



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

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ALERT – December 27, 2021

Top Online Master Point Earners at our Club

Contributed by Allen Pengelly

This table lists the individuals who have earned the most master points at our club in each of three master point bands since the beginning of November.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	45.76	1	Suzanne Edwards	14.93	1	Belinda Burt	8.10
2	Margot Stockie	27.51	2	Stephen Nantes	13.53	2	Virginia Alviano	7.31
3	Cindy Mahn	27.49	3	Kathy Russell	13.21	3	Reinhold Kauk	6.81
4	Moira Hollingsworth	22.03	4	Shelley Metcalfe	11.41	4	Steven Allen	6.46
5	Colin Harrington	21.86	5	Jim Dalglish	11.23	4	Joe Blake	6.46
6	Edith Ferber	19.72	6	Brian Kirkconnell	10.97	6	Elinor Girouard	6.21
7	David Wilson	19.52	7	Lynda Burnett	10.35	7	Molly Worden	5.28
8	Mike Peng	19.17	8	Kevin Latter	10.17	8	Kathleen Burns	5.01
9	Liz McDowell	18.92	9	ML Benjamins	10.02	9	Nancy Cattanach	4.79
10	Tom Ramsay	14.31	10	Jim Hardy	8.35	9	Donna McKay	4.79
11	Ted Boyd	14.13	11	Barbara Arthur	8.15	11	Carol Robinson	4.34
12	Dianne Aves	13.89	12	Roy Dandyk	7.95	11	Trent Robinson	4.34
13	Stephen Young	13.47	13	Tony Verhoeven	7.91	11	Martin Jones	4.34
14	Robert Griffiths	12.99	14	Andy Wilson	7.76	14	Ginny Scott	4.21
15	Neil Jeffrey	11.80	15	Susan Kerrigan	7.08	15	Pat McDonald	3.99
16	Malkin Howes	10.97	16	Joan Slover	7.07	16	Kim Hauley	3.98
17	Mary McClelland	10.91	17	Cheryl Kip	6.95	16	MJ Hartlieb	3.98
18	Bruce Roberts	10.65	18	Dave Leitch	6.48	18	Sue McDonald	3.89
19	Sandy Graham	10.13	19	Aggie Udvari	6.44	19	Brian Gaber	3.86
20	Neil Coburn	9.47	20	John Kip	6.42	20	Susan Durance	3.64
21	David Longstaff	8.96	21	Barbara Lindsay	6.04	21	Liz Graham	3.49
22	John Vandergrift	8.96	22	Sue Voll	5.83	22	Rick Arthur	3.39
23	Sharon King	8.65	23	Nanci Phelan	5.61	22	Marg Sanderson	3.39
24	Pat McMillan	6.48	24	Renate Boucher	5.60	24	Dona Reinhart	3.24
25	Peter Hannak	5.99	25	David Embury	5.44	25	Carolyn Israel	3.24

Re-Opening Plans

Contributed by Cindy Mahn, President

The advent of the Omicron variant, originally identified in late November, puts our planned re-opening date of January 17 in jeopardy. As new case counts have been increasing significantly in Ontario and the highly-transmissible Omicron has become the dominant variant, we will continue to follow updates from provincial and local health authorities on indoor gatherings. The board will meet on January 4, 2022 and reassess, and we will keep you informed.

The Guelph and London clubs, which re-opened a few months back, have reverted to online play only.



A Warm Welcome to

the following new club members. Their memberships will take effect on January 1, 2022.

- **Carol Burrows**
- **Dana Vautour**

For information on how to renew your membership or join our club for the first time, click [here](#).

Quickie

Don't lose interest when holding a bad hand.

[\(Don's Tips to Winning Bridge\)](#)

Bridge Ethics

Click [here](#) for a short – but amusing - video that illustrates some of the faux pas inexperienced bridge players can commit. How many can you find? There are more than a dozen gaffes!

Thanks to Mark Obermeyer for the tip.

