



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

ALERT – August 28, 2023

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

Looking Ahead

- ♥ Our **new 99er game** on Saturday mornings is on hiatus until September 9.
 - ♥ All of our F2F games from Monday, August 21 – Friday August 25 are **club championship games** = extra masterpoints, no extra charge.
 - ♥ **Tonight's open game (August 25) has been cancelled** due to the Goderich tournament.
 - ♥ [Goderich Sectional](#), Saturday, August 26 – Sunday, August 27
 - ♥ [Labour Day Silver Point Sectional Bridge Tournament](#), Toronto, Friday, September 2 – Sunday, September 4
 - ♥ **No Monday morning bridge lab** on September 4 (Labour Day)
 - ♥ All our F2F games during the week of Monday, September 4 – Saturday, September 9 are **club championship games** = extra masterpoints, no extra charge.
 - ♥ [71st Annual St. Thomas Jumbo Tournament](#), Saturday, September 9 - Sunday, September 10
 - ♥ **Intermediate Bridge Lab**, 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm, Thursday, September 14
 - ♥ **Competitive Bidding module** begins, Friday, September 15, 9:30 am – noon
 - ♥ [Learn Bridge in a Day](#), Saturday, September 16, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm
 - ♥ **Overcalls/Doubles module** begins, Tuesday, September 19, 9:30 am – noon
 - ♥ **Beginners 1 lessons** begin, Saturday September 23, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm
-



Congratulations...

to the following local players who placed first, second, or third in their section at last weekend's 750 Niagara-on-the-Lake tournament.

- **Salvatore and Noah Pace**, 2nd in A, Saturday Pairs
-

I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about it, then I realized I am somebody.....

Our club is looking for a **volunteer co-ordinator**. The job is to find volunteers for positions needed at the club, identified primarily by the Management Team but also by the Board.

If we had a volunteer co-ordinator, we would start by tasking him or her to find us a bulletin board boss, a club photographer, a designated spare, and a kitchen king (or queen).

For more information about any of these positions, hit reply.



Somerset Maugham on Bridge

“Bridge is the most diverting and intelligent card game that the wit of man has so far devised.

“I would have children taught it as a matter of course, just as they are taught dancing; in the end it will be more useful to them, for you cannot with seemliness continue to dance when you are bald and potbellied; nor, for that matter, can you with satisfaction to yourself or pleasure to your partner continue to play tennis or golf when you are well past middle age. But you can play bridge so long as you can sit up at a table and tell one card from another. In fact, when all else fails – sport, love, ambition – bridge remains a solace and an entertainment.”



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, essentially a column for the beginner player! You can write to me at suzan2420@yahoo.ca.

Question

Hello again Answer Lady, We are the four “newer” bridge players and have returned with another hand to share and more questions to ask.

In the hand below the contract was 3♦ making 6♦! East opened the bidding with 1♦ after South passed, and West jumped to 2♠ to show a good hand and a five-card spade suit. After a pass by North, East repeated those diamonds with a 3♦ bid. Sitting West, I assumed that 3♦ bid showed a weaker hand with lots of diamonds, and so I passed. I didn’t think I could bid 3NT with my hand especially since I didn’t think my four little diamonds carried any value.

Answer Lady where did we go wrong? How should the bidding have gone? Should West have bid 5♦?

10♦

N 3+
♠ 10852
♥ Q98532
♦ 7
♣ K5

Par Score: -1700
Par: NS 7♥x-6

W 3+
♠ K9743
♥ A
♦ 10852
♣ A109

	W	N	E	S
			1♦	Pass
	2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
	Pass	Pass		

E 3
♠ A
♥ K6
♦ AQJ9643
♣ Q82

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	3	0	7	3	1
S	3	0	7	3	1
E	9	13	6	10	12
W	9	13	6	10	12

