



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

## ALERT – April 1, 2024

Click [here](#) to access our regular game schedule.

### Looking Ahead

- ♥ [Toronto Easter Regional](#), March 26-31
- ♥ **Our club will be open on Good Friday, March 29** (every Friday that we play bridge is a good Friday).
- ♥ **The March 29 Friday night game has been cancelled due to the Toronto Regional.**
- ♥ Dave Quarrie will be giving a mini-lesson on **Play of the Hand in No Trump** at the Monday morning bridge lab on April 1.
- ♥ Due to low attendance, **the Tuesday night online team games have been discontinued.**
- ♥ **Club Championships for F2F games**, Week of April 7 – extra masterpoints, no extra cost. **As well, we will be celebrating our 12<sup>th</sup> birthday with cake on April 9, 10, and 12.**
- ♥ Barbara Arthur will be giving a mini-lesson on **DONT (Disturbing Opponents' No Trump)** at the Monday morning bridge lab on April 8.
- ♥ **The April 19 Friday night game has been cancelled due to the Gatlinburg tournament.**
- ♥ Malkin Howes will be giving a mini-lesson on **Bid One More Again?** at the Monday morning bridge lab on April 15.
- ♥ Cindy Mahn will be giving a mini-lesson on **Slam Bidding (Suits)** at the Monday morning bridge lab on April 22.
- ♥ [Buffalo Spring Sectional](#), April 26-28
- ♥ Lynda Burnett will be giving a mini-lesson on **No Trump Declarer Play** at the Monday morning bridge lab on April 29.

---

### We're Turning 12

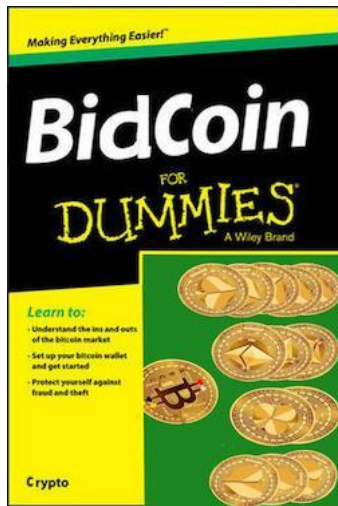
*Contributed by Joe Blake, Special Events Lead*

GRBC is celebrating a birthday in April!! To acknowledge this important event, the club will be serving birthday cake the week of April 8. We will be having cake at the following games.

- Tuesday afternoon Open game - April 9
- Wednesday afternoon 299 and 749 games - April 10
- Friday afternoon 749 game - April 12

So, get your sweet tooth ready and join us for some bridge and cake.

---



## Cashing in on Crypto: *BidCoin*<sup>™</sup> For Dummies

In these high-tech times, your financial advisor may be recommending a puzzling new investment called *cryptocurrency*. To learn more, I recently interviewed **Evan Splitz**, who represents the crypto, *BidCoin*<sup>™</sup>. Here is our conversation, with the hope that it may help YOU invest wisely.

**Evan, what is crypto?** Thanks for asking. A cryptocurrency is a *virtual currency* designed to act as money without the need of a third party, such as a government or a bank. Crypto is created, distributed, traded, and stored on computer networks, using a decentralized ledger system known as a *blockchain*. Crypto is a “volatile” asset, with its value fluctuating faster and more than regular cash.

**Uh, sure. Got it. Okay then. What are BidCoins<sup>™</sup> and who created them?** *BidCoins* are crypto issued by the *Acme BidCoin LLC (ABCL<sup>™</sup>)*. ABCL is a member-based organization, that sanctions the creation and registration of *BidCoins*, and monitors the amount in circulation. ABCL has about 118,000 members, and issued 5.6 million new *BidCoins* last year!

**NEW BidCoins? Where do BidCoins come from?** Regular crypto is “mined”, like gold or silver, but not in a “pick and shovel” way. Crypto mining is done on powerful computers, executing intensive mathematical algorithms, that are actually validating crypto transactions. In contrast, *BidCoins* are mined using **human** resources, acting in groups. Pairs of miners work together to earn *BidCoins*.

