



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

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ALERT – May 23, 2022

Top 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 April.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	26.32	1	Paul Latimer	10.40	1	Nancy Cattanach	8.74
2	Cindy Mahn	21.46	2	Shelley Metcalfe	9.29	2	Molly Worden	6.71
3	Mike Peng	17.93	3	Suzanne Edwards	7.82	3	Louise Dawdy	6.12
4	Moira Hollingsworth	16.02	4	Brian Kirkconnell	7.78	4	Martin Jones	6.08
5	Liz McDowell	14.60	4	Stephen Nantes	7.78	5	Belinda Burt	5.88
6	Neil Jeffrey	13.22	6	Barbara Arthur	7.17	6	Richard Wehrle	5.04
7	Malkin Howes	10.81	7	Jake Liu	6.98	6	Don O'Bright	5.04
8	David Longstaff	9.51	8	Roy Dandyk	6.10	8	Jane Wilson	4.62
9	Dianne Aves	9.04	9	Kevin Latter	6.09	9	Elinor Girouard	4.43
10	Robert Griffiths	8.99	10	Andy Wilson	6.03	10	Reinhold Kauk	4.36
11	Scott Hills	8.91	11	Sue Peterson	5.99	11	Gordon Hunter	4.20
12	Margot Stockie	8.73	12	Joan Slover	5.98	12	Sue McDonald	3.95
13	Neil Coburn	8.46	13	Isabel Hetherington	5.91	13	Joani Horvath	3.82
14	Frank Fischer	8.21	14	Lissa Lowes	5.83	14	Jeannie Leforge	3.77
15	Kathy Russell	8.01	15	Kathleen Burns	5.75	15	Barb Neibert	3.64
16	Bruce Roberts	7.88	16	Bev Hitchman	5.43	15	Anita Hanson	3.64
17	Tom Ramsay	7.41	17	David Dennis	5.41	17	Shirley Clarke	3.59
18	John Hanemaayer	6.99	18	Cheryl White	5.39	18	Marg Sanderson	3.49
19	Ted Boyd	6.61	19	Sue Voll	5.33	19	Ginny Scott	3.46
20	Peter Peng	6.08	20	George Pepall	5.23	20	Virginia Alviano	3.45
21	John Vandergrift	5.99	21	Sandra Jonasson	5.21	21	Christine Kelly	3.11
22	Sandy Graham	5.61	22	Nanci Phelan	4.97	22	Patricia Malvern	3.07
23	Diane Bourdeau	5.46	23	Barbara Lindsay	4.95	22	Joanne Strong	3.07
24	Ranjith Chandrasena	5.22	24	Lori Cole	4.89	22	Diane Jones	3.07
25	Ronna Hoy	5.19	25	Jack Cole	4.89	25	Susan Durance	3.03

Club Championship Game

This week's Friday afternoon F2F 499er game will be a club championship game – extra masterpoints but no extra charge.

Masks Now Optional at Our Face-to-Face Games and Bridge Labs

Mask wearing at Grand River face-to-face games and bridge labs is optional, effective immediately, for a one-month trial period. Individual players may use their own discretion in deciding to wear a mask or not for games and labs at the club.

If this is what you needed in order to return to F2F bridge, please come out and show your support so that the club's board of directors know this is the way to go!

Friday Night Game to Change to Face-to-Face

In response to a request from the Friday night game players, the Friday night open game will become face-to-face as of June 10.

Victoria Day Bridge Lab

Although we are very loyal to Queen Victoria, it will be business as usual at Monday morning's bridge lab – making this an ideal opportunity for those with day jobs to check out our labs. Just pop in to our club at 2481 Kingsway Drive (the old Dare building) at 9:00 am. All you will need is proof of vaccination and your debit card. Our labs are very informal – if you come without a partner, we'll match you up with someone. This is a great chance to play bridge with experienced players on hand to make suggestions and answer questions. You will also make some new friends (and meet potential partners)!

ALL GAMES ARE ONLINE UNLESS DESIGNATED FACE-TO-FACE.

