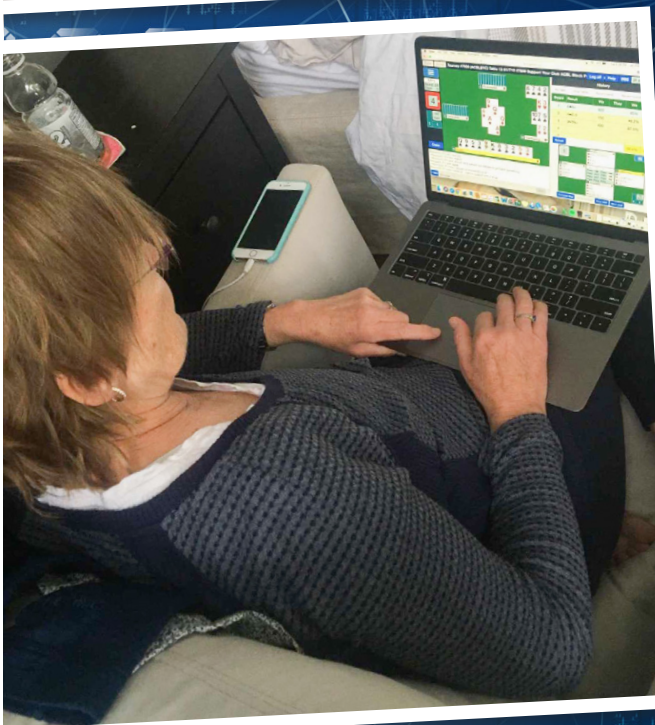


The Kibitzer



Summer 2020

Volume 67, Number 2





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Oct 4 Cruising the Pacific Ocean
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Fred Gitelman and his winning GNT team from last summer featured 5 ex-TO players: Roger Lee, Haig Tchamitch, Dan Korbel, Sheri Winestock, Fred, Geoff Hampson and Koda. See p. 23.

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Editor's Note

As Charles Darwin wrote, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change." These past two months we have experienced quite the change. What they've shown us is that you can take the bridge table away from the bridge player, but you can't take the bridge player away from the table.

So, this issue of the Kib is dedicated to you the online player. By the way, I see Paul Linxwiler, the editor of the ACBL Bulletin, my arch nemesis, (kidding) stole my idea as the May Bulletin also has an online bridge theme. We'll have to have words. That's what editors do when they get together: have words.



Ever since its inception in 2001, I have been a big fan of BBO. Where else can you play with friends, view world class bridge, and accumulate masterpoints? All for the low, low cost of ... free. Well, not the masterpoints. Those babies are not cheap. Once you get the hang of playing online, you'll discover that it's a lot of fun, too. Perhaps you have already joined so that you can play in your club's virtual game.

BBO founder and former Ontarian Fred Gitelman was kind enough to answer all my questions. You can read not only the interview with Fred on p. 23, but two other interviews, with our two 2020 award winners, Viktoria Renaud (p. 13) and Steve Overholt (p. 16). Plus, we have extra articles this issue. We lost all our tourneys due to Covid 19, at least through to the end of July, so we aren't publishing the respective tourney ads. See the Tournament Trail on the back page for the list of cancellations.

Hang in there! Keep playing on BBO. Try Bridge Master. Try playing the bots. Watch some top-level players play. And take heart. Like my grandmother used to say, "This, too, shall pass."

Andy Stark

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ph. 647 530 1360

On the cover (clockwise from top right): Camilo Stark, Sylvia Proaño, Jill Thompson, and Rosie—all staying at home and playing bridge online



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

- Board-approved January 4, 2020 Board of Director minutes.
- Aug 31, 2019 Board of Director Minutes
- Nov 3, 2019 Board of Director Minutes

The next Unit 166 Board meeting is scheduled for 9am on Saturday August 29, 2020 via video conference.

The Kibitzer Information

A printed version of The Kibitzer is now available. Please see page 24 for how you can subscribe. 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.

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IMPORTANT KIBITZER DATES:

Issue:	Deadline:	Posted online by:
Fall 2020	July. 15	Aug. 15
Winter 2020	Oct. 15	Nov. 15
Spring 2021	Jan. 15	Feb. 15
Summer 2021	Apr. 15	May 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.



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(Visit www.acbldistrict2.org for details)

- All District 2 tournaments & results
- District 2 business
- NAP/GNT tournament information
- District 2 Director's page for ACBL news & info
- Graham Warren is the District tournament coordinator - gwarren@rogers.com
- Martin Hunter the NAP/GNT coordinator - martinhunter@rogers.com

creemore's bridge etiquette, rule #2

Arrive on time, ready to go, connection issues solved,
chores done, door closed, coffee nearby, phone away,
distractions set aside. Enjoy!



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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



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Notice to All Clubs & Tournament Managers in Units 166, 246, 249 & 255

If you plan to run a tournament, please check with your Unit Coordinator to see if the date is free. There is an agreement among the four Units in southern Ontario that their tournaments will not compete with one another. This does not apply to those clubs which have an historic tournament weekend - they are set aside for you.

Graham Warren, District 2 Tournament Coordinator

***creemore's* bridge etiquette, rule #13**

The Claim button is your friend. Be sure you are making a good claim. Best is to set up one hand, either yours or the dummy, before claiming. Then it's easier for the opponents to accept. Opps: please look the hand over carefully. If it looks like a good claim, hit 'Accept.' Auto-hitting the 'Reject' button because you don't want to look at the claim is ... embarrassing for you, n'est-ce pas?



Viktoria Renaud: Winner of the 2020 Audrey Grant Award

Kib: Congratulations, Viktoria, on winning your second major trophy in our unit. Along with the 2006 Kate Buckman Award you now have the Audrey Grant Award for teaching excellence for your mantel. Maybe you can tell us how you got started and what you do now. Over to you...

Viktoria: My mother was an excellent bridge player, but I displayed no interest in this wonderful game till my late 20ies... She was also the one to recognize my natural teaching ability and urged me to become a teacher of languages in my native Hungary. Languages helped me become an impresario at Interkoncert and tour with artists in Europe and North America where I met my husband Chuck. 22 years ago, when we purchased the Hamilton Bridge Centre, the wonderful Jerry Helms conducted a teacher accreditation in Kingston that I attended and passed. I also got accredited for Easybridge! and that literally saved our club. Six free lessons and free books underwritten by the ACBL brought in all kinds of prospective players; most of them had no idea what bridge was. After a 20-minute fun introduction they were playing hands. East-West were moving the third week and we were giving out masterpoints.

A wife of a bridge player asked me if this was duplicate. Following the spirit of the program I asked her why she was putting this question to me. The response: "I know duplicate is nasty, but this is great fun!" She still plays... We developed great groups of loyal players who learned "the fun way," who enjoyed the game and camaraderie. We offered workshops for those who really wanted to learn but there was no obligation or commitment.

I really appreciated when Audrey Grant invited the new bridge teachers, myself included, to Toronto for a free day of encouragement and further professional development. Was very pleased when she asked me to help at one of her seminars in Burlington. I was invited by the Board to run a couple of seminars at the Toronto Nationals on Doubles. Had an elaborate lecture prepared on several different doubles, but when it was time to deliver it turned out I had a large group of absolute novices. I quickly improvised, got back to very basics, and we had a ball. Barbara Seagram kindly ran a wonderful workshop to celebrate the club's 15th Anniversary and John Rayner ran another successful one for the 20th.

I used Eddie Kantar's books for special series of workshops and sent him an e-mail stating my husband was

starting to get jealous of him, I love his material so much. He didn't know me from Adam (or Eve) and immediately responded, "Tell your husband not to worry—some women take me to bed; my books that is." What a wonderful man! And a fantastic bridge player.

Due to space and time restrictions at the club these days I only offer once a week Supervised Play where the first hour is a workshop on suggested topics from the participants and the second hour they play hands from the previous game with travelers so they can check if they were in the right contract and did as well or better than the more experienced

players before them. Occasionally I run an Introduction to bridge for several weeks using the Easybridge! Philosophy. We have four weekly games, I run two of them and play in the other two with regular partners.

My tournament playing days are over. I never got into playing bridge on the computer; being a social butterfly I need people around me. I am passionate about our club, love playing and teaching, and feel my life has come full circle as a teacher. I agree with one of our best players Helen Kirkpatrick: "Good bridge is boring bridge!" Do the basics right! I have been quoted as saying



Viktoria and Chuck Renaud

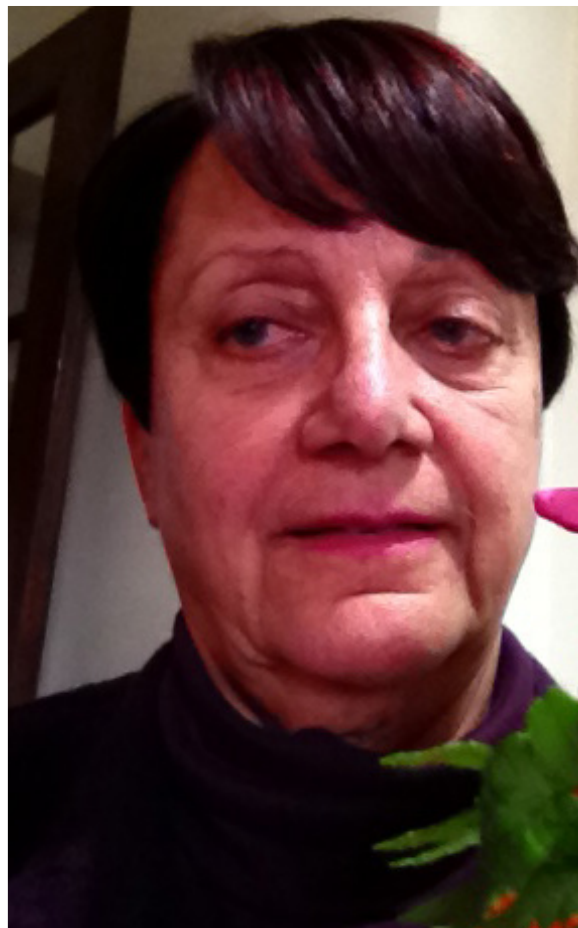
“Life is not fair; bridge is not fair.” I am honoured to have received both prestigious awards the Unit has to offer.

The photo is of my husband Chuck, the man behind the successful woman (who makes the best coffee at the club) and

me at the Great Wall of China. Traveling was our hobby and we’ve been fortunate to have had numerous wonderful trips, cruises, and river cruises. I love opera, sang at the Met (backstage with no audience) and hope to continue with our activities.



Viktoria and Chuck Renaud



Viktoria Renaud

***creemore's* bridge etiquette, rule #6**

The proper pace of online play is like Goldilocks: not too fast, but not too slow. Virtual ACBL games are not Speedball Pairs.

No, we don't want to play too slow that we lose a board, but we also don't need to sit around for 8 minutes after the three-board round because we rushed through.



Steve Overholt: Winner of the 2020 Kate Buckman Award

Kib: Congratulations, Steve, on your second prestigious Unit 166 award. You won the Audrey Grant award back in 2016 for teaching excellence and now the Kate Buckman this year for being an all-around great ambassador of the game. How long have you been playing bridge and what got you into the game?

