



PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

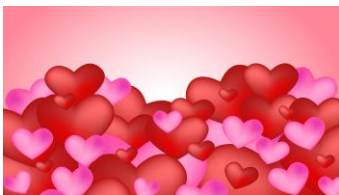
[Our Website](#)

ALERT – January 30, 2023

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

Looking Ahead

- Our inaugural **F2F 299er game** will take place on Wednesday afternoon, February 8 (more information below).
- We will be holding our annual **499er Valentine's Swiss Teams extravaganza** (includes lunch) at our club on Sunday, February 12. The sign-up sheet is posted on the Events bulletin board (more information below).
- There will be **no online game on Saturday, February 12** to encourage attendance at the Valentine's Day Swiss.
- [The Niagara Sectional Tournament](#) runs from Friday, February 10 through Sunday, February 12.
- There will be **no Friday night game on February 17** because so many of our players will be at the [Barbados tournament](#) that weekend.
- Our face-to-face games on Tuesday, February 14, Wednesday, February 15, Thursday, February 16, and Friday, February 17 will be **STaC games** = EXTRA MASTERPOINTS, of which $\frac{1}{4}$ are black, $\frac{1}{4}$ are **silver**, $\frac{1}{4}$ are **red**, and $\frac{1}{4}$ are **gold**.



Bargain 499er Swiss Tournament, Sunday, February 12

To stimulate a return to Face-to-Face play, we are offering a bargain price of \$20 (including lunch) for our 499 Swiss tournament (as compared to a normal price of \$25-\$30). There is a sign-up sheet on the Events bulletin board – the cut-off for registration is Wednesday, Feb. 8. If you can't get in to the club to sign up, just email Dave Quarrie at daviquar@bell.net. Volunteers will be available to assist with scoring for those players who have not previously played a Swiss format. The tournament will finish between 5:00 pm and 5:30 pm and you will not need to miss the Super Bowl. 😊

POWER RANKINGS		
5.29.18		
1st	BOSTON RED SOX	37-17
2nd	NEW YORK YANKEES	33-17
3rd	HOUSTON ASTROS	35-20

If you're looking for our top masterpoint earners chart, you will find it on the last page.

A Warm Welcome to Our Latest Members

- John Hann
 - Katie Plaisance
-



Calling All 299ers

Contributed by Kevin Latter

A new face-to-face game has been approved for our 0-299 players. It has come about due to an initiative from grassroots players in this point band who asked for it and then researched it through a phone survey. Impressed by this, the Games Committee has agreed to give it a try. Despite it being designated up to 299 MP, one of the aims of this game is to encourage live participation of the lower-point players, and there will be a number of incentives and promotions to further this aim. A mentoring programme can hopefully be supported in due course.

Pre-Covid, there was a very well-attended live game at this level and time that regularly had excellent table counts. We hope to return to that. Remember: the club gets double revenue per person for live games compared to online. Our club has 70+ members in the 0-100 point range, but VERY few are playing live. We would like that to change and encourage all in that group and above to reconsider live play. Remember: your scores will be compared only with all the other 99ers because of the miracle of stratification!!!!!!!

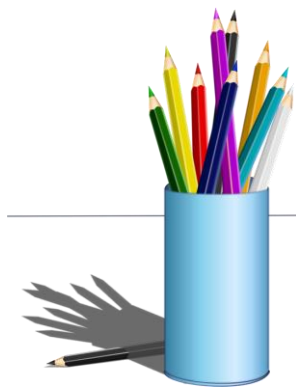
As an older demographic, we are more vulnerable and must be cautious in our approach to many aspects of our lives. Covid has only heightened these concerns and made us even more likely to stay at home and stay safe and not socialise. The irony of this is that to be healthy, well-adjusted and vibrant, we need to be in company with our contemporaries, and be able to interact with friends and acquaintances other than through a screen. It is not the same social interaction. Live is better for many reasons. So, take off your pyjamas, get showered and in the car (not naked), and take off for a few hours to play a card game, have a bit of a laugh, do some errands on the way home, get back in your PJs, have a glass of wine, and relax. Who wouldn't enjoy such an afternoon? Staying home in such a scenario has interaction only with the screen and yelling at your partner who can't hear you!

The game will be on Wednesday afternoons starting at 1.00pm, so please plan to arrive at 12.30 pm+. The first game will be on **Wednesday, February 8**. PLEASE support this game! If you have no partner for whatever reason, you can call Kevin Latter (519 208 6628) who will be your game director, or Mary Lynn Benjamins (519 880 9086), and they will endeavour to fix you up.