**Tell me more!** *BidCoin* mining has three phases. *Bidding*, where one pair of miners vies with another pair for a *BidCoin* contract; *Working*, where the successful bidders try to complete their contract; and *Tallying*, where the results are calculated. All three phases are then repeated, against the same pair or a different pair. This may go on for several hours, or sometimes several days!

**Wow! ... so all miners are rewarded for this hard work?** Not exactly. Think “**prospecting**”, rather than mining. They pay for the enjoyment of mining. In dollars, or in virtual *BB<sup>™</sup>* dollars - that’s *Build BidCoin* - if they prospect from home. Those miners who “play their cards right” receive *Miner Points<sup>™</sup>*, or **MPs**. They are verified and registered with ABCL, and periodically the MPs are converted to *BidCoins*.

**And if they don’t play their cards right?** Well, sometimes it’s zero MPs, but as Steve Jobs once said, “The journey is the reward”. Ha ha! Either way, great success or humiliating failure, we publish their names and results online for all the world to see at *ABCL Live*.

**Yes, thanks for that... So, MPs and BidCoins must REALLY be worth quite a lot then?**

Well, um, the value of a *BidCoin*, like all crypto, is not fixed. In fact, you might say they are “priceless”. They are “collectables” more than “spendables”. The ABCL computer will keep track of how many *BidCoins* you have, though. And – and this is important - **how many more you need!**

**Say what? How many more?** Well, you need so many *BidCoins* to advance in the ranks of *BidCoin* miners. And some of the *BidCoins* must be red and gold and silver.

**So. Many. Questions. Miners have RANKS?** Oh yes. The first step up is Junior Miner. With fewer than 50 MPs you’re “A Miner 49er, and we call you Clementine”. Ha ha! Everyone aspires to be a Life Miner, and see their name in *The Alert* or even the *BidCoin Bulletin*™ magazine! Climbing the ladder is a fun part of the whole experience.

**And there are coloured BidCoins? So, actual coins? And regular ones are.... what?**

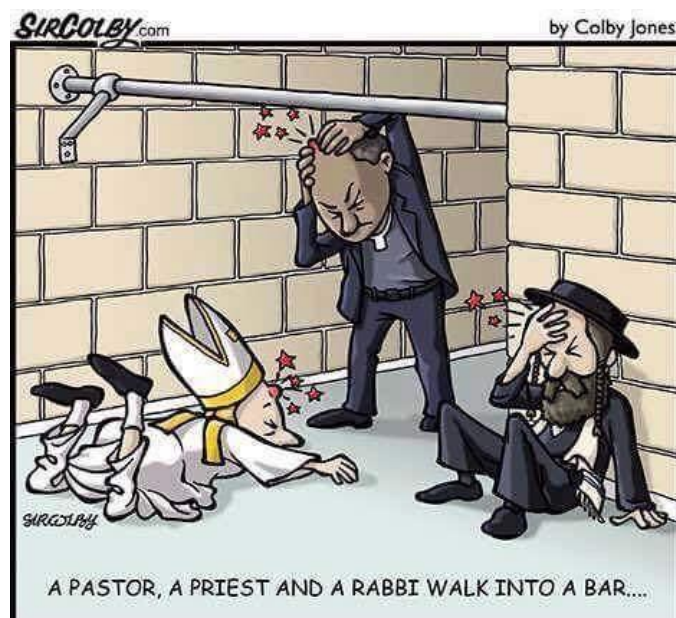
**Clear?** Uh, no. No actual coins. You must *imagine* them. Like unicorns. Regular imaginary *BidCoins* are black. There are four other imaginary colours, given at special mining competitions. And colourless *BidCoins* too, for online play, but nobody understands *those* at all.

**Right. Back to their value...what can I do with my BidCoins? Is there a currency exchange or a loyalty program?** No, not usually, but here is some breaking news! On April 1 **only**, when MPs turn into *BidCoins*, members can also transfer them to a valid Coffee Card! One for one. So, 400 MPs become 400 Coffee Points, and that, my friend, is worth a free coffee!!

