

Table Talk

The Quarterly

October 2018



Editors

Mark Oettinger

Ingi Agnarsson

Editors' Message

What's the state of duplicate bridge in Vermont? Are table counts up at the Club level? They are down long-term at the Sectional level. What about the Regional level? The National level? Online? Readers' thoughts are appreciated, and may be published.

Burlington Bridge Club offers "limited" games, 8 is Enough, intermediate lessons, supervised play, special events, and more. Most of its games are thriving, but the Tuesday night Open game is currently unable to attract the requisite 3 tables during the "snowbird season." That's tough on the >500 masterpoint non-retirees. But...kudos to Burlington! We hope to hear from other clubs, and will gladly publicize descriptions of their efforts to strengthen duplicate bridge in their local "catchment" areas.

Online bridge is mentioned above. We feel that publishing a list of online usernames might be desirable. For starters, we are MDO7912 and IAgnarsson on Bridge Base Online (BBO). If you are willing to share your online username, please forward it to one of us for inclusion in the next issue of *Table Talk*.

We are starting to see greater response from our readership. That's great! We have received interesting articles, thoughtful replies to our requests for feedback, and the occasional Letter to the Editors. Thank you all, and particular thanks to this quarter's contributors, Mark McKenzie and Jay Friedenson (and indirectly, Marty Bergen)!

Key Card and Beyond (Mark Oettinger)

Midway through a somewhat unremarkable club session, you are careful not to display any reaction as the following collection unfolds before you:

North Deals
Both Vul
Matchpoints



♠ A Q 10 3
♥ A K Q 6 3
♦ A K
♣ A 10

26 HCP and two 10s. Only two losers. Yikes! At least you know what your *opening* bid is going to be. But you're in 3rd seat, and when you emerge from recounting your points for the second time, you see that partner has opened 3♦! Not surprisingly, the opponents will pass throughout. How do you foresee the auction?

You assume that partner has a seven-card ♦ suit. We are vulnerable, and partner lacks the ♦ Ace and King, so you could be forgiven (or could you?) for thinking that partner has the Queen, Jack and 10 ("two of the top three" or "three of the top five" is a general suit-quality rule for vulnerable preempts in many circles). If he does hold ♦ QJ10xxxx, we have twelve top tricks if ♦ are trumps, and we have a very high probability of being able to establish a thirteenth trick through the ♥ suit. Of course, this is matchpoints, so we start wondering whether 6NT, or even 7NT,

might make. Chances of establishing a thirteenth trick in the ♥ suit are far less good if we play in notrump, but there is also a serious entry problem in notrump. Since I have no small ♦ to lead to partner's hand, partner will need either the ♠K or the ♣K as an entry to the ♦ if we are to play in notrump.

First, a point about preempts. The partner with whom I was playing on this occasion (some readers will recognize him from the context) believes in preempting to the fullest extent possible, and considerations of vulnerability and suit quality can sometimes seem secondary. Even traditional notions of suit *length* can sometimes be “bent.” For example, we have been known to jump overcall an opponent's 1-level major suit opener at the *four* level with a *seven*-card suit, especially “white against red.” And...we regularly open major suit weak 2s with a 5-card suit, with the “concession” that we will have a 4-card or long minor “on the side” if we do. This approach to preemption is not for everyone, but maximum disruption of the opponents' auctions is highly correlated with good results. Part of the reason that I raise this issue here is that I cannot assume, playing with this partner, that he does indeed have ♦QJ10xxxx, and this factors into how the auction *should* be approached in our “style.” I say “should” because I got it wrong at the table. Here's a possible “standard” auction using Roman Key Card Blackwood (3014) and Queen Ask:

N	E	S	W
3♦	P	4N (FN 1)	P
5♣ (FN 2)	P	5♥ (FN 3)	P
6♦ (FN 4)	P	P, or 6N	P

FN 1: 3014 Key Card Blackwood (♦ being the “key suit”)

FN 2: 0 or 3 key cards (♦K is a key card, along with the four aces)





FN 3: Do you have the ♦Q?

FN 4: I do not.

We actually have a better way to bid the hand, as we use a key card variation called Minorwood. The basic premise of Minorwood is as follows:

When a minor suit has previously been agreed as trump and one member of the partnership bids 4 of that minor, or when one member of the partnership bids 4 of a minor which has previously been bid naturally, the “4 of a minor” bid initiates Key Card Blackwood.