PS This has been a non-paid commercial for our free [Playing Face-to-Face workshop](#) which will be offered when Omicron permits.

Here is an example of the sort of behaviour that is frowned upon. _____



"OH FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, CHARLIE, JUST LET THEM HAVE THE BID!"



New Player Profiles

Contributed by Louise Dawdy

This week we are highlighting new GRBC player Hilary Kekanovich.

Hilary first became interested in bridge through her husband Kevin Loader (profiled in a November Alert). When a Learn to Play Bridge in A Day program came up in January 2021, Hilary jumped in. LBIAD was followed by beginner lessons with Allen Pengelly and then coaching sessions.

Outside of bridge, Hilary teaches English to newcomers to Canada on a full-time basis. In her free time, Hilary enjoys reading and attending Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Although Hilary enjoys all of the symphony's signature concerts, her notable favourite is their Yuletide Spectacular and, well, anything to do with Christmas!

When asked about whether she herself is musically inclined, Hilary shared that although she doesn't play any instruments she does enjoy singing for her own pleasure, and recalled a ridiculously fun, single-day course that she took in the west of England called "Singing for the Terrified"!

During this last year, Hilary found herself rereading two books by one of her favourite authors, Bill Bryson. *Notes from a Small Island* and *Neither Here nor There* harken back to her years living in the U.K., where she met her husband, as well as her days of solo travel around Europe.

Originally hailing from Kitchener, Hilary moved away to Scotland for university and teachers' College (Craigie College of Education, University of Strathclyde). She spent many years teaching in England before moving back to Kitchener in 2008 with Kevin (now a proud Canadian citizen) and their spoiled cat, Erwyn.

Hilary has really enjoyed learning bridge. She has also discovered, like many of us, that sometimes it feels as if the more you learn and play, the more you forget! Hilary's bridge tip is to count opponents' trump cards and long suits - as they are played!

Nonetheless, Hilary is learning to roll with the peaks and valleys of playing bridge. Hilary notes that sometimes when she learns something new, she will hit a point where she never wants to see another hand. Persistence and determination carry her through - until the next challenging tip. Such is the game of bridge!

Post-pandemic, Hilary looks forward to teaching English in person.

As a postscript note of fun, Hilary was a "background artist" for British television, otherwise known as an "extra" :).

Welcome, Hilary!



Health Canada has told Santa he must use Santatizer on his hands after each household visit.

Playing in Team Games

Contributed by Ted Boyd

The Canadian Bridge Federation offered an online Canadian team championship contest for two levels of play starting on November 3 and ending in January 2022 followed by playoffs. No master points will be issued, but the teams get to play against other teams from across the country.

Our team of Bruce Roberts, Peter Peng, Adam Weisz-Margules, and Ted Boyd have so far played teams from Montreal, two teams from Saskatchewan, and two teams from the west coast.

First, let's talk about team play (as opposed to club play). There are two major differences.

1. Team play is scored with IMPs (International Match Points), while club games are scored with matchpoints.
2. Team game hands are played only twice, while club hands are played multiple times.

With IMPs, your score is compared against your single opposition, and the larger the difference between the two teams' scores, the more IMPs are awarded. So, the strategy is to bid your games, even marginal games, because missing a game when the opponents bid and make it, could mean a loss of 10+ IMPs. Ouch!

Club play is scored by matchpoints, and the winning strategy is to match the field and play the cards better than the field. Consider a hand that is played eight times: you have 24 points and eight spades between you. Do you bid 3 spades or 4 spades? Let's say half the field bids 4 spades - and half the time they take ten tricks, half the time nine tricks. In matchpoint scoring (0-7 points awarded), the pair that bid and make 4 spades get close to 7 matchpoints, while the pair that bid 4 spades and went down score close to 0 matchpoints. The pairs that bid 3 spades and made four get something like five matchpoints, while the pair that bid 3 spades and made exactly three spades score around two or three matchpoints. So, in matchpoints, you should bid exactly what you think you can make, and over 24 boards (if you play your cards right), your score will be above average.

