

The Kibitzer



Winter 2020

Volume 67, Number 4



BBO Directors Roundtable Discussion



Photo credit: Sylvia Proaño

Editor's Note

Well, here we are, still playing out of our homes. On the plus side it's a shorter walk to the fridge between rounds. This issue marks our last one in the 'half-size' format. Starting in 2021 the Kibitzer will be the same size as ... Sports Illustrated, Time, and the New Yorker, to name three. Lofty company indeed. Our prose might not be in their league, but is their bridge writing in our league? If you would you like to be part of Ontario bridge history and see your name in print in this monumental future edition on this momentous occasion, please keep those articles coming in.

Keeping up with the tradition of providing you some content to do with BBO and online bridge, this issue features a roundtable discussion with four Ontario directors: Nancy Strachan, Martin Hunter, Lee Daugharty, and Greg Coles. They all sat down with the Kib on

their day off to share notes, quotes, and anecdotes, plus the dos and the don'ts of online play. See what they have to say on page 12.

One of Canada's best bridge playing nonagenarians Bruce Gowdy tells us what he has learned in the appropriately named column, "What I Have Learned" (see page 31). Here's a little side note that did not make Bruce's article: when the Kib sat down with Bruce over Zoom last month, Bruce's wife Mia was within earshot. At one point, the Kib asked, "Bruce, how about Mia? Does your wife play bridge?" While Bruce was pondering how to answer that, Mia piped up, "I do play bridge ... just not with Bruce."

Our celebrity bridge player this issue is Liz Tory, mother of Toronto's mayor, but a celebrity in her own right. Liz was a fill-in for her mother's home game back in the 1940s and she loves to play today, and by today, I mean today, learning to navigate BBO. She's still taking lots of tricks and venturing into the winner's circle every now and then. You can read about Liz on page 36.

Speaking of mayors, how about "Mayor" Mel Norton of Burlington? At the time of this writing and the time of you reading, Mel is number one in Canada for number of masterpoints. He is well on his way to winning the Richmond Trophy, beating out all the pros. There's a good trivia question—when is the last time a non-pro non-client player won the Richmond? Read the article to find out.

Thanks to Brian Gray for contributing to this issue his newcomer's guide to the safety play. More to come on this subject. And as always, thanks to our regulars, Robert Griffiths, David Turner,

and Jim Priebe.

Andy Stark
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*On the cover, clockwise from top left: Nancy Strachan,
Lee Daugharty, Martin Hunter and Greg Coles*

Contents

Editor's Note.....	2	Unit 166	4-5
Unit 238	6	Unit 246	7
Unit 249	8	Unit 255	9
Kibitzer information	10	Credit Valley Bridge Assoc	11
In Memoriam.....	47		

Articles this issue:

BBO Directors Roundtable Discussion	12
What I Have Learned, featuring Bruce Gowdy	31
Celebrity Bridge Player, featuring Liz Tory.....	36
Mel Norton: Richmond Trophy Leader	40

Contributors this issue:

Robert Griffiths	23
Brian Gray.....	27
Barbara Seagram & Alex Kornel	30
David Turner.....	44
Jim Priebe.....	45

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Nominations Please!!

For Unit 166 members only

Kate Buckman Award

Do you know someone who contributes to others' enjoyment of the game of bridge? Do you know someone who should be honoured by the Board of Unit 166? We're looking for nominations for the Kate Buckman Award for 2019. If you don't nominate someone, then we can't honour them and we really want to celebrate this kind of person and the contributions they make to the game of bridge.

Audrey Grant Award

Do you know a bridge teacher who exemplifies the best of the profession? Do you know someone who should be feted by the Board? Submit the nominations for the Audrey Grant Award for 2019. Again, if you don't nominate then we can't celebrate the excellence of this teacher's skill and dedication.

The Unit 166 Board of Directors should consider

for the Kate Buckman/Audrey Grant (circle one or both) Award.
The reason that this person deserves your consideration is:

Please submit to David Ellis

ellis2106@gmail.com

Deadline: December 31, 2020

Unit 166 meeting minutes from May 9 are available at

www.unit166.ca

Next Unit 166 Board Meeting

Sat. Jan 9 | 9:00 a.m

Video Conference

Annual General Meeting

Sat. Jan 9 | 11:30 a.m.

Video Conference

To Attend Video Conference: please email [Andy Risman](mailto:Andy.Risman@unit166.ca)
(incl ACBL #)

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.

UNIT 238



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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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creemore's online bridge etiquette, rule #32

Refrain from clicking on your opponents' bids in order to ask them for more information. For example, a 3♣ opening is preemptive. You know that, your partner knows that, the janitor knows that. If your opponent does not provide a decent explanation, then you can click on their bid, to get clarification. Clicking on bids slows the game down and gives your partner unauthorized information. See BBO Directors Roundtable Discussion in this issue.

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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 online bridge etiquette, rule #39

Think about how terse your messages might be to your opponents. Instead of typing, "You have to claim when your hand is high. You're slowing the game down!" Try typing instead, "The recommended procedure is to claim when your hand is high as it helps speed up the play." See BBO Directors Roundtable Discussion in this issue.

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

- May 9 Board of Director minutes
- Jan. 4 Board of Director minutes
- Nov. 3, 2019 Board of Director minutes

The next Unit 166 Board meeting is scheduled for 9:00 am on Sat., Jan. 9, 2021. See p. 6 for more details.

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.

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IMPORTANT KIBITZER DATES:

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

Giving Credit Valley Bridge Association Credit During a Pandemic

March 14th, 2020 and our world changed. The Nation Wide shut down due to Covid 19, closed our clubs and changed how bridge enthusiasts would connect for the game they love. Within a month, through the hard work of ACBL (American Contract Bridge League) in conjunction with BBO, (BridgeBaseOnline), a new style of playing emerged. Credit Valley Bridge Directors, with the invaluable support and guidance of ACBL Tournament Director, Nancy Strachan, launched our first Virtual Club Game on April 18th with over 40 first timers on BBO.

Our three Credit Valley Bridge Clubs, Brampton B.C., Marilyn's B.C. and Thistle B.C. attract players from Orangeville, Bolton, Brampton, Georgetown, Caledon and areas in between. Since our physical clubs were closed, we joined forces to offer online duplicate bridge, under the new Credit Valley Virtual Club. With no rent to pay, no overhead costs to defray, we could offer our games to our members at a reduced fee and still have money to spare. As Directors, we agreed to take no compensation for running our games. Instead, we would set aside our funds to support our frontline health care workers at the two main hospitals that serve our communities and our players:



The Wm. Osler Health System--Brampton Civic
Headwaters Health Centre, in Orangeville



From April to the end of September, we, the players of the Credit Valley Virtual Club, have raised **\$10 000!**

On Tuesday, October 13th, we presented a cheque in the amount of \$5 000.00 to the Brampton Civic Health Care Heroes and we are more than pleased to announce that our donation has been generously matched by the Armour Insurance Brokers.



On Monday, October 26th, we presented a cheque in the amount of \$5 000.00 to the Headwaters Health Centre, Covid-19 Response Fund. The picture below was taken in the Friendship Garden outside the hospital, a quiet spot of reflection for the patients, family members and staff.

More than anything, as directors, we are proud of our members who have risen to the challenges that Covid-19 has brought to our game. While social isolating, they have worked hard to master the computer technology and the challenges that playing online have brought to our games. Credit Valley Bridge has a loyal following. We celebrate our players, their loyalty and their generosity during difficult times. As directors, we are proud to serve them.



Marilyn Rochford

John McWhinnie/Linda LaPlante

Denise Donovan



BBO Directors Roundtable Discussion: Just the FAQs

Rather than get together in person to sit around the proverbial roundtable, four BBO Directors and I got together via Zoom a few Sundays ago to discuss the proverbial only game in town: Bridge Base Online. Greg Coles, Lee Daugharty, Martin Hunter, and Nancy Strachan exchanged all kinds of ideas and stories and dos and don'ts for players today, namely: how to prepare for and play online bridge. But first, before we launch into the bridge talk, here's a quick intro of our 'knights' of the roundtable:

Greg Coles is a former Ontario tournament director from Barrie, now living near Horn Lake, Mississippi, where he works as Director of Operations for the ACBL. Greg's technical expertise is legendary, having invented new ways of running Swiss movements. You may have seen Greg in a bacon costume on the cover of the Kibitzer two years ago alongside his pal Rob Avery, who, yes, was an egg.

Lee Daugharty is the director and manager of Lee's Bridge Club. In the face-to-face days Lee would often get 40-50 tables for an afternoon game at the Temple Sinai in Toronto. He's still getting quite a few out for the virtual game, often in the high 30s to low 40s. Lee was kind of enough to join us even

though he had just moved into his new home in Ridgeway, ON.