Here’s the whole hand and how Minorwood allows you to get to the optimal contract:

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ K2 ♥ 10 ♦ 10975432 ♣ K74</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">♠ 765 ♥ J8754 ♦ 6 ♣ QJ92</td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; text-align: center;">  </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">♠ J984 ♥ 92 ♦ QJ8 ♣ 8653</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ AQ103 ♥ AKQ63 ♦ AK ♣ A10</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">A very minor wood</p>	♠ 765 ♥ J8754 ♦ 6 ♣ QJ92		♠ J984 ♥ 92 ♦ QJ8 ♣ 8653	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>3♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♦^{FN1}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥^{FN2}</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠^{FN3}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♦^{FN4}</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♥^{FN5}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>6♣^{FN6}</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>6NT</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>All Pass</p> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">FN1: 3014 <i>Rolling</i> Key Card Minorwood (♦ being the “key suit”) FN2: 3 or 0 key cards FN3: Do you have the ♦ Q? FN4: I do not FN5: Number of Kings? FN6: I have two Kings</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>		3♦	Pass	4♦ ^{FN1}	Pass	4♥ ^{FN2}	Pass	4♠ ^{FN3}	Pass	5♦ ^{FN4}	Pass	5♥ ^{FN5}	Pass	6♣ ^{FN6}	Pass	6NT
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You might fairly opine that it’s pretty darn bad luck that the hand doesn’t make 7NT. After all, if partner had only the ♦ *Jack* and just *one* entry, the chances of running the suit would be better than 50% (by my assessment, 40% for the 2-2 split, plus 12.5% for the stiff Queen). Interestingly, with the actual hand, and the ♦ splitting 3-1, you need *both* Kings in partner’s hand in order to make 6...the first to get there and drive out East’s ♦ stopper, and the second get back to the board to

cash the rest of the now-established \diamond . This raises a bridge aphorism worth revisiting...“Don’t bid a grand slam unless you can count 13 sure tricks.” [Ingi’s note: statistically, in a team game, you should be in grand slams that are >70%]. To circumstantially validate this principle, we need look no further than the “recap sheet.” It was a 5-table game, and the other scores were $6\diamond=$, $4N+2$, $4♥=$, and $5\diamond+1$. So, $6\diamond$ would have been a 2-way tie for top...and $6N$ would have been an unshared top.

How did we fare on the hand? Well...we managed $7\diamond-1$, for an unshared bottom. The fault was mine...twice. First, after a long day of work, I lazily assumed that partner *had* to have the $\diamond Q$ for his vulnerable opener...and then, to add insult to injury, I violated the “13 sure trick rule.” We have the tools to avoid such pointless disasters. If I had only limited myself to *one* mistake on the hand, we would have had a top.

This raises one last aphorism. It takes careful parsing, but it’s worth the work: “Strive for the best contract possible...not the best possible contract.” Not every perfect contract is realistically attainable. Your goal is to equal or beat the rest of the field, not to achieve perfection. “Bridge as art” is a beautiful thing, but winning is important too.

We digress. The obvious value of Minorwood is that you can get slam-related information while “staying low.” This allows us room to explore *and* the ability to stop at the 5-level if the news is not what we had hoped for. This problem is particularly endemic to the exploration of *minor* suit slams, since we simply have less opportunity to exchange information...and then stop at $5\clubsuit$ or $5\diamond$...than we do when our “bailout” is $5♥$ or $5♠$.

The usual slam bidding taxonomy, in order, is as follows:

- Key Cards (3014 or 1430?);
- Queen Ask;
- Number of Kings (or Specific Kings); and
- Extras (tools for further exploration of grand slam).


On the question of whether to use Number of Kings versus Specific Kings, I'm a little undecided. Readers: Do you have a preference, and if so, why?

Also regarding King Ask...it should *guarantee* that the “asker” has all 5 key cards. On occasion, this knowledge makes “responder” the better-positioned member of the partnership to place the final contract.

We will discuss Extras (how to explore grand slam after “response to King Ask”) in future issues. We will also discuss cue bidding (in fact, Italian Cue Bidding) as precursors (and as adjuncts) to effective Blackwood sequences.