S 3+
♠ QJ6
♥ J1074
♦ K
♣ J7643

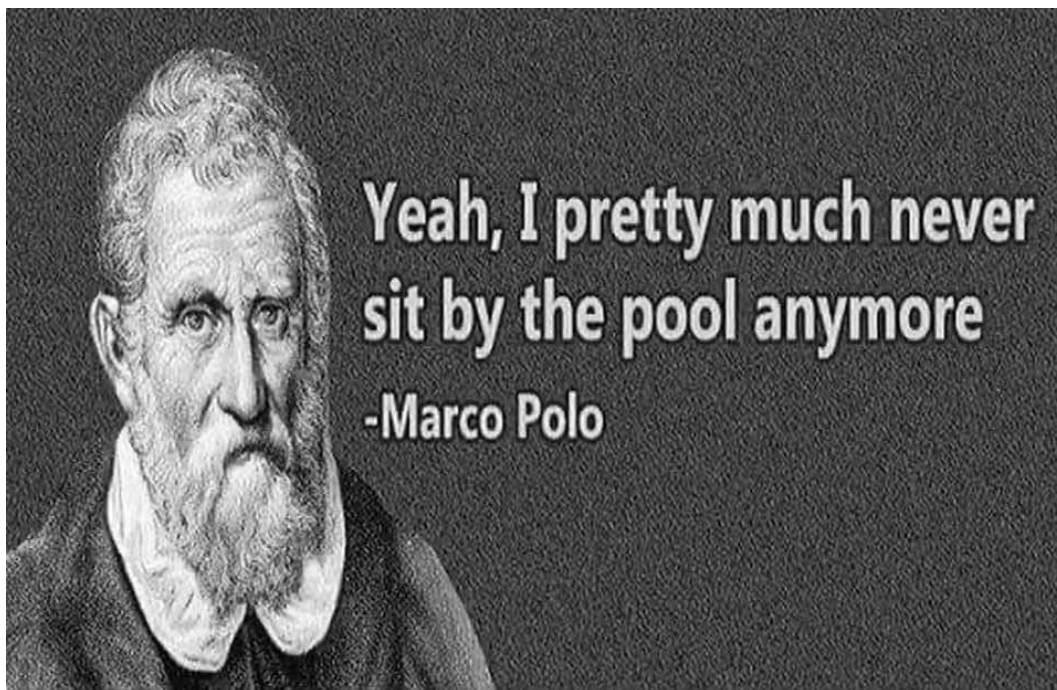
3♦ East
0 0

Answer

East/West has a total of 27 points, East having 16 points and West 11. Somewhere, somehow, East/West need to be in game!

East elected not to open the bidding with 1NT - 16 HCP but an unbalanced hand with a long minor suit, in this case diamonds. (In fact, 1NT would be an illegal opening bid on this hand because it has a singleton AND a doubleton.) The challenge for this hand occurred when West decided to jump to 2♠ after that 1♦ bid. A jump shift by West to 2♠ is sometimes reserved for a weak hand, showing at least six spades and very few points. Other players might use that jump shift to show a much stronger hand. West's hand meets none of those requirements. After 1♦ by East, West should not bid 2♠, but instead should bid just 1♠. Too much bidding room is taken up by a jump shift to 2♠, and it puts pressure on East. How will they now show that 16-point hand after 2♠?

After a 1♠ bid by West, East can now comfortably bid 3♦, showing that intermediate hand, 16-17 points and a long diamond suit, with at least six diamonds. While this bid is not forcing, West with 11 points and four cards in partner's suit should not pass. They can comfortably bid 5♦ with those four small diamonds. Point-wise, it doesn't exactly meet the recommended 28 points for a minor suit game contract, but West's hand has additional shape, including a singleton ♥A and four cards in partner's suit. That extra diamond is worth its weight in gold!



Canada at the 46th World Team Championships

Canada has sent four teams to the world team championships in Marrakesh, and they are generally doing pretty well. You can follow their progress [here](#). If you're really keen, you may be able to watch some of the matches on BBO's Vugraph.



Player Profile – William Christian

William was born in 1945 in Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia), where his father was serving in the RCAF. Two years later, William's family moved to Toronto where William grew up.

Whenever he saw his parents setting up the card table in the living room on Saturday night and putting a bottle of Crown Royal on the sideboard, William knew that a bridge game was about to happen. Thus, bridge came to be associated with fun (*which it still is for William, ed.*) He liked the game so much that he founded a bridge club at his high school.

When William started university at Toronto, he discovered the challenge and excitement of duplicate bridge. He played in the regular weekly games at Hart House, as well as at the legendary Kate Buckman's Bridge Club. William was on the U of T bridge team which played in tournaments hosted by other universities such as Rochester and Waterloo.

Once, William and his teammates deployed the Italian team's blue club bidding system to knock Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela out of a regional knock-out teams game. With this, William reached the apex of his bridge career at the age of 21. The nadir quickly followed. On the way to a tournament at the University of Waterloo, the embers from his pipe set fire to the passenger seat.