In team play, if you bid 3 spades vulnerable and make four, you will score 170, while if the opponents bid 4 spades vulnerable and make four, they will score 620 (a difference of 450) for a 10-IMP loss. But if 4 spades goes down one, you score 140 and the opponents score -100 (a difference of 240) for a six-IMP gain. Because the odds are so lopsided, team players should bid the game if it is at all reasonable. Plus, don't forget that your opponents on the other team are also IMP players, so they too are likely to bid the same 4 spades game.

♠ A J 9 8 6 3

♥ K 3 2

♦ 9 8 4

♣ 7



♠ K 10

♥ Q 5

♦ A K J 7

♣ Q 10 6 5 4

On November 3, our **first** match, we lost to a good team from Montreal by 32 IMPs, as the opponents made more correct decisions all day. On this hand, we bid 2 spades, 4S for down one, while the opponents bid 2 spades, pass for a loss of six IMPs. And so it went.

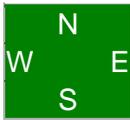
In our **second** match, we were down 20 IMPs after five boards and then gained 17 IMPs on the seventh board by bidding the correct slam! On the remaining 13 boards, there were no more big swings, but we made a series of good decisions and outscored the opponents 33 to 2 IMPs, winning by 28 IMPs.

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ K Q J 9 5 4 ♥ K Q ♦ Q 3 ♣ A Q J</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ A 2 ♥ A 7 6 5 ♦ A K 7 ♣ 9 4 3 2</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 15%;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1 N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4 ♥¹</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4 ♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4 N</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5 ♦²</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>5 N</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>6 ♦³</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>7 N</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">1. Texas transfer 2. 0 or 3 keycards 3. diamond king but not club king</p>	West	North	East	South				1 N	Pass	4 ♥ ¹	Pass	4 ♠	Pass	4 N	Pass	5 ♦ ²	Pass	5 N	Pass	6 ♦ ³	Pass	7 N	All pass		<p>On our third match, Bruce bid a nice grand slam anticipating from the bidding that he could take six spade tricks, three heart tricks, three diamond tricks, and one club trick. That was a 13-IMP gain on the way to a runaway 61-IMP win.</p>
West	North	East	South																						
			1 N																						
Pass	4 ♥ ¹	Pass	4 ♠																						
Pass	4 N	Pass	5 ♦ ²																						
Pass	5 N	Pass	6 ♦ ³																						
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	♠ 5 4 ♥ 5 3 ♦ A 9 8 6 5 4 3 ♣ 9 4																																
♠ 8 6 2 ♥ A J 8 4 2 ♦ 10 7 ♣ 6 5 3	<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A K Q 10 9 7 ♥ K Q 10 7 ♦ K ♣ A K																															
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5 N ³	Pass	6 N ⁴	All pass																														

The **fifth** match was a rock-em sock-em match with six double-digit swings. Always fun to play and discuss after the match! Here are some of the more interesting deals.

♠ J
♥ Q
♦ 9 8 6 2
♣ A Q J 10 9 4 2



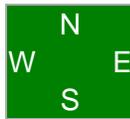
♠ A 10 7 5 3
♥ A K 9 6
♦ K 4 3
♣ 7

Board 4

We bid to an aggressive 3 NT game, down three, while at the other table our opposite number never ventured beyond 3 clubs. Ten IMPs away.

♠ Q 9
♥ 5 4 3
♦ Q J 10 9 5 3
♣ 9 3

♠ K
♥ A J 10 7
♦ A K 2
♣ A 7 6 5 4



♠ J 8 7 3 2
♥ Q 9 6
♦ 7 4
♣ Q 10 8

♠ A 10 6 5 4
♥ K 8 2
♦ 8 6
♣ K J 2

Board 5

Both E/W teams bid to 3 NT. At our table on the ♠5 lead, dummy won the ♠K perforce, and then played ♣A and another club to declarer's ♣Q and South's ♣K. South continued a diamond, which was taken in dummy with the ace, followed by a third club to South's ♣J. South then led another diamond, which dummy ducked to North's ♦9. North led the ♠Q, which held, and then a diamond to put declarer back on the board. In the end game, South took a heart and a spade for down two. At the other table, the play started the same, but at Trick 4 South switched to the ♥K, ending the defence and allowing declarer to make four.