Bring-a-Friend Month

February has been designated Bring-a-Friend month at our club. If one of our players (not necessarily a member) brings along a partner who has not played at our club since March 2020, both play free. This option can be used (for regular club games only) up to three times during the month of February by the same player – with the same partner or with different partners (but only those who haven't played at our club since March 2020).



The Colouring Box of Bridge Master Points

Contributed by Richard Ross

When I first started playing duplicate bridge, master points were issued in the form of little paper certificates, which gave the player a tangible record of his or her achievement. I treasured those slips of paper and was so proud when I had collected a bunch of them and sent them in to the ACBL to have them recorded. My friends were very blasé about their slips and saved them in the glove compartment of their cars. It was a standing joke that when the glove compartment got too full of master point slips, it was time to trade in the car.

I almost yearn for those days when I would get that little slip of paper; as dear to me as a high school diploma; my announcement to the world that I won .06 of a match point for coming fourth in a pairs event.

Nowadays, master points are recorded electronically: no little certificates, no need to submit anything. It's all done instantaneously without any effort at all - save, of course, the effort of actually winning the points.

The points awarded at the club level are **Black** points. These are the easiest to get. Sectional tournaments held within the ACBL's units (we are in Unit 249) offer **Silver** points. You can also win coloured points at STaC events (STaC = Silver points tournament at Clubs). We will be hosting STaC events from time to time so watch out for announcements in the near future.

Red points are available at Regional events except for the overall winners and section-top winners who get Gold.

Platinum points - the true hen's-teeth of the bridge world - are awarded at National championships.

Gold points are also awarded at regional tournaments' novice events. Called Gold Rush competitions, these offer a much easier way of earning gold than having to win at an Open game at a Regional. There will be Gold Rush events at the Easter Regional in Toronto this April and at the Kitchener Regional from July 4 – 9 this summer, and I encourage you to play - especially those of you who need gold points.

But to what end do we compete for master points? Some people play bridge for the pure enjoyment of the game. It's a social activity which keeps the mind active. Some play for that competitive edge, the need to win. But many of us strive to become a Life Master. If you have less than five master points, you are considered a Rookie. At five, you become a Junior Master and at 10 points, you may call yourself a Club Master. At 50 master points, you are considered a Sectional Master but here's where it gets tricky. Of those 50 points, at least five of them have to be silver.

Confused yet? No? Read on. You will be.

The next stage is Regional Master for which you'll need 100 master points of which 15 must be black, 15 must be silver and no less than five have to be red. Then comes NABC Master which is 200 master points: at least 20 must be black, 25 silver, at least 20 red/gold/platinum and at least five gold/platinum.

You're well on your way now to Advanced NABC Master. For this lofty height, you need 300 points: 50 black, 50 silver, 50 red/gold/platinum and 25 gold/platinum.

And now we're there. Life Master. For this you require 500 master points of which no less than 75 are black, 75 silver, 100 red/gold/platinum and 50 gold/platinum.

It's a long road and not an easy journey. Some never make it; some continue to play only for the social aspect and mental challenge without masterpoint goals. But there really is a thrill opening the envelope from the ACBL, reading the letter of congratulations from the President and receiving the heavy metal card that tells the world that you're now a Life Master. (I know that sounds chauvinistic, but I cannot see anyone striving to become a Life Mistress.)

For me, seeing my name in print in The Bulletin was a great moment of personal satisfaction and I still read each month the names of newly-crowned Life Masters. (New Life Masters is actually the second thing I read in The Bulletin).

(Based on an article by Edgar Kaplan and adapted by Richard Ross)



The Bean Counter

Contributed by Steve Allen, Treasurer

In a previous ALERT, there was a pop quiz on the payment methods for our games. Let's look more closely at "Square", the company behind our debit machine.

When a player pays their F2F game fees with their debit card on the Square Box, GRBC is charged for the transaction. Typically, it is only a dime per transaction and it scales higher if we have a lot of the same transaction on the same day. The \$ amount does not influence the fee – just the # of transactions. For example, purchasing a convenience card is \$75 (member rate); GRBC gets only \$74.90 from Square.

In the last 12 months, we have paid about \$150 in dimes. Not a big number.

I forgot my cat outside.
I am too scared to let him in now.



This may be my last post

Volunteer Corner



A volunteer is sought to periodically clean our teapots and coffee makers.

For more information and to volunteer, email Dave Quarrie at daviquar@bell.net.