Steve: My mom played with the neighbourhood ladies until she found out they gossiped about whomever was away that day; that was the end of that! I played with some high school friends for a bit. Then I started school at York University and saw a poster for a duplicate bridge club. At the end of that year of playing, the guy running the York club was graduating and needed a replacement or had to close the club. Slowly my hand went up and that was how I got my first gig as an ACBL club manager. There I met some good players with whom I started playing tournament bridge and we became Life Masters together.

Kib: How did you come to be the owner of the Etobicoke Bridge Club?

Steve: My career was as a teacher and IT administrator at two boys' private schools (Upper Canada College & Crescent School). I retired in December of 2009. I had not played much bridge

during my time working and raising our two boys. Once retired, I started playing at the Etobicoke Olympium, my local club, where Bev Ross was running three open games. I started thinking about running a full-service bridge centre and after doing my research, I took over the club in September of 2010. My main goal was to provide both ACBL bridge games and a strong learning program. As a life-long teacher and bridge player, this was a great fit for my skill set. Clearly, for a sustainable model, I needed to develop new bridge players, who would eventually populate the various games I offered.

Kib: How long have you been teaching bridge and how did you implement bridge teaching at the EBC?

Steve: As soon as I took over the club, I began offering introductory bridge lessons, and creating low-masterpoint duplicate games. First, I added a 199er game (now 299er). The Wed open game was struggling so I replaced it with a 750 game. I also added a 0-20 supervised game on Wednesdays. What was clear to me was that the normal player-generational-sustainability model was no longer valid. Instead, new students were coming from empty-nesters and those retiring from their career; these were the people wanting to learn to play

bridge. So, I teach most Mondays of the year: an Absolute Beginner course in the fall, Level 2 in the winter, and a hodge-podge of more advanced courses in the spring. I also do a half-hour lesson before our Wednesday 0-20 game and Thursday 299er game. And, EBC is very fortunate to have expert Dave Colbert do hand analysis with a large group of the 299ers every Thursday after their game. Also a shout-out to the EBC staff: Nancy Strachan, Lezlie Cullen, David Eddy, and Danielle Gosselin—they all are fabulous at directing/ teaching/ supporting our patrons.

Kib: What have been some of the highs and lows you've experienced? eg. Any particular student who has gone on to great heights?

I really enjoy teaching bridge. All my students are keen, and they tell me they do their homework. I have great respect for the difficulty of learning the game, and I make every effort to manage my students' expectations. My Rule-of-7 is that it will take seven iterations of being taught a specific skill before it will become integrated properly into your bridge repertoire. While the growth path is a long one, I enjoy watching my students move from one limited game to the next higher one. Some of my earlier students are now starting to play open bridge, which has taken longer than I had expected. It is also rewarding to see many of them competing well in tournaments. I also oversee the Intermediate/Novice section of the Toronto tournaments and enjoy teaching many of the lessons. It is enjoyable meeting new students and rewarding

helping them improve their game. My main low-point is right now, with COVID-19 virus forcing us all to stop running our clubs; thank goodness we at least have Internet bridge! Check out our web site for a BBO user manual and some other online recommendations.

Kib: How much or little are you playing these days?

Steve: I play almost every Tuesday evening at my club's open game. I play every Friday at Rainbow with one of my students and follow our game with an email of suggestions to improve their game. I get out to MOBridge about one Saturday per month. I also play at the occasional local tournament event.



Steve Overholt, Etobicoke Bridge Centre
Photos courtesy of JS



Paul Pointet, Lezlie Cullen & Steve Overholt

Kib: What advice do you have for bridge teachers?

Steve: Bridge is a very hard game to learn and bridge teachers need a lot of empathy for the challenges their students face. I try to first explain the “why” of the many rules and that they will have many more chances (six now (-) to acquire each skill). Students have made a great decision to take lessons, versus other ad hoc learning methods, as it allows them to learn the basics properly, and then they can gradually build on these solid fundamentals.

Kib: A dilemma for us bridge teachers who teach beginners is this: do you teach Two Over One from the get go

or do you think it’s best to teach them Standard American first?

Steve: I like to teach Standard, which allows you to play with anyone anywhere. I also feel the bridge learning energy of my students is better spent improving their bidding fundamentals, defensive basics, and play technique, rather than switching to 2/1. Once they have reached a good level of proficiency in general, they are well-positioned to study and possibly adopt 2/1.

Kib: When not playing teaching or thinking about bridge, what else do you like to do in your spare time?

Steve: I have always enjoyed playing sports. In the winter I play hockey twice a week, and have returned to snowboarding, inspired by my 6-year-old grandchild who is now skiing. In the warm weather, I play slo-pitch baseball and try to golf once a week.

Kib: And finally, over to you, Steve, any final thoughts? A specific anecdote, specific memory, etc.

Steve: Bridge is an amazing activity (it is more than a game) and I am very blessed to have found a great way to enjoy my retirement years. Through my roles at the EBC and the unit, I get to teach and develop great students, offer a

great leisure service to my community, and I've made many new friends for life. Thank you to the unit for awarding me this prestigious honour. And finally, what kind of teacher would I be if I did not encourage any learners to visit and use the Learning Materials section of our web page? While there is some advanced material at the bottom, most of my notes and quizzes (with answers) are suited to novice/intermediate learners (teachers are welcome to use any of it). And, as I always tell my students, "Any questions—email me."

What a game!



Steve in action providing tips to newcomers in the 0-20 game at a Toronto Easter Regional



Bridge in the Time of Covid-19

I've been playing a bit online lately, have you? When I play in one of those virtual ACBL games on Bridge Base Online I frequently scroll over my opponents' profiles to see who they are and how long they've been a member of BBO. While the earliest date that appears on long-standing members' profiles is March 1, 2005, some of us have been members since 2001. But some folks, I have observed, have been members for mere days! So, if there is one silver lining to be found during these days of self-iso, it's that many players are flocking to online bridge. That has to be worth something.

For those of you who have not taken the plunge, here's a wee primer for joining BBO.

First step: get online and go to bridgebase.com. Start your BBO life by entering a name you would like to be known as—this will be your username—and it must be unique. Your handle can be cryptic or clear-cut or some random letters and numbers. You can capitalize or not capitalize. Once you have that set up, you should have a look around the site.

What's in a BBO Name?

Choosing your BBO handle can be daunting. It may take a try or two. On BBO, I'm *creemore*, not *astark*. (That's the username of the New York Andy Stark.¹) I scrolled through the list of all my friends and those whom I follow on BBO; there are some interesting usernames. Chances are you won't get to pick your real name because so many have been snapped up. So, if your name is *joey* or *pamela* or *haig* or *fred*, and you wanted to be known as your first name on BBO, nope, all taken. How about both names like *mike evans* or *dannymiles*? Gone. Coincidentally by Mike Evans and Danny Miles. Are you a foodie? Well, you can't be *sushi* or *donut* or *spuds* or *fish* or *duck_72*. Those names have all been...consumed.

Some folks choose bridge-y names like *jumpshift* or *redouble* or *bridgebabe* or *3400²* (a number you don't want to go for) or *hugeslam* or one of my faves: *idblu* (= I double you!³) Some are clearly in the health field: *doctorj*, *nurse l*, *drderby* and *drderby l l*.⁴ Some go for Star Wars names like *skywalkr* or *darth*, or *darthwife*; some go for a LOTR name like *frodo2*. Hmm, if there is *frodo2*, might there be a *frodo*? Yes, last seen leaving the Shire.

There are players who associate with a place like *CanadaGrl*, *gbayplay*, and *jonottawa*, or an animal like *taydog* and *jaguar*, or place and animal like the *quintefox*. There are a few who go for the adjectival like *honest* and *DRBTooTall*, and those whom we hope are not describing their bridge game such as *rabid*, *scruffy*, *ludicrous*, *kindanerdy*, and *dank*. Actually, *dank* is world class; you should watch him play sometime.

If the name you want is already taken, try it again with a favourite number after it. So, if you can't be *frodo* or *frodo2*, try being *frodo3* or *frodo123*. One of my buddies is *paleale1* because *paleale*, also a buddy, was already taken. Hey, I happen to know some guys with good taste in craft ale! ~creemore

- 1 We two Andy Starks once won 2 regionals together; tell you about it sometime
- 2 Down 7 redoubled non-vul.
- 3 And if you redouble me, I will put you down 7
- 4 Tip: store your password in a safe place

Second step: Once you're in the site you will be directed to the homepage. From here you can access everything you could want. If you're new to BBO it's because you probably want to play in your club's virtual game. You'll see it under "Featured Areas." Click on "Virtual Clubs" and then scroll through for your club's game. The times are noted so your virtual club game probably starts on the same day and same time as at the club. For example, Lee's games are Tuesdays and Wednesdays at noon, same as always. Third step: Now that you know how to register for your virtual game, make sure you have enough shekels in the coffers. To deposit money into your account, look way up in the right-hand corner. You'll see a blue tab that looks like this: BB\$. Click on that and follow the prompts in order to purchase BB bucks. Then you can register yourself and your partner for the club game. You also have the option to pay only for yourself and have partner pay for herself.

The screenshot shows the BBO homepage with several navigation elements highlighted by pink arrows:

- An arrow points to the "BBO Prime" link in the "PLAY OR WATCH BRIDGE" section.
- An arrow points to the "Virtual Clubs" link in the "FEATURED AREAS" section.
- An arrow points to the "Masterpoints and Races" link at the bottom of the "FEATURED AREAS" section.
- An arrow points to the "BBS" link in the top right navigation bar.

The right-hand side of the page displays a "History" table with the following data:

Board	Result	We	They	We	They
1	3NTN+3	490		94.6%	5.4%
2	3NTS=	600		49.1%	50.9%
3	3NTS=	400		80.4%	19.6%
4	3NTS+3	690		86.6%	13.4%
5	6AS=	1430		97.3%	2.7%
6	6AN=	980		96.4%	3.6%
7	1NTS-1		100	19.4%	80.6%
8	4N-2		100	16.7%	83.3%
9	3NTS+3	490		75.9%	24.1%
10	3NTS+2	660		100%	0%
11	4Nx-3		500	19.8%	80.2%
12	5ANx-2		500	31.1%	68.9%

Below the table, there is a "Refresh" button and a score of 64.0% (36.0%). The bottom right corner shows a card game interface with hands for "Robot" and "creemore".

Fourth step: Explore! You can't get into too much trouble clicking on the various features. I will point out a couple items that you should take advantage of if you would like to bring your game up a notch or five. On the very far right side are four tabs in gray. They are Messages, People, History, and Account. Under Messages you can read chat messages and view your tournament results. Or you can click on History and see your results there. As Robert Griffiths explained on p. 40, you can even go through a hand trick-by-trick. I highly recommend you take advantage of the 'Next trick' feature as you can learn a lot about how to properly play—and improperly play—a hand.