Coming Events

- Friday, May 20, 1:00 pm, 499er game (24 boards) (\$7 members/ \$9 non-members) **FACE TO FACE EXTRA MASTERPOINTS**
 - Friday, May 20, 7:00 pm, open game (24 boards) BBO\$5
 - Saturday, May 21, 1:00 pm, 199er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5
 - Sunday, May 22, 10:00 am, 499er game (18 boards) BBO\$5
 - Monday, May 23, 9:00 am, Bridge Lab (\$7 members/ \$9 non-members) **FACE TO FACE**
 - Monday, May 23, 12:30 pm, 99er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5
 - Monday, May 23, 1:00 pm, open game (24 boards) BBO\$5
 - Monday, May 23, 7:00 pm, 499er game (24 boards) BBO\$5
 - Tuesday, May 24, 12:30 pm, 199er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5
 - Tuesday, May 24, 1:00 pm, open game (24-28 boards) (\$7 members/ \$9 non-members) **FACE TO FACE**
 - Wednesday, May 25, 1:00 pm, 499er game (24 boards) BBO\$5
 - Wednesday, May 25, 6:45 pm, 199er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5
 - Wednesday, May 25, 7:00 pm, open game (24 boards) BBO\$5
 - Thursday, May 26, 9:30 am, 99er game (20-22 boards) BBO\$5
 - Thursday, May 26, 1:00 pm, open game (24 boards) BBO\$5
 - Thursday, May 26, 6:30 pm, 19er game (18 boards) BBO\$5
 - Thursday, May 26, 7:00 pm, 999er game (24 boards) BBO\$5
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The Answer Lady

Contributed by Susan Lawton

As the “The Answer Lady”, I have been responding to questions from “newer” players over the past several weeks. A request has been made to share those players’ questions and my responses in the Alert on a weekly basis, essentially a column for the beginner player! You can write to me at suzan2420@yahoo.ca.

Dear Answer Lady:

My partner and I are newer players and have been playing regularly against another pair with over 30 years’ experience. We share our thoughts on different hands, learning as we go. On one recent hand, my partner opened 1NT with 15 points and 5 hearts. The hand had a distribution of 3 spades, 5 hearts, 3 diamonds, and 2 clubs. Our opponents kindly suggested that my partner should have opened 1♥. They prefer to open with 16-18 and to have all suits stopped. In our case, the clubs were not headed by an honour and we had only 15 points.

Question

Having been taught in the GRBC lessons, my partner and I have been opening with 15-17 points and regularly with a five-card major. What is the right opening bid for this hand? Should we have opened 1♥? Do we need all suits stopped?

Answer

*Using the Standard American approach, which you learned in the GRBC lessons, most players would open this hand with 1NT. The usual prerequisite for 1NT is 15-17 points with a possible five-card major. In fact, opening 1NT with a five-card major is the new **normal**. There is even a box on your Convention Card to indicate this: 5-card major common (right underneath the point range for 1NT). Feel free to tick that box. You also do not need to have all suits stopped to bid 1NT. Other than having, say, two worthless doubletons such as 5-4-2-2, you should open 1NT with almost all hands that have a 5-3-3-2 shape and 15-17 points.*

Different playing partners have different agreements for opening 1NT. Your experienced opponents prefer to use a 16-18 point count. That has presumably worked for them, but any variations need to be announced and explained, either at the beginning of the round or when the 1NT bid is made.

There are several advantages to opening 1NT with a five-card major. 1NT shows a very specific hand type: 15-17 points with a balanced hand. That is a lot more information than opening 1♥ or 1♠ which reveals only that you have five-plus cards in your suit and a 12- to 21-point range. Not only is the point range narrower for 1NT, but also it tells you that your partner has a balanced hand with at most one singleton – and that an honour card.

There are other advantages to opening 1NT. One of the first things we learn as bridge players is how to bid after partner opens 1NT. Opening 1NT allows responder to evaluate his/her hand much better and use very efficient tools such as Stayman and Jacoby transfers to find a major-suit fit.

Suppose as responder you have the following hand and your partner opens 1♥.

 87543  7  Q87  Q543

You as responder have no option other than to pass, leaving the contract in 1♥ with a six-card fit in hearts. On the other hand, opening 1NT leads to a much better 2♠ contract with a not-terrible spade card fit. The bidding would proceed as follows: 1NT by Opener, 2♥ (transfer to spades) by Responder, 2♠ by Opener, then Pass by Responder. The final contract would be 2♠.

Opening 1NT also avoids a frequent rebid problem. The opportunity to accurately describe your hand has been lost if you open 1♥ and partner bids 1♠. How can you show your 15-17 balanced points **now**? Bidding 1NT after the 1♠ response would show a minimum 12-14, while 2NT would show 18-19. You can't repeat your hearts - you have only five of them. Instead, open 1NT!