Painting the Town Red, BBO-Style - Part 2 (Ingi Agnarsson)

In the last issue of *Table Talk*, I told a story of a BBO adventure involving an amazing hand, and—sitting South—a somewhat optimistic auction ending at 6♣:

<p>♠ J3 ♥ Q62 ♦ 862 ♣ K8642</p> <p>♠ Q986 ♥ J109543 ♦ J4 ♣ 5</p> <p>♠ AK1042 ♥ - ♦ AK107 ♣ AQ97</p>		<p>♠ 75 ♥ AK87 ♦ Q953 ♣ J103</p>	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>5♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>6♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>		Pass	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass	4♣	Pass	5♣	Pass	6♣	All Pass			
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When you overbid, you better play well. I asked for input from you, dear readers: comments on the bidding, and more importantly, how would you go about playing the contract. The initial response was underwhelming. I feared that we either have no readers, or that neither reader found the hand interesting. Zero response. Oh,

well. Likewise, some of my scientific articles also receive only crickets chirping, and they are even more work than *Table Talk* articles. :-)

But, in the end, two upstanding members of our club (Jay Friedenson and Mark McKenzie) sent in responses. Hallelujah! I hope that some of the rest of you also thought about this declaring challenge. You get to see all hands, which makes this a lot easier than playing the hand live on BBO!

The lead was a ♥, which you ruffed. First instinct is to draw trumps, but there are some obvious issues. First, it would be nice if you could ruff two more ♥ in your hand. Even though that might cost a trump trick, it would likely be your only loser, but lack of entries frustrates this option. If you give up on that idea, you might take two rounds of trumps with declarer's Ace and Queen, but if you do, you next discover the unfortunate trump lie.

♠A, ♠K, and a ♠ruff is another option, but as the cards lie, East simply overruffs and plays back a small ♣...which looks like game over. Using the ♣K as an entry is hopeless, as it establishes a ♣ trick for the defense, and as you still have another ♥ to trump. Second, if you draw ALL of the trumps, you really only have one hope. Very few players on BBO made 6♣. My guess is that players relied on the ♠ finesse, either entering dummy with the ♣K and playing the ♠J right away, or drawing ♣ and then playing ♠J. In the former case, you lose the ♠ finesse and after another ♥, have to ruff with the Q, and give up a ♣ trick. In the latter case, you lose the ♠ finesse, and upon a ♥ return, are out of ♣ with which to ruff...so you lose two more ♥ tricks. It seems like a fragile contract. And it is, even with the best play. Both Jay and Mark found the best line of play. After taking ♣A and Q (checking for the break, since if ♣ are 2-2, you are done), you need to now play a low ♠ towards the dummy!

Jay's solution: *"There is the potential of 2 losers in this hand...a Diamond loser and a Spade loser by overruff. The key to the play of the hand is to set up the Spade suit for Diamond and Heart discards, and to pull the opposing trumps without losing control of the hand. That is to say, you can't pull trump if that would expose you to Heart losers. The way to do it would be to ruff the Heart lead low in my*


(declarer's) hand. I would then play the Ace and Queen of Clubs from my hand and then lead a low Spade from my hand toward the Jx in dummy. Let's say West takes his Queen of Spades and leads back a Heart. I ruff it with the the last Club in my hand, and lead to the now-established Jack of Spades in dummy. The Jack of Spades wins, and I play the King of Clubs, which pulls the last trump held by East, and on which I discard a Diamond. I then play a Diamond from dummy to my Ace of Diamonds, and I then have 3 good Spades in my hand on which I can take 3 pitches from dummy. I pitch the last Heart and 2 Diamonds in dummy, so that I can ruff my losing Diamond in dummy, and I end up losing only the Queen of Spades."

Mark's solution: "After ruffing the opening lead in your hand, my line is as follows: Play the Club Ace, to make sure you don't have a dreadful split. Both follow. Now, play the trump Queen. If trumps split, you are bullet-proof...but they don't. OK...lead a low Spade towards dummy's Jack. On the actual lay of the cards, you are cold for 12 tricks. If West goes up with the Spade Queen, the hand is over. You can ruff the Heart return in your hand, get to dummy with the Spade Jack, draw the last trump, and claim. If West is devious enough to duck the first Spade trick, you win with dummy's Jack, draw the last trump, play a Spade to your hand (both opponents following). Cash a Spade winner. They don't split. You pitch a Heart from dummy. Spade ruff in dummy, Diamond back to your hand, Spade winner (pitching dummy's last Heart), and you have a Diamond loser at the end...taking 12 tricks."