**That’s ... awesome! So, what can I get with MY 7 MPs?** Umm, water in a paper cup, that you can also Roll to Win! **AND motivation to have fun prospecting online and at your local club!**

**Thank you, Evan.** My pleasure, Avril. Good luck with your crypto adventures!

Contributed by Avril Lafou, Get Rich BidCoin Club (GRBC)





**Gavin Wolpert**  
**at a tournament in Iceland, January 2024**

*Contributed by Lissa Lowes*

Gavin Wolpert was born in 1984, in Toronto, Ontario to a bridge-playing family. His mother Hazel, a bridge teacher, started to teach him bridge when he was only seven years old. Hazel's Bridge Club is still operating and is home to many champions – Gavin, Darren, Jenny, and Hazel Wolpert - and continues to be a popular and successful club.

Later, Gavin trained with the Canadian junior bridge team gaining lots of experience. He has won many major championships such as the North American Bridge Championships (seven times!), Silodor Open Pairs, and the Blue Ribbon Pairs. He is a Grand Life Master.

Gavin is one of the founders of [bridgewinners.com](http://bridgewinners.com), a wonderful website which offers tons of information about bridge, and can answer almost any question you have. It also provides the latest scoops on bridge people and scandals.

Over the past decade Gavin has made the world championship semi-finals three times with three different partners. All three partners were at very different levels from each other; however, the one constant was the system they played. Gavin tries his best to play a very simple, understandable system that needs very little memory work. That doesn't mean he plays no conventions; it just means he limits himself to the ones that are most important and come up a lot. He has a website [wolpertbridge.com](http://wolpertbridge.com) where he offers lessons about the conventions he uses. (There is a charge for these lessons.)

Gavin is a big proponent of [intobridge.com](http://intobridge.com), as explained in [this video](#).

Gavin now lives in Florida and is married to Jenny Wolpert, formerly Jenny Ryman of Sweden, another professional player, whom he met at the Bermuda Bowl in Monte Carlo in 2003. They have three children.

In his profile on [bridgewinners.com](http://bridgewinners.com), Gavin says "I love bridge". I think that is clear!

---





## Bean There Done That

*Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer ([GrandRiverBridgeClubTreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:GrandRiverBridgeClubTreasurer@gmail.com))*

Pop quiz: what's the maximum number of people who can be in the club at the same time?

Answer: 100 (or slightly less than 25 tables of bridge since the director is a 'people' too)

This number is set by the Fire Marshall based on their criteria on physical office spaces. We rarely come close to this limit for our games, but I'd sure like to see us try 🤪. It's a different story for the special events that attract larger crowds (for example, a Barb Seagram visit, a sectional tournament, a club birthday party, or an annual meeting).

---

## Volunteers Needed to Play Bridge

*Contributed by Joan Slover and Randall DeKraker*

It's a tough job but somebody has to do it!

We are looking into setting up a booth at the K/W Multicultural Festival in Victoria Park on the weekend of June 22-23. The goal would be to attract more people to our game.

We would need volunteers to play bridge for approximately two hours, along with additional folks who would be there to explain things to those who stop by with questions. With teams of five (four players plus an explainer), we could be looking for upwards of 30 players (if everyone takes only one shift).

There will be a sign-up sheet at the club (beside the calendar of events), and we are very interested to see how many of you might be willing to take part. Please contact [Joan Slover](#) or [Randall DeKraker](#) if you have any questions or suggestions.

---





## Monday Morning Bridge Lab

The mini-lesson at last Monday's bridge lab had a somewhat different format. Jack Cole (who can't be at the club in person) prepared a video on how to play on BBO. Our tech lead Paul Latimer (shown standing in the lefthand photo) was on hand to help our bridge labbers navigate these uncharted waters. Also there to help were George Pepall and Jim Dalglish (Jim took these photos).

