Gordon, Gloria Bart



Katie giving a speech at the 2016 Hall of Fame ceremony (with Nader Hanna)



Katie & John in 1990



Katie accepting her Hall of Fame award from Neil Kimelman

They say one cannot be successful in all three areas – marriage, career, and bridge. But I disagree! I believe I've had them all. Almost 47 years with John, an enjoyable career in IT (once I found that career) and a pretty good bridge game. Could the bridge have been more successful? Almost certainly but I would have had to sacrifice time with our families and perhaps other interests as well. **For me, looking back, I made the right choices.**

Other successful examples: Jill Meyers, a many time world champion, happily married long term and a very successful business licensing music for movies! Beth Palmer (sadly deceased), ditto, ditto, and a judge. And on the men's side: Ralph Katz and Chip Martel come to mind.

To improve one's game it's important to:

- learn the fundamentals and worry about extra conventions later

- “play up” whenever possible
- don't be afraid to ask better players questions and more importantly, ask why that is their answer
- read the classic bridge books like Watson's *Play of the Hand*

Something I learned way back when I first started learning, and to this day I still strongly believe: Don't make it hard for partner.

Katie's accomplishments:

Between 1984 and 2016 Katie won the Canadian Women Teams Championships (CWTCs) ten times! She also finished runner-up twice. She won the Canadian Open Pairs Championships (COPCs) with bridge/life partner John Carruthers in 1990 and the Canadian Senior Teams Championships (CSTCs) in 2015 with Marty Kirr as her partner. Katie has one silver medal in the Canadian National Teams Championships (CNTCs) and a bronze in the Canadian Mixed (CMTCs).

At North American Bridge Championships (NABCs), Katie won the 1991 Mixed Board-a-Match Teams and was second in the 2001 Wagar Women Knockout Teams.

Katie has represented Canada twelve times in women's world championship team events, winning a silver in the 2000 Olympiad, and two bronze medals – at the 1988 Olympiad and the Venice Cup in 1989.

On the administrative front, Katie served on the board of directors of the Canadian Bridge Federation from 1987 to 1993 and was president from 1990-1991.

In 1989, Katie won the Kate Buckman award for greatly contributing to others' enjoyment of bridge.



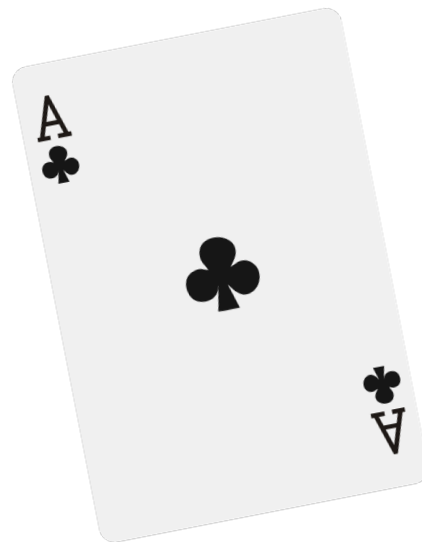
Congratulations to Cheryl Barlow for becoming a lifetime member of the ACBL National Goodwill Committee! Cheryl has served on the executive committee of her home club - the Cobourg Duplicate Club - for 40 years. Cheryl is a regular at 'Friendly Friday,' a club game, where she helps mentor less experienced players.

Unit 166

2020 Helen Shanbrom Ace of Clubs Awards

0-5		
Ron Lawrence	Oakville	183
Fay Greenholtz	Toronto	140
Roshanak Madadinoei	Toronto	101
5-20		
Michael Kirsh	Mississauga	91
Helen Kay	Toronto	74
J Weber	Mississauga	58
20 to 50		
Kathryn Jensen	Toronto	217
Utpal Patel	Toronto	194
Cinzia Vettese	Toronto	183
50-100		
Susan Samuels	Toronto	156
Sharon Ridsdale	Toronto	129
Virginia Minnaar	Toronto	128
100-200		
Julie Wood	Toronto	242
Luigi Giammarco	Oakville	180
Peter Rival	Ancaster	160
200-300		
Myrtle Herzenberg	Toronto	256
Amy Yin	Mississauga	191
Peter Morawetz	North York	181
300-500		
Sum Tang	Mississauga	199
Lucia McCurdy	Toronto	184
Kelly Shields	Toronto	153
500-1000		
Iain Macdonald	Toronto	223
Zsoka Balla	Toronto	185
Jerry Lenders		183