Fifth step: You will see that some players have a K or Q or J or some number between 1 and 55 beside their name. If they have a letter, then they have accumulated more than approximately 5600 BBO masterpoints. If they have a number, it reflects their number of masterpoints multiplied by 100. Oh, and if they have a star, then they are a world class player and have won a national event. For more details on how the player ratings work, click on Masterpoints at the bottom right of your screen. Here's a screenshot that will pop up. You can read about BBO's masterpoint system by clicking on "What's this?" which is located beside your current rank.

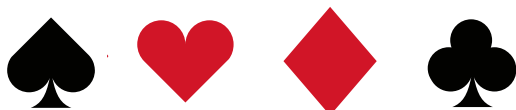
The screenshot shows the BBO Masterpoints interface. At the top, it says 'Masterpoints BBO'. Below that, the user's name is 'creemore'. The current rank is 10, with a link to 'What's this?'. The next rank is 11, with 46.6 points to advance. A table lists various organizations and their corresponding points.

Organization	Points
ACBL Hybrid Events	20.61
ACBL Sectional	0.53
ACBL SYC Daylongs	4.47
ACBL Virtual Clubs	8.62
American Contract Bridge League	752.60
Instant Robot Duplicate	168.44
Massive Tournaments (Daylongs)	96.80
Robot Duplicate - MP	0.74
Robot Race	0.07
Support Your Club	0.52
	1053.40

At the bottom of the screenshot, there is a copyright notice: © 2018-2020 Bridge Base On Line LLC • About • Privacy • Rules • Terms and Conditions • Advertise • Support • Robot Convention Card

Some things I've noticed since March when we all flocked to the only game in town: Sometimes there are so many of us wanting to get onto BBO that it cannot accommodate us. Once you are in though, you should stay in unless you are having connection problems at your abode. If you do lose connection, don't despair—when you log back in you will be taken to the table you were at before unceremoniously being booted. Occasionally there is someone else in your seat, but whoever is hosting the table will have the ability to eject them from your seat so that you can 'sit down.'

For some information on playing against the robots, please read the interview with Fred Gitelman (next page) as he explains how the bots work. The 'bots' are excellent defenders and can frustrate you at times, but it's yet another wonderful learning opportunity that BBO has to offer. And, if you love your masterpoints, you can even win masterpoints playing against the bots.





Interview with Fred Gitelman

I'm reminded these days of that famous milk ad from the '80s. The slogan was, "The faster life gets, the more sense milk makes," but now with quarantining and self-isolation in the times of Corona V, for us bridge players, it's more like, "*The slower life gets, the more sense BridgeBase makes.*" The numbers flocking to the *Canadian* online bridge site must be at an all-time high. It's not a shock to see 55,000+ players logged on and playing bridge. Compare that to BBO's early, early days when designer and founder Fred Gitelman would call his mom, Joan Gitelman, and ask, "Can you log on—there are three people on right now and they need a fourth."

Do you know of Fred? If you do not, it's time you did. He and his wife Sheri Winestock, both Torontonians born and bred, started their company Bridge Base Inc. in 1990, mere steps away from the old Kate Buckman's Bridge Studio. They sold educational software products like BridgeMaster—a fantastic learning tool that expertly guides you through a bridge hand. Then, in late 2000 they developed Bridge Base Online, and launched it in mid-2001. Fred & Sheri left TO for Las Vegas in the spring of 2002. That you are making plans to play bridge on your device at home is because of them. Now that Fred has sold the company and

is enjoying retirement, he was more than accommodating to sit down with the Kib and answer a few questions, (virtually, of course; it's not like we both drove to Hastings, Nebraska*).

Kib: When you first visualized the concept all those years ago, is BBO about where you expected it to be today?

Fred: When I first visualized the concept of BBO (the last week of the year 2000), I did not give a lot of thought to the future (to say nothing of the distant future let alone a distant future that would include a pandemic). All I was concerned about was implementing the idea. In those days Sheri and I would quote Field of Dreams to each other: "If you build it, people will come," and that was effectively the extent of what we were thinking.

That being said, I was concerned at the time that face-to-face bridge was dying and that our best hope to attract a new generation of players was through technology. COVID-19 has unfortunately both given us a glimpse of the future of bridge and served to greatly speed up the arrival of such a future.

Bridge has received its wake-up call. Let's hope it is not too late.

**Fun fact: Hastings is the exact half-way point between Las Vegas and Toronto.*

Kib: Is there anything you and Sheri might have done differently?

Fred: In retrospect I wish I had planned some technical aspects of BBO more carefully—that would have saved my partners and me a lot of headaches over the years. Several years after BBO was first released, “social media” changed the world, but not being an especially social creature, I was not paying attention. If BBO had understood the relevance of Facebook, etc., at the time, we might have been able to leverage such sites and technologies to spread the word about bridge far and wide. We were also slow to catch on to the profound impact that smart phones and tablets would have on everyone’s lives.

Kib: Was there a kind of make-or-break moment where you almost gave up or thought, “Well, this is not going as planned”? And if so, how did you clear that hurdle?

Fred: Not that I can recall. We were lucky in that the initial expenses required to develop and maintain BBO were close to zero and we had other good sources of income at the time (selling Bridge Master CDs and playing professionally). That made it possible to work on a free bridge site full time without having to be concerned about bankrupting ourselves. We believed that the BBO project was vitally important to the future of bridge and that helped to keep us going during the occasional dark periods that we had to get through.

For most of 30 years I worked on bridge software, I thought I had the best job in the world and wanted to do it forever. Roughly five years ago, however, I started to think that I might have had enough. I cleared that hurdle in late 2018 by selling BBO and, in the summer of 2019, by retiring.

Kib: Now that you’re retired (congrats, by the way), is bridge still a big focus or have you gravitated towards other interests? I’ve been told you were (are?) an amazing skier—did you get back into that?

Fred: Bridge is still a significant part of my life (in no small part because Sheri is still very interested in playing), but I wouldn’t call it a “big focus” anymore. I very much enjoy skiing but tend to ski no more than once every couple of years. Maybe I will do more of that in the future.

If I have a big focus at all right now, it is on pool (mostly 8-ball). I have a table at home, practice for hours every day, and take lessons from some of the best players in the country (much less



Fred and Sheri

expensive than hiring a bridge pro!). It is a wonderful game that, surprisingly, has a lot in common with bridge, but I will never be very good at it—just like bridge, in order to be a great pool player, you really need to start when you are young!

Kib: When you first came out with BBO in 2001 your number one competitor was probably OKBridge, which is still around today. OKBridge developed the Lehman rating system. Did you ever considering a similar rating system for BBO or did you feel that type was flawed?

Fred: I was (and still am) very much against Lehman-like ratings, because I saw firsthand that Lehmans effectively poisoned the atmosphere on OKBridge and I did not want to see the same thing happen on BBO. The problems that arise from rating systems are very human in nature and I don't think they have much to do with the specifics of how ratings are calculated.

Kib: How did the current BBO system of ranking players come about? I'm referring to each player getting an 'A' or 'K' or 'Q' or 'J' or their number of masterpoints, (e.g. '24' for 2,400 BBO points, or '9' for fewer than 1,000).

Fred: I wanted a masterpoint-like "rating system" on BBO and thought it would be easier for players to understand if the various ranks were named after something familiar that had a natural ordering.

Kib: The CBF just announced (at the time of this writing) that the round

robins of the Canadian team events (Open, Women's, Seniors, and Mixed) will be played in early June via online play, namely on BridgeBase.com. Do you think we are a lot closer to holding major championships via BridgeBase, with or without a pandemic?

Fred: Yes, but only because, until life returns to some semblance of "normal," online bridge is the only game in town. There is still strong resistance among the elite players to running major events online though I expect, if push comes to shove, most of these people will go where the money is even if they are not fans of playing online.

Kib: Is there a way of assuaging the fears some players have of rampant cheating?

Fred: If we want the online event to be structured like a traditional bridge tournament, there must be some kind of mechanism in place (human or electronic or both) for fairly intrusive monitoring of the players. This is much easier to arrange if there are a handful of designated "official playing sites" (for example, various major bridge clubs across the country) rather than each player sitting down to play in their own home.

However, if organizers are willing to be creative with the format of their events (for example, no fixed partnerships, non-duplicate scoring, utilizing robots, etc.), it is possible to run a viable online bridge tournament without intrusive monitoring in which cheating (at least the collusive kind) is basically impossible.

Using “the honor system” would not work in the USA Trials because there is too much money at stake and the players generally do not trust one another. In Canada, where we know how to spell “honour,” it might be different, but my gut suggests there would still be a lot of suspicion of cheating even if nobody was actually cheating. For me at least, such suspicion would make it difficult, or impossible, to enjoy the experience.

Kib: I remember one of the last times you and I chatted...it was a few years ago at an NABC and you mentioned to me then that there were ways you (and those of you running BBO) had of catching some of the cheaters.

Fred: Most of the methods we used were statistical in nature. Here is a simple example: if we see a non-famous player average (say) 65% over (say) 1000 boards in a decent field, that raises a red flag (because we know that even a superstar cannot average 60% under such conditions). If an expert were to take a close look at the bridge actions of the player in question, it is usually obvious that something is rotten.

Kib: What do you see as the pros and cons of contesting national championships online?

Fred: Pros include: no realistic alternative during a pandemic, all bids, plays, alerts, and timing, are recorded, completely accurate vugraph can be made available for every table with no need for operators, no irregularities (revokes, etc.).

Cons include: new challenges in terms of guarding against cheating, “table presence” becomes a smaller part of the game (not clear that this is a con but it is a frequent complaint about the notion of serious online bridge), the social aspect of the event would be greatly diminished, those with poor computer skills or certain disabilities might have trouble playing their best (or even playing at all).

Kib: I tell my bridge students to triangulate: to play, to read, and to take lessons. One way of taking lessons is to get onto BridgeBase and take advantage of BridgeMaster, now available for free. Another way is to practise playing against the robots, or ‘bots’ as they are called. How did the bots come into existence?

Fred: Before BBO came to exist in early 2001, Bridge Base Inc. had already existed for about ten years. The primary focus of that company was creating and selling educational CD-ROMs related to bridge, but we also sold a bridge game CD named GIB that was developed by one Matt Ginsberg, a friend of mine and quite possibly the smartest person I have ever met. GIB stands for Ginsberg’s Intelligent Bridgeplayer.

As I recall, it was fairly obvious to Uday Ivatury, (our business partner and superstar programmer), Sheri, and me that the concept of heavily integrating a bridge robot program into an online bridge site was a good one. Fortunately, Matt gave us permission to more or less experiment with his robot as we saw fit. Eventually BBO the company purchased the rights to GIB

and became more seriously involved in trying to improve the robots (a process that, many years later, still continues).

Kib: In 50 words or less, can you explain to my 7-year old how the bots work?

Fred: A bridge robot tries to look into the future in terms of what rates to happen if a specific bid or play is selected. The bid or play that leads to the most optimistic future is the one that GIB will pick.

Kib: How do they know to play a hand and defend so well? It's based on thousands of hypothetical deals...?