Playing a low ♠ towards the Jack, instead of trying a finesse (or trying to ruff ♥) solves at least some of your problems. If West has the ♠Q, you are now very close to making (see Jay and Mark). You get 4 ♠ tricks, 7 trumps (two ruffs, plus five ♣ in dummy) and you have ♦AK...an abundance of tricks after giving away one. If the ♠Q is in the East, you are still pretty fragile. On a ♥ return, you will ruff, and have to rely on being able to ruff a ♠ for an entry to the dummy. Why is this line better than finessing for the ♠Q? Because, this line loses (almost) only to ♠Qx in the East and ♣ being 3-1, with East having the three,

A 5-1 break in Spades is all but impossible to handle, *except* as pointed out by Mark, “*If East started with exactly 5-2-3-3 distribution. He wins his Spade Q and returns a Diamond (best). You win, cash a Spade to learn about the split, ruff your low Spade in Dummy, ruff a Heart in your hand, cash two Spade winners (pitching a Heart and a Diamond from Dummy), cash your top Diamond, ruff a Diamond in Dummy, and have Dummy’s trump King as your final card. Easy.*”). Pretty good odds, hard to calculate exactly, but trumps 3-1 with length in the East is 25%, and the odds of East having exactly ♠Qx are very low, less than 5%. Of course, a 4-0 ♣ break and a 5-1 or 6-0 ♠break would also kill us, but these are relatively unlikely. My guesstimate is that this line of play gives you well over an 80% chance of making. A line including a ♠ finesse would be little over 50%, as you cannot enter dummy to take the last trump upon a failed ♠ finesse and a ♥ return which forces declarer’s last trump. I think this line is clearly your best option. Finding this *really very simple* solution at the table, following aggressive bidding, yielded a 100% score in a game of roughly 1,200 BBO players.

Test Your Play in 3NT at IMPs (Mark Oettinger)

<p>♠ J63 ♥ AQ ♦ QJ102 ♣ KJ52</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>♠ Q42 ♥ 1043 ♦ AK95 ♣ A83</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <p>The simple auction proceeded as follows:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>*1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*12-14</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				*1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass	
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North/South were playing 1NT openers showing 12-14 HCP. The form of scoring was IMPs, so overtricks were of relatively little importance: the focus was on ensuring the contract. This was actually an “8 Is Enough” team game at the

Burlington Bridge Club. In this format, the pairs are divided into 3 categories, roughly based upon masterpoint holdings. Each “A Player” counts as 3 points; each “B Player” counts as 2 points; and each “C Player” counts as 1 point. A typical team therefore could consist of 2 A Players and 2 C Players, or 4 B Players, or any other combination that does not exceed 8. Four rounds of 6 boards each are easily completed in a single session event. This is a wonderful way to introduce newer players to the IMP form of scoring, and its strategic variations. The A Players generally take on the role of mentors, and I prefer to seat A and C pairs at the same table during the competition, again to allow for “teachable moments” (if the less experienced pair is desirous of receiving feedback). As always...and perhaps even more so...impeccable comportment is a must.


West led the ♣10. I called for the Jack from the board. It held, as East contributed the ♣4 and I played the ♣3. With 3♣ tricks, 4♦ ricks, and the ♥A assured, I needed one more trick to ensure the contract. What’s the best line? I can’t attack ♠ myself, but if the opponents break them for me, I’m guaranteed my game-going ninth trick. I will also succeed if ♣ split 3-3 or if the ♥ finesse works. With ♣ entries in both hand and dummy, I decided to take the four guaranteed ♦ tricks that I had coming, ending in my hand for a possible ♥ finesse, figuring that one of the defenders might err by pitching a ♣ after starting with four.

Neither opponent pitched ♣ during the run of the ♦, and I decided that I might as well try the ♣ before taking the ♥ finesse. Still needing to be in my hand for the eventual ♥ finesse, I led a ♣ to the King on the board, and a ♣ back to my Ace. RHO showed out on the third round. I resigned myself to the ♥ finesse, which lost. Back came a ♥, and I had to lose 2 ♠, a ♣, and 2 ♥...for down one. There was a better line. Do you see it?

I could play the ♣ the other way, ending in the dummy. Even though they don’t split, I can lead dummy’s last ♣ into whichever defender holds the other remaining ♣. If that happens to be West (as was the actual case), the best thing he can do from the defense’s perspective is to lead a ♥, so I get my finesse anyway. Instead, West might break ♠ for me at this late stage in the hand, giving me my game-

going trick. Interestingly, if it's *East* who has the last ♣, my contract is looking better, as he either is end-played in ♥ or *has* to start breaking ♠.