Board 6 was a disaster, as North, not vulnerable against vulnerable opponents with ♠QJT3 ♥9 ♦AQ7 ♣AK874 and a bidding partner, chose to double the opponents' 5 hearts instead of bidding a likely 5 spades game. Both 5 hearts doubled and 5 spades made, for a double game swing and 16 IMPs away.

♠ K 10
♥ K 9 8 7 3
♦ Q 10 7
♣ K 8 7



♠ A Q 9 7 4
♥ —
♦ K J 6 5 4 2
♣ 5 3

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Dbl ¹
3 ♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl ¹
All pass			
1. take out for spades and diamonds			

Last Board

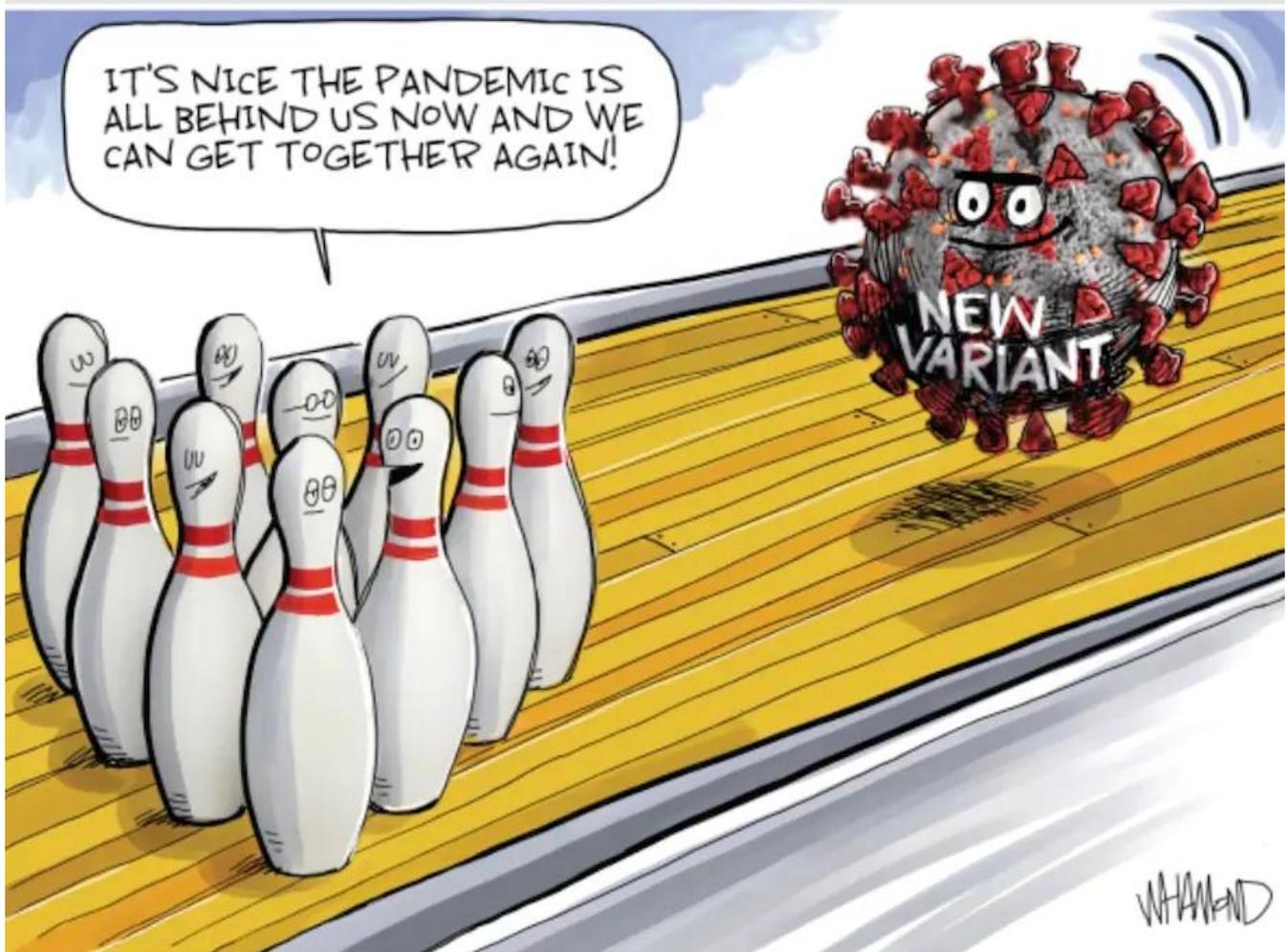
When we got to the final board, we were down 6 IMPs, all vulnerable, and the bidding went as shown. South really really wanted his partner to bid either spades or diamonds, but North elected to pass. He was vindicated, as declarer went down two for -500 points while at the other table, our opponents bid to the quiet 3 diamond contract. An 8 IMP gain.