Fred: Not thousands. Sometimes dozens. Usually fewer. GIB, like most people, tends to be more accurate on play or defense if it has more time to "think." The more time GIB has to think, the more possible layouts of the unseen hands can be considered in GIB's analysis. The more layouts that are considered, the more likely it is that GIB will come up with the "best play" (which is not necessarily the same thing as the "winning play").

Most BBO players seem to appreciate how quickly the robots are able to play, but I don't think they understand that there is a trade-off—fast plays lead to more "mistakes." We spent a lot of time over the years experimenting with the trade-off between speed versus quality of play. The vast majority of our members seem to be willing to put up with somewhat less intelligent bots if it means they will play somewhat more quickly.

There is a business trade-off as well: faster robots are less expensive to run and allow people to play more bridge (resulting in more entry fees) per unit time.

Kib: I read somewhere they don't really signal. As declarer I've noticed they give count, but sometimes, and often at the right time, they know when to lie, or follow deceptively, i.e. not give true count.

Fred: The robots on BBO have a rudimentary knowledge of how to signal, but other than inferences from the opening lead (such as a lead of the Queen tends to show the Jack but deny the King), the robots cannot really be said to "pay attention" to the signals that their partners make (even when such partners are other robots).



Fred and his dog Koda, a Siberian Husky

A tip: the robots, like many humans, frequently give gratuitous count signals on defense. If you are able to recognize these situations and take advantage of the information you are being offered, you will find yourself taking more tricks as declarer.

For example, say you have a problem like this:

♥ Q 10 7 2

♥ A K 3

You're in your hand and start by cashing the ace and king. The robots will usually tell you whether or not you should finesse the 10 on the third round. In my experience, if either robot plays high-low on the lead of an honor from your hand, the suit is almost certainly 4-2. If they both play low-high, then the jack is coming down third and you can play for the drop.

The robots have two advantages over human declarers and defenders:

- 1) They always count and never miscount
- 2) Once the robot has a count on the hand (and often before that), it will essentially never make an error. Even the best human players sometimes miss something when the whole hand is known.

Kib: You've written extensively on suit combinations. Can you recall a suit combination (or any form of card play) that you learned from a bot that you

were able to use against fellow experts at the table?

Fred: Off the top of my head I can't think of anything, but I was an extremely serious student of bridge for 20+ years and I was especially interested in learning about card play and defense. By the time GIB started playing on BBO, I knew a lot about what the cards could do.

So, the robots haven't done much for my bridge game, but Sheri has benefitted greatly by playing against the BBO bots. She's probably spent, on average, several hours each day playing against them for about 5+ years. The robots took Sheri from being a decent Flight A player to being someone who has qualified twice for Team USA and won the 2019 Grand National Teams. I used to be terrified to be the dummy when I was her partner, but nowadays (thanks to all the time she spends playing with robots) I can relax.

Just about every top human player has spent at least a few years of his/her life playing bridge more or less full time. In my view that is because it is necessary



Fred and Daniel Korbel: 2 Canadian-Las Vegans

to see a LOT of bridge hands in order to become really good at our game. Most people, however, have family and/or work obligations that make it a practical impossibility for them to get in their equivalent of “10,000 hours” of play—that is, unless they play a lot against the always fast but infinitely patient robots on BBO.

In my opinion, this is one of the primary reasons why today’s young players are so much better than people like me were 30ish years ago.

Kib: I started to play in 89-90 and computer deals were just coming out and many of the old guard had to be convinced that the deals were truly randomized. The reason the computer deals were unlike people dealt deals was because the computer gave the deck a very good shuffle. Nowadays I don’t hear the lament anymore of, “Oh those tricky computer deals.” How about the deals on BBO when playing against the bots? Is it possible there is something not-so-random in the dealing? Maybe this is just me, but I find them slightly different than the deals of regular BBO games such as when playing against friends or in a virtual club tourney.

Fred: Aside from giving the human the “best hand” in most of BBO’s one-human, three-robots games, BBO has never intentionally done the sort of thing you suggest. To the best of my knowledge, the hands you see on BBO really are random—we have performed various statistical tests over the years to convince ourselves of this.

Kib: I looked at the Help section on BBO and read about how the bots use Winning Leads strategy by author Taf Anthias. Any thoughts on how essential these books are? Did Goren not have the right approach with fourth best leads from longest and strongest?

Fred: The bots on BBO select their opening leads in the same way that they select any other card to play, by considering various possible layouts consistent with the bidding and figuring out which opening lead will do best (on a double dummy basis) across that sample.

This process often results in robots making opening leads that appear very strange to a human (and which seem to work out well more often than one might expect!). Some of these strange opening leads are in line with the general strategies suggested in “Winning Leads,” but it is not as if the BBO robots have been implicitly told to make specific types of leads or to follow specific leading rules like “Always lead partner’s suit,” or, “Don’t lead from Axxx after INT-3NT.”

Actually, I think you have it backwards—robot opening leads inspired the conclusions of the book in question, not the other way around.

Kib: Former Kibitzer editor and CBF Hall of Famer John Carruthers hosted the ACBL Hall of Fame ceremony at the Toronto NABC three summers ago. He said at the time that his Mount Rushmore of Bridge includes Harold Vanderbilt, Ely Culbertson, Charles

Goren, and Fred Gitelman. How cool is that? Are there any other bridge notables whom you think belong up there as well, if, say, we were to chisel out room for a fifth and sixth?

Fred: It is very flattering that someone with JC's brains and credentials holds me in such high regard, but the truth of the matter is that I don't really like being "famous." I am naturally very much an introvert. For example, attention from strangers generally makes me uncomfortable.

Culbertson and Goren were in a class by themselves as far as I am concerned—they are the only two people who have had real success at getting the masses interested in bridge. I did make some efforts in this area and, although it is possible that I (with plenty of help from my friends) managed to give bridge a few more years of life, I believe that these efforts have so far largely failed.

It is possible that Josephine Culbertson deserves as much credit as Ely. Women seem to get a bad deal in such discussions. BBO would certainly not have happened without Sheri Winestock, but nobody ever talks about putting her on Mount Rushmore (where no doubt she would make for a very attractive statue). Audrey Grant is special, too, and she would also look good in stone. If Audrey had been born at a different time or in a different world, she might have really succeeded at putting bridge on the map.

Kib: When Eddie Wold was inducted into the ACBL Hall of Fame a few years

ago he said, "I would give up all my trophies if I could go back in time and learn to play bridge again." Do you agree with those sentiments as a player?

Fred: Well I don't care much about the trophies (or even the accomplishments they represent), but I don't really feel Eddie's point. If I had a do-over of life in general, I would still want to learn bridge, but it is not clear to me that I would want the game to be (more or less) the entire focus of my life as it has been.

Kib: Okay, Fred, time for speedball! What's your preference: Imps or matchpoints?

Fred: Monday or Tuesday?

Kib: Bridge playing actuaries are pretty good at estimating their matchpoint game before seeing their actual result. How are your estimating skills?

Fred: Not bad, especially for someone who never keeps score.

Kib: What's the best part of your game?

Fred: I am good at bringing out the best in my partners.

Kib: Sheri's game?

Fred: She always plays her best when it matters (not typical—most people fold under pressure).

Kib: Your mom Joan's game?

Fred: She is a very good student, but I am not sure that really counts as being "part of one's game."

Kib: Favourite non-US city to play bridge?

Fred: Toronto, but if you meant non-US/Canada, I would pick Amsterdam.

Kib: Dogs or cats?

Fred: Dogs are tied with chocolate for the two best things in the world. I'm afraid cats don't make the top 10.

Kib: Who is Koda's Alpha Dog: you or Sheri?

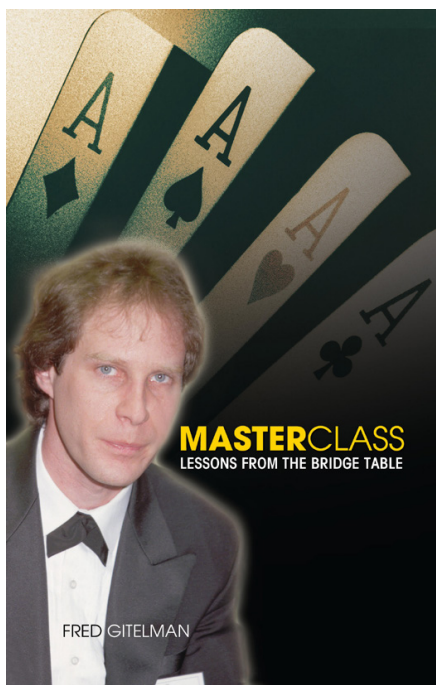
Fred: Sheri. I am very much the runt of the litter.

Kib: Favourite music genre?

Fred: Rock from the 60s and early 70s.

Kib: How many cups of coffee do you drink per day?

Fred: Usually two (both in the morning).



Cover of Master Class, Fred's book

Kib: Do you need coffee to play bridge?

Fred: "Need" is too strong I think—"want" would be more accurate.

Kib: A miscommunication arises, and you and partner get a bad result—do you discuss immediately or away from the table?

Fred: Almost always away from the table.

Kib: Coolest or favourite suit combination?

Fred: I like combinations that make my head spin. Here are some examples: KQ10987 vs. 32 (for 5 tricks); AQ9 vs. 65432 (for 4 tricks); and A432 vs. J987 (for 3 tricks).

Kib: What year, if any, will the Leafs win the Cup?

Fred: Not expecting it in my lifetime (I am 55 and healthy).

Kib: What do you miss about living in Canada?

Fred: In no particular order: Wine gums, Swiss Chalet, Caramilk, California Sandwiches, gun control, friends and family, the CNTC.

Kib: Besides the weather, what do you not miss about living in Canada?

Fred: Toronto's airport and traffic.

Kib: Aliens have come to Earth to abduct us all. To save the planet,

one person must declare and make a difficult but makeable bridge hand. Who's your pick today?

Fred: I would pick Sheri. Like I said above, she is always at her best when the pressure is on.

Kib: John Gowdy is a great storyteller. What other bridge player(s) tells a good story?

Fred: Geoff Hampson tells a good story—maybe hanging and playing with Gowdy for much of the 1990s rubbed off on him. Every time I speak to Bob Hamman, he seems to have a remarkable hand to share with me.

Kib: Lord of the Rings fan?

Fred: Big time.

Kib: Favourite character?

Fred: Galadriel.

Kib: Right on. Have to say I love Cate Blanchett. What's the last book you read, or are currently reading?

Fred: "Thinking Fast and Slow"; written by Daniel Kahneman, recommended by Mark Caplan.

Kib: What do you call someone from or living in Las Vegas? Las Vegan? Las Vegaser?

Fred: I would call such a person fortunate, but I think Las Vegan is technically correct. The expert bridge community here is probably the strongest of any city in the world. Two

notable ex-Canadian bridge players, Geoff Hampson and Dan Korbel, both live within a mile or so of Sheri and me. Our GNT-winning team last year had five ex-Toronto players (Sheri, Geoff, Dan, Haig Tchamitch, and me; Roger Lee was our token non-Canadian).

Kib: You are still a member of the Canadian Bridge Federation and eligible to play in Canadian team championships even though you reside in the US. What are (or were) your plans for playing this year?