Lastly, opening 1NT will make it more difficult for your opponents. It is harder for them to enter the auction after a bid of 1NT than after 1♥ or 1♠. You also make it harder for the defence to find a killer opening lead. It's conventional bridge wisdom that on the auction 1NT-3NT, the opening lead should be a major if at all possible. With that in mind, sometimes your opponents will lead right into your five-card major!

I hope that helps in your decision-making around opening 1NT.



From the Archives – Accentuate the Positive, Eliminate the Negative

Once upon a time, I was playing in a pairs game in Reno, Nevada, having picked up a totally-new-to-me partner at the partnership desk. It turned out that my new partner had a friend who was a really good bridge player, and they had come to the tournament together but had decided to take a short break from playing together. My partner and I had a pretty good game that morning, and I was pleased with how well I had played – so when my partner said to me “I like playing with you better than I like playing with my friend...” I started to get quite excited. But then my new partner finished his sentence with the words, “because you never once criticized me”. So, while his comment brought me down to earth with a thud, it also made me reflect that many players prefer a supportive partner to a virtuoso partner.

Conventional Wisdom

This is the seventh in a series of columns on convention cards. Today, we will look at the rectangle entitled **DESCRIBE RESPONSES/REBIDS**.

	DESCRIBE	RESPONSES/REBIDS
2♣ _____ to _____ HCP Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> 2♦ Resp: Neg <input type="checkbox"/> Waiting <input type="checkbox"/>		
2♦ _____ to _____ HCP Natural: Weak <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/>		2NT Force <input type="checkbox"/> New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>
2♥ _____ to _____ HCP Natural: Weak <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/>		2NT Force <input type="checkbox"/> New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>
2♠ _____ to _____ HCP Natural: Weak <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/>		2NT Force <input type="checkbox"/> New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>
OTHER CONV. CALLS: New Minor Forcing: <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Way NMF <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Weak Jump Shifts: In Comp. <input type="checkbox"/> Not in Comp. <input type="checkbox"/> _____ 4th Suit Forcing: 1 Rd. <input type="checkbox"/> Game <input type="checkbox"/> _____		

- Many people write 22+ HCP beside 2♣, but you might also consider writing 8½ quick tricks.
- Tick the **Strong** box.
- Beside 2♦, most people tick the **Waiting** box.
- On the lines to the right, you should indicate what responder's bids mean. Some people use step responses, for example. But there are two main systems.
 - If you and your partner have agreed to use 2♥ as a bust bid, write **2♥ = 0-3 HCP**. If you and your partner have agreed to use 2NT to show hearts, write **2NT = hearts**. Both 2♥ and 2NT are alertable. Using this system, the responses of 2♠ and 2NT promise at least 8 HCP and five of the suit. But there is no need to write the latter on your card.
 - If you and your partner have agreed to use a double negative (2♦ followed by 3♣, alertable) to show a bust hand, write **double negative**. Using this system, both 2♥ and 2♠ promise at least 8 HCP and five of the suit. But there is no need to write the latter on your card.
- Beside 2♦, write **6 to 10**, assuming you don't have a conventional use for this bid.
- Beside 2♥, write **6 to 10**.
- Beside 2♠, write **6 to 10**.
- Check the **2NT Force** for all three bids, and write **FEATURE** above each (unless you have a conventional use such as Ogust for the 2NT bid). Some people also like to write RONF in these spaces. RONF stands for **Raise Only Non Force**, and it just means that every bid *other than a simple raise* (for example, bidding 3♥ after your partner opened 2♥) is forcing (cannot be passed).
- Don't tick any of the boxes in the **OTHER CONV. CALLS** section unless you have an agreement with your partner to use them.

We will be circling back and discussing some of these conventions once we have completed our first pass. If you have any questions, please write to [Malkin Howes](#).

TIME YOU LEARNED YOUR LESSONS!

If you and your friends have a burning desire to take lessons on a particular topic – online or face to face - please email [Malkin](#), our lesson lead, and she will see what she can do. We currently have a group that may be interested in lessons on the **Precision bidding system**. Watch this space!

It would also be possible to offer a free workshop on face-to-face play if there were enough interest.

In the meantime, we have these recorded lessons available.

Recorded Lessons

The following recordings are available for \$10. To order one or more of them, send in your payment specifying what it is for (click [here](#) for information on how to pay).

