



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

## ALERT – January 11, 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 December 2020.*

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	David Baker	36.27	1	Brian Kirkconnell	17.20	1	Barbara Arthur	12.98
2	Robert Griffiths	26.86	1	Stephen Nantes	17.20	2	Suzanne Edwards	12.29
3	Cindy Mahn	22.38	3	Kathy Russell	12.46	3	Andy Martinek	9.12
4	Mike Peng	20.82	4	Brian Silva	10.12	4	John Kip	7.86
5	Edith Ferber	20.25	5	Janet Howell	10.04	5	Salvatore Pace	6.91
6	Margot Stockie	19.99	6	Sandy Graham	9.86	6	Renate Boucher	6.22
7	Colin Harrington	19.05	7	Tony Verhoeven	9.01	7	Marlene Dopko	6.12
8	Bruce Roberts	18.86	8	Cheryl Kip	8.69	8	Elinor Girouard	5.96
9	Moira Hollingsworth	18.85	9	Sue Voll	8.67	9	Shirley Metcalfe	5.67
10	Liz McDowell	16.27	10	Sherry Benenati	8.12	10	Casey Baron	5.48
11	Tom Ramsay	16.04	11	Sandy Lee	7.76	11	Carol Robinson	5.38
12	Dianne Aves	15.42	12	Ron Lawrence	7.35	11	Trent Robinson	5.38
13	Adrian Record	13.80	12	Dave Leitch	7.35	13	Joe Blake	5.35
14	Ted Boyd	12.55	14	Donna Angst	6.94	13	Steve Allen	5.35
15	David Longstaff	12.21	15	Fred Young	6.91	15	Susan Kerrigan	5.25
16	Stephen Young	10.56	16	Adriaan Kempe	6.70	15	Mary Lynn Benjamins	5.25
17	Steve Carpenter	10.34	17	Judy Widdecombe	5.83	17	Elisabeth Graham	5.12
18	Malkin Howes	9.76	18	Karen Whitworth	5.25	18	Molly Worden	5.11
19	Diane Bourdeau	9.65	19	Vivian Zochowski	5.06	19	Anita Hanson	4.94
20	David Wilson	9.10	20	Roy Dandyk	4.88	20	Christine Kelly	4.59
21	John Moser	8.91	20	David Embury	4.88	21	Noah Pace	4.52
22	Neil Jeffrey	8.87	22	John Hanemaayer	4.87	22	Barb Neibert	4.50
23	John Vandergrift	7.78	23	Jim Veitch	4.86	23	Nanci Phelan	4.34
24	Kandis Smith	6.90	23	Bev Hitchman	4.86	24	Donna McKay	4.28
25	Wayne Jordan	6.81	25	Kevin Latter	4.83	25	Jim Fox	4.10



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

Junior Master

- **Sarah Pace**

Club Master

- **Molly Worden**

Sectional Master

- **Joani Horvath**

NABC Masters

- **Donna Angst**
- **Betty Wendling**

Life Master

- **Mary McClelland**

Sapphire Life Master

- **David Longstaff**

*And a warm welcome to the following new ACBL members.*

- **Brian G. Gaber**
- **Isabella Li**

*And an even warmer welcome to the following new GRBC members.*

- **Suzanne Cline**
- **Don O'Bright**
- **Noah Pace**
- **Sal Pace**
- **Richard Wehrle**

I asked my Doctor today how long he thinks this COVID thing will last. He responded with: "How should I know? I'm a doctor, not a politician".



## My Week to Make Mistakes

*Contributed by John Moser*

I am writing to report that this week there were two boards I didn't get right. Probably more. Here is one of them (the other one next week).

	♠ A K Q J 5 3		
	♥ A 8 7 6		
	♦ 3 2		
	♣ 3		
♠ 10 4 2		♠ 7 6	
♥ J		♥ K 10 9 4 3 2	
♦ 10 8 6		♦ K Q 9	
♣ K J 9 8 6 5		♣ A 7	
	♠ 9 8		
	♥ Q 5		
	♦ A J 7 5 4		
	♣ Q 10 4 2		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	1 ♠	2 ♥	Dbl
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

I was sitting north and opened 1♠. Leftie overcalled 2♥ and pard doubled to show some values. So, I decided to bid 4♠.

The opening lead was the ace of clubs and then another club. I ruffed the second club. There are still four possible losers – three hearts and a diamond. How can I get rid of two of my heart losers? Luckily, the heart king is well placed – which covers one of my heart losers, but I still need to figure out what to do about that other heart loser.