After graduating from U of T, William went to the London School of Economics for his PhD, which he finished in 1970 at the age of 24. He played on the LSE bridge team as well, but then he got engaged to Barbara and they were married in London in 1969.

After LSE, William got a teaching position at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick. He snagged a wonderful partner there and they played regularly through the 70s. At one point, William was simultaneously club champion at Amherst, Spring Hill, and Moncton!

But after he came to the University of Guelph in 1979, his bridge career went on hold. Instead, William published 11 books and wrote regularly for *The Globe and Mail* and the *K/W Record* for almost 20 years – garnering an entry in Canadian *Who's Who*.

William returned to bridge in San Miguel, Mexico one winter and, when he returned to Canada that spring, he decided to give Dave Baker's club in Kitchener a try. As luck would have it, Dave fixed him up with Malkin and they won! And, for a brief while, William thought they were lords of creation, but then he found out that all the really good players were in Gatlinburg that week....

Since then, William has played regularly at local clubs and online. William very much enjoys online bridge because he is protected from his chief vices – bidding out of turn and revoking. Unfortunately, others of his vices - like letting his mind wander and forgetting simple conventions – carry over to the new medium.

The most important piece of advice William was ever given was: no one makes a mistake on purpose.

That includes your partner.

TIME YOU LEARNED OUR LESSONS!

- Every Monday morning (except holiday Mondays), **newer players are invited to our club to play a bunch of hands** (but not keep score). These sessions are very informal and relaxed. At these bridge labs, you can discuss the hands with and ask questions of the experienced lab leaders(s) present. You 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. SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS: There will be free mini-lessons on selected Mondays, starting on Sept. 18 when the Answer Lady will teach negative doubles.
- On selected Thursday evenings starting on September 14, your coach Liz McDowell will preside over **a session of practice hands for intermediate players**. Often, the session is preceded by a mini-lesson. Liz makes herself available to provide constructive advice and tips to hone your skills. There is no need to prepay or to register in advance. Just show up on Thursday, September 14 at 6:30 pm, bringing along any problem hands you may have been wondering about. You can come solo or with a partner, but regular partners may find it beneficial to attend as a pair.
- [Learn Bridge in a Day](#) will give the uninitiated a taste of bridge and hopefully start them down the path towards bridge joy. We already have 14 people signed up for Saturday, September 16, so it's going to be a party! Click [here](#) to register.
- **Beginners' lessons** will start the following Saturday, September 23. We have 13 players signed up so far (a good number for bridge players), but let's get some more! Click [here](#) for more information and to register.



Competitive Bidding

Those nasty opponents have interfered with your bidding! What do you do now? Competitive bidding can be the most challenging aspect of bidding. This is a three-part workshop on competitive bidding.

The first workshop will focus on when to overcall, how to respond to partner's overcall, making take-out doubles, responding to take-out doubles and cue bidding the opponents' suit to show a fit.

The second workshop will focus on the use of doubles after two bids have been made.

- **Negative doubles** are used after partner opens and the opponents overcall.
- **Responsive doubles** are used when the opponents open, partner overcalls, and the other opponent bids.

The third workshop will focus on balancing: that is, passing at first and later entering the bidding to prevent the opponents from winning the contract too cheaply. Other topics will include what to do when the opponents have bid your best suit and when to bid a second time if your partner passes.

The participants will be given lots of hands to bid and play that will practise the new concepts. Regular partners may find it beneficial to attend this workshop as a pair.

Instructor: Stephen Carpenter

Level: **Novice/Intermediate**

Venue: Our teaching room

Dates: Friday, September 15, 22, & 29, 9:30 am – noon

Cost: \$\$60 members/ \$70 non-members

Click [here](#) to register.



Dear David

The Forcing Pass

Dir: S

Vul: None

5

14 8

13

♠ A K 10
♥ 10 8
♦ A Q J 9
♣ 10 8 7 3

♠ 7
♥ 9 5 3
♦ K 10 8 4 3 2
♣ Q 6 5

♠ Q 9 5 4 3 2
♥ Q J
♦ 7 6 5
♣ K 2

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

2

Here is my definition of a forcing pass: If our side (N/S in the example hand) **voluntarily** bid to a game (not pushed there in a competitive auction), there are only two things that can happen when the opponents are making an **obvious** sacrifice – we bid on in the hopes that we can make it, or we double the opponents. Here is how it would work on this hand. If South doubles, he is saying he has minimum strength. If South passes instead of doubling, he is saying that he has extra strength. Now North must either double or bid 5♥. If South bids 5♥ instead of doubling or passing, he is showing even more extra strength. If South passes and North chooses to double, and then South pulls the double to 5♥, he is showing the best hand he could possibly have, given the previous bidding.