- John Hanemaayer's **novice** workshop on **Filling out your Convention Card**
 - Stephen Carpenter's defence workshop on **Killer Signals**
 - Jack Cole's **novice** workshop on **Playing in our Online Games**
 - Stephen Carpenter's defence workshop on **Opening Leads**
 - Jack Cole's **novice** workshop on **Scoring Matters**
 - Stephen Carpenter's defence workshop on **Third Seat Play**
 - Stephen Carpenter's defence workshop on **Second Seat Play**
 - Stephen Carpenter's defence workshop on **Discards and Strategies**
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Sacrifice Against 3NT

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

Board 12	♠ J 8 2	
West Deals	♥ 2	
N-S Vul	♦ 9 8 6 4	
	♣ Q J 9 7 5	
♠ 9 7 4	♠ K 10 6 5 3	
♥ Q J 8 4	♥ A K 9 7 5	
♦ 10 7	♦ 2	
♣ K 10 8 2	♣ 4 3	
	♠ A Q	
	♥ 10 6 3	
	♦ A K Q J 5 3	
	♣ A 6	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Dbl
2 ♠	Pass	Pass	3 N
Pass	Pass	4 ♠	Dbl
All pass			

I was East and opened 1 ♠ after two passes. My hand was a bit light but in third seat, with 5/5 in the majors, 10 HCP was plenty.

South was probably hoping for no interference but now had to start with a double. My partner dug deep to find a 2 ♠ raise, passed by North and myself.

Now South, counting on an opening spade lead, jumped to 3NT. On a spade lead, he would easily win his nine tricks.

3NT was passed back to me. I had often played with and against South and felt that he would not have jumped to the vulnerable game unless he was confident of making it. I bid 4 ♠, not expecting to make ten tricks - but as a sacrifice against his vulnerable game. I expected him to hold a long running minor suit and some sort of stopper in the other three suits.

South doubled my 4 ♠ and led a top diamond. I lost three spades, a diamond, and a club to go down two for a score of -300. About half of the field played in a N/S partscore and half made the vulnerable game, so our -300 was average. Every South player that bid NT over E/W spade bids got his desired spade lead.

If we had defended 3NT and my partner had led a spade, our score would have been -600, for a very poor score.

My partner, of course, pointed out that he might have led a heart, giving us the first five tricks and the only positive E/W score for a cold top.

I robbed him of the chance to make a brilliant lead, so we will never know.



It's probably a bad idea to count on brilliance from your partner.



Dear David

Misdirection (The Woods Gambit)

The Italian Blue Team was arguably the best team in the world more than a half-century ago. I was recently reading a book about them when I saw something fascinating. In a 3NT contract. Declarer Giorgio Belladonna won the opening lead and promptly led a low diamond from three small in his hand towards Jxx in dummy! Why would he do that? If you were a defender, would you not think that some of declarer's values are in diamonds and you should therefore look to the other suits for tricks? His fear was that once he knocked out a side-suit ace, the opponents would quickly switch to diamonds as their only chance to beat the contract.

The first time I ever saw this gambit used was in a club game. I was playing with Larry Woods many years ago and he used it with spectacular success. In all the years since, I have never had the opportunity (bravery?) to give it a try. Until now.

W	N	E	S
♠ J987	♠ 43	♠ AK2	♠ Q1065
♥ 984	♥ K10752	♥ Q63	♥ AJ
♦ AKQ53	♦ 864	♦ 92	♦ J107
♣ 6	♣ 942	♣ AK873	♣ QJ105

Contract: 3NT
 Dummy: D
 Puppet Stayman: Explain
 3NT East
 0 0

South led the ♠5 and I won the first trick with the 7. Even my grandmother could make 10 tricks at this point, but her grandson started thinking (horrors!). If the diamonds are not 3-3, where is my ninth trick? I could duck a diamond and make nine tricks IF diamonds split 4-2 and IF they don't switch to hearts. (I couldn't know the hearts were blocked.) It finally struck me that now was the time to try the Woods Gambit. I led a diamond to the ace and a heart to the queen. This would not only be my ninth trick if North had the AK of hearts, but also - if South had either or both honours - I would still have the diamonds to fall back on as long as South did not continue hearts. In fact, even if South continues hearts after taking my queen, I am still alive if hearts split no worse than 4-3. On this particular hand, I would be down one if South continued hearts. 😊

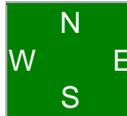
But my expert-level opponent decided that clubs was my weakness, so he led the ♣Q, his partner played the nine, and I ducked (he'll never get this right, so let's see what happens). He then led a low club and I won the 7 and all the rest of the tricks for a lucky top score.

Even though it was a silly way to play the hand, I was so pleased that I decided it was worth a piece of cake. About one minute after the hand was over, my opponent sent me a chat message: "You got me 😊". Now I had ice cream to go with my cake.