Martin Hunter, having retired as a high school math teacher, is a bit of a jack-of-all-trades these days. He teaches bridge, directs bridge, plays bridge, and is the webmaster of the Unit 166 bridge website. When able to, Martin and his wife Danielle Gosselin organize a bridge weekend up at Fern Resort around this time of year up on the shores of Lake Couchiching. Hopefully next year!

Nancy Strachan, a retiree from Dupont, is now directing for the ACBL. She not only directs Virtual Club games but is a 'yellow,' one of those ubiquitous Directors you see on BBO. Before the pandemic you would have seen Nancy directing at various sectionals and regionals including that sweet gig down in Bermuda. Ms. Strachan carries on the tradition of giving us Ontario players a wonderful director named 'Nancy,' picking up where Nancy Hart left off.

Kib: Thank you all for taking time out of your weekend to do this. Let's start at the point before the game even starts. What should players be doing before game time?

Nancy: The important thing is to sign on early and come back early. Register for the game, go do whatever, then log back into BBO and remain online. By coming back early we know how many tables we're going to have in the game. We may know, for example, that we have to change from three-board rounds to two-board rounds. Or whether we need to switch from a Howell movement to a Mitchell or a Mitchell to a Howell. It's critical in the last five minutes that we know what's going on. So, if you want to sign on early, you can do it two hours ahead of time, but please come back ten minutes before the game, five minutes latest. Reset BBO; that is to say, log off and back on, because you may think you are logged on, but you may have been booted out. BBO times out if it thinks you are inactive. You can receive an email five minutes before game time, "Please make sure your partner is online." We've all been there. Sometimes it's two minutes before game time and I'm emailing, "Your partner is still not there yet."



Greg, Nancy & Martin

Lee: Nancy, you mentioned resetting BBO. Is there a way of resetting BBO without logging off and logging back in again?

Nancy: No, not that I know of.

Martin: It only takes a second. Just log off and log back on. That's what they should do. In all of the ACBL Virtual Club games, all the players are trained by now. But for those who don't know, we directors don't click a button and start the game. BBO starts the game on its own. It will start right at, say, 4:00 pm, provided everyone is logged on and available to play at 4:00 pm. I directed a game last week and it was pandemonium three minutes before game time. New players were trying to join, and I still hadn't figured out the movement.

Kib: So, in that case, Martin, how were you feeling? Were you starting to get a little nervous?

Martin: Yeah, ask Danielle. I wasn't sweating, but I was stressed. It was too much.

Nancy: We can't be responsible to have to work that fast.

Martin: So, finally, the game just kicked in. Everyone should know the game is started by BBO; we don't push a button. We need time to make any little changes.

Lee: I had a tricky start one time, and this goes to Nancy's point about getting logged in early enough. Two

or three Wednesdays ago, with two minutes before game time I had eight tables. Then suddenly with one minute to go I had nine and a half tables. So, I decided to go from 3-board rounds to 2-board rounds and do a revenge Mitchell, where you play your last round against the pair you played the first round. I was trying to put this all together with 30 seconds to go and I didn't want to delay the start of the game. I was rushing so much that I missed a 'one' on my screen. Instead of playing 2-board rounds, I had programmed the game to be 12-board rounds. The game started and a player messaged me, "Something's wrong!" I looked and said (something that cannot be printed). So, I had to get everyone out of that game, and start all over. I ended up losing a pair, and so was back to 9 pairs and 3-board rounds.

(Everyone laughs and nods.)

Lee: I second the motion, Nancy—everyone should be checked in early.

Nancy: Oh yeah, it's crazy not to.

Greg: I don't think it's that hard.

Martin: The new players have an excuse because they're new, but most of our VACB players really have no excuse, now that we're eight months in.

Kib: What should the players do during the game?



Fall of 2018: back when Lee could direct in person

Martin: Be there. Be ready to bid. We all need to go to the washroom but try to wait until the round is over. But the biggest thing that needs to not happen during the game is people clicking on bids and asking for an explanation of that bid. The bidder will then have to answer the question and that answer will pop up on the opponents' screens, so one of the opponents will know that their partner asked that question. For example, say someone opens 2♥. It's a Weak 2. But let's say someone clicks on the 2♥ bid, to ask for an explanation. Now the partner of the asker has some information; they might infer their partner has a good hand . . . It's getting worse. I've had people ask about a bidder's club bids. And, it turns out, the person asking holds something like ♠AQxxx. They will ask late in the auction about a 1♣ opening bid. If it could be short, it would have been alerted as, "Could be short." Or it will go 1♠-1NT, 2♣ and someone will ask,

“What’s 2♣?” Now in that context, it’s a natural bid; it could be a 3-card suit in a 2/I system, but that is not alertable. Turns out the person asking has a good club suit. If you need to ask a question, you should ask it privately. I can’t think of a good time to click on a bid and ask about it unless the alert is a poorly explained alert.

Kib: Example?

Martin: Well let’s say someone opens INT and there’s an overcall of 2♦ and it is self-alerted as “Cappelletti.” That’s not a good alert because not everyone knows what that means. The alert should be, “Shows both majors.” So there it’s okay to click on the 2♦ bid to get more of an explanation. But apart from that the clicking on bids is offering unauthorized information to the partner of the person who clicked on the bid. Another example of a bad explanation is to alert your bid as Lebensohl. I don’t think everyone knows what Lebensohl is or what it means.

Nancy: A lot of people may not know that they can explain before they make their bid. I’m frequently saying to people, “Please explain in the bid box before you click on your bid.” It saves so much time. This alerting with no explanation coming is crazy. Someone alerted a Pass the other night, and it was the final pass. I still don’t know what that alert meant.

Greg: Sometimes it’s a mis-click.

Nancy: True.

Martin: Many experienced players are used to typing in their explanation before clicking on their bid.

Lee: So, Greg, is that a possible wish list for programming that when you click ‘Alert’ that you can’t actually click the bid until you have filled out an explanation for the alert?

Greg: Programmatically you could force text to be written in that field, but it wouldn’t preclude people from putting in just a period or a ... whatever. But yes, theoretically. This is similar to what we have struggled with in face-to-face bridge the last 100 years, people not alerting, then someone having to ask later on, “What does 2♣ mean?” Oh well, it probably means you have some pretty good clubs in your hand, that’s what that means. But for beginners, half the time, you think that’s what it means, but you’d be wrong, they’re just curious.

Martin: I opened 3♣ the other day in an open game, and someone asked me what 3♣ was.

Nancy: Really?

Martin: Yup.

Greg: Well, some people have to know, they have to ask, they have to know.

Kib: How about the clock? Say you’re a fast player and you’ve finished your round and there are six minutes left on the clock. That doesn’t mean you have a six-minute break, right?

Greg: No.

Martin: Not necessarily, no. I'd say three times out of four you probably do, but no guarantees.

Kib: Do you have any suggestions for players after their final board is played?

Greg: You can kibitz the other tables in your games. Instantly after your last board, you can see all the other tables still in play. All of our VACB games are set to 'No kibitzers,' but you are allowed to kibitz if you played in the game and you're done playing.

Kib: And if that table finishes, can players kibitz a different table?

Greg: Yes, you get popped back to that screen.

Nancy: Another thing for after the game, understand that you have 20 minutes for any score corrections. After that, there are no score corrections. Most VACB directors stay online for 20 minutes. If you look at your score and there's an obvious error, message us right away.

Kib: Let's talk about etiquette. Lee, I noticed you send out an email the week before your games giving your players some tips. Anything on etiquette?

Lee: Yes, I send out an email to everyone on my list. I have some dos and don'ts and stuff like that, and anything new to announce. Regarding etiquette, I've made a list of stuff I'd like people to read so that they know

the nature of the club I run. I want people to introduce themselves at the table. I want your names in your profiles. I'd like the players to get to know each other, especially if they plan on playing in the game, like a real game. You can't hide—there's no anonymity here... As a club director it's difficult to create an online ambience, like in a live game. In a live game you can walk around and you're friendly with people. I think it's important to do the same thing online, so I spend half the time saying 'hi' to everybody, just to try to recreate the social aspect of a live club. I think people miss that the most... Sometimes when I message people I never hear back; maybe they don't see the dialogue box. A couple times people wrote me back, "Who are you?"

Kib: Yeah, who's VACoB?

Lee: I try to send a little personalized message to everybody. Also, getting people to fill in their profile page—I think that's important. I don't think people should play anonymously at a virtual club.

Kib: Do you enforce that, Lee?

Lee: I do. I go around and talk to people and say, "Excuse me, I don't see your name in your profile page." Last week though I had both players of a partnership not have their names in their profiles. I pointed it out and one of them wrote me back, "How do I do that?" So, I write back with step-by-step instructions and say, "Please pass this along to your partner."