Here's the whole hand. It doesn't make with best defense, but the line that I did not find makes the contract in more cases, and gives the opponents more opportunities to go wrong:

	♠ J63	
	♥ AQ	
	♦ QJ102	
	♣ KJ52	
♠ A1075		♠ K98
♥ J96		♥ K8752
♦ 83		♦ 764
♣ Q1094		♣ 76
	♠ Q42	
	♥ 1043	
	♦ AK95	
	♣ A83	

I Like Those Odds! (Ingi Agnarsson)

Answers to the July Issue's 'Test Your Skills' Challenge

(Suggested for players just starting to learn about odds)

Last issue, I offered you three challenges to solve based on the basic bridge probabilities that we have covered so far. I don't like repeating myself, so I won't talk at all about an overwhelming lack of response to the challenge, how it makes me feel that almost nobody reads my articles, or that almost nobody is interested in them. I won't mention at all that this is similar to some of my scientific articles. Not at all. Instead, I will take great delight in having received ONE response, from Mark McKenzie (thank you Mark!), and I'll march on in the firm belief that the

rest of you actually have read, and thought about, the problem, and have an answer in your head.

In Hand 1, you found yourself on a bit of a losing streak, but were encouraged by the aroma of an upcoming meal. You faced the challenge of finding the best play in 3NT, according to the odds, with two very clear alternatives:

♠ 10
♥ J3
♦ AQ2
♣ AKQ7543



♠ QJ2
♥ AK754
♦ J10543
♣ -

After the opponents cashed ♠AK, and played the third round of ♠ (signals indicating that ♠ are 5-4 and thus cashable no matter which opponents get in), you are looking at 7 top tricks. What is your best chance of making your contract? The ♣ are very tempting, but the chance of them coming in 3-3 is around 36%. Playing a ♦ to the Ace first works if the ♦King is stiff, so the combined probability of making the hand with this line of play is around 39%. On the other hand, a simple finesse in ♦ is 50%, and if it works, guarantees the 2 extra tricks needed (since you have the J and and 10). It is a simple but superior play, according to bridge odds. In the words of Mark McKenzie, “You can either play for the ♦King to be on-side, or for the ♣ to split 3-3. I would pick the ♦ finesse, as it’s 50% (better odds), plus you have an extra chance of success if the ♠ are blocked.”

On Hand 2, you had picked up a dream first hand of session one, as West led a Spade against 6NT:

♠ AK6543

♥ 95

♦ 32

♣ 987



♠ 7

♥ KQJ10

♦ AKQ10

♣ AKQ10

South has only two losers, and partner has the ♠AK. What could possibly go wrong, and how do you proceed after a ♠ lead?

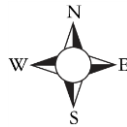
Clearly, you cannot afford to take your second ♠ trick, as the Ace of Hearts is still out, and ♠ would be left wide open. So, you must therefore abandon your ♠K (or your ♠A if you prefer flair). Playing a ♥ to knock out the ♥A seems intuitive, but then relies on a defensive mistake (the defense leading back anything other than ♥!) to give you a good chance. As you happen to be playing against world class players, you are not counting on any gifts.

Foregoing the “gift option,” you must finesse one of your minor suit 10s at trick 2! Which minor? Well, there is a higher probability of the ♣J falling under the ♣AKQ, since the opponents have only 6 ♣, than the ♦J falling under the ♦AKQ, since the opponents have 7 ♣. The superior play is therefore to finesse the ♦10 at trick 2. Even if this finesse succeeds, you are still not guaranteed your contract by any means, but everything is under control. A defensive mistake will still give you the contract after you knock out the Ace of Hearts, and you have a decent chance of the ♣J dropping. It’s not a great slam (~18% without a defensive mistake - 50% for the ♦ finesse, combined with a roughly 37% chance of the ♣Jack dropping), but at least you played to give yourself the best odds! Mark McKenzie was quick

to get to the point: “After the opening lead, you are in dummy for potentially the last time. I would take the ♦ finesse (50%). If it loses, you are down more than one trick after the opps kill your ♠ stopper. But if it wins, you have legitimate chances.”

Sitting South on Hand 3, you were inspired by your play in the previous hand, and the upcoming shrimp feast, and you pushed to a grand slam. How do you make 7♣?

♠ KJ4
♥ A54
♦ A876
♣ KQ7



♠ AQ53
♥ KJ3
♦ 2
♣ AJ1098


West leads a small ♦. You go up with the ♦ A, and it’s time to make a plan. On the upside, you can count 12 top tricks! On the downside, you can only count 12 tricks! You need one more. It seems like a straightforward 50% contract, you take trumps and might as well take all the ♠ in case the opponents make a mistake. Then you lead a ♥ to the Ace and finesse the ♥J on the way back. This is a bit better than 50%, perhaps, but you can do even better.