Our bridge labs are pretty special. For only \$8 the participants get free mini-lessons on various topics and get to meet a rotating cast of the club's more experienced players. After which, they play hands and get to ask as many questions as they like. At these sessions, they make new friends and form new partnerships. And, of yes, they sometimes get to hang out in our wonderful teaching room!

These bridge labs for newer players take place every Monday morning (except holiday Mondays), starting at 9:00 am. The sessions are very informal and relaxed. The participants don't need to come with a partner or even arrive on time. This is an excellent way for beginner/novice players to learn the ropes and improve their skills.



# Conventional Wisdom

This is the ninth in a series of columns. Today, we will look at these sections.

<p><b>SIMPLE OVERCALL</b>          1 level _____ to _____ HCP (usually)          offer 4 cards <input type="checkbox"/> very light style <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Responses</b>          New Suit: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> NFConst <input type="checkbox"/> NF <input type="checkbox"/>          Jump Raise: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>DEFENSE VS NOTRUMP</b>          vs:          ♠ _____          ♥ _____          ♦ _____          ♣ _____          Dbl: _____          Other: _____</p>
<p><b>JUMP OVERCALL</b>          Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>OVER OPP'S T/O DOUBLE</b>          New Suit Forcing: 1 level <input type="checkbox"/> 2 level <input type="checkbox"/>          Jump Shift Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/>          Redouble implies no fit <input type="checkbox"/>          2NT Over Limit+ Limit Weak          Majors <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>          Minors <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>          Other _____</p>
<p><b>OPENING PREEMPTS</b>          Sound Light Very Light          3/4-bids <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>          Conv./Resp: _____</p>	

## In the SIMPLE OVERCALL box

- Write **6 to 16** in the slots beside **1 level**. This just means that you have to have at least 6 HCP to overcall at the one level but not more than 16 HCP (in which case you would make a power double instead).
- Under Responses, check the **NF Constr** (Constructive) box. This means that if you bid a new suit in response to your partner's overcall, he is encouraged to bid on but doesn't have to.
- Don't worry about the Jump Raise line for now.

## In the DEFENSE VS NOTRUMP box

- There are all kinds of defences to the opponents' opening 1NT bids – DONT, Cappelletti, Landy, Meckwell, etc. Some partnerships use different defences when their opponents' opening no trump bid is strong (15-17 HCP) and when their opponents' no trump opening is weaker (that's why there are two columns). If you use any of these defences, be sure to write what each bid means on the line beside it (you shouldn't just write DONT, for example). If you and your partner agree that you will simply bid your suit (no conventions) when you want to interfere, just write **NATURAL** through the box. Natural bids are the only defences that are NOT alertable.

## In the JUMP OVERCALL box

- Tick the **Weak** box to show that your jump overcalls are the usual weak two bids.

## In the OPENING PREEMPTS box

- This box is where you show how strong your three- and four-level pre-empts are. Most people tick both the **Sound** and the **Light** boxes and then underneath Sound write **V** (for vulnerable) and underneath Light write **NV** (for non-vulnerable). In other words, you are more cautious when vulnerable.
- Leave the **Conv./Resp.** line blank.

## In the OVER OPP'S T/O DOUBLE box

Leave this section blank for now unless you have already discussed this with your partner.

**FOR INTERMEDIATE PLAYERS**



**Second Hand Low?**

*Contributed by Robert Griffiths*

It was getting towards the end of a long team game. E/W had had most of the good hands and N/S were getting a bit weary.

West dealt and opened 1♥ and North bid 2♦. East bid 2NT, promising at least a limit raise of partner's hearts.

South found a raise to 3♦. West now bid 3♥, which was alerted as showing a minimum opener with no interest in game opposite a mere limit raise. Now, North dug deep and found his second suit, coming in with a 3♠ bid.

East liked his fourth heart and ♦K and had no interest in defending spades, so he raised to 4♥, which was passed out.