Rob Avery & Greg Coles, winning the Halloween game (and best costume award) in 2018

Nancy: Following up to that, I was directing a tournament last week and I mentioned the same thing to the other directors, that players should have their names in their profiles. One of the directors said, “Well, that’s easy to do, but we had a situation where one of the players got followed...and harassed.”

Lee: I tell people, at least just put in your first name so we know who you are. If you’re uncomfortable having your whole name, just your first name is fine... One of my next blurbs is going to be on how to phrase things at the table. You guys know, as a director you can stop in and sit at a table and see what’s going on. One of the things that I find irritating is when someone says to the table, “You have to do this!” And so, in my blurb I’m going to say, “Please don’t say ‘this’; please phrase it this way: ‘I think it is recommended that...’” Players should try to be more

polite. Instead of being offensive it can just merely be a comment in passing. And so hopefully it is less offensive, and a comment will be taken better.

Kib: Martin, any tips on etiquette?

Martin: Well one thing I do, and I like it when other people do it, too, is I announce to the table my general system. So, I’ll write something like, “Good morning, (or good afternoon), we play 2/1, UDCA, standard leads” or whatever I’m playing that day with that partner. I like not having to look at convention cards. Then everything I need to know that round is there. It’s easy to do: the first round write it, then copy what you write, and then at the beginning of each subsequent round, paste it. When I direct open games, I say to everyone, “As a courtesy, please announce your general agreements at the start of every round; please use copy and paste.”

Greg: I have a few things. I remember when we first talked about how many minutes we should play in a round: 7 minutes or 6 and a half minutes. There was a lot of controversy. I remember saying to some managers, “For gosh sakes, can you not just talk to each other while you’re waiting?” Lee’s right, we’ve lost some of the sociability, but there are opportunities. If I’m done early, that’s my chance to say, “So how have you been...” It’s a big part of bridge, getting to know people who have been coming to the club for years. So, from an etiquette standpoint, it’s good to talk to people

and let's keep those social connections. It's important to be kind...it's why I was so interested in keeping the club games up and running, I mean the league's income is one thing, but for our clubs, it was their income. Even more, I didn't want our bridge players to get away from playing bridge if we were going to be away from the physical clubs for a while. So...be social when you get the chance. And be nice to each other.



Lee at his new home in Ridgetown

Nancy: It's important to just greet people. Just a quick, "How's your son-in-law, whatever." For many of us we usually do have time because we can get done in 7 minutes per board.

Kib: Question for the panel. What's your style if and when you can see a table is slow and they are not going to get through their board in time?

Nancy: I remind them.

Kib: You just say, "Try to keep up."

Nancy: "Watch the clock, folks."

Lee: I don't bother because if there's only a minute left on the clock I don't want to distract them, and we'll just let the chips fall where they may.

Nancy: As directors we try to do it at three minutes to go.

Martin: We're watching the tables so when there's three minutes to go we can see who's slow and if we think there's a problem we say, "Please be mindful of the time."

Kib: Do you go to that table that's slow and type that into the message box?

(Nancy nods)

Martin: Yes, if I'm not on a computer that's slow, I can go in and see what tables are still playing with three minutes to go. So, if there are five tables I will go to each table to type in, "Please be mindful of the time." With one minute to go, I'm right there with, "Clock,"

Kib: How are the subs working for you? (The subs being BBO players who sign up to fill in at a game that has a sitout.)

Nancy: I have been lucky. I've had some subs that don't want to stay. But I have heard some bad stories.

Lee: I had only one bad experience with one guy, but that was really early, way back in April. I like to drop in on subs to see how they're doing. I'm lucky because I have some regular subs

and I can tell them, “This is a friendly club; everyone knows each other.” I have three regulars and I look forward to them coming so now I know them by name. If you can find good subs you hopefully get them into your game, and they keep coming back.

Nancy: We always go to the partnership desk first though.

Lee: Right! I have people who call me periodically where their partner has cancelled and they’re looking for a game. So, I try to get them in the game. We could have them play with robots but I’m somewhat averse to having people register with a robot.

Nancy: I try to only use a robot for a temporary disruption.

Lee: Right, I do that all the time—I’ll use a robot if there are connectivity issues, but not to register for a game.

Nancy: No.

Kib: Once in your game, Lee I saw at the table that I was playing against a pair from the States. Were they subs, Lee?

Lee: They might have played at my club during face-to-face times, so they’d be eligible to play.

Martin: The eligibility rules have changed over the past year. Now a club is allowed to have 15% of the players in the game be guests. The ACBL does not allow club managers to change their include list and anyone

not on it is not allowed to play in the game. It’s become an issue at some clubs allowing too many guests to play. It should only be 15% of the field.

Lee: At my club it could have been a player who spends six months here and six months in the US and they happen to play with a guest from the US. Sometimes we have had to refuse guests.

Kib: Another hot topic these days is ... cheating. Anyone have any pairs they suspect of cheating?

Nancy: Yes. Lots.

Martin: It comes up all the time. So last week I get a director call: “Possible cheating!”

(Lots of laughs.)

Martin: As it turns out we made an adjustment. There was a significant break in tempo, almost 40 seconds. There was no mention of this really long hesitation, just: “Possible cheating!” But yes, cheating is a problem. People are cheating, but then there’s people who are not cheating that people think are cheating. Now, regarding the hesitation I mentioned, Nancy and I did change the result because the result was totally illogical.

Nancy: And this wasn’t the first time.

Martin: No. Not the first time for Nancy with this pair, but for me it was. So, we changed the result.

Nancy: We have to be careful with the level of player. Someone might think it's an odd bid but to them it was a genuine thought out process. In this instance with Martin, I believe that the pair is not cheating. I believe one of them is playing two hands.

Greg: So maybe one of them is logging in twice—as themselves and their partner.

Nancy: Yes, because the tempo is off.

Lee: I've had a couple complaints about another pair. I sent out a blurb saying, "We are watching" in a nicely worded way. But I also watch these people and they do lots of weird stuff. Sometimes they get horrible results.

Greg: I know a lot of things about cheating that I cannot talk about today. There's a lot of stuff going on. We have 50,000 people playing online and early on I predicted that we'd have 1% of the people cheating and I stand by that. That's a lot of people—that's around 500 players. We've already kicked out of the ACBL 30 some-odd people, and this is public record, there's a lot of investigations going on still. We've been doing some negotiated resolutions. So, it's like a plea bargain as opposed to taking them to trial. It saddens me that there is as much as there is. For some the temptation is there, it's too easy, so they do it.

Lee: Greg, if we suspect there is some cheating going on, what's the best procedure for a director to pursue? At what point do we report this to the

ACBL and who do we report it to?

Greg: So, there's a simplified Recording Form you can fill out. If we get a report of a few hands from a pair, then we can delve deeper and we can catch them. We have to be careful because sometimes it might look like cheating, but it is not. We had a call one time where a guy accused someone of cheating on opening lead. The leader held Qx of a suit and led the queen. Well, I guess I'd be cheating, too because that's what I would have led. But the complaint was so strong, so I looked at a bunch of hands that the pair had played, but it soon became obvious that this pair was not cheating. By looking at a bunch of their results. But this guy was adamant... There are some pairs that have been booted out of BBO by BBO. And when that happens, they let us know if those players are ACBL members. We have several of those cases right now. Disciplining these folks is not quite as urgent because they have nowhere to play. I think of it as BBO owns the building. If your bridge club meets in a church basement and someone's been barred from that church, well, they can't play in your game because they can't go into the church.

Lee: It's good that all our players know—that people are watching.

Kib: Things have changed a lot in the past 8 or 9 months; what can we expect to see in the near future?

Greg: In general, the ACBL is continuing to work on aligning the

online experience with what was available playing face-to-face. Starting in the new year we should see a rollout of allowing clubs to select a game rating much the same way they could before. So, if it's, say, Junior Fund month, they can select whether to play a junior fund game or not. Club championships, charity fund championships, etc., all those will be optional for the clubs. Up till now it's been all or nothing. When we do it, all the clubs do it. Those games have been successful, but it will soon be up to the clubs whether they participate or not.... We're also talking about the Include Lists and if it makes sense to base attendance on who played in what game in 2019.



Martin and his wife Danielle Gosselin

If you go back to last March, we were literally operating from the point of view everything is fine and dandy to Boom, March 15—it's over. Every club was shut down. I think coming back it will be a lot slower of a progression. Some people will be slower to come back to the club. So, we're looking at helping with the transition—

integrating online play with face-to-face play. Those are the big things we're working on: getting online to be more like face-to-face.