A dummy reversal is a technique to increase the number of trump tricks you can get by trumping in the long trump hand until it is shorter than the (originally) shorter hand. In this case, if you can trump three times in the long trump suit, while drawing 3 rounds of trump with high trumps, you will get 6 trump tricks instead of 5. Mark starts his response with: “This calls for a dummy reversal,” clearly on the


right track, but he uses one ♠ entry to ruff a ♦, an unnecessary risk if the ♠ lie is terrible. The best play is to ruff a ♦, play a ♣ to the King, ruff another ♦, return to Queen of ♣, and ruff a third ♦ with the ♣A. Now enter dummy with the Ace of Hearts to take the last trump with the 7. You've won 6 trump tricks, 4 ♠ tricks, the ♦A, and the ♥AK...13 tricks and grand slam made. This requires (almost) only that trumps are 3-2, which is 68%, clearly a better percentage play. Go enjoy your shrimp!

Agree on Defensive Signals...and then *Trust Partner* (Mark Oettinger)

I picked up the following, sitting S:

 ♠ 9872 ♥ Q3 ♦ 76 ♣ AKQJ6	Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable : IMPs The auction went as follows: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>2NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3NT</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			1♣	Pass	1♦	2♥	2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>														
		1♣	Pass														
1♦	2♥	2NT	Pass														
3NT	All Pass																

My partner is known to preempt vigorously. There's no rush to lead a ♥, and I start with the ♣K. It is important to note that we play that a lead of a King from AK asks partner to give count. Dummy comes down, and this is what I see:

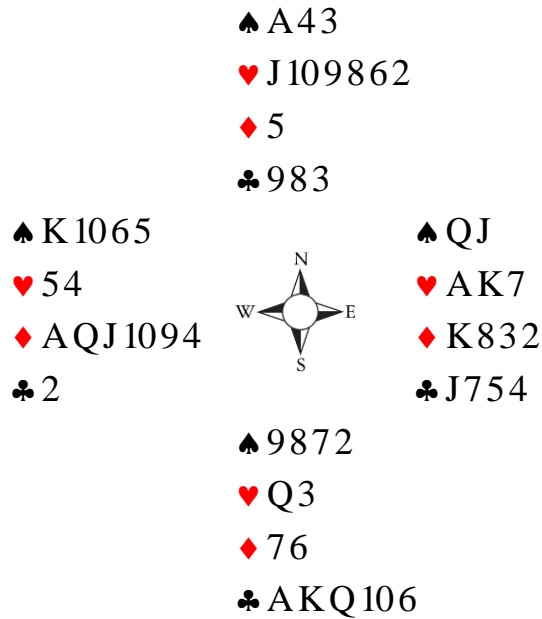
♠ K1065 ♥ 54 ♦ AQJ1094 ♣ 2	
	♠ 9872 ♥ Q3 ♦ 76 ♣ AKQ106

Partner follows with the ♣2, showing that he has an odd number. East opened 1♣, showing at least 3, so partner has either 1♣, or 3♣. I decide to find out by leading the ♣Q in trick 2. Partner follows with the ♣8, so he has 3♣ in total. If his third ♣ is the Jack, I can drop it and take the first 5 tricks. If it's a small ♣, I need to find an entry to his hand so that he can lead his last ♣ through declarer's ♣Jxxx. What should I do next?

Look at it from partner's perspective. He preempted, and you led a suit other than his against the opponents' notrump contract. Aside from the fact that you've led the ♣King (initially showing either the Ace or the Queen...or *both*), you've continued the Queen (after having gotten an "odd number of ♣" signal from him, and notwithstanding declarer's 1♣ opening bid). It's therefore odds-on for him to assume that you have length in ♣, likely the Ace, and quite possibly the 10, in addition to your proven King-Queen. Think again before reading on. What's the solution?

If partner's three ♣ include the Jack, he would have (or, at least, *should* have?) pitched it under your Queen! Trust him! Assume that he didn't pitch it because he doesn't have it. So...you have to shift and hope to find his entry. Given his 2♥ bid, the obvious shift is a ♥, but which one? It seems natural to lead the ♥Q, implying that you have only one or two ♥. Leading small would imply 3 or more. Also, leading the Queen should deny the King, which makes it easier for partner to grab the ♥A (if he has it) and return his last ♣ before declarer takes the ♥K, 6♦ tricks and (if he has the ♠A) some number of ♠ tricks. It turns out that partner preempted with 6♥ to the Jack, but declarer can't take more than 8 tricks before losing the lead to partner's ♠A, whereupon he leads his last Club through declarer's remaining ♣Jx...for an elegant down 1!

Here's the whole hand:



Nice defense! Did you find it? I did not.