Fred: Mark Caplan and I had been planning on playing in the 2020 CNTCs in Niagara Falls on a team with Les Amoils and Darren Wolpert. We are in the middle of trying to figure out if we want to play in 2020 CNTCs under the revised conditions of contest. Regardless of what we do in 2020, I am hopeful that our team will stick together for the 2021 CNTCs.

Kib: As always, Fred, if and when you do win another CNTC, you'll be a worthy Canadian champion. Thank you so much for doing this and all the best in your retirement years. Cheers! ♠

Fred vs. TGBH

I asked Fred for a recent hand, but he has not touched a card since last summer's NABC. So, I dusted off my copy of Master Class, Lessons from the Bridge Table, Fred's book that Masterpoint Press published in 2005. Here is a fun story hand from the 2003 Vanderbilt that Fred played against TGBH (the great Bob Hamman):

<p>♠ 6 5 4 ♥ J 7 ♦ K Q J 10 9 6 ♣ K 3</p> <p>♠ 3 ♥ Q 10 9 5 4 ♦ A 8 5 3 ♣ Q 6 5</p>	<p>♠ A 9 8 2 ♥ K 8 2 ♦ 4 ♣ A J 8 7 2</p> <p>♠ K Q J 10 7 ♥ A 6 3 ♦ 7 2 ♣ 10 9 4</p>
---	---

Hamman was South, declarer in 2♠. Fred, East, had doubled North's (Paul Soloway's) opening bid of 1♦. The ♥10 was led and it went jack-king-low. Fred now went into the tank. He knew his partner probably had the ♦A because she had competed freely to 2♥ over the 1♠ response by South. But he wasn't sure that was the correct defense. He considered playing back a heart but eventually selected the ♠2.

Hamman won the ♠K in hand, cashed the ♥A and ruffed his small heart in dummy. When a trump was called, Fred hopped up with his ace, noting Hamman's play of the ♠10. This seemed strange to Fred—why is Hamman unblocking in spades? Here was the position:

<p>♠ - - ♥ - - ♦ K Q J 10 9 6 ♣ K 3</p> <p>♠ - - ♥ Q 9 ♦ A 8 5 ♣ Q 6 5</p>	<p>♠ 9 8 ♥ - - ♦ 4 ♣ A J 8 7 2</p> <p>♠ Q J 7 ♥ - - ♦ 7 2 ♣ 10 9 4</p>
--	--

Fred now got out his diamond to partner's ace and received a diamond ruff. It would have been better if West, Christal Henner, had put a club through, but she was not sure where the ♣J was. Plus, giving Fred the diamond ruff would certainly set the contract. Fred wrote, "Pleased with how the defense had gone, I exited with my remaining trump (the ♠8). My pleasure was very short-lived. In about a tenth of a second, Bob followed with the 7, allowing my ♠8 to win the trick!"

The position was now:

<p>♠ - - ♥ - - ♦ K Q J ♣ K 3</p> <p>♠ - - ♥ Q 9 ♦ - - ♣ Q 6 5</p>	<p>♠ - - ♥ - - ♦ - - ♣ A J 8 7 2</p> <p>♠ Q J ♥ - - ♦ - - ♣ 10 9 4</p>
---	--

Fred was endplayed into giving life to dummy's diamonds. Instead of losing three club tricks, Hamman's trump gambit allowed him to lose only one club. All Fred could do was cash his ♣A and surrender unto Caesar. Fred again: "At the point where Bob ducked my ♠8, he let out a very characteristic chortle. It did not take me long to realize that my decision to return the ♠2 at Trick 2 was indeed a mistake... Playing the ♠8 or ♠9 instead would have resulted in another trick for the defense... If I had retained the ♠2, not even TGBH would have been able to duck.



The Lynda Marks Memorial Game

By David Cohen

bbo username: *deakowen*

Last November, the Cavendish Club held a memorial game for our dear friend Lynda Marks. Over 100 people attended the event which included a light dinner, raffles, and extra prizes for those who doubled a contract and defeated it and for those who made a doubled contract.

Many of the players had an opportunity to relay stories and feelings that they had for Lynda. One story that really summed up Lynda for me was when she was playing in a 2-day, 4-session event, and after the third session saying she was not feeling well. Instead of going home, she played through the evening session, won it, and then checked into the hospital the next day as her kidneys were failing.

Lynda used to make sure that everyone was enjoying themselves. Whether it was at one of her infamous spontaneous poker games, or her Wandering Jew Christmas Party for all those not celebrating Christmas.

Lynda loved to play jokes on people: someone shared a story of when Lynda

once tied John Collins' shoes to a chair. Another shared how he used to bring candy to games, and Lynda would hide the bowl, only to have it returned later with more candy in it. Almost all the speakers commented on how much Lynda liked to psych at the table. Knowing Lynda's sense of humour, this was not about the game, but about the joke. Every one of her partners got to experience a psych, at least once. Eventually, she got the friendly nickname of "Psycho" from her original partner Allan Weinrib.

My memories of Lynda are about her being a fierce opponent. I can't remember the hands anymore, but the first three boards I played against Lynda, she doubled them all, and I went down in all of them. And then she psych'd on the next board. I didn't care because her infectious smile and laugh made the experience for me.

One hand from the memorial game really reminded me of Lynda at the table. Merryll Chin was sitting West, or as I would call it, the Lynda Marks seat.

Dealer North
NSVul.

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

After two passes South, Linda Lord, my partner, opened 2NT. West, Merryl stuck the screws to me and bid 3NT. I started with a Double. Andy Risman, East, bid 4♣, which was doubled by Linda and back to me. Now I am completely stuck (the word I have in mind rhymes with 'stucked').

If I pass, and there are no diamonds in the East hand, there could be a quick

cross ruff that would probably produce a bad score for us. I cannot bid 4♦ because partner will not know if this is Stayman, Gerber, or some kind of Unusual vs Unusual to show hearts. I cannot bid 4♠ because there are too many of them on my right. It is too one-sided to bid 4♠, especially with the potential of lots of them on my left.

I ended up choosing 4NT and hoped that partner would get the point that this was to play, which thankfully she did. For those of you who know me, I play very fast. For me to tank for 30 seconds is extremely rare. It took me at least 2 minutes to decide what to do. I just kept seeing Lynda sitting on my shoulder, wearing her devil's hat, and chuckling at my pain.

We will miss you Lynda, and I next time I see you, I expect to see a nub of a double card in your bidding box from the wear and tear it is going through.



Lynda Marks, Merryl Chin, Marie Chabot & Henrik Pedersen at the 2015 Penticton Regional

Photo credit: JS



For Newer Players

By Robert Griffiths
bbo username: *griffus*

Showing Your Entry

South opened 1♦ and West overcalled 1♠. North passed and East raised to 2♠. These non-vulnerable players will bid without restraint.

South showed his good hand with a double and North thought that his clubs were good enough that his side should be in either 5♣ or 3NT if South had a stopper in spades. So, he came out with a 3♠ bid, asking South if he had a stopper and South showed it with a 3NT bid, leaving this auction:

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

Board 15

South Deals
NS Vul

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

West led the ♠Q which won trick one, then the ♠J, East winning trick 2 with the king. East needs to get his king out of the way so that it doesn't prevent West from running the spade suit when EW get the lead.

South won the third trick with the ♠A and saw he had lots of tricks if the club finesse won and lots of trouble if it didn't. So, he led the ♣Q and played low from the dummy, East winning his ♣K.

What should East lead now? Seeing all

***creemore's* bridge etiquette, rule #28**

A card laid is a card played. Click well, my friends.

of the cards, we know that he should lead a heart to his partner's ace so that the contract will go down two as West cashes the last two spades.

Is it totally a guess which red suit East should return? Did East notice which spade West played on South's ace? When South wins the third spade trick, West is the only player at the table with spades; so, the card he plays should indicate to East where his entry is. If he plays the ♠10, his highest card, it should

tell East that his entry is in hearts, the highest suit. East knows that West has lots of spades to choose from, so the ♠10 should leave no doubt. If his entry had been in diamonds, he would signal with his smallest spade.

No matter what signalling methods you use, there are times when you should make use of this kind of suit preference. The suit preference signal comes up more than you might think.

Protecting Kings

Here's a hand from a recent online game. I was West and opened 1♥ after South's pass. North passed and my partner bid 2NT. We play that as a limit raise or better in hearts. I should show a short suit here, but we generally bypass that plan if the singleton is a high honour. A 3♣ bid might give partner an inaccurate picture of where my values were. I could have bid 3♥, warning of a minimum hand but with a sixth heart, I bid 4♥; it was a team game and I didn't want to miss the vulnerable game.

That was enough to get my partner thinking slam, so she bid 4NT, Blackwood. I replied with 5♥, showing my 2 key cards, the ♦A and the ♥K, but denying the ♥Q. Which got my partner to thinking about the missing key card.

RG's bbo tip: If you find that you are mis-clicking, go to the Account tab on the far right, and click on Settings. Under 'Playing' look for 'Confirm bids.' Toggle the switch there and see if you prefer that setting.

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

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

It was very likely that I held the ♥K for my heart bids which would leave our side missing one ace: the ace of diamonds or spades. In either case, she wanted the lead to come from South, which would leave her kings protected at trick one. So, she went for the slam, but bid 6NT, so the lead could not come from North. South led a trump and my partner had twelve tricks: six hearts, four diamonds, and two clubs.

The other team played in the heart game; North led the ♠Q and the defence took the first two tricks. There is no lead from South that will prevent

East from making twelve tricks in NT.

Good bid, partner.

No Pat on the Back for Me

Until this month, many bridge players would never consider turning on a computer to play bridge. But times change. Lately I have found myself involved in all sorts of computer bridge, almost all with and against local players. All it took is a pandemic. I admit that there have been days when I have overdone it, playing more than a person aspiring to sanity should.

Here's a hand that I played online last week. It was late in the day and all four players at the table were weary. I have no evidence, but I think that some of the others' wits were a bit dimmed by alcohol. I, however, remained pure.

As East I dealt and passed. South also passed and my partner opened 1♦. After North's pass, I bid 1♠ and South backed into the auction with a double.

My partner and I were playing support doubles + redoubles; in this case he should have redoubled to show his 3-card spade support. But it was getting late; he forgot and bid 2♦. North liked his 7 HCP with a diamond void but chose to bid 3♣ rather than 2♥. He bypassed the heart suit, even though he knew there was likely a NS heart fit thinking that his side was more likely to be defending and if his partner was on lead, he wanted to get her off to their best lead. Note that if South held Kxx(x) in both hearts and

clubs, a club lead would not cost a trick whereas a heart lead would.

It was my bid and I raised partner to 3♦, passed back to West who belatedly remembered the support redouble agreement. With a few extra values, he tried 3♠. This was passed back to me and I decided to count on the ♣K as a stopper, go with a wing and a prayer in hearts, and try 3NT.

Here was our auction:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Db!
2♦	3♣	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	All pass

Board 6

East Deals

E-W Vul

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

I got my club lead and with the ♣K

now a sure trick, I counted two spades, one heart, six diamonds and a club for ten tricks. I patted myself on the back (you can do that when you play online). I think that if anybody is short in diamonds it will be South, who doubled, and I lazily led a small diamond towards the board. I get a rude awakening when I win the diamond on the board and North discards.