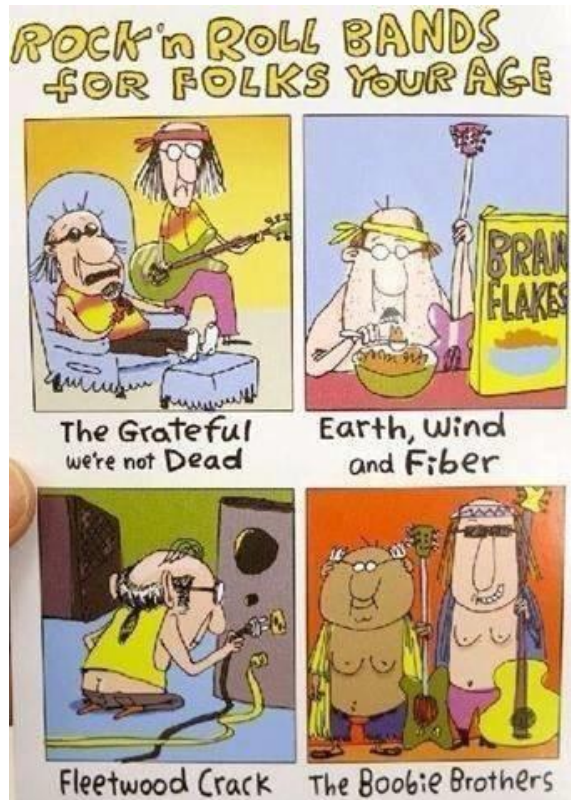


A volunteer is sought to fill in for our pop czar, Neil Coburn, until he returns from Florida at the end of April.

For more information and to volunteer, email Dave Quarrie at daviquar@bell.net.



Volunteer bakers are sought to bring in delicious baking for hungry bridge players.





What are Swiss Teams? Part 2

Contributed by Mike Peng, President

IMP Scoring

Let's start with a logical way to score a team match using International Match Points (IMP) scale where each team has one pair playing North/South and the other pair playing East/West.

Recall from last week that Team Abbie (Pairs A/B) is playing against Team Deuces (Pairs C/D). Abbie has pair A sitting North/South at table A1 and are in 4♠ making 4 vulnerable for a result of +620 points vs pair C. Assume Deuces (with North/South pair D sitting at table B1) are in 3♠ making four for a result of +170 points vs Pair B.

A reasonable way to score that hand would be to subtract the opponents' result from your result. So, Team Abbie would be +450 (620 (from pair A at table A1) minus 170 (from pair B at table B1) and Team Deuces -450. That is the basic idea behind IMP Scoring.

However, in order to lessen the effect of a really bad result, it was decided to scale the absolute score such that larger scores did not have as much of an impact. So, the IMP scale (usually found on side of each score sheet) translates absolute scores to a number between 0 and 24.

IMP Scale

0 - 10	0		220 - 260	6	600 - 740	12	1750 - 1990	18
20 - 40	1		270 - 310	7	750 - 890	13	2000 - 2240	19
50 - 80	2		320 - 360	8	900 - 1090	14	2250 - 2490	20
90 - 120	3		370 - 420	9	1100 - 1290	15	2500 - 2990	21
130 - 160	4		430 - 490	10	1300 - 1490	16	3000 - 3490	22
170 - 210	5		500 - 590	11	1500 - 1740	17	3500 - 3990	23
							4000 - more	24

Translating the above board result, Abbie gets +10 imps and Deuces gets -10 imps. For simplicity, assume the two teams played another seven boards and they had the exact same results. For the eight-board match, team Abbie won a total 10 IMPs. However, we're not done yet.

Victory Point Scale

The net total IMP result for a match is converted to victory points using a scale printed inside the convention card. Here's an example of a 30 victory point (VP) scale for a six-to-eight-board match (found at the side of each score sheet).

30-point scale

IMP Score	0	1	2	3	4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-13	14-16	17-19	20-23	24-27	28+
VPs	15-15	18-12	19-11	20-10	21-9	22-8	23-7	24-6	25-5	26-4	27-3	28-2	29-1	30-0

Applying the scale, for the eight-board match, team Abbie scored 24 VPs and team Deuces scored six VPs. Are we done? No, not yet.