1000–1500		
Rod McLeod	Burlington	335
Raymond Mitchell	Etobicoke	257
Joanne Grandy	Toronto	235
1500–2500		
Daniel Cecchelli	Hamilton	260
Steve McGrahan	Hamilton	234
Terry Bradley	Burlington	225
2500–3500		
Jill Thompson	Toronto	209
John Cook	Toronto	201
Suzanne Hidi	Toronto	194
3500–5000		
Doug Andrews	Etobicoke	444
Ann-Marie Crabbe		421
Barbara Seagram	Toronto	299
5000–7500		
Mel Norton	Burlington	795
Jack Shinehoft	Dundas	306.9
Alex Kornel	Toronto	306.7
7500–10,000		
Gary Westfall	Brampton	352
Barry Senensky	Toronto	305
Andy Firko	Oakville	255
Over 10,000		
Linda Wynston	Toronto	300
Andrew Tylman	Toronto	297
John Rayner	Toronto	276



Unit 166

2020 Mini-McKenney Awards

0-5		
Ron Lawrence	Oakville	197
Fay Greenholtz	Toronto	147
Roshanak Madadinoei	Toronto	101
5-20		
Michael Kirsh	Mississauga	96
Helen Kay	Toronto	78
J Weber	Mississauga	58
20 to 50		
Utpal Patel	Toronto	303
Cinzia Vettese	Toronto	290
Kathryn Jensen	Toronto	237
50-100		
Susan Samuels	Toronto	169
Virginia Minnaar	Toronto	142.7
Sharon Ridsdalei	Toronto	142.6
100-200		
Julie Wood	Toronto	292
Luigi Giammarco	Oakville	202
Don Hapuararchchi	Brampton	197
200-300		
Myrtle Herzenberg	Toronto	256
Amy Yin	Mississauga	191
Yale Zhong	Oakville	186
300-500		
Sum Tang	Mississauga	245
Lucia McCurdy	Toronto	200
Richard Durk		189
500-1000		
Iain Macdonald	Toronto	243
Zsoka Balla	Toronto	233
Martin Klaponski	Toronto	221

1000–1500		
Rod McLeod	Burlington	341
Raymond Mitchell	Etobicoke	277
Joanne Grandy	Toronto	273
1500–2500		
Jacob Freeman	Toronto	472
Peter Peng	North York	285
Daniel Cecchelli	Hamilton	269
2500–3500		
Jill Thompson	Toronto	241
John Cook	Toronto	207
Suzanne Hidi	Toronto	195
3500–5000		
Doug Andrews	Etobicoke	518
Ann-Marie Crabbe		423
Barbara Seagram	Toronto	356
5000–7500		
Mel Norton*	Burlington	1011
Jack Shinehoft	Dundas	386
Alex Kornel	Toronto	364
7500–10,000		
Barry Senensky	Toronto	378
Gary Westfall	Brampton	364
Andy Firko	Oakville	287
Over 10,000		
Jonathan Steinberg	Toronto	460
David Grainger	Etobicoke	433
John Rayner	Toronto	366

*2020 Richmond Trophy Winner
(for most masterpoints won by a Canadian)

In this issue...

Bernadette Morra
Celebrity Bridge Player



Katie Thorpe
What I Have Learned

Deadline for the Spring 2021 Kibitzer: April 15, 2021

The Kibitzer

Andy Stark

126 Ivy Ave., Toronto ON M4L 2H7