<b>Board 8</b>											
West Deals	♠ A J 9 7										
None Vul	♥ Q J										
	♦ A 7 6 3 2										
	♣ 10 9										
♠ K 10 5	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q 8 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ K 10 7 6 4 2		♥ A 9 8 3									
♦ J 8		♦ K 5									
♣ A 6		♣ Q 7 4 3									
	♠ 6 4 2										
	♥ 5										
	♦ Q 10 9 4										
	♣ K J 8 5 2										
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>								
1 ♥	2 ♦	2 N	3 ♦								
3 ♥	3 ♠	4 ♥	All pass								

North led a tricky ♥J and West won the first two tricks with the ♥A and ♥K, then led a diamond towards Dummy, won by North with the ♦A.

North got off lead with the ♣10; Declarer played low from Dummy and won with his ace, then crossed to the ♦K and led a low club to South's jack.

And here we sat with South on lead.



	♠ A J 9 7	
	♥ —	
	♦ 7 6 3	
	♣ —	
♠ K 10 5	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;">           N W      E S         </div>	♠ Q 8 3
♥ 10 7 6 4		♥ 9 8
♦ —		♦ —
♣ —		♣ Q 7
	♠ 6 4 2	
	♥ —	
	♦ Q 10	
	♣ K 8	

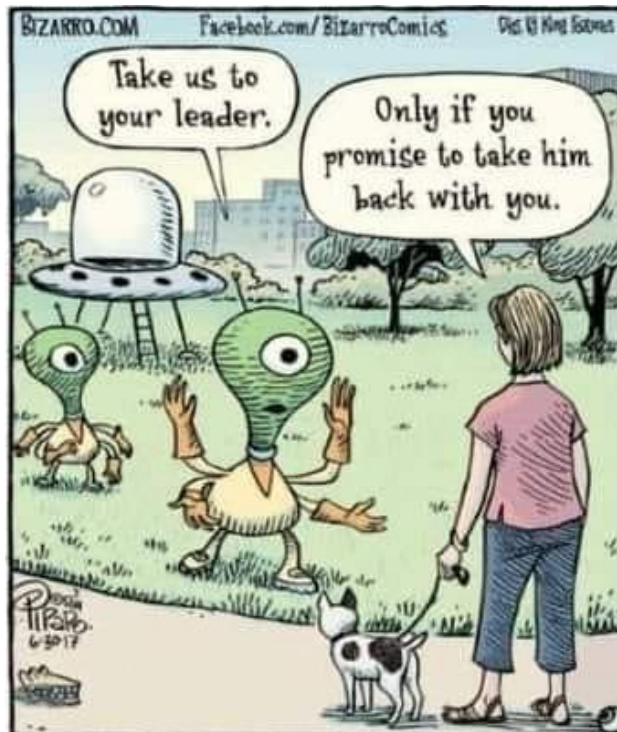
West had lost a diamond and a club and could afford only one spade loser. He had managed to force the defenders to lead spades (any other return will cost South the game-going trick).

South led the ♠6 and West was at the crossroads. North was sure to hold the ♠A and, on the auction, was the favourite to hold the ♠J as well. If North holds these cards, there is only one play to guarantee just one spade loser. West has to resist the urge to play the ♠5 or ♠10 and instead throw his king into the fire. (If West plays the ♠5 or the ♠10, North can play his ♠9 or ♠J and force Declarer to take the trick with dummy's ♠Q. Now Declarer has to lose two spade tricks.)

North can do no better than win the ♠A and return a small spade. But West, having already decided that North has the jack, can play low from Dummy and win his ♠10, making his contract.

West did very well to strip the hand to the point where North had to lead a spade away from his jack. It's the only way he could avoid two spade losers.

**👉 As with virtually all bridge “rules”, there are exceptions to second hand low.**





## Dear David

### He Who Hesitates is Lost

The things I write about every week were originally supposed to be answers to problems that occurred at the table (hence the “Dear David” moniker). I have gotten very few questions from our members, so I have tried to come up with hands-of-interest to talk about. I usually write them in bunches such that our esteemed editor usually has two or three months worth of articles on hand. She has informed me that the well is almost dry, so if you have something you want me to talk about, email me at [davidbaker@rogers.com](mailto:davidbaker@rogers.com) and I will try to help.