Kib: Assuming we're all back in six months or a year, the pandemic is over, nobody is afraid to come and play in person at a club. What if a guy like Lee decides, "You know, I like that online game—I think I'll offer one or two per week in addition to my three or four face-to-face sessions. Do you see clubs doing that? Will that be an option for clubs in the future?"

Greg: 100%, yes.

Nancy: Yes, I believe online games are here to stay.

Greg: A phrase I used early on was, "putting the toothpaste back in the tube." I just don't see it being exactly the same as before COVID. I thought I would get major pushback from the Board on this, but so far, I have not. I think we all realize that online bridge is here to stay. Maybe not exactly as it is now, but it's here.

Nancy: I think we'll see the online games at night—there won't be any face-to-face night games.

Lee: I have heard a lot of the players saying, "I actually prefer online." It's almost a coin toss. They'll say they miss seeing people in person, but they'll also say they don't miss having to put on makeup or have a shower.



Nancy and Martin

Greg: From a player's perspective, the way you can go back and review everything online is fabulous. It's easy for experienced players to go out after a game at a tournament and discuss all the boards because we remember them, but for many beginners that's a struggle. They're not going to remember that I led the ♠8 against 3NT on Board 4. If you want to become a better bridge player, playing online can accelerate your ability to learn. It's far better for learning than face-to-face ever was.

Lee: Incorporating the playing history of a deal into ACBL Live was great.

Greg: Yes, I was pushing for that for a while; I'm so happy we got that done.

Lee: It's excellent.

Greg: It's really cool and we have some more enhancements there coming.

Lee: Just want to say, thank you, Greg, and all you guys down there for getting us up online almost without skipping a beat. You know, bridge could've been dead if you guys hadn't taken the helm on this thing.

Greg: When the pandemic hit, we contacted BBO. I think I started working on the SYC concept on a Tuesday afternoon and we ran the first one on a Thursday afternoon. It was two days. And the virtual clubs... we had them up and running in 10 or 11 days. There was so much going on behind the scenes. I've never been part of a project that started from absolute scratch to fully up and running quite like that. It was incredible.

Kib: Thank you all. All those Zoom meetings we have nowadays, and here we are having another on a Sunday no less...

Martin: One last thing: a reminder to all players who play online. All of their timing and chat is recorded.

(Everyone nods in agreement.)

Kib: Good point. Thanks, Martin, and thank you, Greg, and Lee, and Nancy.





For Newer Players

By Robert Griffiths

Resulting

My partner, South, opened 1♥ after East's pass. West passed, I bid 1♠ and partner jumped to 4♥. I can't imagine her bidding like that with more than one heart loser, so with all of my top cards, I considered 6NT then decided that 6♥ would be safer, so 6♥ was my second bid.

Board 18

East Deals
NS Vul

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

Against 6♥ West led the ♦9, partner won dummy's ace, led the ♥2 off the board, and paused to consider after

East played the 3. Should she play the ace or finesse? She may or may not have one heart loser, but the diamond lead has raised her fears that the opponents might be able to engineer a diamond ruff.

After long seconds of considering the possibilities, South chose to play the ♥Q. This, of course, lost to the singleton king and along came another diamond which was ruffed by East and our scientifically bid slam was down at trick 3.

After she claimed the rest of the tricks, she asked if she should have played the hearts differently. When you can see all of the cards, it's plain to see that playing the ♥A at trick one will give us all 13 tricks and I was tempted to suggest that playing the ace at trick 2 followed by the queen might have been a safer plan.

There is a nasty affliction that bridge players are susceptible to: *resulting*. Sometimes when they see a play that works, in this case playing the ♥A on the first heart lead, they think

that that is the play that should have been made. Suggesting that the ace should be played on the first round of trumps on this hand would be an example of resulting.

Luckily, I am a slow typist and before I could suggest that a misplay had occurred, I reconsidered. While playing the ace to drop the singleton king works in this case, it's far more likely that East might hold ♥K3 and West ♥754. Now, if West's lead were a singleton ♦9, instead of the top of his long suit, playing the ace then the queen would lead to West's getting a diamond ruff whereas taking the first round finesse will give South all

13 tricks. Playing the ace on the first round is simply an anti-percentage play that would happen to work on this hand on this day.

This is just one of those hands where there isn't enough information at trick two to make an informed decision, but I think South gave herself the best chance the way she played it.

Those blessed with any lead except a diamond easily made 12 tricks after losing the heart finesse. Others in 6NT went down; a spade lead from East was automatic and there were three EW spade tricks after the heart finesse lost.

Are 4 HCPs enough?

I am often asked, when bidding, how many points am I promising when I interfere with the opponents' INT opening. There is no answer to this question; bidding might show points, it might have nuisance value.

On this hand, every West passed and most Norths opened INT (15-17). Every East player stuck their nose into the auction, usually showing a 2-suited major hand. Without the interference, NS will most likely find a notrump contract---a game or slam. There are 12 easy tricks to be had in notrump---5 clubs, 4 spades, 2 diamonds and a slow heart.

Board 12

West Deals
NS Vul

♠ K J 9
♥ K Q
♦ 4 3 2
♣ A K J 9 2

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

But with EW making noise during the auction, it became easy for NS to

lose their way. After East mentioned the majors, both North and South were concerned that the heart suit might be a problem in notrump. Some NS pairs settled into a happy club contract, some into a not-so happy diamond game. One EW pair managed to buy the contract for 3♥ doubled for a very happy EW score of +530, just losing one trick in each suit, in spite of having only 7 HCPs between the two EW hands.

There are various ways of showing major two-suited hands over the opponents' INT openers. Cappelletti uses 2♦, DONT uses 2♥, and other systems start with a double. Two-suited bids are generally safer than simply bidding a single suit---your partner is more likely to have a fit for one of two suits.

Thanks to Cindy Mahn for the hand---of course she had the +530.

Morton's Fork

This is another hand stolen from Kary Lobb's 'Stay Warm Up' series.

South opened 1♠ and West doubled. North bid 2NT, which NS play as a limit raise or better. South bid 3♣, showing his short suit and North cuebid 3♥, showing extras. This was enough for South to ask for key cards and bid the spade slam.

West led the ♣K and South considered. How can he avoid a heart loser and a diamond loser?

Board 19 - 6♠ by South

South Deals

EW Vul

♠ Q 10 7 4

♥ K Q 6 2

♦ Q J

♣ A 3 2

♠ —

♥ A 10 9 7 4

♦ K 4 3 2

♣ K Q J 10

♠ 8 3

♥ 8 3

♦ 10 8 5

♣ 9 8 7 6 5 4

♠ A K J 9 6 5 2

♥ J 5

♦ A 9 7 6

♣ —

South realized that if he took his ♣A at trick one, he had no useful discard---he would still be left with a loser in each red suit. So he found a better plan.

He ruffed the club lead in his hand, drew two rounds of trumps and led his ♥5 towards the dummy. West is stuck at this point. If he goes up with his ♥A on this trick, then South has 12 tricks: 7 spades, 3 hearts and the two minor aces. But, if West ducks the heart lead, then South can win dummy's ♥Q, throw

creemore's online bridge etiquette, rule #36

When you finish a round early and see there are a few minutes on the clock, it's okay to chitchat with your tablemates.

away his other heart on dummy's ♣A, then cross-ruff the red suits after losing a diamond to West.

South needs to delay winning the ♣A until he has given West the choice between taking his ♥A without capturing one of South's honours or not taking it at all.

Over 500 years ago, John Morton found a way to force the English people to

pay taxes whether they could afford to pay or not. He explained that those who lived frugally must be saving their money, (so of course could afford the tax) while those who lived lavishly could simply live a wee bit less lavishly and pay the tax. Morton's fork has come to mean a dilemma in which you lose no matter how you play it.

West was like those English taxpayers of the 15th century, a loser either way.

Playing with 'Rob'

Playing in a BBO game, East had lost his partner to the mysteries of the internet, and was playing with a replacement named Robot, aka Rob for short. Rob, who is known mostly for his speed, was an unknown entity to the East player.

On this hand, North opened 1♦ and East doubled. He would have opened 2♣, but had to make do with a double, planning to show his strength when he could. South liked to throw wrenches into the works and threw in a 3♦ bid. At this, Rob mulled things over for roughly a nano-second, then bid 3♠.

North passed and back it came to our hero, East. He thought for quite a bit longer than a few nanoseconds and decided that nobody would program Rob to make a 3-level free bid without at least the ♠KQxx. Happy in that knowledge, he lept of to 7♠, envisioning Rob drawing the needed 3 rounds of trumps, running 7 heart tricks and the ♣A. Rob would have thrown all of his

clubs on the hearts and could crossruff the last two tricks.