I said, "D'oh" and slapped myself on the forehead like you should when you blunder online as my contract went down one because of my misplay in the diamond suit. There is only one distribution that will defeat 3NT played

by East: all four diamonds with North. If that were the case, there is no way the suit can be played that will prevent North from winning a trick.

But, if South has all the diamonds, I can still win the whole suit *as long as I play the* $\diamond K$ first. Now, when I see North with no diamonds, I can lead 'through' South's $\diamond J106$ twice towards dummy's $\diamond AQ98$ and make the six diamond tricks that I had counted. The way I played it had no upside; the downside was that I went down on the actual distribution.

It's a good thing that computer bridge isn't real bridge anyway.

BBO's Memory

Like many bridge players who previously played only live and in person, I am slowly learning how good a system BBO is. Here's a hand I played in a virtual club game on BBO and what I was able to learn about how the field played the hand:

Board 21

East Deals

NS Vul

<p style="margin: 0;">\spadesuit Q 8 2</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\heartsuit K 10 7 5</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\diamond 8 6 5 3</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\clubsuit Q 4</p>	<p style="margin: 0;">\spadesuit —</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\heartsuit A Q J 9 8 6 4 3 2</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\diamond Q 9</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\clubsuit 5 3</p>
<p style="margin: 0;">\spadesuit J 10 9 6 5 4 3</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\heartsuit —</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\diamond A K J 10</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\clubsuit 7 2</p>	<p style="margin: 0;">\spadesuit A K 7</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\heartsuit —</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\diamond 7 4 3</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\clubsuit A K J 10 9 8 6</p>

I was East, dealt, and opened $4\heartsuit$. South bid $5\clubsuit$. My partner forlornly passed; the 5-level was a bit rich for her suit. Back it came to me.

I know there is a rule that you shouldn't raise your own pre-empt, but I thought that if my partner can't double $5\clubsuit$, it's too likely to be making, so I tried $5\heartsuit$. This was doubled by South and there I was needing 11 tricks. South made the normal lead, the $\spadesuit A$, leading the suit he was shortest in which is less likely to be ruffed. I gleefully ruffed this, played the $\heartsuit A$, then cashed dummy's four diamond tricks, throwing both of my losing clubs and claimed my contract, losing just two heart tricks to North.

Nobody did anything unusual here, just one of those freakish hands that come up. If you're lucky that day, you get a good result. (And some days the bear eats you!)

BBO has a feature that allows you to go

back to any hand in their tournaments to view the results and play record of every table in the event. As I suggested, we mostly behaved normally at our table, so it wasn't a surprise that in a 9-table event, there were 4 tables that had exactly the same auction, play, and result as we did.

One South player went on to take the 6♣ "sacrifice" and went down 2 for a good NS result.

The best NS result came after the same auction as ours. Instead of leading the ♠A, this charmed defender started with the ♣A. One would think that this lead would be far more likely to be ruffed than the other black ace, but today it was the winning play; the contract went down 2, losing two clubs and two hearts.

The best EW score came when the auction went 4♥-5♣-Dbl-P-P-P. West doubled to warn East of the heart misfit and to show defensive values and East trusted her judgment. Their defence missed nothing: West took three diamond tricks and East ruffed two spades for down 3 and +800 for EW, better than making the doubled game. Well done, Adrian and Edith!

Here are the scores from an EW point of view:

Contract by	Result	EW Score	EW %
5♣* S	-3	+800	100
5♥* E	5	+650	68.8
5♥* E	5	+650	68.8
5♥* E	5	+650	68.8
5♥* E	5	+650	68.8
6♣ S	-2	+200	37.5
5♥* E	-1	-100	25
4♠ W	-3	-150	12.5
5♥* E	-2	-300	0

You can access the full bidding and play of every club hand you've played on BBO by clicking on the 'History' tab on the right side of the screen and calling up your game from the list of games offered. Now you can scroll to the hand of interest and highlight it. By clicking 'Next trick' (in blue at the bottom, beneath the hand diagram), you can replay the hand as you originally played it.

Then, by clicking on 'Other tables' (two tabs to the right of 'Next trick') you can see each table's bidding and again, using the 'Next trick' function, replay the hand as it was played at each table in the section.

creemore's bridge etiquette, rule #53

If you are fine for time feel free to send a message to the table such as, "good D" or "well played," but only if you mean it. If you type in something snarky you don't have to hit 'Enter.' Just type it, then erase it—you'll feel better.



For Advanced Players

By David Turner

bbo username: D_Turner

King Nine Four

I assume most of you enlightened readers play upside down attitude. I wanted to alert you to a significant exception you might otherwise overlook.

This deal is from a World Seniors Championships. As West, needing four tricks in this suit on defence against INT, I saw:

	North
	♦ Q 6
West	
♦ A J 8 3	

I played the ace, and partner, John Gowdy brightly played the 9. I continued with the 3 to his king, and he returned the 4. Declarer studied a moment and I let him know I had both the jack and 8. One down, declarer having started with ♦10 7 5 2. Note if partner had played low, then king, then 9, declarer could have ducked, and we'd never get our fourth trick. The counter-intuitive 9 is required to unblock the suit – a not uncommon situation.

With that example in front of you, the next hand from a CBF Online Championships match should be pretty easy. Declarer has nine

obvious runners in NT when he gets back in, so you need four quick defensive tricks in this suit as East with no re-entry:

North
♥ 7 2

East
♥ K 9 4

Yes, it has to be the 9 from this side as well, as partner holds ♥A Q 8 3 and declarer ♥J 10 6 5. Satisfy yourself that if you lead low or high instead, declarer can shut out your fourth winner. And the same thing is true if the queen and jack were switched between partner and declarer. It's true this can be difficult for partner to read, but that can't be helped.

Keep your eyes open for this unblock situation whenever you have three cards to an honour and a high spot card.

creemore's bridge etiquette, rule #18

If you absolutely must leave the table, wait till you are the dummy and type in 'brb' for 'be right back.'



TORONTO FC vs. BOCA JUNIORS

By John Carruthers
bbo username: jgc

COVID-19 has changed the landscape of bridge: the NABCs in Columbus and Montréal, as well as the European, Asian, South American, USBF and CBF Championships for 2020 have all been postponed or cancelled. It's possible that the European Winter Games in late February-early March was the last major tournament of the year anywhere in the world.

Michael Roche had asked Nader Hanna, John Rayner, Marty Kirr, and me if we'd join Daniel Lyder and him in an online knockout event, the Tax Day KO, a 32-team tournament being played on BBO. We did and, since I enjoyed the experience (64-board matches), I decided to see if I could organize my own matches. I enlisted Mitch Dunitz and Ifti Baqai to join us and emailed some friends in Argentina and Brazil to see if they'd play against us. They readily agreed, so we



John Rayner

prepared to do battle against Fernando Lema, Pablo Ravenna, Agustin Madala, Carlos Pellegini, Alejandro Bianchedi, Carlos Lucena and Leonardo Rizzo. I knew most of their players from their days as members of the Argentina Junior Team in the early 1990s. Ravenna is currently playing for Brazil and Madala for Italy (and the Lavazza team) but they are all currently in Buenos Aires waiting out the pandemic. Bianchedi, man of the world that he is, has played for Venezuela and Italy, as well as for his home country Argentina.

We never did get to call the 'friendly' Boca Juniors versus Toronto FC since Fernando informed me that his team would kill him if he called them Boca Juniors. I guess his team members must be River Plate or Racing supporters. He requested instead that they be called 'The Untouchables.' I agreed as long as we could be 'The Unmentionables.' And there we were.

We played the match in 16-board quarters, two sets a day over one weekend. Two of the stanzas were very close, 1 or 2 IMPs either way, but we dominated the other two sets, winning the match by 50 IMPs; this was a very good result for us since the Argentines were a Bermuda Bowl-calibre

team. We got a bit lucky on the following deal, despite being outbid by Argentina:

Board 40. Dealer West Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Lucena</i>	<i>Roche</i>	<i>Pellegrini</i>	<i>Lyder</i>
1♦ ¹	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Double
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Unbalanced, usually 5+ diamonds

Five Clubs is a fine contract – once Lyder had doubled 3♥ and Lucena had bid 3♠ and not 3NT, Pellegrini headed for the hills, exploring for slam, then settling for game. A 3♥ splinter over 2♣ might have led to slam, but it appears that the Argentines’ requirement for such a bid is more formidable than the West hand.

South led a trump. Declarer took a simple line, winning in dummy and playing the ace and another diamond. He could not be prevented from setting up the diamonds for two discards and ruffing one heart in the dummy. Note that South can never lead spades without giving up a third trick in the suit. Yes, I see that leading the ♠Q would

have given declarer a problem, but that’s an opening lead for Deep Finesse. And if the defenders are allowed to play double-dummy, why too can’t declarer, guessing diamonds for one loser? In any case, it was plus 400 to Argentina.

West	North	East	South
<i>Dunitz</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Baqai</i>	<i>Ravenna</i>
1♦ ¹	1♥	1♠ ²	3♥ ³
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
5♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Unbalanced, usually 5+ diamonds
2. Denies 4 spades
3. Mixed raise

If the Argentine requirements for a splinter-bid after a Two-Over-One are more stringent than those in North America, that appears not to be true for one-level overcalls. Their bidding here took away valuable space for the Californians to describe their hands. Dunitz might have bid 4♣ instead of 4♦, but he knew that Baqai had fewer than four spades and it was evident from the opponents’ bidding that East had at most three hearts, so he had at least three diamonds (no transfer to clubs, showing five-plus, from East). So, West decided not to give any extraneous information to North/South and set trumps with 4♦, then subsided over 4♥ by Baqai.

Five Diamonds was a hair-raising proposition: with no place to get rid of his spade loser, declarer had to bring in the diamonds for one loser. He could play either opponent for a doubleton-honour: if North, low toward the jack; if South, low to the ten. When Madala led his singleton club, Dunitz placed him with more diamonds than South so, on that slender thread of evidence, won with the ♣Q in dummy and led a diamond to the ten. Declarer was soon scoring up plus

400 for a push.

We were doubly lucky here: firstly, that 5♦ made for a push, but secondly, that the poor, but makeable, 6♣ was not bid at the other table.

Argentina returned the favour a little later, getting a bit lucky here:

Board 44. Dealer West. NS Vul.