The 8-IMP gain on the last board gave us the win by two IMPs. Our team now sits a narrow first after five matches, and the new year will bring two more matches and then the play-offs if we qualify.

Playing Cards Have Very Deep Meanings

- Do you all know what the original meaning of a deck of playing cards are?
- 52 cards for 52 weeks in the year
- Two colors for day and night
- Four suits for the four seasons and 13 weeks per season
- 12 court cards representing the 12 months
- If we add each of the cards (ace + ace + ace + ace + two + two + three + seven + eight, etc.) of the game, we will get 364.

The cards were an agricultural calendar that told about the weeks and the seasons. With each new season, it was king's week, followed by queen's week, jack's and so on, until ace's week changed the seasons and we started over with a new color. Jokers were used in leap years.



TIME YOU LEARNED YOUR LESSONS!

Given the Omicron situation, it seems quite possible that all of our plans for face-to-face lessons are going to have to be postponed once more. We will be getting in touch with everyone who has registered/paid for a face-to-face lesson. For sure our **online** lessons will proceed, and here are the online January ones. What better way to hunker down during the cold Covid winter months than to learn bridge/improve your game! Click [here](#) for more information and to register.



Playing in Our Online Games

Level: **Beginner**

Instructor: Jack Cole

Mode: Online

Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022, 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Fee: \$20 for members/ \$25 for non-members



Level: **Beginner**

Instructor: Sue Peterson

Mode: Online

Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Fee: \$25



Beginners 1

Level: **Beginner**

Instructor: Al Pengelly

Mode: Online

Dates: Thursdays, 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm, January 13, 20, 27, February 3, 10, 2022

Fee: \$85 (includes the cost of the text)



Losing It at Trick 1

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

Board 12		
South Deals	♠ J 4 3 2	
E-W Vul	♥ K J 9	
	♦ J 10 7	
	♣ A 6 2	
♠ 10 9 7 6		♠ 8 5
♥ 8 7		♥ A 6 5 4
♦ K 6 4		♦ A 8 5
♣ Q J 10 7		♣ 9 8 5 3
	♠ A K Q	
	♥ Q 10 3 2	
	♦ Q 9 3 2	
	♣ K 4	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
		<i>South</i>
		1 N
Pass	3 N	All pass

South opened 1NT. North with his flat hand simply jumped to 3NT.

West led the ♣Q and Declarer made a plan. He could see nine tricks - four spades, three hearts, and two clubs, but has to watch his communications.