Board 25

North Deals
EW Vul

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

7♠ was passed out and Rob couldn't help but find the ♠Q and make all 13 tricks for a top board, but East felt that he had to apologize to his friends who were playing NS. He had no idea that Rob would freely bid a mediocre suit at the 3-level with nothing in his hand but a king, a singleton, and a queen of dubious value.

Who programs these guys?

One pair in the field found a sensible route to 6♠:

North	East	South	West
1♦	Dbf	2♦	P
P	3♦ (1)	P	4♠ (2)
P	4NT	P	5♣ (3)
P	5♦ (4)	P	5♠ (5)
P	6♠ (6)	All Pass	

(1) This was no regular takeout double, partner

(2) Well, I do have a few values--3♠ would show the same hand without the ♠K

(3) 1 or 4 Key cards

(4) Do you have the ♠Q?

(5) No ♠Q

(6) If you'd had the ♠Q, I would have bid 7♠

The rest of the field played the hand in either a heart game or slam. Notice that you can make an extra trick in spades, the 4-4 fit gives you an extra ruffing trick.



Safety Plays

By Brian Gray

I'm just an advancing newcomer player. I know the term Safety Play but probably would not recognize a safety play situation. I would mistakenly play on and only realize the error in my line of play when it was too late. I'd just grumble, "Bad trump split again," for not making the contract.

I wanted to "spruce up" this article and make it more meaningful by using personal examples of a safety play. I didn't want to just Google "Safety

Play" for the information. How much fun would that be?

On behalf of the Kibitzer readers, may I extend our heartfelt thanks to all the contributors: the bridge experts, teachers, and writers who gave freely of their time and talents to educate us with their Safety Play examples. Thank you, Josee Hammill, for your editing prowess and constructive commentary.

I will set the stage with Karen Walker's

definition: A safety play is where you play a suit in such a way that it will protect against an adverse distribution of the opponents' cards. With this line of play, you may give up the chance to make the maximum number of tricks when there's an average break, but you avoid the loss of extra tricks when there's a bad break.

I am still looking for an answer to my question: "How will I recognize a safety play opportunity?" Below is what I learned from various contributors. Here is writer James R. Klein in a post at the website www.bridgetips.co.il Klein writes:

"In order for the average player to know when to use a safety play (when the occasion presents itself), the player must be able to concentrate on the following three things:

- 1) The player must be able to fix in their mind, especially as declarer, the outstanding cards of a suit not held in hand and dummy.
- 2) The player must be able to visualize the worst possible way these cards could be distributed.
- 3) The player must assume this distribution and play to hold their loss to a minimum, or to bring home the contract against the bad distribution. This is especially true in doubled contracts, slam contracts, and unusual game contracts."

Here is a definition from another contributor, Merry Schainblatt, a retired special educator, now combining a love of bridge with a

love of teaching. Merry is accredited through TAP, is a certified online teacher, accredited through Learn Bridge and a dynamite teacher at St. Petersburg Bridge Club, Florida. Merry writes:

"The safety play is used when you are trying to gain extra tricks through length but have no other entries to the suit other than through that suit.

The key to using a safety play is to stop and make your plan to make your contract before playing to the first trick.

Say this is the heart holding:

You

♥ x x x

Dummy

♥ A K x x x

You have eight hearts and if your opps have five, they are likely to break 3-2.

Ideally, you can play the ace and king, then lose a trick, get back to the dummy with an entry in another suit and collect the last two tricks. But what if you don't have an entry in another suit?

You have to use the safety play. So, you should lose the first trick in that suit. This leaves the ace and king in the dummy and two small hearts in your hand. Next time you get control, lead small to the ace and collect the rest of the tricks. You have to recognize this potential problem when the dummy comes down or you might not do it right.

The ACBL Bridge Series, "Play of the Hand," also has helpful examples of safety plays.

Greg Coles, ACBL Technology Guru, ACBL Tournament Director, certified teacher, and former Club Manager of Midland Bridge Club, Ontario provides us with this example:

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

The bidding goes 1NT by South, 3NT by North.

West lead, the ♥Q. This one is simply a case of thinking about what could go wrong. If the missing clubs are divided 3-2 then declarer has ten winners off the top (a spade, two hearts, a diamond, and six clubs). However, if you assume that this is going to be the case when you play two top clubs and find out that the clubs are divided 4-1, you will now have no chance of taking nine tricks due to the fact that there are no entries to dummy. The better play is to duck a round of clubs right away while you still have control of all the suits. Now you will take nine tricks for sure.

Contributor Dave Willis is bridge columnist for the Toronto Star and Ottawa Citizen. He's also the Director at the Prince of Wales Bridge Club in Ottawa. Here's his example:

With N-S vulnerable, the bidding goes 3♣ by North, 3NT by South.

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

Opening lead: ♠Q

Safety plays are really only appropriate at rubber bridge or imp scoring, where overtricks are of little value. A safety play requires declarer to sacrifice potential overtricks which are losing tactics at matchpoints (where overtricks are all important).

You are fortunate to have escaped a heart lead on this deal. Dummy has no outside entry to the club suit and so the play of the top clubs will be an abject failure when a defender holds ♣Qxx. Defeat will be imminent.

At matchpoints, you should play a club and insert the jack when West follows suit. This line will guarantee at least nine tricks as long as East follows suit. Alas, East shows out and the game will be defeated, but you will have lots of

company on this unfriendly layout.

However, if your objective is to make the contract at all costs (rubber bridge or team game), you should play a club to dummy's nine when West contributes the club three. This play guarantees success regardless of how clubs break.

When East discards, you play a diamond towards hand in an effort to build a winner in that suit with a good guess. Even if you misguess diamonds, you can still make 3NT as a subsequent finesse of the jack of clubs

brings home the entire suit and earns the game bonus.

Stay tuned for more examples of safety plays in future issues of the Kib!

Brian is busy finishing his second bridge book, "A Handy Bridge Player's Guide to Duplicate" for the UK beginners. You can read more about what Brian is up to at his website:

www.bridgebeginnermentor.ca

New Platinum Life Master: Dudley Camacho

Congratulations to Dudley Camacho who recently became a Platinum Life Master. Dudley arrived from Guyana in the late 70s. The bridge world first met him in the early 80s. He played bridge afternoon and evening at Kate Buckman Bridge Studio. He was always by far one of the very best players at the bridge club. If someone wanted to improve their game, we recommended that they play with a professional: Dudley.

Dudley has always been able to play with less experienced players and he can always get down to their level. He is never esoteric. Many of his students over the last 38 years have gone on to become competent players

because of time spent with Dudley going over hands. Dudley would always stick around at the end of the game and answer questions about hands from players. It was a huge learning opportunity for so many. He always gave them down-to-earth answers to their questions.

We have all known Dudley as a man of few words. However, we have watched with joy as he developed over the years. He is everyone's bridge guru and a Toronto bridge icon.

~Barbara Seagram & Alex Kornel



What I Have Learned

By Bruce Gowdy



In 1947 my parents sent me to Pickering College in Newmarket. The principal was Joe McCully, the best man at their wedding, so they were hoping to get rid of me. **I picked up a MacLean's magazine and read about Percy "Shorty" Sheardown's bridge club down on St. Clair Ave. in Toronto.** So, I got on a bus to go take a look.

The first person I met when I walked in the club was **Bill Anderson, who was standing there with Shorty and Charles Goren. Bill Anderson was an actuary;** he verified all the mechanics to Charles Goren's point count system. He and his wife Marjorie were well known players in Ontario back in the '50s.

Soon after I met Bruce Elliott. **Bruce and I were known to Shorty as "the two pooches."** And that's how I got started in high level bridge.

Before that, I learned a bit about card play from my grandparents, who lived down in Kingsville, ON. They loved to play a card game called Rook.

My grandparents never played bridge because they associated bridge with gambling. So, they took to Rook. There was bidding, but not in suits, just in numbers. Whoever bid the highest got to name trumps. There was a kitty and the winner of the auction got to exchange five of their cards with the cards in the kitty, so quite often you were down to two suits. **That's how I got started thinking about cards and distribution. That's when I learned that length beats strength.**

I played a bit of bridge at Pickering College, but there I could play Q 3 2 opposite A 5 4 by leading the queen and letting it ride and I'd win the trick. **I found out quickly at Shorty's: that's not the way you play that combination.**

In 1949 I became Life Master #269; it took me 18 months. **It was a record—youngest Life Master at 19 years of age.** But that's been displaced quite often since then, most recently by an 8-year old!

1949 was the year we won everything including the Intercollegiate Teams, and the



Bruce and Mia Gowdy celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in 2011

Spingold. I even teamed up with Charles Goren and won the Open Pairs in Buffalo. I remember a hand from that event. We had bid 1NT-3NT. Both defenders simultaneously tabled the opening lead. One led the ♠2 and the other led the ♠3. My dummy had ♠10 8 6 and Goren held ♠J 9. For the benefit of all the kibitzers, Goren, feigning disgust, loudly asked, “How could you bid 3NT without a spade stopper?”