South Deals  
All Vul

♠ AJ8643	♠ Q	♠ 10972
♥ 108	♥ AQ974	♥ 2
♦ 4	♦ Q863	♦ J10952
♣ AQ104	♣ K93	♣ J85

♠ K5
♥ KJ653
♦ AK7
♣ 762

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♠	pass	1♥
4♠	5♥	5♠	4♥
pass	pass	pass	dbl

Dear David,

I opened 1♥ and my partner cuebid 2♠, showing at least a limit raise (10+ HCP) of my suit. East took quite a bit of time before he passed the 2♠ bid. West then decided to try a 4♠ sacrifice over our 4♥ game. As you can see, the heart game made five for +650 but we got only +500 for beating 5♠ - a bottom board. Do you see 4♠ as a legitimate attempt if there had been no hesitation?

The problem with an online game is trying to ascertain why there was a hesitation. Maybe he had to use the washroom or he had a singleton spade and seven diamonds to the ace and was trying to decide whether he should compete. Lots of interpretations by everyone at the table as to the reason for the hesitation. Playing F2F, it is easier to determine why there was a hesitation.

It's different when it goes: 1♥ 1♠ 2♥ 2♠ 3♥ P 4♥ P (long hesitation) P 4♠. Now we know the reason for the long hesitation. He certainly isn't thinking about introducing a new suit at the five-level. A complaint to the director would be warranted in that situation.

So, the question remains - did West act on unauthorized information? He probably interpreted it as spade support and took a flyer. However, unless partner held four spades AND a singleton heart AND the ♣J, he might be going for -800 and a bottom. He got lucky at your expense. I would not feel comfortable changing the result just because your opponent made a gross overbid and got lucky this time. He will not be so lucky the next five times he makes this silly bid.

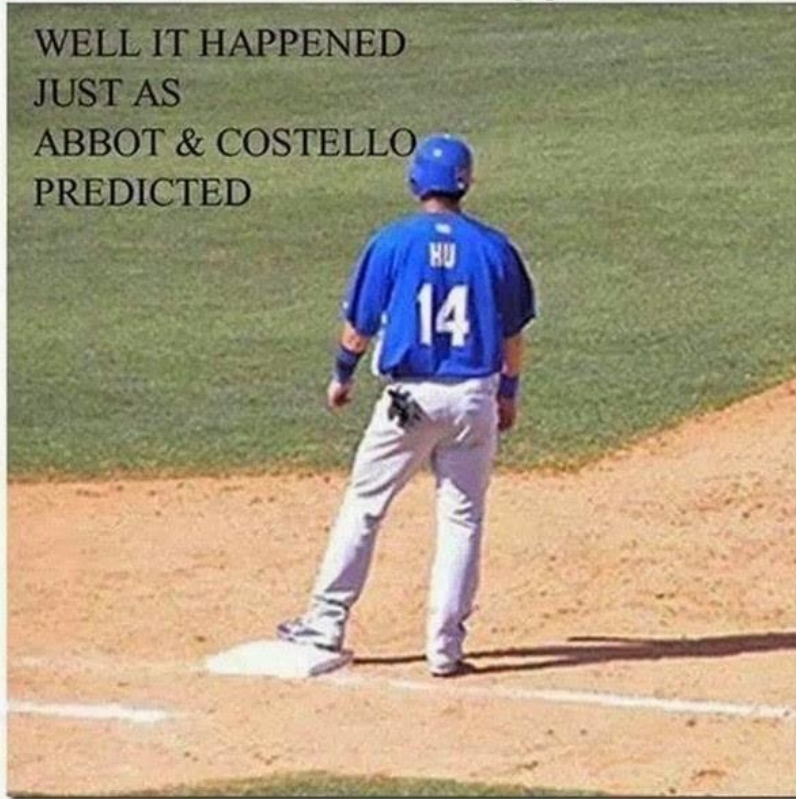
I cannot find a compelling reason to change the result at an online game. However, if a similar situation were to re-occur with the same pair, I would probably rule against them because they would seem to have a penchant for using "UNAUTHORIZED INFORMATION".