Suppose South wins the first (or second) club in his hand and starts in on the hearts. East can hold up until the third heart then play clubs until dummy's ace is knocked out. Now there will be no entry to the dummy to cash the spade jack after Declarer plays his top spades, and so there will be two diamond losers, two club losers, plus the heart ace.

Instead, suppose South wins the first (or second) club in his hand and plays off the AKQ of spades, then leads a heart. East should again duck until the third heart, and now South will get his fourth spade but will have no entry to his hand to cash the long heart.

South has only one useful entry to his hand, the ♣K. The many spade entries are not useful because he needs to play off his top spades before he can cash Dummy's jack.

The only way that South can keep control of the hand is to win Trick 1 in dummy with the ♣A, clear the top spades from his hand, then lead a heart towards dummy. One of dummy's top hearts will give him an entry to dummy. Of course, he needs to save the club entry to his hand so that he can cash his long heart at the end.

If South ducks the first club, he'll have to win the second club in his hand and thus will have no entry when he needs it for the last heart.



A lot of thinking needs to be done before playing to Trick 1.

FOR OPEN PLAYERS



Dear David

You Can't Get There from Here

What do you do when you have five cards in one major and four cards in the other major and have only one opportunity to tell partner what you have? Most bid their five-bagger and often live to regret it when partner has no fit for that major - but a great fit for the other one.

D 8	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ 963 ♥ A83 ♦ K1075 ♣ 1032	P	P	1♣	2♦
W West		2♥	3♦	P	P
♠ Q1082 ♥ KJ10976 ♦ 4 ♣ QJ	E East	3♥	P	P	P
	S South				
	♠ J5 ♥ Q2 ♦ AQJ632 ♣ 765				
		3♥ W		NS: 0 EW: 0	

This is an even more extreme example, in that West has 6-4 distribution. Perhaps East was a bit cowardly in not bidding 4♥, but he worried about his partner being a passed hand and the opponents who seemed to have some values based on their bidding. Had West started with a negative double, 4♣ would have been a very attractive proposition for East. There was no opportunity for E/W to find their spade fit once West decided to focus on his heart suit. Full disclosure: I was the cowardly lion.





#53.5

I recently played in a team game called “Twin-City Cup”. It was the first round of Season 2, and we played 16 boards on a Zoom live broadcast.

The two teams (Waterloo and Calgary) were selected as the two top-tier teams (based on their performance in Season 1), and the match was billed as diamond-cuts-diamond. It attracted nearly 40 kibitzers – which was unprecedented!

The organizers identified the two best opening leads of the match – and both were made by me!

Here is the first hand.

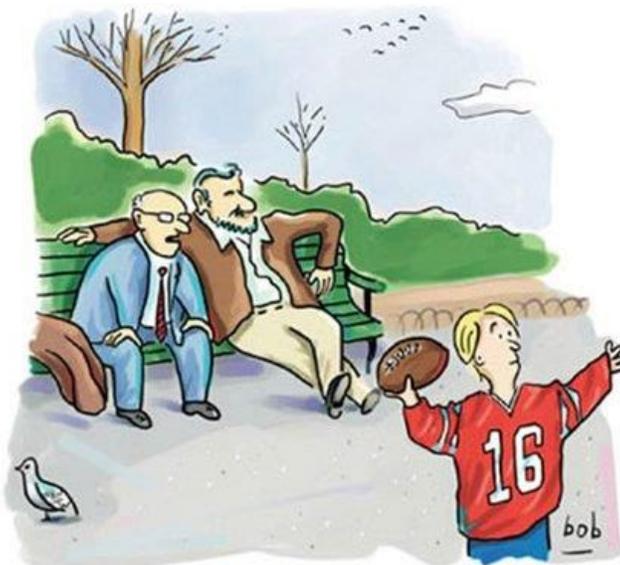
Board 8		♠ K J 10 9 4 3	
West Deals		♥ 8	
None Vul		♦ J 8 6 2	
		♣ 8 4	
♠ Q 6		♠ 8	
♥ A K 6	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> N W E S </div>	♥ Q J 9 7 4 2	
♦ A Q 10 7 5 4 3		♦ K 9	
♣ K		♣ A J 5 3	
		♠ A 7 5 2	
		♥ 10 5 3	
		♦ —	
		♣ Q 10 9 7 6 2	
West	North	East	South
<i>frankyxie</i>	<i>cthy2k</i>	<i>toughk</i>	<i>biamsan</i>
1 ♦	2 ♠	3 ♥	4 ♠
5 ♥	All pass		