Bill Anderson and I won the Ohio State Open Pairs. There was a hand where he went into the tank and then emerged with the winning bid. We were in 7♣ but he figured out it wasn’t going to make even with our 9-card club fit. So, he bid 7♦, our 4-3 fit. The diamonds split and we scored up 2140. **That’s when I learned the key to the whole game: you have to always be thinking.**

At trick one you should never call for a card until you have stopped and counted. Even with a singleton, don’t play right away. Ask yourself, “What can go wrong?”

I played on a team with Shorty and Elliott and Roy Funston—we won the Canadian National BAM five years straight, from ’49 to ’53 at the Easter tournament. But at some point, the BAM went out of fashion and Swiss Teams took over. **BAM scoring is very difficult where +130 is better than +120. In Swiss, those results are a push. BAM scoring makes you think.** In 1960 we played against Reese and Shapiro at the world championships in Turin. I noticed Reese was spreading his fingers awkwardly when he held a bridge hand. A few years later he was accused of cheating.



*Bruce and team, winners of the 1949
Intercollegiate Teams*

Shorty was a wonderful player: always thinking. He had great respect. Mrs. Doolittle, a 90-year old lady who played against Shorty would never double him. The scoresheet would read +630, +630, +600, +660, +250. **What was the +250? Shorty in 4], down five, undoubled.**

When we first moved to the Don Mills area, I started teaching at the high school. I thought it was going fine, but **after an hour a student raised his hand and asked, “Sir, what’s a trick?”** That ended my teaching career.

My only regret is that I never really learned to be patient with partners. I’m sorry Zero Tolerance was not around when I first started.

When you’re in a 9-card trump fit missing the queen, finesse for the queen if your trumps are divided 6-3. But if your fit is 5-4, then play for the drop. Obviously, you’re tempered by what the opponents bid, but **more**

often than not, finessing for the queen with a 6-3 fit is the winning play. It’s a game of percentages. Nobody’s ever invented a bidding system that works all the time. There’s weak notrumps, strong notrumps, there’s hundreds of systems out there, you name it—none of them work all the time. **All that’s important is that the engine and the caboose are both on the same track.**

I like playing Baron over a 2♣ opening bid. 2♦ is game-forcing, 2♥ is negative, 2♠ shows a five-card suit someplace, not necessarily spades, and 2NT shows a hand with three kings. If it starts 2♣-2♦, 2NT, then both players can bid four-card suits up the line. **You can find all 4-4 fits at the 3-level.**



*Here’s Kib photographer Jonathan Steinberg
and Bruce Gowdy*

On defense if declarer has a five-card running spade suit in the dummy and you have four small ones, you will play yours in a certain order, one that sends a message to partner. If you play high-low you are telling partner that you have the higher-ranking side suit stopped. Count doesn't matter. **This way, you can help partner know which suit to guard. Subtle signals like that, and thinking, lead to a lot of good results.**



Bruce and Mia Gowdy "just married!" in 1961

Before 5-card majors came in, there was nothing wrong playing a 4-3 fit. Suppose you have ♠Q 10 x, and a singleton heart and 5-4 in the minors and 10+ HCPs. Partner opens 1NT. With those hands I like to bid 3♥ which shows that hand pattern: a stiff heart, three spades, and 5-4 or 4-5 in the minors. Quite often partner will bid your 3-card major and play in a 4-3 fit. You avoid playing 3NT with ♥J x x opposite a singleton.

I get the Globe and Mail. Steve Becker, their bridge columnist, is good

at providing hands that show the importance of thinking. For example, you get to 3NT on these cards and receive the opening lead of the ♠6.

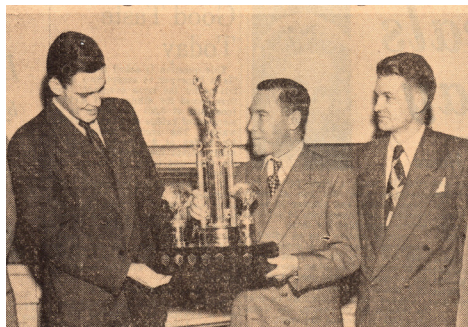
♠ A 4 3
♥ K 7 4
♦ K 7 5 2
♣ Q 10 5

♠ J 7 2
♥ A Q J
♦ A 10 4
♣ A J 9 3

What's going on? Some players will call for a small spade without thinking. But West probably does not have the ♠KQ so East will win with the K or Q and return the suit, setting up West's spades. **When West gets in with the offside ♣K you'll go down if West started with five spades.**



Bruce Gowdy



*Bruce Gowdy receiving the Telegram Trophy
from Percy Sheardown*

**The answer is to rise up with the ♠A
right away and take the club finesse.**

Now when it loses to West's king, they cannot untangle the spade suit. Back comes a low spade to East's honour. But if the spades are divided 5-2, that'll be it for the defense. You will come to one spade, three hearts, two diamonds, and three clubs. If spades are divided 4-3, you'll still make nine tricks.



*Bruce Gowdy and his distant cousin
John Gowdy*

Mike Roche mentioned the ABCs—Always Be Counting—in the last issue of the Kibitzer. **I agree with that. But you should also mind your ABTs—Always Be Thinking.**

Bruce's accomplishments:

For his career Bruce worked as a chartered accountant. He was part of the development and opening of the Eaton Centre while with Cadillac Fairview, but he also worked for the Perini Corporation, and Country Style Donuts. Bruce's bridge accomplishments are incredible. At the ripe old age of 19 he won the Spingold Teams in 1949; 15 years later he came second in the event. Bruce became a tournament director in 1950 and was the Director in Charge for half of the tournaments in Ontario from '53 to '60. Bruce has a bronze medal for finishing third overall in the World Team Olympiad in 1972. He represented Canada in Turin in 1960, Monte Carlo in 1976, and New Orleans in 1978. Besides numerous regionals, Bruce was on the winning team for five years straight in the Canadian National Open Teams from '49 to '53. Bruce is a WBF World Life Master and a Canadian Bridge Federation Hall of Famer. Yes, Bruce Gowdy and John Gowdy are related: they are distant cousins somewhere on their father's side.



Celebrity Bridge Player: Liz Tory

This is our second profile in this series. We find an Ontario bridge player who is a celebrity outside of the world of bridge. Last issue the Kib sat down with former Blue Jays broadcaster Jerry Howarth. This issue the Kib catches up with Liz Tory. Liz is a force unto herself. Some know Liz as John's mother, but others know Mayor John Tory as Liz Tory's son.

Kib: Take us back to the very beginning. How old were you and how did you get started in the game?

Liz: I was 15 years old when my mother taught my two sisters and me to play. We had a family cottage up on Lake Simcoe, so it was perfect. A great way to while away the summer evenings, and sometimes afternoons. My sister Anna complained that she was never dealt any cards so sometimes we had to beg her to play.

Kib: Besides your mom did you have any other early mentors?

Liz: Yes, Florence Hudson Johnson. Later on, I would play with and learn from my mother-in-law.

Kib: What are some of the things you learned back then that still apply today?

Liz: Don't underbid!

Kib: Any pearls of wisdom?

Liz: My mother used to say things like, "Whenever you work hard to get over to the dummy to take a finesse, the finesse always loses." Upon seeing the dummy, she might remark, "Now, let's see what treasures we have over there."

Kib: What face-to-face games around Toronto did you play in? (Pre-COVID, of course.)

Liz: I first joined the Women's Monday club back in 1972. I used to play at Kate Buckman's when it was around. Later I would play at Partner's when it was around. Now I will play at Lee's and the Granite Club, occasionally at Rosedale. In the winter when I'm in Florida, I usually play at the Lost Tree Club.



Liz outside her home in North Toronto

Kib: How about now—do you play in any of the online Virtual Club games?

Liz: Yes, but it's been so-so. It took me a while to learn the mechanics of clicking on bids and looking at History and sending chat messages, etc. But I've gotten used to it and when I did, my scores improved a bit. I get tired after two and a half hours of playing.

Kib: We know you love to socialize and chat up your opponents. How is that working for you in the online game?

Liz: Well, I don't send too many messages when I'm playing on BBO. If there's time between rounds I often get out of my chair and get onto a stationary bicycle that I have right in the room where I play. I often cycle up to 2 or 3 kms during a bridge game!

Kib: Have you made any friendships that started with you and your friends meeting at the bridge table?

Liz: Starting many years ago I used to be part of a group with 8 other women. We'd play twice per month and each take a turn hosting. We did that for 40 years! When you were the host you made sure to serve a delicious lunch.