	♠ J 6 2		
	♥ 10 8 3		
	♦ 10 5		
	♣ K 10 7 5 3		
♠ K 10 4 3		♠ A 8 7	
♥ Q 5		♥ A K 9 7 2	
♦ A K J 6		♦ Q 9 4 2	
♣ A Q 8		♣ 6	
	♠ Q 9 5		
	♥ J 6 4		
	♦ 8 7 3		
	♣ J 9 4 2		
West	North	East	South
<i>Dunitz</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Baqai</i>	<i>Ravenna</i>
2NT ¹	Pass	3♦ ²	Pass
3♥ ³	Pass	4♦ ⁴	Pass
6♦ ⁵	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 19-21 HCP
2. Transfer
3. Denies 4 hearts
4. Natural, slam try
5. Intended to signal very good trumps and controls in both side suits, as well as the obvious slam suitability

Had Dunitz bid 4♥ or 4♠ over 4♦, Baqai might have launched RKCB and discovered two key cards plus the heart queen (if for hearts) or three key cards (if for diamonds) opposite. Then, 5NT might have elicited the king of spades or, at the very least, no king of clubs; or, perhaps East might have simply



Mike Roche & John Carruthers

raised to seven. 4♥ would have offered an opportunity to play there, so 4♠ was perhaps better. Even 4♥, though, would not have stopped Baqai from getting to at least a small slam. Could East have raised 6♦ to seven? These questions are always easier to answer in the post-mortem.

At the other table, they had no problem...

West	North	East	South
<i>Lucena</i>	<i>Roche</i>	<i>Pellegrini</i>	<i>Lyder</i>
1♣ ¹	Pass	1♦ ²	Pass
1NT ³	Pass	2♦ ⁴	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♣ ⁵	Pass
3♦ ⁶	Pass	3♠ ⁷	Pass
4♦ ⁸	Pass	4NT ⁹	Pass
5♦ ¹⁰	Pass	7♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. 2+ clubs: could have a balanced hand outside the one notrump range
2. Transfer to hearts (promises 4+ hearts)
3. 18-19 balanced with fewer than four hearts
4. Re-transfer (promises 5+ hearts)
5. Shows diamonds
6. Denies 3 hearts
7. A value in spades
8. Confirms diamonds as trumps
9. Roman Key-Card Blackwood
10. 0 or 3 key cards (must be 3 on the bidding)

When Lucena bid 5♦, Pellegrini had seen enough, at least at the state of the match, down 50-odd after three quarters and with no hope of gaining that much from his results so far in this stanza.

Lyder led the eight of diamonds to the five and nine. Pellegrini drew trumps and started on hearts; when they were three-three he had enough tricks. Had the hearts been four-two, East would have needed the club finesse, a fortunate spade position or perhaps a squeeze.

Pellegrini was indeed lucky and admitted as much, since his chances of success were just about 50%. Still, accepting an even-money shot to win 11 IMPs (or lose 14) was an acceptable risk at that stage in the match, with the score as it was.

There was an alternative line available: ruff two clubs in hand, giving up on the club finesse but making the contract any time hearts were three-three or four-two. This line is just about equal to the line Pellegrini took.

Naturally, since we won the match handily, we had plenty of good results. For example, John Rayner made the play of the match on the following deal:



Martin Kirr

Board 63. Dealer South. NS Vul.

♠ Q 6 4 3

♥ 4 3

♦ 10 8 3

♣ Q J 6 4

♠ J 10 9 7

♥ A K 8 7 5

♦ 6

♣ A 8 3

♠ A K

♥ Q J 6 2

♦ A J 7

♣ 10 9 7 5

♠ 8 5 2

♥ 10 9

♦ K Q 9 5 4 2

♣ K 2

At our table, South. Leonardo Rizzo opened with a weak Two Diamonds. Marty Kirr doubled and Pablo Ravenna passed. I bid Three Notrump, feeling that both high diamonds would be on my left for the vulnerable-against-not weak two and thus not caring if we had a four-four heart fit.

Rizzo led the queen of diamonds. Ravenna's ten told him where the jack was. I ducked, and ducked the two-of-clubs shift to North's jack. He went back to diamonds, so I took my nine tricks for plus 400.

At the other table, things were rather more exciting...

West	North	East	South
Lucena	Hanna	Pellegrini	Rayner
—	—	—	2♦
2♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

East/West were on the same page as to the meaning of 5♥: asking for club control. That was pretty aggressive bidding by both players.



Nader Hanna

Hanna led the three of diamonds. Lucena won with dummy's ace and played a low club. Rayner played the KING! Declarer won with his ace, led a heart to dummy, ruffed a diamond, led a heart to dummy, cashed the ace-king of spades and ruffed dummy's jack of diamonds. He then led the jack of spades and ran it when Hanna played low, discarding a club.

This was the position declarer hoped he had created:

<p>♠ 10 ♥ A ♦ — ♣ 8 3</p>	<p>♠ — ♥ 6 2 ♦ — ♣ 10 9</p>	<p>♠ Q ♥ — ♦ — ♣ J 6 2</p>
<p>♠ — ♥ — ♦ 9 5 4 ♣ Q</p>		

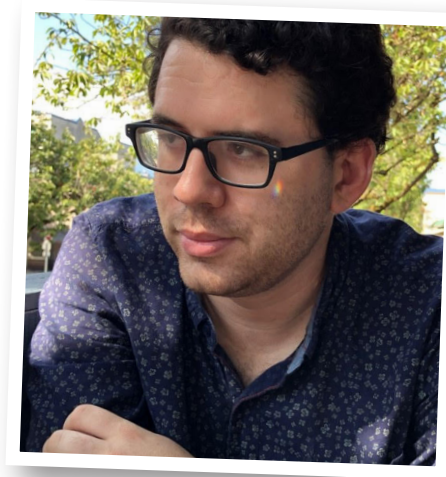
When declarer exited with a club, Rayner would have been end-played into giving him a ruff-sluff to make his contract. If Rayner

had not played the king of clubs at trick two, he would have been end-played with it. Declarer had played well, leading a club as early as possible in case a defender did not unblock the king. Here was the true end position:

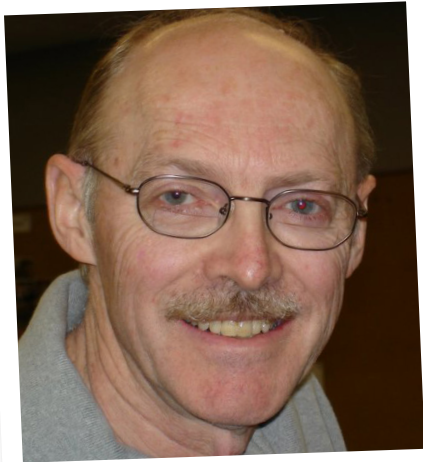
<p>♠ 10 ♥ A ♦ — ♣ 8 3</p>	<p>♠ — ♥ 6 2 ♦ — ♣ 10 9</p>	<p>♠ Q ♥ — ♦ — ♣ Q J 6</p>
<p>♠ — ♥ — ♦ 9 5 4 ♣ 2</p>		

With Rayner ridding himself of the ♣K as early as possible, when declarer exited with a club, Hanna was right there with the cashing Q-J of clubs for down one.

We're now working on more matches.



Daniel Lyder



An Instructional Hand

By Doug Andrews

bbo username: *dandrews*

Late in a one-session duplicate game at all vulnerable you pick up: ♠Q642 ♥853 ♦Q5 ♣J863. It has been a busy afternoon, with multiple decisions, finally a chance to relax. Partner opens INT (15-17) and RHO overcalls 2♦ alerted as a transfer to hearts. You pass. LHO bids 2♥ and it goes pass-pass to you; what do you do? Sadly, you are not playing negative doubles, so perhaps you pass.

Partner asks, "What happened?" Apparently, he had doubled 2♥ and so the final contract is 2♥X. This is not going to be a relaxing hand after all! Partner leads the club ace (playing A from A-K), and dummy hits with: ♠1073 ♥KQJ109 ♦A103 ♣Q7.

You play the ♣8, standard count and attitude, partner shifts to the ♦4. It goes 3, Q, K from declarer. Declarer leads the ♥2, partner takes the ace, cashes the ♥K, and plays a heart to dummy as declarer follows. Declarer cashes a trump as partner discards a low club. Declarer leads the ♦A, as all follow, and the ♦10 – what do you play? You only have clubs and spades left— does it matter?

Take a deep breath, the play has gone very quickly so far, so slow down and think. What

do you know about the hand? Anytime you are on defence after partner opened INT you have a lot of information. Partner has the ♣AK, at most the ♦J, the ♥A so to make 15-17 he needs either the ♠A or ♠K, but he cannot have both. Regardless of his spade holding you do not want partner to play spades, so play a discouraging spade, in this case the 2.

If you played the ♠2, partner wins the ♦J, leads a club (having seen your discouraging spade) to endplay the dummy and you collect three spade tricks for +500 and a top. If you played anything else, partner tries to cash spades for -670 or -870 and a bottom.

The full deal was:

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

In addition to counting out partner's hand to make the correct defensive play, there were a number of interesting points on this deal.

First, later in a session we may want to relax, but often events are won or lost on the last few rounds. Players get tired, lose interest if their game is not good, etc., so try to stay alert - the top you need may be available.

Second, what defence do you play when the opponents interfere over your INT? Is it more useful to play negative doubles or penalty doubles? Note that your hand would have been a reasonable negative double in the balancing seat, if you were playing them, and it had gone 2♥, pass, pass. If you are playing negative doubles and the opponents make an artificial overcall, then double of the artificial suit shows cards in that suit, but waiting and doubling their real suit is negative.

What does double by the INT opener mean? It should show a good hand inviting partner to bid another suit but with sufficient defensive tricks if partner chooses to pass. In this hand partner had only a doubleton heart and could afford to have you bid any suit but also had an AK plus two more aces on defence.

Third, what do you think of the 2♦ (showing ♥s) overcall holding: ♠1073 ♥KQJ109 ♦A103 ♣Q7? You are on lead against vulnerable opponents and can see at least four heart tricks plus the ♦A. You might be tempted to pass, lead a heart and play for vulnerable undertricks. Note in this deal it would be wrong. Declarer is so strong he can't get to the dummy so he will play the ace-king of clubs and when your queen

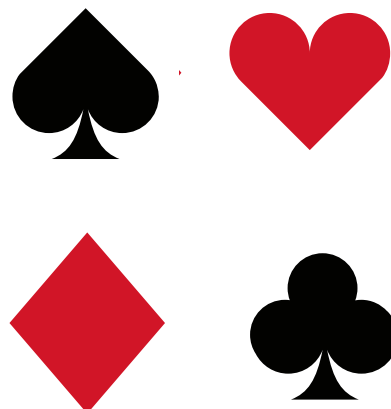
drops, he will make nine tricks for +150.

At matchpoints it is a good tactic to interfere over the opponent's INT where possible. Defending INT is difficult and if it makes it is often a poor score. Moreover, the opponents have discussed their system to bid over INT without interference. Interfering may change their system meanings or create uncertainty regarding the meaning of undiscussed bids.

Suppose the opponents had been playing negative doubles or one player had pulled the double of 2♥, the likely contract would be 2♠ making 3 (or possibly 4 if played by West), scoring +140 (or +170). That may be a good result compared to +150 available at INT. Or, possibly, you will make 2♥ or go down only one, for a fine matchpoint result.

In the actual game there were a few INT contracts making +150, a couple of 2♠ contracts making +140, one 2♠ contract making +170, a couple of 2♥ contracts making +110 and +140, and a 2♥ contract down 1 for +100. This reinforces the point of interfering over the opponent's NT when possible.

A highly instructional hand.