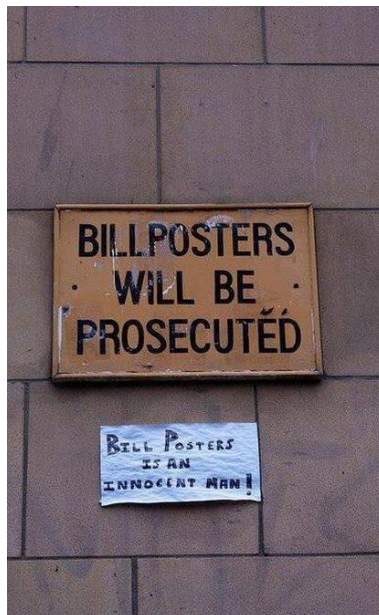
The Swiss Movement

Curious that we haven't mentioned anything about Swiss yet?

OK, let's pull this all together. Let's assume the Swiss Team event had eight teams in total, including the two teams (Abbie and Deuces) from above. The event is set up as three matches of eight boards per round. In the first match, Teams Abbie and Deuces played at tables A1 and B1. The other six teams played at tables A2, A3, and A4 and B2, B3, and B4 respectively. After the first round, Team Abbie has 24 VPs and Deuces has six VPs.

In round two, Abbie will play against one of the other six teams with a similar VP score, and so will Deuces. This is the Swiss movement in action: at each future round, teams with similar results (VPs) will play against each other.

To conclude this example, by round three (the final round), the top two teams will likely face off for the first place in the event!



GRBC Spring Team League

What are you planning to do with your Sunday afternoons for the rest of the winter? It's not yet golf or gardening season, but there's no more football after Super Bowl.

GRBC is running a Spring Team League over six consecutive Sunday afternoons starting **February 26 and running through to April 2** inclusive. The time slot will be 1:30 pm until 5:00 pm. **Organize your teams (of four, five, or six members)** and **register by February 21**. Sign-up sheets will be posted soon. Depending on the number of teams registered, we will set up two or three masterpoint divisions. The cost will be \$8 per person per session.

TIME YOU LEARNED OUR LESSONS!

Jack Cole has developed workshops specially targeted at those of our players who are near the start of their bridge journey. Perhaps they recently graduated from our beginners' lessons? Perhaps they have been away from bridge for many years? Perhaps they would like to learn more about playing online? These newer players should run, not walk, to sign up for Jack's workshops.

- **Hand Evaluation**, Saturday morning, February 4. Online. \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Instructor: Jack Cole. Current enrollment: **5**. Level: **Beginner/Novice**. **IF WE CAN GET JUST ONE MORE STUDENT FOR THIS WORKSHOP, IT WILL GO AHEAD.**
- **Using the Common Game**, Saturday morning, February 11. Online. \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Instructor: Jack Cole. Current enrollment: **4**. Level: **Beginner/Novice**.
- **New Minor Forcing**, Monday morning, February 6. Online. \$20 members/ \$25 non-members. Instructor: Malkin Howes. Current enrollment: **8**. Level: **Intermediate**.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register for any of these lessons.



Negative Doubles: Find your 4-4 Major Fit

Larry Cohen says he couldn't live without negative doubles.

One of the most powerful bidding tools in a player's arsenal, negative doubles are more complicated than they first appear, and this workshop will teach what a negative double is, how many points you need to make a negative double, and - most important - when and when not to make a negative double.

After a fun bidding exercise, the participants will bid and play up to 16 negative double (or not) hands. Regular partners may find it beneficial to attend this workshop as a pair.

Instructor: Malkin Howes

Level: **Intermediate**

Mode: ONLINE

Dates: Monday morning, February 13, 9:30 am – noon

Cost: \$20 members/ \$25 non-members

Current Enrollment: **3**

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

FOR OPEN PLAYERS



Dear David

Hand Evaluation

We have all been there: ♠Q865 ♥J9832 ♦10 ♣874. Partner opens 1♣. What’s your “pleasure”? Here are some of reponder’s typical thoughts: “I don’t have the six+ high-card points needed to respond to 1♣, but if partner has four hearts or four spades, winner-winner, chicken dinner!” (Author’s note: I don’t know what that means, but it sounds cute). Inevitably, partner does not have a major and he bids way too much. “Sorry partner, but...”. How about the other side of the coin. You have six HCP and three-card support for partner’s 1♥ opening bid. Automatic raise to 2♥, right? If the answer to that question was going to always be “of course”, you should ask yourself why I would be writing about it if that were the case.