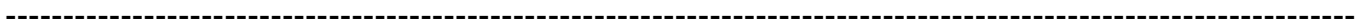
South	West	North	East
1♥	dbl	2♥	2♠
4♥	pass	pass	4♠
pass*	pass	pass**	

Here is a simpler chart to show what it all means
 Double = minimum
 Pass = “I have a little extra – you decide partner”
 Bidding on = “I have a lot extra, partner”
 Pass & then pulling the double = “I have a max, partner”

*-- Forcing pass
 **-- Not allowed

So, your question after all this might be “Why would I bother to do this?” Let us suppose you have an easy route to a 4♠ contract that you think would be duplicated at virtually every other table. Everyone would get an average score. At your table however, your opponents try to sacrifice in 5♣. If you get less than the value of your +420 in 4♠, you will get a bottom score. Your choices are: 1) bid 5♠ and hope to make it, or 2) double their 5♣ contract and hope for down three, garnering +500. Anything less than that gets you a bottom. Some would say “What if I double and they make it?” As I said, anything less than +420 is a horrible result. It will not always be clear as to what the results are at other tables, but it is usually clear that you are heading for a bad result unless you make a choice that gives you a chance.

On the hand above, South did not have a lot of high-card strength, but he passed because he had an extra heart, prime values (two aces and a king) and a hopefully-useful diamond void. North was so worried about how weak his hand was that he refused to do anything but pass. I am suggesting that despite his lack of high card strength, he should hope that his singleton spade would be of value and he should bid 5♥. After a spade opening lead, declarer can make at least 11 tricks. Curiously, +450 or +300 or +100 would all have been an average score on this board because two pairs were +480, one pair was +50 and one pair was -140. Nevertheless, playing forcing pass gives you a better chance at getting it right than guessing.



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

No. 121

♠ Q2
 ♥ QJ
 ♦ AKJ
 ♣ AKJ853

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ AK109876
 ♥ 97
 ♦ 864
 ♣ 10

West	North	East	South
		1♦	3♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥ ¹
Pass	6♣	Dbl	All pass

1. two keycards, no ♠Q

Sitting South, I was declaring an aggressive contract – 6♣ missing the ace and king of hearts. Luckily, West apparently believed in the aphorism that leading partner's suit may not be right but is never wrong! He led the ♦3. Phew, I was still alive - but on life support. I took the trick with dummy's ♦K.

- At Trick 2, I led the ♠2 from dummy, catching East's ♠J (good news), which I took with my ♠K, West following suit.
 - At Trick 3, I led the ♣10 from my hand to West's ♣4 and dummy's ♣K which won the trick, East following suit.
 - At Trick 4, I led the ♣3 from dummy, East played the ♣6, and I ruffed with ♠A (all my remaining trumps were now boss 😊). Unfortunately, West didn't follow suit but rather discarded a small heart.
 - At Trick 5, I led a trump to dummy's ♠Q. West followed suit and East discarded a diamond.
 - At Trick 6, I ruffed another club in my hand and West discarded another heart.
- If you were in my shoes, what would you do now?

SOLUTION

This is what you can see after six tricks have been played.



You have three potential losers: two hearts and one diamond. One of your losers can be parked on the ♣A, but you still need to get rid of another one.

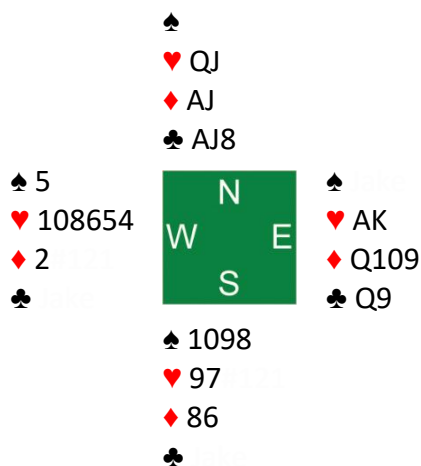
Three scenarios come to mind.

1. Develop a long club. For this to work you will have to have two dummy entries but you don't. Next!
2. Finesse West for the ♦Q, but that finesse is doomed given the bidding. Next!
3. What about a strip and endplay? You have nothing to lose.