Trust the Carding More Than the Bidding (Mark McKenzie)

Playing with Trey Hyer in the Monster Knockout at the 2018 Warwick Regional, I dealt myself this robust 1NT opener while sitting North; neither side vulnerable:



We were playing a strong NT (15-17), so I opened the obvious 1NT. Things proceeded as follows:

N	E	S	W	
1NT	2♣*	3NT	All Pass	*alerted as showing ♣ and a higher suit, DONT.

I assumed that Trey's 3NT bid showed a solid ♣ stopper, game points, and no 4-card major. [Note from Ingi: many people use Lebensohl in this situation, where 3NT bid directly denies a ♣ stopper, whereas 2NT (requiring a 3 ♣ "relay"), followed by 3NT, shows a hand with the stopper.] With my shape and ♣ holding, I was fine with settling in 3NT. East led the ♣10, and Trey tabled this dummy:

♠ AJ5
♥ A106
♦ K743
♣ KQ8



♠ 976
♥ K74
♦ AJ65
♣ AJ3

Our combined hands look strong, but play weak.

I quickly counted up 30 HCP between my hand and the dummy. I also saw that we only had 8 tricks on top, and that we had mirror distribution. I asked West if they had any agreement on the strength required for a DON'T overcall, and he replied "about 10 points." This would mark East with all of the missing high cards, so I made my plan: pick up the ♦Q via finesse, and take 10 tricks if the ♦ split, 9 tricks if they don't. So, I won the first trick on the board with the ♣A in order to conceal the ♣ position, West following with the ♣9. I then played a low ♦ toward my ♦K, in case East was harboring the singleton ♦Q. East discarded the 9♥ on this trick!

This of course totally destroyed my plan. Forget about 10 tricks, I didn't even have a legitimate way of taking 9 tricks. My ♦ were dead, I didn't have a long suit anywhere. East must be sitting behind me with the rest of the missing high cards, and there was no way for me to throw him in to force a ♠ or ♥ lead. He could always exit safely with a ♣. The only thing that gave me any hope at all was the discard of the ♥9. East-West were playing UDCA, upside-down carding and

attitude. Would East really discard the ♥9 from ♥QJ9x to discourage a ♥ lead? Maybe his bid showed crazy distribution in lieu of high-card strength. If West had the missing ♥ honors, or at least the ♥Q, maybe I could end-play him. So...should I trust East's bid, or his carding?

Since the opponents potentially had long cards in both major suits for me to worry about, I didn't want to lead one. So I ducked a ♦ to West to put him in, East discarding the ♣2. West couldn't return a ♦, and I was hoping he didn't have a ♣ to lead. Not surprisingly, he returned a low ♠. I played low, and East won his ♠10. Back came a ♣, which I won with the ♣K that East was hoping to find in West's hand. West discarded the ♠8 on this trick, which confirmed to me that both missing ♠ honors were with East – no surprise. I exited with the ♠J to East's ♠Q, and won the ♣ return with my ♣Q, West discarding a ♦ this time. I put my ♠A on the table and held my breath; both opponents followed suit. ♠ were gone, and I now had a complete count of the hand. East was down to 3 ♥ and 2 ♣, while West was down to 3 ♥ and 2 ♦. I needed four more tricks. This was my holding now:



My play was to throw West in with a Heart to force a ♦ lead into my ♦ A-J on the board. I had to hope that he was holding the ♥QJx, or ♥Qxx and had failed to unblock the ♥Q. I played a low ♥ to the King; another ♥ back towards my Ace, fetching the ♥J from West. Mike Lawrence always says “Play to make!” With that exhortation in mind, I exited with the ♥10 and held my breath again. If East had

the ♥Q, I would be down two; if West had it, I would be golden. East played the ♥8, and I could claim my contract. :)

At the other table, 3NT went down two tricks. The 11-IMP gain helped us through to the next round; we ended up making the semi-finals before bowing out.

Evaluating Distributional Hands: What To Bid? (Ingi Agnarsson)

“Points schmoints,” says Marty Bergen, and there are certainly times when this is true; when counting points is far from enough to evaluate the hand. For example, any time you feel lucky! Or when you find yourself in Zia’s “Heat 1.” For us mere mortals, however, more relevant are hands where distribution trumps point count, in hand evaluation. Mark has discussed some of the ways we may go about evaluating hands beyond mere point counting. Point counting is merely a proxy, one of many, for evaluating hand strength. Loser count (discussed in the upcoming January issue) is another good one. Highly distributional hands can be very hard to evaluate. Consider the following hand that came up in a sectional in New Hampshire in late September:

♠ A108765
♥ K98543
♦ 2
♣ -

What is this hand worth? What do you do with it as dealer? Counting points, we get only to 7, far from opening strength. Perhaps you have a gadget for point-shy distributional hands containing both majors. If so, use it! Let’s look at it from the standpoint of loser count (in the simplest sense, missing A, K or Q in a suit, maximum 3 losers per suit). You have only 5 losers, 2 each in ♥ and ♠, and one in ♦. Five loser hands are usually worth opening. Your typical hand with 12-14 HCP will contain 6-7 losers. So...should we open? What about misleading partner? If you open, you may soon confront a 4NT key card ask, with potentially dire consequences.