Kib: Do you ever get recognized away from the bridge table?

Liz: All the time.

Kib: When you are not playing bridge, what else do you like to do in your spare time?



*Liz with her mother, Helen,
and her sister Rena Mae*

Liz: I love to play golf. I do some social work, and when possible, I like to travel. I'm often in touch with my many grandchildren. Plus, I am now a great-grandmother!

Kib: Have you been able to persuade any family members to take up the game?

Liz: My daughter Jennifer and my daughter-in-law Barb are starting to play now.

Kib: Thanks, Liz—all the best both here and in FLA—hope you're back at the bridge table soon.



*Liz's children: Jennifer, Michael, Jeffrey,
and John Tory*

The Kib sat down with Liz's daughter Jennifer Tory to get some more insight on Liz's love of the game.



Kib: What are your earliest memories of your mom playing bridge?

Jennifer: My mom has played bridge for as long as I remember. Her mother ("Grandma" to me) was a huge card player. Not only did she have her "bridge ladies" but she also had a group of "poker ladies!" No doubt my grandma taught my mom and her two sisters early on so they could sub in when one of the ladies couldn't play. Also, my grandma and her three daughters had their own built in bridge group. Interestingly, my other grandmother, Grandma Tory, was also a keen bridge player and often would play with my mom's mom. They became good friends as a result.

Bridge mix, licorice, and chocolate bars, too—all part of the attraction. To this day my mom enjoys this candy best.

Kib: What were your first impressions of the game? Did you think you'd like to try learning to play one day or did you resent bridge for taking up your mom's time?

Jennifer: I have seen how much enjoyment my mom has gotten from bridge. I am so glad for her. She has played in multiple bridge clubs, in Toronto and Florida. She and my father (who enjoyed playing but was a medium player due to time pressure) would have other couples over for dinner and bridge. It keeps her brain active and she is very competitive, so she likes to challenge herself.

Kib: How about now? Liz says you are keen on playing bridge...

Jennifer: Yes, I would like to learn. I have always liked card games. I used to play hearts and gin rummy with my grandma. I have taken a few lessons but could not commit the time. I recently retired so I will have more flexibility. A number of my friends play or would like to learn, so I know there will be bridge in my future ... just not sure I will ever be good enough to play with mom!

Kib: Do you think Liz's passion for bridge is up there with her passion for golf?

Jennifer: Bridge and golf are her two favourite pastimes. Although she doesn't love online bridge due to the lack of interaction, it has certainly kept her brain working and given her something to do! Thank goodness!

Kib: Do any of Liz's grandchildren show an interest in bridge?

Jennifer: Not yet, (too busy in their lives), but a number of the grandchildren like card games so I expect some will.

Kib: Thanks, Jennifer; it'll be awesome to see mother and daughter at the table someday!



*Summer 2019: Celebrating
Jennifer's daughter's wedding*

Liz Tory's game is not flashy. She does not play a lot of conventions; her game is 'down the middle.' But Liz has great instincts for playing card combinations and she gets a lot of good results through guile. Having taken some lessons from Marty Bergen Liz plays Bergen Raises. Having played against Doug Drury, she plays the Drury convention. But other than Stayman, Transfers, and Roman Keycard Blackwood, that's about it.

Here's a decision Liz made in a club game at Partner's a few year ago.

Liz held:

♠ 9 7 3
♥ K Q 10 7 3
♦ Q J 5 4
♣ 8

The opponents were vulnerable. Liz's LHO opened the bidding with 1♥. Partner made a takeout double, RHO passed, and Liz decided to pass. Right!

The defence scored up 8 tricks for down 2 and a score of +500. That was a top board for Liz and her partner. Liz took four trumps tricks and was able to push through her ♦Q to pick up declarer's ♦K. The key is this: if you are going to leave in partner's takeout double at the one-level, you should have a five-card trump stack. Well judged, Liz!





Mel Norton: 2020 Richmond Trophy* Leader!

Every once in a while, the Kib goes online to check out some of the masterpoint races. This year, in 2020—the Year of the Rat, (how apropos of 2020), we have an unlikely leader, and soon-to-be winner. Two things you should know right away: first, Mel Norton is a humble guy so he would be the first to admit that nobody had Mel Norton winning the Richmond Trophy on their 2020 bingo card. Second, while the Kib is loath to predict the outcome of a competition, especially a mere six weeks before its conclusion, this one is a no-brainer. This trophy is for all Canadians but check out the (all-Ontario) Richmond Trophy leaderboard:

1) Mel Norton	Burlington	830
2) Richard Chan	Markham	457
3) Bill Koski	King City	444
4) Doug Andrews	Etobicoke	440
5) Keith Heckley	Hamilton	433
6) Jonathan Steinberg	Toronto	417
7) Mike Kenny	Aurora	399
8) David Grainger	Etobicoke	389
9) Helen Johnston	Peterborough	383
10) Julie Berdock	Aurora	381

In fact, six more Ontarians round out the top 20:

14) Layne Noble	Ottawa	311
15) John Rayner	Toronto	309
16) Linda Winston	Toronto	302
17) Barry Senensky	Toronto	301
18) Jack Shinehoft	Dundas	300
20) Don Kersey	Kingston	290

It was not easy finding time with Mel for a quick conversation because Burlington's Mr. Bridge plays a fair bit these days. Plus, there's the whole mask thing: it's hard to annunciate, etc. But find time we did, and so we met outdoors on a glorious +16 degree day in November for a mask-less, yet safe, conversation.

Kib: How many games are you playing per week?

Mel: Currently, I play on average twice a day, and if you were a betting man, take the over.

Kib: With whom?

**The Richmond Trophy goes to Canada's top masterpoint earner for a calendar year*

Mel: I play with many friends, but my principal partner is Doug Andrews. Actuaries stay together. I have worked with Doug twice in a past life. I have more or less regular games with actuaries Andy Firko and Steve Bonnar, and real people including Jim Priebe, Keith Heckley, Roman Klein, John Stevens (a partnership of well over 50 years), Debbie Feldman, Rod MacLeod, and where possible, Jack Shinehoft, Jackie Syer and Lew Richardson. About the only person that keeps avoiding me is some guy named Stark.



Mel the actuary

Kib: Where?

Mel: I try to play most often in the 'Bricks and Mortar Clubs' that have to pay rent. This includes the clubs to whom I have paid 2020 dues such as MO Bridge and the Bridge Centre of

St. Catharines, but also clubs in London, Grand River (Kitchener), Guelph, and Barrie. I also play frequently in the clubs run by Jackie Syer and Lee Daugharty, as well as an alliance of clubs in South East Florida, one of which I physically played in last December.

Kib: So, at the 10 and-a-half month-mark you are up to 830 masterpoints. Did you get a few masterpoints back in the pre-Covid days?

Mel: Cliff Campbell, Keith Heckley, Rollie LaFramboise and I went south for a couple of regionals earlier this year just before the pandemic, and I picked up about 175 in these events. As soon as we got back, we learned we should not have been there!

Kib: Were you thinking that the Richmond was a possibility early on?

Mel: I recall in the first listing in the Bulletin, at the ¼ pole, I read a comment that David Grainger appeared to again have the Richmond Trophy locked up. At that point, I sat fourth behind David, Jonathan Steinberg, and Richard Chan: all significantly better players than I. All three have either stopped entirely (David) or scaled back to (arguably...my wife's position) a modest, sensible level. So, unless something untoward happens, there may be an unworthy winner of the Richmond. Modestly will prevent me from reminding the commentator of those words in the April Bulletin.

Kib: So, it's full steam ahead? Or what's your goal now?

Mel: I wish to finish the year alive!

Kib: Is all the playing affecting other areas of your life or are you loving it?

Mel: Surprisingly, in spite of playing around five hours a day, our life goes on, in a happy and healthy way. I closed my personal business last fall, so extra bridge has filled the time. Shirley and I generally eat most meals together, so we see each other probably more than she likes. I even cook a few dishes . . . nothing fancy. When summer arrived, I tried to get out for walks in the neighbourhood most days, and in the early fall I temporarily cancelled my beer consumption, so I dropped 30 lbs.

Kib: Are you dreaming of card combinations?

Mel: No! And trying not to fret over my mistakes. I'm hoping to find new mistakes to make, rather than merely repeating old ones. Often, I can do both!

Kib: Having fun?

Mel: Yes, except visits with kids and grandchildren (# 7 headed this way soon) are virtual, and that is what I miss most.

Kib: Do you have a set routine when you play?

Mel: No...other than possibly morning, afternoon, and evening. At my age, I'm not ready for midnight games. But if BBO starts some...

Kib: Are you totally focused on the game or are there distractions?