For the strip and endplay to succeed, you must first remove all of East's safe-exit/winning cards. Here is how.

Cash your three remaining trumps, keeping the ♦AJ and ♣AJ in dummy and watching East's discards like a hawk (West's hand is immaterial).

Here is the full hand after six tricks have been played.



As you can see, East will be able to shuck his ♦9 on your first trump (comfortably) and the ♥K on your second trump (unwillingly). But he will start squirming when you lay your last trump on the table.

- If he discards his ♥A (best defence), you cash the ♦A and throw East in with the ♦J. He will take the trick perforce and then be forced to lead away from his ♣Q9 into your ♣AJ tenace.
- If he discards a minor card instead, he will have to bare one of his minor-suit queens, and all you need to do is figure out which one. Cash the ♦A and, if the ♦Q does not fall (most likely), then cash your ♣A. One way or another, a minor-suit queen will fall with a thud and you will make one or other of your minor-suit jacks.

Poor East has no defence against this line of play.

Here is the complete deal.

	♠ Q2	
	♥ QJ	
	♦ AKJ	
	♣ AKJ853	
♠ 543		♠ J
♥ 10865432		♥ AK
♦ 32		♦ Q10975
♣ 4		♣ Q9762
	♠ AK109876	
	♥ 97	
	♦ 864	
	♣ 10	

Moments like this are why you play bridge.



Jake Liu, Alert Contributor

You've read Jake's columns, you've got the T-shirt, now here's the scoop on Jake the person – in his own words.

When I write my columns, in the back of my mind I am always trying to help our players improve their skills so they can hold their heads high and have more fun at the table. I love to hear from readers who tell me that they benefit from my articles.

I have always liked games, and I started off with chess. It so happened that one of my chess friends was barely making a living because of his poor health, and so he was offering bridge lessons to augment his income. I signed up out of compassion, and at first I was really terrible at the game. The odd time I was asked to play in the local club as a sub, and every time my partner and I just got smoked. I was so ashamed that I decided to improve my game by playing on OK Bridge and reading books. I look back now and realize that while I was in college I read more bridge books than textbooks!

I was born into a Korean family living in China, where I went to university and stayed on as assistant professor. Later, I went to graduate school in South Korea and majored in electronics engineering. I married Yena Jin, a lawyer, and we have one son. We emigrated to Canada in 2001. My favourite hobby is volleyball. Because I am tall for a Korean, my first PE teacher immediately put me on the volleyball team and I have loved the game ever since. In addition, I have a wide range of interests: reading, music, table tennis, badminton, watching movies/dramas and the sports channels, brewing beer, and on and on. The photo shows me at the K/W Single Mom sponsorship volleyball game.

Tips

- When declaring you should assume the opponents' hands are as bad for you as you can possibly handle, and play for that layout.
- When defending, you should try to avoid broaching new suits – unless it looks as if you need to hurry to take your rightful tricks lest they evaporate.

One other point: when I first came to GRBC (back in the Gage Street era), I got the impression that this club was not a friendly environment because some of the players were calling the director far too much for their opponents' little slip-ups. This impression made me hesitant to come back.

My wife and I love to travel, and it's always a must for us to visit the local bridge clubs.

Seoul Club (South Korea)

The club's year-long schedule can be seen on [their website](#). If you could read Korean, you would see that there are all kinds of special events, like monthly members' day games, board-a-match games, regular cup tournaments, and tournaments on various holidays. The club offers its members various prizes. For example, in a game like Club Members' Day, a pair of silver spoons/chopsticks are awarded to the winners. In the pairs match, first prize is approximately Cdn\$1000, with an entrance fee of Cdn\$100. In the Disability Sponsorship Teams event, the winning team will get about Cdn\$3000, with an entrance fee of Cdn\$300.

Iceland

The bridge players in Iceland use a completely-different bidding system, even a different way to count their HCP, so their alerts/explanations were Greek to me. They were live-displaying game results from the first round until the end, which was stimulating and everyone there loved it.