### Possibilities

- I might be able to ruff one of my heart losers, but from the bidding East probably has a singleton heart. If I draw all of East's trumps to prevent a heart ruff on his part, I won't have any trumps left on the board to ruff my heart loser with.
- I suspect that East has the king/jack of hearts, the club ace, and the king/queen of diamonds. Maybe I can pitch a heart on the diamond jack by finessing the jack. But what do I do if East plays an honour? If I take East's honour with the board's ace, I can never get back to the board's jack. Better to duck East's honour and win his return (if he leads a small heart, I go up with dummy's queen.) Once I'm back in my hand (via a spade lead) and have drawn all the trump, I can lead another diamond from my hand, finessing the jack. Assuming the finesse works, I can throw my other losing heart on the board's ace of diamonds.

Alas, I failed at the first gate when at Trick 3 I led a heart towards the dummy, which East took with the king and promptly led another heart which got ruffed by West. Down two when the dust cleared.

Remember my advice in my very first column? "When you make a plan, place the cards where you need them to be." I should have heeded my own advice. ☹

## Want a Partner on BBO?

- If you are looking for a possible long-term partner, someone to play with on a regular basis for a while, then you should get in touch with [Cheryl Kip](#), our membership lead. Cheryl keeps a list of people who are looking for long-term partners and when she gets a possible match, Cheryl tells each of the players about the other one and bows out. All Cheryl needs to know is your name, your contact information, and your playing level.
  - If you are looking for a partner for a specific game, you can post your availability on Pi-anola (if you don't know how, email [Grant Roberts](#)) or on our Facebook page (if you don't know how, email [Jake Liu](#)).
  - If you are looking for someone to play with at the last minute, log in to the game in question on BBO and click on the PARTNERSHIP DESK button at the top. It's possible that someone else is looking at the last minute and will invite you to play, plus it's also possible that the director will want to avoid a sit-out for the game and try to find you a partner (this is why you should hang around for 10 minutes after the start of the game).
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## Just Ask Sue

*Contributed by Cheryl Kip*

Just a reminder that Sue Lawton is willing to respond to email questions from 199ers about problem hands.

Sue is willing to entertain any and all of your questions. Ideally, it would be about a hand in one of our games so that Sue can go in and look at the actual hand. Just send Sue an e-mail indicating the date, session, and hand that you want help with. When asking about hands not played in a club game, try to provide as much information as possible. Please leave your name, e-mail address, and phone number and Sue will get back to you.

Sue's e-mail address is [suzan2420@yahoo.ca](mailto:suzan2420@yahoo.ca).

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# Dear David

## Purposeful Pre-Empts

Many players believe that pre-empts are a nice tool for describing your hand and hopefully getting to the best contract. Sixty years ago, there was a TV program called "Championship Bridge", featuring four luminaries of the bridge world showing us how the game should be played. Watching reruns ten years later, I was struck by the fact that the opponents never interfered in the auction! Today, if you are not getting in the way of your opponent's auction, you are not doing your job. Pre-empts are specifically designed to cramp the exchange of information by your opponents.

Dear David,

The bidding went pass by my partner, 3C by North. I bid 3N. My partner wondered whether 4S would be a transfer. This doesn't come up often but would there ever be a reason for systems on when bidding 3NT over a pre-empt?

Dir: W Vul: Both 5 8 17 10	♠ J ♥ K ♦ 9 5 2 ♣ J 10 8 7 5 4 3 2	<b>20</b>
♠ K 9 7 6 5 4 3 ♥ 10 8 ♦ Q 7 6 ♣ K	♠ A 10 8 2 ♥ A 6 4 ♦ K 10 8 ♣ A Q 9	
	♠ Q ♥ Q J 9 7 5 3 2 ♦ A J 4 3 ♣ 6	

W	N	E	S
Pass	3♣	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

First of all, I think West should have opened 3♠ (or at least 2♠ if he was afraid of the vulnerability and/or his weak suit). Secondly, North's 3♣ bid was horribly egregious (I was North 😊), but pre-empts often work in one's favour. East's bid was perfectly reasonable. Since E/W apparently play 2♠ as a minor-suit transfer, he was afraid to bid 4♥ if it wasn't a transfer and afraid to bid 4♠ if it was a transfer - so he panicked and passed. Pre-empts work! (Sometimes 😞). Here is the answer to your question: If you have not SPECIFICALLY discussed the meaning of a bid (any bid), treat the bid as natural. The worst that can happen is that partner will bid over 4♠ and you will have to bid 5♠. The best that can happen is that partner will still not get it, bid again, and force you to your cold 6♠ contract.

