



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

## ALERT – October 5, 2020

### 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 between August 1 and September 29.*

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	52.27	1	Allen Pengelly	18.02	1	Ron Lawrence	20.48
2	Mike Peng	36.83	2	Kathy Russell	16.69	2	Suzanne Edwards	17.82
3	Margot Stockie	34.77	3	Brenda Semple	14.72	3	Brian Silva	15.72
4	Cindy Mahn	32.37	3	Sue Moses	14.72	4	Noah Pace	14.29
5	Colin Harrington	28.54	5	John Hanemaayer	14.59	5	Salvatore Pace	12.13
6	Edith Ferber	20.74	6	Lori Cole	13.99	6	Brian Kirkconnell	11.69
7	Liz McDowell	19.22	7	Sandy Graham	13.52	7	Stephen Nantes	10.91
8	Ted Boyd	19.21	8	Adriaan Kempe	9.87	8	Barbara Arthur	10.61
9	Robert Griffiths	18.73	9	Kevin Latter	9.79	9	Nanci Phelan	10.40
10	Moira Hollingsworth	17.73	10	Janet Howell	9.46	10	Shelley Metcalfe	9.69
11	Dianne Aves	16.97	11	Jack Cole	9.16	11	Robert Gillick	9.34
12	David Longstaff	15.62	12	Paul Latimer	9.09	12	Judy Bailey	7.19
13	William Christian	15.19	13	Keith Prosser	8.95	13	Marlene Dopko	7.17
14	Stephen Young	14.88	14	Charles Walkey	7.37	14	Susan Durance	5.73
15	Wayne Jordan	14.68	15	Andy Wilson	7.24	15	Marion Allan	6.51
16	Tom Ramsay	14.67	16	Sandy Lee	7.19	16	Virginia Alviano	6.30
17	Neil Jeffrey	13.02	17	Judy Widdecombe	6.94	17	Steven Allen	6.24
18	Bruce Roberts	12.75	18	Jim Veitch	6.89	17	Joe Blake	6.24
19	Diane Bourdeau	11.37	19	George Pepall	6.47	19	Edward Murphy	5.85
20	Malkin Howes	10.75	20	William Sherman	6.45	20	Andy Martinek	5.77
21	Pat McMillan	9.58	21	Sue Voll	5.44	21	Barb Neibert	4.99
22	Adrian Record	9.56	22	Fred Young	6.21	22	Susan Kerrigan	4.78
23	Stephen Carpenter	9.32	22	Mary McClelland	6.11	23	Susan McDonald	4.58
24	John Moser	8.00	24	Rebecca Kalbfleisch	5.60	24	Casey Baron	4.37
25	Peggy Pearson	7.94	24	Jim Dalglish	5.60	25	Anita Hanson	4.18



*Congratulations to the following local players who have advanced to the next level.*

Club Master

- **Casey Baron**

Sectional Masters

- **Robert Giilk**
- **Shelley Metcalfe**

Silver Life Master

- **Mircea Giurgeu**
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## **Learning the Lingo: STRATIFICATION**

*By Allen Pengelly*

When you play in bridge games, whether it be at the physical club, the virtual club, or tournaments, the games (if they are large enough) are “stratified”. Stratification is a process whereby players with fewer master points (MPs) are given an opportunity to win master point rewards in a game even if they do not finish in the top 40% of teams.

Usually games are stratified into three sections. When you look at the results sheets, there will usually be ranks under “A”, “B” and “C”. When playing at the club or at a tournament, the division by MPs is usually a pre-determined number. For example, a 499er game could have a “B” stratification at 199 points and a “C” stratification at 99 points.

In the online games it is a little different (and has changed recently). In the online games, all of the pairs are ranked by their average number of MPs and divided into relatively equal stratifications. When the stratifications (or “strats” for short) are unequal, then more pairs are put into the bottom stratifications. (There are some exceptions – any subs as well as pairs containing a robot or pairs containing a player without an ACBL number are automatically part of the “A” strat).

Each stratification is treated as its own tournament for the purpose of awarding points (the formulas are outside the scope of this article).

Lastly, if your pair would win MPs for your performance in more than one strat, you get the higher amount of all the possible rewards.

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**I finished Netflix today.**

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## Counting Losers or Winners?

*Contributed by Robert Griffiths*

It is often said that when playing in suit contracts, your success depends on the number of losers in the hand. But not always.

### **Board 26**

East Deals

Both Vul

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♦	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	2 ♦
All pass			

East opened 1♦ and South found himself passing. West bid 1♠ and East tried 1NT. This was passed back to North (who hated to let opponents play low level contracts). North doubled, with support for the two unbid suits, expecting South to bid one of them.