Hawaii

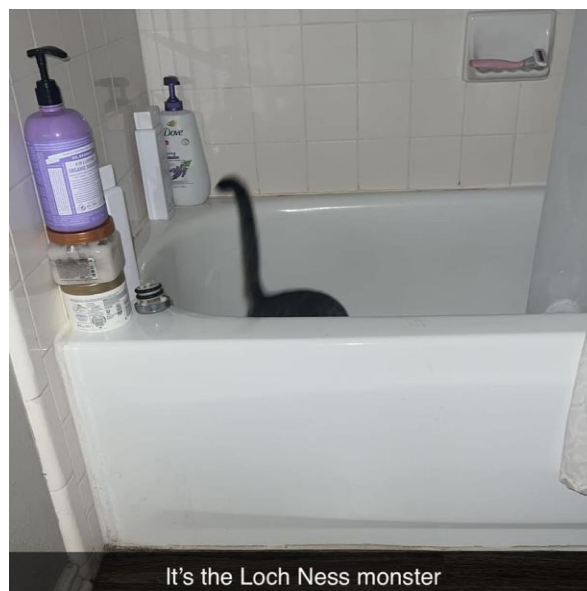
At the Hawaii club, there was a long wooden spoon on each table. Apparently, the spoon is needed to hold down dummy's cards to prevent them from being blown away by the wind. Instead of air conditioning, Hawaiians like to eschew internal walls and leave the entry doors wide open. Hence the need for spoons.

Tokyo

One day I found a gap in my schedule and went to a bridge club there. Unfortunately, I had picked a ladies-only day. It was an eye-opening experience to learn that there is a ladies-only bridge day somewhere in the world.

Shanghai

Before the pandemic, I visited a bridge club in Shanghai. There were screens installed on every table (such as we use in North America for top-level contests). When I asked why they had screens at the club level, I was told that the federal bridge association sorts the clubs into different classifications, like Class A, Class B, etc., and that there were benefits to having screens because they earned a higher classification.



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 July.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	35.04	1	Denis Williams	10.42	1	Doug Fickling	5.81
2	Cindy Mahn	20.49	1	Regina Williams	10.42	2	Mark Sherwood	4.97
3	Edith Ferber	19.20	3	Bev Hitchman	8.73	2	Debbie Miethig	4.83
4	Mike Peng	17.11	4	Lori Cole	8.38	4	Don Slowinski	4.17
5	Kathy Russell	16.98	5	Suzanne Edwards	7.67	5	JP Fraresso	3.45
6	Stephen Young	13.87	6	Lissa Lowes	7.40	6	Audrey Cook	3.20
7	Neil Jeffrey	12.91	7	Jack Cole	7.25	7	Russel Kerr	3.06
8	Moirra Hollingsworth	12.77	8	Jim Dalgliesh	6.81	8	Joan Stroud	2.88
9	Margot Stockie	11.69	9	Janice Pengelly	6.13	9	Rick Arthur	2.74
10	Neil Coburn	10.89	10	Barbara Arthur	5.85	10	John Aldridge	2.50
11	David Longstaff	10.35	11	Anita Hanson	5.76	11	Denise Dolff	2.47
12	Steve Carpenter	10.03	12	Joe Blake	5.74	12	Brian Gaber	2.39
13	Roy Dandyk	9.64	13	Elinor Girouard	5.38	13	Valirie Binkle	21.35
14	Scott Hills	9.24	14	Lynda Burnett	5.32	14	Ben Cornell	2.23
15	Bonnie Kains	7.61	15	Sue Moses	5.27	15	Pat Gascho	2.06
16	Ed Hills	7.37	15	Brenda Semple	5.27	16	Jane Wilson	2.02
17	Dianne Aves	7.29	17	Nancy Cattanach	5.26	17	Peter Gaasenbeek	1.97
18	Thea Davis	6.96	18	Andy Wilson	5.13	18	Randall DeKraker	1.76
19	Wayne Schroeder	6.87	19	John Kip	5.05	19	Jim Fox	1.70
20	Robert Griffiths	6.86	20	Michael Pengelly	4.97	20	Pat Pietrek	1.65
21	Adrian Record	6.79	21	Pat McDonald	4.79	21	Maureen Logel	1.55
22	Adriaan Kempe	6.51	22	Sue Peterson	4.73	21	Mary Jameson	1.55
23	Diane Bourdeau	6.38	23	Nanci Phelan	4.72	23	Shirley Clairmont	1.48
24	Pat McMillan	6.32	24	Peggi Rieger	4.64	24	Elizabeth Bobo	1.28
25	Tom Ramsay	5.81	24	Donald Rieger	4.64	25	Jim Weir	1.23

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.
- 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 are very interested in other clubs at our **club**.