Finally, I would like to say that most Open players "police" themselves when their partner makes a long hesitation. Even if they were planning to take another bid even though their hand was not quite good enough to take that action, they must bend over backwards to NOT take that action because they have "UNAUTHORIZED INFORMATION" from their partner.

---

## Well...it FINALLY happened

WELL IT HAPPENED  
JUST AS  
ABBOT & COSTELLO  
PREDICTED



It Took 70 Years...

If you don't get it, ask an adult...

---

I have an inferiority  
complex, but it's not a  
very good one.

# 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 February.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	26.90	1	Judy Beauchamp	12.79	1	Brian Gaber	10.07
2	Ted Boyd	20.23	2	Jack Cole	11.30	2	Paul Raymond	8.95
3	Edith Ferber	18.71	3	Rick Arthur	10.82	3	Andrew Widdis	8.68
4	Kathy Russell	15.34	4	John Kip	9.51	4	Mark Sherwood	8.28
5	Lori Cole	13.59	5	Cheryl Kip	9.51	4	Doug Fickling	8.28
6	Bob Griffiths	13.50	6	Carolyn Baechler	9.09	6	Randall DeKraker	7.21
7	David Wilson	13.36	7	Susan Durance	8.98	7	Sheila Charters	6.86
8	Roy Dandyk	13.22	8	Jim Dalgliesh	8.90	8	George Rybiak	6.02
9	Mike Peng	12.65	9	Louise Dawdy	8.46	9	Robert Darby	5.65
10	Stephen Young	12.21	10	Denis Williams	8.21	10	Sharon Nesbitt	5.60
11	Neil Jeffrey	11.84	10	Regina Williams	8.21	11	Richard Rybiak	5.38
12	Steve Carpenter	10.67	12	Kim Wakeford	8.11	12	Debbie Miethig	5.32
13	Ton Verhoeven	8.57	13	David Dennis	7.67	13	Russel Kerr	4.58
14	Malkin Howes	7.89	14	Kevin Latter	7.42	14	Julia Prendiville	4.53
15	Dave Quarrie	7.82	15	Robert Gilck	7.28	15	Pat Pietrek	4.33
16	Sharon Boyd	7.26	16	Elinor Girouard	6.44	16	Peter Gaasenbeek	4.10
17	Thea Davis	6.53	17	Renate Boucher	6.35	17	Kathy Chandler	3.93
18	Dave Embury	6.36	18	Janice Pengelly	5.97	18	Ken Hundert	3.77
19	Wayne Schroeder	6.26	19	Nancy Cattanach	5.80	18	John Snowden	3.77
20	Scott Hills	6.14	20	Brenda Semple	5.49	20	Phil De Montigny	3.62
21	Moirra Hollingsworth	6.04	21	Cheryl White	5.36	21	Jeannie Leforge	3.38
22	Barbara Arthur	5.82	22	Doug Grant	4.69	22	Pat Gascho	3.34
23	John Hanemaayer	5.40	23	John Aldridge	4.62	23	Richard Wehrle	3.24
24	Margot Stockie	4.92	24	Joe Blake	4.56	23	Don O'Bright	3.24
25	Diane Bourdeau	4.29	25	Martin Jones	4.50	25	Chris Beck	3.19

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

- For both online and F2F games, log on 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. *When you use Partner Finder, it will allow folks to see your contact information. If you have posted a Partner Finder ad, kindly remember to check your phone and email and, when you've found a partner, delete your ad. Someone who replied to your ad may be waiting for a response.*
- For online games only, log in to the game in question and register yourself on the Partnership Desk tab (or look to see if someone else has already registered there).

If you are looking for a regular partner, contact [Joan Slover](#), our membership lead. Please let her know what sort of game/partner you are interested in – your playing level, your available time slots, F2F and/or online, and any other pertinent information.

We have fun in **spades**.  
 We play with all our **hearts**.  
 We treat our members like **diamonds**.  
 We use BidCoin at our **club**.



# HAPPY EASTER