Mel: During games, Alexa and Spotify provide music of my choice, and during baseball season MLB.com gave me audio play-by play of any Blue Jay games. I missed them this year, so I cancelled my baseball and Wolfpack season tickets and my shares of others' Leaf and Raptors tickets. Will settle for TV with a good view (or audio-only if I play bridge) and no commute.

Kib: Any good story hand?

Mel: No, but I did learn that a vulnerable 2♠ redoubled making with two overtricks is worth 20 points more than 6♣ doubled just in.

Kib: What's been your best score? And dare I ask, your worst % score?

Mel: Had a few 70+ percenters. On the downside there were several high 30s and 40 percenters.

Kib: Let's say, for fun, (sorry if we jinx it) that you win the Richmond. You will become the first non-pro, non-client to win since Hans Jacobs in 1997. Who do you dedicate your incredible run to, besides Shirley?

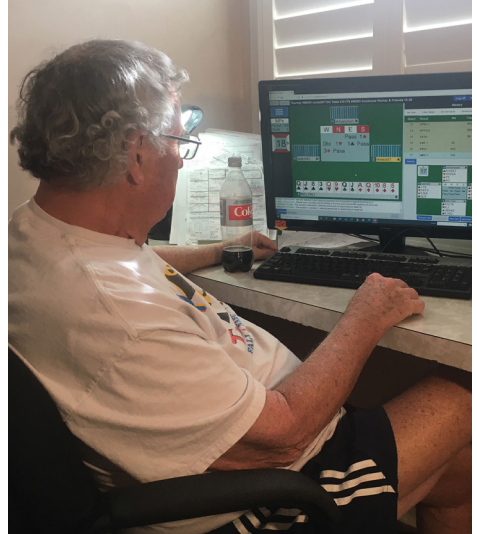
Mel: That makes responding harder, because it's Shirley all the way. But probably it must go to the 20+ partners who over the year paid their \$US to BBO to play with me. I acquired lots of points by simply playing online early and often. I may have almost bankrupted Doug Andrews! However, the actual

dedication must go to Donald J. Trump, who, had he handled the pandemic forcefully, scientifically, and intelligently, and fully shut down his country early, we probably could have had NABCs in Montreal and Tampa as well as multiple regionals, and I'd be lucky to be in the top 150 of the Barry Crane 500, and the top 10 of the Richmond.

Kib: And where would you rank this bridge achievement? Is it up there with coming in second in the Evening Swiss at the Grand Rapids Regional?

Mel: For 2020, the Richmond Trophy award is like a participant medal at the end of a house league sporting season...I 'participated' most. Hope it helped all the local bridge clubs stay solvent, and bridge can revert to some form of normalcy sooner. Sadly, it may not be until 2022 at the earliest.

Kib: Thanks, Mel. We'll get that game in soon. Best of luck the rest of the way, but you can probably go on cruise control. A well-deserved trophy for you!



Mel, at home, winning masterpoints

*creemore's online bridge etiquette, rule #43**

Upon starting a new round versus new opponents, please type in a greeting and a quick summary of your basic agreements.

For example, you could write, "Good morning! We play 2/1, UDCA, and 4th best leads." During the first round, copy that greeting; then for each subsequent round, paste it in for your new opponents. See BBO Directors Roundtable Discussion in this issue.

**rule 43 courtesy of paleale*



For Advanced Players

By David Turner

In the previous issue Jim Priebe wrote up a hand that was played well by John Gowdy. But where we might give a grade of 'A' to John, there was another line he might have adopted for which we'd give him an 'A+'.

Board 15 (rotated for convenience)

Vul: NS

Dlr: N

David Turner

♠ K 8

♥ J 8

♦ A 8 7 6 5 2

♣ 9 7 2

Bob Zeller

♠ J 10 7 2

♥ 6 5 4

♦ Q 3

♣ 8 6 5 4

Mark Siegrist

♠ A 6

♥ Q 10 9 3 2

♦ 10 4

♣ K Q J 3

♠ Q 9 5 4 3

♥ A K 7

♦ K J 9

♣ A 10

♠ K 8

♥ 8

♦ 6

♣ 9 7

♠ J 10 7

♥ - -

♦ - -

♣ 8 6 5

♠ A

♥ 10 9

♦ - -

♣ K Q 3

♠ Q 9 3

♥ K 7

♦ - -

♣ 10

West led the ♥4 and it went ♥J - ♥Q - ♥A. Gowdy now cashed the king of diamonds and then the jack. Bob Zeller, West, played the ♦Q and Gowdy ducked! Bob shifted to a club which Gowdy won with his ace.

Next, declarer played the ♦9 to dummy to run all his diamonds. With only the ♦6 left in dummy, this was the position:

Quick review: In second seat, East opened 1♥. Gowdy overcalled INT. I bid 2NT, a transfer to diamonds, so Gowdy bid 3♦ to say, "I like diamonds." I then signed off in 3NT.

At the table East pitched the ♣3 and now Gowdy could safely set up a spade to make the vulnerable game.

I think it's called a 3-suit delayed duck squeeze—sweet! Had West held

as little as the ♣J, the squeeze fails, however.

It's aggravating to have to rely on opener to have all the high clubs with diamonds 2-2 the whole time. Is there another way to make it? Yes! Think about it before reading on. Go back to the opening lead of the heart. What could John do differently at trick two?

How about playing the ♠Q from hand at trick two? If East ducks his ♠A, that's your ninth trick after you duck the diamond next. You'll score

five diamonds, two hearts, one spade, and one club. If East wins his ♠A and continues hearts, you win and play on diamonds. Yes, they will block but you can unblock them and now you can cross to the ♠K to cash six diamonds for an overtrick. If East returns a spade after winning his ♠A, win the king and duck the diamond. It's impossible they can cash more than two spades before you get your nine.

Little wonder bridge still fascinates me...there's always something new around every corner!



Great Defence!

By Jim Priebe

I was playing in one of Jackie Syer's virtual club games recently with 2020 Canadian Mixed Teams Bronze Medalist Paul O'Hara. He made a fine defensive play that got us most of the matchpoints on this deal.

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
3♣	3♥	All pass	

Paul, sitting West, led the ♣A

♠ A K 5 4
♥ Q J 7 3
♦ A 9 8 2
♣ 5

♠ J 7
♥ 5 4
♦ 6 5 4
♣ A K 10 9 7 4

What to do at trick 2?

Obviously, on lead for the last time, my partner had to decide what to play next. Paul found the diabolical switch to the ♠7!

Here is the whole hand:

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

Who can blame declarer, looking at all those beautiful diamond spots, for going up with the ace of spades? He now drew trumps, ending in his hand to lead the jack of diamonds.

East won and with nothing better to do, returned the ♠9 to the ♠10, ♠J and ♠K.

Result: we ended up -140, for 97% of the matchpoints. If Paul gets out any other card at trick two, other than the ♠7, declarer has time to set up the diamonds for two winners.

Most North's rebid 3♥ over partner's 1♥ and ended in 4♥ for plus 620. Of course, Deep Finesse* would have no trouble making ten tricks, no matter how the defence plays, but who declares like Deep Finesse?

*Deep Finesse is a program on BBO and ACBL Live. When you click on GIB (Goren in a Box), when viewing the History of a deal, the computer will tell you if the contract can be made or not. It will also indicate the number of overtricks or undertricks that are available, assuming perfect play by all players.

creemore's online bridge etiquette, rule #31

When playing in a Virtual Club game, log in to BBO 10+ minutes before game time. Now you have 10 minutes to grab your coffee, go to the washroom, send that email. To log back in to BBO one minute or even five minutes before game time stresses the directors out. See BBO Directors Roundtable Discussion in this issue.

In Memoriam



Margaret Unger (nee Woolley)

July 3, 1943 – September 3, 2020

Marg was an avid bridge player from the mid-60s to the mid-80s. Shortly after entering the world of tournament bridge, she achieved the rarity of accumulating the gold point requirements for Life Master but not enough black points, by winning a Toronto Regional Women's Pairs event with her friend, Janet Galloway. Marg had successes with other partners, namely her husband Steve, Alex Kornel, and the late Mark Dunsiger. She enjoyed kibitzing the partnership of the late John Sabino and Gord Chapman. They called her their "lucky charm." Her most lasting memory is hosting annual Christmas parties in Toronto, which were open to all bridge players. These events were extremely well attended, boisterous, and often carried on into the early hours of the morning. Rest in peace, Marg. If you wish to record condolences and/or memories, please access dignitymemorial.com.

~Steve Unger & Michael Unger (son)

The Kibitzer



In this issue...



Liz Tory
Celebrity Bridge Player



Bruce Gowdy
What I Have Learned

Deadline for the Spring 2021 Kibitzer: January 15, 2021

The Kibitzer

Andy Stark

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