This was passed to South who considered passing, hoping for great things from the diamond suit, but decided to bid 2♦ - even though he knew that North probably had very little diamond help. 2♦ was passed out.

Note that East can do quite well in 1NT if he plays the black suits carefully.

West started with the king and another club. East won the ace and played a third round, ruffed by South. South then played the ace and king of diamonds only to discover that he had a sure diamond loser. This, along with the two clubs he had already lost plus the three looming spade losers, made it look as if he would go down in 2♦.

But the defence had left him a chance! South crossed to the ♥A, ruffed the board's last club, then crossed again to the ♥K, and ruffed a heart with his last small trump. And just like that, he had made eight tricks: six tricks in diamonds (three ruffs, plus the ace, king, and queen), and the ace and king of hearts. In other words, he made his contract before the defence could bring home their six winners.

In the ending, E/W found that their trump trick and third spade trick were played on the same trick. The defence can rain on South's parade if they lead hearts or spades instead of clubs. It turned out that the club leads gave South the timing (via the heart entries) to make use of all of his little trumps.

N/S earned a top board for making +90 on the hand. All the other E/W pairs got plus scores because they were allowed to play in part scores in NT or spades.

**👉 Occasionally, it's better to count your winners in suit contracts.**

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IRISH  
POST

**Neighbour: Hello Mary, how are you?**

**Mary: I'm homesick.**

**Neighbour: But this is your home.**

**Mary: I know, I'm sick of it!**



Protected by fashion



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## Ode to the Bridge Lab

*Contributed by Debbie Miethig*

### **BC (Before COVID) – How we learned to play bridge in a non-competitive environment**

- Monday mornings
- No need for a partner because someone will be looking for one
- Jean Farhood, Bill and Bev Pope and a host of other bridge club volunteers willing to answer your every question
- Faced with uncertainty as to what to bid? lead? Just raise your hand and someone would come and help coach you through what to do...NOT tell you what to do, but guide you
- Meeting new people

***How I have missed you! Not just me but others too!***

### **DC (During COVID)—So Now what?**

Along comes BBO Bridge Base Online. I don't really want to play many competitive games...at least not yet, I am still learning! My friends and I discover that there is a "Casual" play section in BBO where we can set up a table and play with each other.

PROBLEM: The cards disappear way too fast and then there's that timer pushing us to hurry up and make up our minds. The only way to chat is on the bottom with typed words. If we don't go quick enough, we get "booted" out!

DISCOVERY: "Start a Teaching Table" AND set up A "Conference Call".

Now we can talk to each other and ask questions like "Okay, partner your bid means...am I right?" No pressure except from your friends to hurry up and make a decision. However, your friends are learning too from the discussion...they start to ask questions. The cards don't disappear at the end either! They stay there for us to really analyze what we should have done. They disappear only when our "host" requests a new deal. What can get any more perfect than this?

ANSWER: Add a coach - BBO would call that person a “kibitzer”.

Not just any coach but someone from the Grand River Bridge Club who also helped out at the bridge labs! Add him or her to our table and also to our conference call. A coach there for the asking who can see your cards and hear your voice. George Pepall has been our coach for the last three weeks. We have only one more session with him. We offered to pay George for his time, but when he declined payment we decided to make a donation to the club instead. We are all learning this new way of doing things together, and George has been a wonderful coach! Thank you, George!

I have been playing with three different groups on the “PRACTICE” side of BBO using the “Start a Teaching Table” for a few months now. Mainly people from our Bridge Labs on Monday mornings, and now with my spouse Mike and another couple in the evening hours. Mike had been unable to attend the bridge labs, so now we are able to play together.

Who knows how much longer we will be playing this way, but I can tell you this: my confidence level and opportunity to play has grown immensely. There are at least two other groups now setting up a teaching table, conference call, and using a coach from the club.

Thank you, Malkin Howes for helping us secure George as a coach, plus Malkin tells me she has another bridge coach on hand who is ready to step up. For more information, [email Malkin](#).

### **Today - Bridge Lab Online**

- Any time that is convenient for you, your three friends, and a coach
- Personal assistance at your table only - like a private lesson!
- Meeting members from our club
- Helping out our club with a donation (suggested rate: cost of attending a weekly bridge lab for each session you participate in)

If you would like instructions on how to do this yourself, please [contact me](#). I am more than willing to share!

***Bridge Lab, Bridge Lab, yes how I miss you!***

***But this new way of learning will have to do...until we meet again!***

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This is the first year I’m not going to Fiji because of COVID-19. Normally, I do not go because I am poor.