38th Annual Festival of Bridge

Stratford

October 9 to 11, 2020

Friday October 9

1:00 pm and 6:00 pm
Stratified Open Pairs - single session
Non-Life Master Pairs - single session

Saturday October 10

10:00 am and 2:30 pm
Stratified Open Pairs – 2 session event
Single session entries welcome
Non-Life Master Pairs – 2 session event

Sunday October 11

10:00: Bracketed Teams: two session
play through event with short break for
lunch

Stratification by Average

A: 2000 +
B: 1000-2000
C: 0-1000
Non Life Master 0-500
A: 300-500 B: 100-300 C: 0-100
Adjustments at discretion of the DIC

Lunch Available on Site

Free hotel parking

Venue

Quality Inn
1144 Ontario St.
Stratford, ON. N5A 6Z3
519-273-1150
Tournament Rate: \$109/night

Tournament Chair

Kevin Smith
519-273-2278
judykevin@wightman.ca

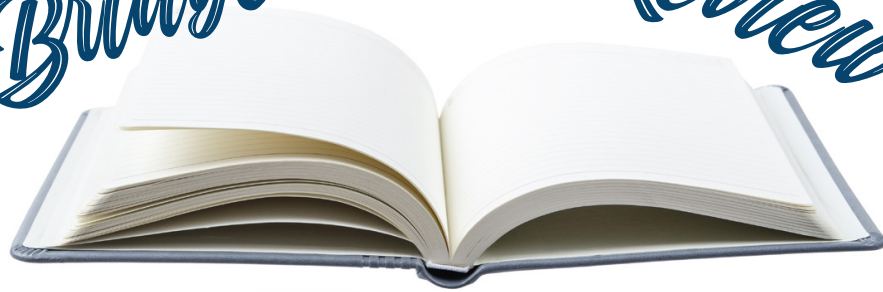
Partnerships

Perry Hill
519-301-6770
phillc606@rogers.com

Entry Fees

\$12.50/Session (Pairs Events)
\$100/Bracketed Team on Sunday
*Non-active and unpaid ACBL
members add \$4.00 per person per
session *Players without an ACBL
number must buy a 1-month \$10.00
membership BEFORE buying entry.
Students: \$5.00

Bridge Book Review



A Newcomer's Guide: Stress-Free Introduction to Duplicate Bridge

by Brian Gray

bbo username: *BGRoderick*

Still feeling like a newcomer himself, Brian Gray has recently published a book designed to aid the newcomer to bridge.

John Rayner, renowned Canadian bridge teacher and Canadian champion writes,

Many aspiring new bridge players eventually, with trepidation, venture out to their local duplicate bridge club to give it a try.

For new players the world of duplicate bridge can be a daunting and humbling experience.

For such players, Brian Gray's "A Newcomers Guide: Stress-Free Introduction To Duplicate Bridge" is a wonderful reference to help them better prepare for the experience of club play.

With detail and humour, Brian gently guides the reader through every aspect of what to expect as you get ready for your debut at the duplicate table.

In addition to the fine explanations and advice, this book's presentation, the quality of the

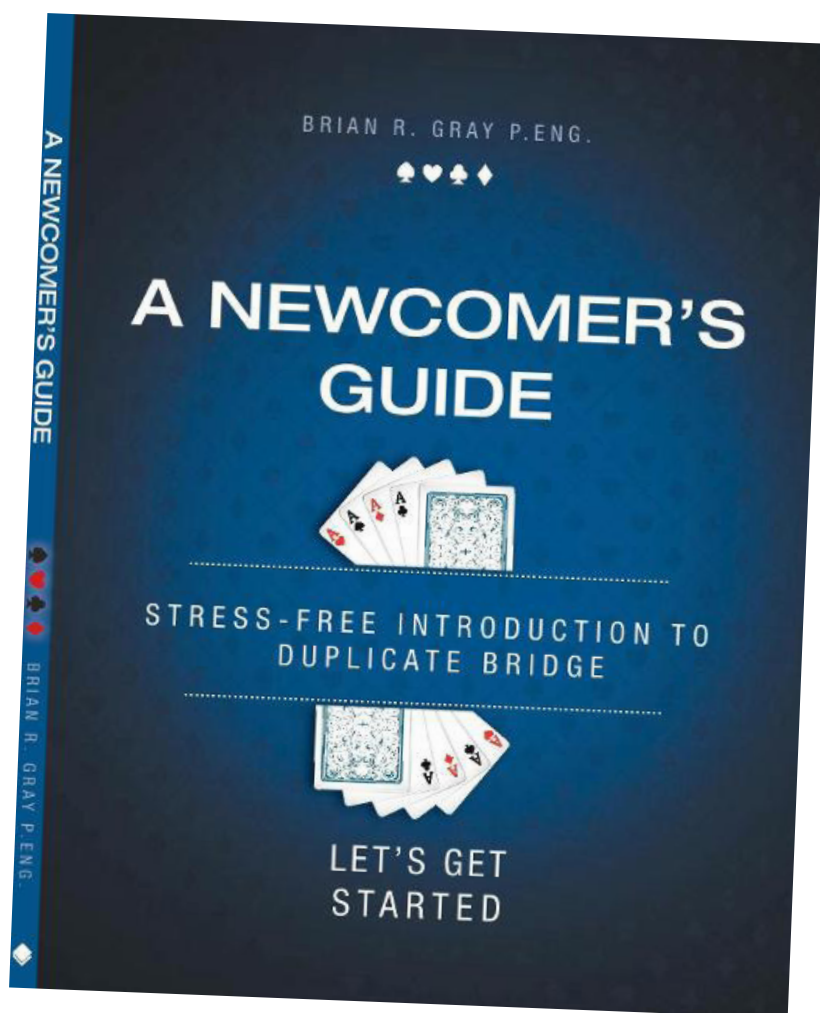
type-style, pages, graphics and illustrations is terrific. Colour abounds throughout, bringing the pages alive. Brian's book should be a "must-read" for every newer player - and for more experienced players as well.

Brian, you have done bridge players a great service with your guide. Congratulations - well done indeed!

~ John Rayner
bbo username: rayndear

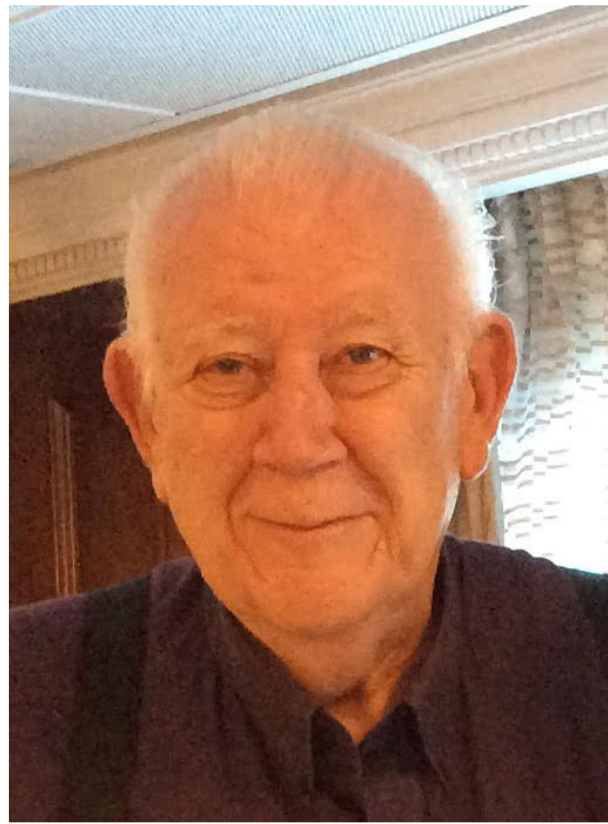
And from Selwyn Kossuth, novelist of bridge themed books including Weak Two, Bronze LM and member of MOBridge:

“ *It is really meaningful when an author can put so many personal and interesting thoughts and facts into a book which will be of such help to those who are moving forward into the fascinating game of Duplicate Bridge. There is so much to absorb along that journey that I have no doubt that 'A Newcomer's Guide' will be read and reread by those lucky enough to have their copy.* **”**



<http://bridgebeginnermentor.ca>

In Memoriam



Robert Colton

Robert Colton of Tillsonburg, ON, passed away on Sunday March 22nd, 2020 at Victoria Hospital in London. At the time of his death, Rob, a long time ACBL member, was extremely close to achieving his goal of accumulating 10,000 master points. A devoted family man, Rob is survived by his wife of 58 years, Jeanne, four children and thirteen grandchildren. Rob was exceptionally proud of all of his family and the recent addition of a great granddaughter made his life even more joyful. Friends and competitors alike considered him fair, ethical, helpful, and humorous. He will be greatly missed.

Dwight Bender
bbo username: *redneb*

And Now it Can be Told

By Susan Cooper & Mark Caplan



Susan: It was the early 80s.

Mark: I remember it well—it was 1981.

Susan: There were five of us. You and your brother David.

Mark: And you and your sister Karen.

Susan: And Fred Gitelman.

Mark: Good ol' Fred.

Susan: We all hopped on a train and went to the Montreal Regional.

Mark: We slept five in a hotel room back then.

Susan: On the Sunday they were short caddies, so they asked us if one of us could caddy.

Mark: We had agreed that whoever was sitting out that one of us five would caddy.

Susan: It was going great, but then it was Fred's turn. He was doing well, until he—

Mark: Fred was walking between tables, passing boards when—

Susan: He heard someone bid 3♦. He looked at the next hand.

Mark: I don't know if he even saw the hands, but—

Susan: In a very loud voice he said, "Double!" and moved on with the boards.

Mark: The players were unamused.

Susan: Fred was asked not to caddy anymore.

Mark: Definitely a true story.



Tournament Trail

Page numbers (p.) refer to ads in this issue. Information is subject to change - check www.unit166.ca or www.acbl.org for up-to-date information.

MAY

2-3 Peterborough **Cancelled**

2-3 Sarnia **Cancelled**

12-18 Kingston Regional
Cancelled

22-24 Sudbury **Cancelled**

27-June 7 CNTCs see p. 4

JUNE

13-14 Leaside TO 499er
Cancelled

20-21 Parkhill **Cancelled**

26-28 Niagara-on-the-Lake
Cancelled

JULY

4-5 Thornhill **Cancelled**

7-12 Kitchener Regional
Cancelled

16-26 Montreal NABC
Cancelled

JULY

18-19 Hamilton **Cancelled**

25-26 Goderich **Cancelled**

AUGUST

7-9 Tillsonburg **Cancelled**

15-16 St. Catharines 299er

18-23 North Bay Regional

SEPTEMBER

12-13 St. Thomas

26-27 Caledon East

OCTOBER

9-11 Stratford p.49

17-18 Collingwood

NOVEMBER

1 NAP District Finals

7-8 Oshawa

13-15 N-O-T-L

21 Burlington 499er

26-Dec. 6 Tampa Bay NABC

Deadline for the Fall 2020 Kibitzer: July 15, 2020

The Kibitzer

Andy Stark

126 Ivy Ave., Toronto ON M4L 2H7