For Intermediate *Jake's*
Play a Bad Hand Well

#73

♠ Q 10
 ♥ K 9 6 4 3 2
 ♦ K Q 6 4 3
 ♣ —



♠ K 9 8 7 4 3
 ♥ Q 10
 ♦ 10 8
 ♣ K 10 6

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			2 ♠
3 ♣	4 ♠	5 ♣	Pass
Pass	5 ♠	6 ♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All pass	

After a fierce competition, my partner and I ended up defending a doubled slam. My partner, North, led the ♠Q, which Declarer took with the ♠A in his hand. Declarer then led a small spade from his hand and ruffed it in dummy, my partner contributing the ♠10.

- At Trick 3, Declarer cashed dummy's ♥A, playing the ♥J from his hand, while my partner and I followed suit.

Declarer then started cross-ruffing like there was no tomorrow.

- At Trick 4, he led a heart from the board and ruffed it in his hand. My partner and I followed suit.
- At Trick 5, he ruffed another spade in dummy and my partner discarded a small diamond.
- At Trick 6, he led a heart from the board and ruffed it in his hand. I discarded a spade, while my partner followed suit.
- At Trick 7, declarer ruffed another spade in dummy and my partner discarded a heart.

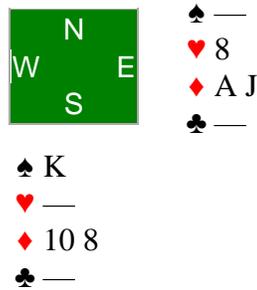
Finally tiring of his cross-ruff, Declarer tackled trump.

- At Trick 8, he led dummy's last trump, the ♣9, from the board. I covered it with my ♣10 to Declarer's ♣J, which won the trick as my partner discarded a heart (void in trump).
- At Trick 9, declarer played the ♣A and my partner discarded a small diamond. Declarer watched my partner's discards carefully and threw away a small diamond from the board. I played my ♣6 of course.
- At Trick 10, Declarer put the lead into my hand with his ♣Q. My partner discarded another small diamond, and Declarer also pitched a diamond from the board.

What would you do now?

SOLUTION

These are the cards you can see after ten rounds.



It's your turn to lead. The big question is whether to lead a spade or a diamond.

It looks dangerous to lead into the board's ♦AJ, while it looks safe to lead your good ♠K. Let's think about it a bit more.

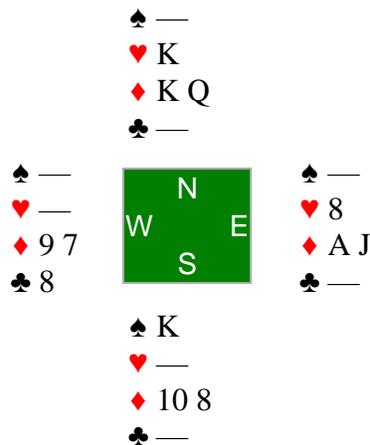
Declarer originally held four spades, one heart, and six clubs, meaning that his remaining cards are two diamonds and a club. Your partner must hold the ♥K and two diamonds.

If you lead the ♠K, what can your partner discard? If he discards his ♥K, dummy's ♥8 will become good, while if he discards a diamond, dummy's ♦J may get set up. In other words, your partner will be squeezed if you lead a spade.

What about if you lead a diamond? If your partner holds ♦Kx or ♦Qx, it is true that you will give Declarer a free finesse. But the truth is that if your partner holds ♦Kx and declarer holds ♦Qx, Declarer doesn't need your help to finesse your partner's ♦K. Whereas, if your partner holds ♦Qx and Declarer holds ♦Kx, Declarer would have already claimed.

In addition, it is entirely possible that your partner holds both the ♦K and the ♦Q. In that case, when you lead a diamond your partner can force the dummy to take the trick with the ♦A (otherwise, the opponents are down immediately) and then have to lead away from the board giving your partner the setting trick.

You can't be sure your partner holds both ♦K and the ♦Q, but in fact you have zero chance of defeating the contract if you lead the ♠K. So, cross your fingers and lead a diamond. It will work out, as shown below.



What a partner! No wonder he pulled out the red card.

And you're no slouch either - I can assure you that your partner won't be looking for a new partner - at least for a while. 😊

Here is the full deal.

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

You should always squeeze the opponents - but never your own partner (unless it's your spouse, of course).

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 strive to open 1NT at our **club**!