# Dear David

Here is an interesting problem: how to get to seven spades.

**10<sup>♦</sup>**

W	N	E	S
♠ 8 ♥ KJ105432 ♦ 5 ♣ J975	♠ K975 ♥ AKJ74 ♣ A1064	♠ 643 ♥ Q976 ♦ Q1032 ♣ 82	♠ AQJ102 ♥ A8 ♦ 986 ♣ KQ3

Bidding sequence:  
 N: 1NT  
 W: 3♣ (Dbl)  
 N: 5NT  
 W: 7♠ (Pass)  
 N: 7♠ (Pass)  
 E: 7♠ (Pass)  
 S: 7♠ (Pass)

Score: 0-0 (7♠ South)

The final contract gives declarer many options for success. The ♣J falling in three rounds, finessing the ♣10, the ♦Q falling in two rounds, or finessing the ♦J. There are other more complicated chances and one less complicated — hoping your opponent makes a mistake. 😊

This hand is not presented in order to talk about the play. I want to talk about a little-known convention called “Grand Slam Force”. 3♣ is Puppet Stayman, asking opener for a four- or five-card major, and 3♠ shows five spades. 5NT agrees that spades (the last-bid suit) is trump and asks partner to bid 7♠ if he has two of the top three honours in spades. If opener has only one of the top three honours, he will bid 6♠. If he has none, he will bid 6♣ and pray.

You may not have an occasion to use this convention for many years, but it is a useful little tool to have when you need it.

Do you have a “what-should-I-do” bridge-related question for me? Email me at [DearDavid@hotmai.com](mailto:DearDavid@hotmai.com) and I will try to answer all your questions, either privately or in the Alert.

## Virtual Bridge Clubs vs Face-to-Face Bridge Clubs

Dianne Aves has sent in [this link](#) to an article about the importance of bridge clubs to seniors in terms of their well-being and meaningful engagement in a community. The article investigates the question of whether virtual bridge clubs can “replicate the same sense of belonging and quality of interaction” that can be obtained from physical bridge clubs.

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# LESSONS NOT YET LEARNED



## Bidding Suit Slams Using Control-Showing Cue Bids

There is still time to sign up for this **novice** workshop on Wednesday, October 14, from 9:30 am until noon. The teacher is Malkin Howes.

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## Introduction to Two Over One

Two over One (2/1) is the most popular bidding system used by experienced players. 2/1 is an extension of Standard American that introduces a few minor changes and makes it easier for partnerships to bid to games and slams that would be hard to get to using Standard American. The students will learn all of the features of 2/1: game-forcing bids; forcing 1 no trump; Bergen Raises; and cue bidding for slams.

Players need not be afraid of switching to 2/1, as most bidding stays the same. The first workshop will focus on the theory and the second workshop will focus on practising 2/1 bidding, using the magic of Shark Bridge.

Regular partners may find it beneficial to attend these workshops as a pair.

Level: **Intermediate**

Instructor: Stephen Carpenter

Date: Wednesday, October 28, 9:30 am – noon & Wednesday, November 4, 9:30 am - noon

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

*It is not necessary to sign up for both workshops, but players who attend only the second (ALL PLAY) workshop should have a working knowledge of two over one.*

Click [here](#) to for more information and to register and [here](#) for information about paying.

Just a reminder about Guelph's Ray Millie Memorial Tournament tomorrow (October 3). Click [here](#) for more information (scroll down to the middle of the page).

*Our Club's Activities this coming week....*

- Friday, October 2, 12:45 pm, **499er game** (26-28 boards)
- Friday, October 2, 7:00 pm, **open game** (26-28 boards)
- Saturday, October 3, 12:45 pm, **199er game** (20-22 boards)
- Monday, October 5, 12:30 pm, **49er game** (18 boards @ 8 minutes)
- Monday, October 5, 12:45 pm, **open game** (26-28 boards)
- Monday, October 5, 7:00 pm, **499er game** (24 boards)
- Tuesday, October 6, 12:30 pm, **199er game** (20-22 boards)
- Tuesday, October 6, 12:45 pm, **open game** (26-28 boards)
- Wednesday, October 7, 12:45 pm, **499er game** (26-28 boards)
- Wednesday, October 7, 6:45 pm, **199er game** (20-22 boards)
- Wednesday, October 7, 7:00 pm, **open game** (24 boards)
- Thursday, October 8, 9:30 am, **99er game** (20-22 boards)
- Thursday, October 8, 12:45 pm, **open game** (26-28 boards)

We have fun in **spades**.

We play with all our **hearts**.

We treat our members like **diamonds**.

We use the grand slam force all the time at our **club**.