Here was my thinking. From my (biamsan) perspective as defender, my most powerful weapon was my diamond void. The question was: how could I get my partner on lead so that he could lead a diamond to me? Furthermore, it had to be right away; otherwise, declarer would lose no time drawing my trumps. The only real chance was if my partner happened to hold the ♠K. I could have started by leading the ♠A in order to take a look at the situation, but it seemed very likely that one of the opponents would have a singleton spade (my partner promised six of them and I can see four in my own hand). Underleading my ace of spades was very risky, since it could easily cost our side a trick, but it was our only chance. High risk = high return!

Here is the second hand.

Board 3		♠ Q 10 9 5	
South Deals		♥ A 10 9 8 6 2	
E-W Vul		♦ 6	
		♣ 7 6	
♠ 6 4			♠ A J 7
♥ Q J			♥ K 5 4 3
♦ A Q J 9 7 5 2			♦ K 4
♣ K 8			♣ 10 9 5 2
		♠ K 8 3 2	
		♥ 7	
		♦ 10 8 3	
		♣ A Q J 4 3	
West	North	East	South
<i>frankyxie</i>	<i>cthy2k</i>	<i>toughk</i>	<i>biamsan</i>
			Pass
1 ♦	2 ♥	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	All pass		

Although my partner had bid 2 ♥, East had shown a stopper in that suit – so I figured a heart opening lead was likely to help declarer. Leading a club was unappealing, since partner might well not have the king (the opponents surely wouldn't have bid no trump with clubs wide open). The opponents had bid diamonds, and I had only three of them. So, I looked more closely at the spade suit. West hadn't opened a spade, nor did East overcall in spades or even make a negative double, so I knew East had at most three spades). I knew my partner wasn't totally broke (he had found a weak two bid) and his non-hearts points weren't likely to be in clubs or diamonds). Ergo, he might well have a spade card. So, I led my ♠2, and in the fullness of time the defence collected the ♥A, the ♣A, and three spade tricks.



“Then it struck me—nobody originally on the Paleo Diet lived past 35.”

Merry Christmas

Coming Virtual Events

- Friday, December 24, 12:30 pm, **99er game, (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Friday, December 24, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Friday, December 24, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- **NO GAME ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25**
- Sunday, December 26, 10:00 am, **499er game (18 boards) \$5**
- Monday, December 27, 12:30 pm, **49er game (18 boards @ 8 minutes) \$5**
- Monday, December 27, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Monday, December 27, 7:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Tuesday, December 28, 12:30 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Tuesday, December 28, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, December 29, 1:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, December 29, 6:45 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Wednesday, December 29, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, December 30, 9:30 am, **99er game (20-22 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, December 30, 1:00 pm, **open game (24 boards) \$5**
- Thursday, December 30, 6:30 pm, **19er game \$5**
- Thursday, December 30, 7:00 pm, **999er game (24 boards) \$5**

If you would like to play in a particular game but lack a partner that day, you can either:

♠ Log in to [Pianola](#), click on Partner Finder, and create a Partner Finder Advert. This needs to be done at least a few hours in advance of the game. OR

♠ Log in to the game in question and register yourself on the Partnership Desk tab.

If you are looking for a regular partner, contact [Cheryl Kip](#), our membership lead.

We have fun in **spades**.

We play with all our **hearts**.

We treat our members like **diamonds**.

We have diverse backgrounds at our **club**.