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## Learning the Lingo – TOPS AND BOTTOMS

*Contributed by Jean Farhood*

As you are aware by now, when playing duplicate bridge your scores are compared against your fellow competitors who are sitting in the same direction as you. All of the North/South scores are compared against each other and all the East/West scores are compared against each other.

You may have heard the expression “that was a flat hand”. This means that everyone in the field declared and made the same contract. A “top” would be if the field was in a contract of 4♠ for example and one pair was able to make an overtrick when everyone else just made 4♠. The pair that surrendered the overtrick would then be assigned a “bottom”.

Oftentimes the contracts are different – three pairs may bid 3NT, while five pairs declare 4♥ and one pair fails to bid a game. The pair in 4♥ making five for 450 has the best score for a “top”, beating the opponents in 3NT making 4 for 430, while the pair who failed to bid game has the worst score for a “bottom”.

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**If you shorten a bridge game,  
do you say it's abridged?**

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## Make Sure You Register for the Right Game!!!

Our game directors' most difficult task is getting players sorted out who have registered for the wrong game. As you know, we often have three games running simultaneously, and they all are designated “Grand River Bridge Club”. That means that when you register you need to be careful to register for the right game – for example OPEN or 499er or 199er.

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## A Common Error

Contributed by Robert Griffiths

I have written blurbs about this exact topic as recently as this year but, when I recently played this hand and failed to follow my own advice, I thought I had better write another one again, if only to remind myself

**Board 12**

West Deals

3oth Vul

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



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 N	Pass	6 N	All pass

I was West and opened 2NT after three passes. My partner counted his 13 HCP and simply jumped to 6NT, giving away no information to the bad guys. North led the ♠J, covered by Dummy's ♠Q, South's ♠K, and my ♠A. I counted up my tricks: one spade, five hearts, three diamonds, and three clubs. That should make an easy 12 tricks, 13 if the clubs split 3-3. Just to make sure that I had five heart tricks, I played the ♥A at Trick 2 and was shocked to see North throw a diamond! South had all four missing hearts, and my trick total has shrunk to 10. My partner, who has been known to tease me, immediately wrote "One for Bob's blurbs." He saw my blunder.

Trick 1 had set up the ♠10 for the defence, so I couldn't lose a heart trick to develop tricks. I played the ♠8 to North's ♠10, setting up Dummy's ♠9 for my 11<sup>th</sup> trick. I was very lucky that the clubs split 3-3 and so I was able to creep home with 12 tricks.

Testing the hearts by playing the ace is a mistake. About 90% of the time the suit will split 2-2 or 3-1 and nobody will suspect that an error has been made. Of the roughly 10% of cases when the suit breaks 4-0, half will have North holding the ♠J1074 and half will have South holding all four.

If North has all the hearts, he will have a heart stopper no matter how declarer plays the suit. But if South has all of the hearts, Declarer can bring home the whole suit. To do this, the first top heart played must be the queen. When the queen is led and Declarer learns that South has all four missing hearts, he can lead low hearts twice from the dummy towards his ♠AK8 and South will not win a trick with his ♠J107.

Playing the ace or king first cannot gain a trick but it can cost one. I checked the BBO records for this hand and saw that almost every declarer has misplayed the suit the same way I did. We are often taught that when holding AK953 opposite Q1042 it is proper to play the ace or king first (from the hand with two of the three top honours. That play gives you the option of finessing either way if you discover that one opponent holds the J876.

But when the four missing cards include the jack AND the ten, they can be finessed only one way. In this situation, we shouldn't bungle our opportunity to finesse the only way that can work. Since the J1074 can be captured only by leading twice towards the two higher honours, the high card in the hand with only one top honour should be cashed first.

**👉 So many bridge "rules" tend to be followed automatically, but it's important to understand why they exist in the first place.**

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## Jake's Challenge #4

Last week, Jake Liu issued the following bidding challenge, and put the answer on our club's revamped Facebook page. For those of you who don't do Facebook, here is the challenge and its solution.

<p>North Deals None Vul</p>		<p>♠ Q J 9 3 ♥ A K 3 ♦ J 5 3 2 ♣ 9 8</p> <p>♠ A 10 7 2 ♥ 9 5 ♦ K Q 8 6 ♣ A 4 3</p> <p>♠ 4 ♥ Q 10 8 7 6 4 2 ♦ A 9 7 4 ♣ Q</p>	<p>South bought the hand with a precarious four hearts contract (we'll draw a veil over the bidding). The opening lead was the ♠ 5 - to Dummy's ♠ J and East's ♠ A. East then cashed the ♣A and led another club. Plan the play.</p>
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### SOLUTION to Challenge #4

You have to ruff the second club lead of course - but ruff with which trump? Did you fall asleep and ruff with the ♥2? If you did, you're already toast!