The screenshot shows a bridge hand evaluation interface. At the top left is a card table icon labeled 'D'. The main area is divided into four quadrants for North, West, East, and South. North's hand is ♠10, ♥943, ♦Q1085, ♣AK1042. West's hand is ♠AKJ, ♥KQJ105, ♦A92, ♣95. East's hand is ♠Q84, ♥862, ♦K743, ♣J76. South's hand is ♠976532, ♥A7, ♦J6, ♣Q83. In the center, a bidding history table shows West opening 1♥, with North, East, and South all passing. At the bottom right, a score display shows 0 for West and 0 for South, with a 1♥ bid icon above the scores.

What are East’s assets and liabilities? Assets are: six HCP and three-card trump support. Liabilities are: Minimum HCP for responding, horrible distribution (I cannot trump anything and I always mentally deduct one HCP for 4-3-3-3 distribution), no aces, and no worthwhile spot cards (10s & 9s). Dismal prospects. My experience tells me that responding 2♥ usually begets 4♥ (especially when opponents have been silent), which usually begets a minus score. Even if the opponents do not get their two club tricks early, there is no play for 10 tricks. Here are all the scores on this board.

11	1♥W+2	140		100%	0%
11	3♥W-1		50	58.3%	41.7%
11	4♥W-1		50	58.3%	41.7%
11	4♥W-1		50	58.3%	41.7%
11	4♥W-1		50	58.3%	41.7%
11	4♥W-2		100	16.7%	83.3%
11	4♥W-3		150	0%	100%

At every table but one, East raised to 2♥ and West reasonably blasted to game. South opened 2♠ at one table and East passed his partner’s 3♥ overcall. My partner’s response when I briefly tried to explain why I passed - “You were right.... this time”. 😊



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 December.

Open Players			499er Players			99er Players		
	Name	MP		Name	MP		Name	MP
1	Ted Boyd	24.28	1	Suzanne Edwards	15.46	1	Nancy Cattanach	7.03
2	David Baker	23.76	2	Shelley Metcalfe	11.87	2	Rick Arthur	6.59
3	Colin Harrington	19.07	3	John Kip	11.35	3	Belinda Burt	6.25
4	Mike Peng	16.82	4	Barbara Arthur	10.74	4	Louise Dawdy	5.94
5	Mary McClelland	16.51	5	Cheryl Kip	10.63	5	Brian Gaber	5.85
6	Moira Hollingsworth	15.09	6	David Dennis	10.58	6	Molly Worden	5.25
7	Cindy Mahn	15.04	7	Renate Boucher	9.19	7	Elaine Doyle	4.55
8	Liz McDowell	13.66	8	Martin Jones	8.62	8	Don Slowinski	3.63
9	David Longstaff	13.28	9	Lori Cole	8.43	9	Jane Wilson	3.16
10	Sandy Graham	12.96	10	Kevin Latter	8.35	10	Kathy Chandler	2.95
11	Edith Ferber	12.05	11	Bev Hitchman	7.87	11	Audrey Cook	2.93
12	Robert Griffiths	10.78	12	Stephen Nantes	7.40	11	Debbie Miethig	2.93
13	Margot Stockie	10.50	13	Brian Kirkconnell	7.21	13	Casi Zehr	2.89
14	Neil Jeffrey	9.17	14	Jim Dalgliesh	6.90	14	Chris Beck	2.82
15	Stephen Young	7.92	15	Jean White	6.69	15	Doug Livesey	2.69
16	Bonnie Kains	7.88	16	Jack Cole	6.39	16	Ginny Marshall	2.41
17	John Hanemaayer	7.62	17	Marlene Dopko	6.25	16	Paul Raymond	2.41
18	Kathy Russell	7.53	18	Nanci Phelan	5.99	18	Donna McKay	2.21
19	Dianne Aves	7.28	19	Susan Durance	5.95	19	Joan Stroud	2.15
20	Neil Coburn	6.68	20	Robert Gilck	5.94	20	MJ Hartleib	1.95
21	Malkin Howes	6.34	21	Lynda Burnett	5.56	21	Robert Darby	1.76
22	Scott Hills	6.09	22	Cheryl White	5.31	22	Charlene Schell	1.75
23	Sharon King	5.96	23	Roy Dandyk	5.29	23	Pauline Copleston	1.60
24	Wayne Jordan	5.41	24	Virginia Alviano	5.27	24	Ellen Libertini	1.59
25	Adrian Record	4.95	25	Patrick McLaughlin	5.11	24	Susan Murray	1.59
			25	Patricia McLaughlin	5.11			

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 [Joan Slover](#), our membership lead.

We have fun in **spades**.
 We play with all our **hearts**.
 We treat our members like **diamonds**.
 Do you read to the end at our **club**?