The key to making this contract is to take three diamond tricks. Your only chance is to make repeated leads from the board and hope that East has both the king and queen of diamonds. In order to do this, you need three dummy entries. There are two obvious entries, namely the ace and king of hearts, but what else? The only possible third entry is the humble ♥3, assuming you get a normal 2-1 trump split. That is why at Trick 3 you need to ruff with the ♥4, not the ♥2.

Picking it up at Trick 4, lead the ♥6 from your hand to dummy's king, and at Trick 5 lead the ♦J towards your hand. If East covers (best defence), take the trick with your ♦A, noting with satisfaction the fall of the ♦10 from the West hand. Lead another heart to dummy's ace and then lead another diamond towards your hand. Assuming East takes this trick and returns a spade (best defence), you ruff. At this point, here is the situation. At Trick 9, lead your carefully-preserved ♥2 to dummy's ♥3. Now you can finesse East in diamonds and the rest is silence!



This week, Jake has a new challenge (#5) for you. The answer can be found on [our Facebook page](#).

### CHALLENGE

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

Sitting South I opened this ugly collection with a bid of four hearts and my partner excitedly raised me to six hearts. West led the ace of diamonds and when the dummy appeared, I saw that we were missing two kings. At this point I wished I hadn't overbid, but unfortunately it was too late to do anything about the bidding now.

After his ace of diamonds held the trick, West thought for a while and then led the five of clubs at Trick 2. I breathed a sigh of relief, as now I had a chance of making my contract. What was this glimmer of hope?



# LESSONS NOT YET LEARNED



## Giving the Gift of Bridge

Learn Bridge in a Day is happening TOMORROW (January 9). At present, we have a healthy contingent of 31 people signed up – and registration will be closed off sometime this morning (Friday). Click [here](#) for more information.

Learn Bridge in a Day is great for people who might be interested in bridge but need to find out more. For people who already know they want to take lessons, they can register for our five-lesson Beginner 1 course, starting Thursday, January 14 from 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm.

Click [here](#) for more information (scroll down).

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## Preventing Declarer from Getting Overtricks

It's not too late to sign up for this workshop.

**Level:** Novice/Intermediate

**Instructor:** Stephen Carpenter

**Date:** Wednesday, January 13, 2021, 9:30 am - noon

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## Opening Leads for Beginners

It has been said that if you could make the right lead every time you would be the best player in Canada. While we can't promise that, this workshop will help post-beginner players decide which suit and which card in the suit is likely the best lead. The workshop will deal with leads against both no trump and suit contracts, as well as against slams. Although there won't be any hands to play per se, attendees will be given lots of problem hands and asked to decide on a lead.

**Level:** Post-Beginner

**Instructor:** Stephen Carpenter

**Date:** Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 9:30 am - noon

The complete schedule for our winter lessons is up on our website now.

- Click [here](#) for information about Learn Bridge in a Day and our beginner lessons.
- Click [here](#) for the workshops for advancing players.

Click [here](#) for information about how to pay for your lessons (scroll down).

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## Silver Linings Week

Mark your calendars for the week of January 18 – 24 - another Silver Linings Week. In exchange for an extra dollar game fee (\$7), our players who do well can earn DOUBLE regular club masterpoints, and the points awarded will be SILVER instead of black.

### Coming Virtual Activities

- Friday, January 8, 1:00 pm, **499er game (26-28 boards)**
- Friday, January 8, 7:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Saturday, January 9, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm, **Learn Bridge in a Day workshop**
- Saturday, January 9, 1:00 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Sunday, January 10, 10:00 am, **499er game (18 boards)**
- Monday, January 11, 12:30 pm, **49er game (18 boards @ 8 minutes)**
- Monday, January 11, 1:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Monday, January 11, 7:00 pm, **499er game (24 boards)**
- Tuesday, January 12, 12:30 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Tuesday, January 12, 1:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Wednesday, January 13, 9:30 am, **Preventing Declarer from Getting Overtricks workshop**
- Wednesday, January 13, 1:00 pm, **499er game (26-28 boards)**
- Wednesday, January 13, 6:45 pm, **199er game (20-22 boards)**
- Wednesday, January 13, 7:00 pm, **open game (24 boards)**
- Thursday, January 14, 9:30 am, **99er game (20-22 boards)**
- Thursday, January 14, 1:00 pm, **open game (26-28 boards)**
- Thursday, January 14, 6:30 pm, **Beginner 1 lessons begin**

We have fun in **spades**.  
We play with all our **hearts**.  
We treat our members like **diamonds**.  
We find silver linings at our **club**.