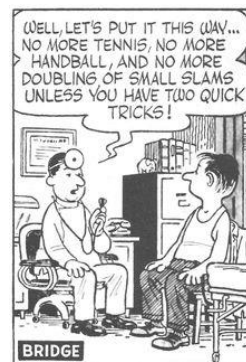
It's a pretty delicate situation, and I do not have any magic solutions. However, here are a few pointers: (1) If you have a gadget that shows both majors, use it; (2) Absolutely do NOT preempt in one of the two majors, as you could end up minus a large number, while having a cold game in the other suit; you can do better than play the lottery; and (3) Realize that this hand is *potentially* very strong, *if* you have fit. I think that the main options are to open at the one level, or to pass and see what happens. I would be very happy to receive some thoughts on this from the readers! I chose to open this hand with 1♠. Sure, you are lying, but no matter what you do, you are lying, so I choose the lie that is most likely to yield a positive score, while relatively unlikely to lead to a disaster.

Against most responses from partner, I am going to bid 4♥, hoping that partner will pick the better game. Of course, this could easily misfire. Say partner forces to game with 2C, and I bid 4H. Fast arrival dictates that this should indicate a distributional rather than strong HCP hand, since we're already forced to game. I would bid 2♥ with a stronger hand, leaving more space for bidding. Partner could easily range from having no fit (with game being hopeless), to exploring for grand slam. In this case, I got lucky. The opponents were quiet, and partner bid 1NT forcing. I bid my 4♥ (again, potentially disastrous if partner has something like 1=1=6=5), asking partner to choose a game. Partner dutifully bid 4♠ and laid down this useful collection:

♠ K43
♥ 62
♦ J1043
♣ A654

"My partner is 20 years behind the times, he still thinks you need high cards to bid. "

"I favor light opening bids. When you're my age, you can never be sure that the bidding will get back around to you again." Oswald Jacoby at 77



Our combined hands:

♠ A108765

♥ K98543

♦ 2

♣ -



♠ K43

♥ 62

♦ J1043

♣ A654

After taking a ♦, the opponents led another ♦, which I ruffed. I next led a ♠ to the King. A small ♥ toward declarers hand elicited the ♥A from West (ducking does not help). On the return of a trump, I could take my ♠A, the ♥K, and trump a ♥. That was overruffed, but that was the third and final trick for the opponents. So 4♠ (just another 15-point game!!) made.

Does this prove that opening 1♠ was the right decision? Not at all. Bridge is a game of percentages, and the question is whether opening 1♠ is a better than 50% decision, or more generally, whether it has a higher frequency of success than other actions. I honestly don't know. One can only answer this through simulation software, running a thousand deals with this potential opening hand, and calculating the frequency of different action being "correct." I don't have this software (yet), so I leave the question to you. What would you do with this hand and why? Regardless of your answer, note how powerful this 7 HCP hand can be, once a fit is found. It is so powerful that you needed only 15 points to make a game! Sure it was fragile, but imagine when partner also as the Ace of Hearts. That makes for a 19-point game that is immune to all but the worst breaks. Points schmoints, indeed!

Is Counting Both Length *and* Shortness Double Counting?

July 2018 Table Talk Revisited (Jay Friedenson (and Marty Bergen!))

With reference to the article on "Evaluating Unusual Hands" - the question was raised whether it would be "double counting" to add points for shortness *and* to add points for length. Mark commented that this question is not well-addressed in the literature, and that he would be disinclined to count both length and shortness. Editorial comment by Ingi, on the other hand, is that it **is** advisable to count both length and shortness since length increases your trick-taking power and shortness avoids losers. After discussion of miscellaneous evaluation considerations, the reader is referred to Marty Bergen's books on hand evaluation.

Marty Bergen, in his books, does discuss at length the advisability of counting both length and shortness in the declarer's hand when a fit is found. Marty would add a point for a 5-card suit in his initial hand evaluation. After a raise in this suit by partner, Marty would add an additional point for each trump after 5. He would then add 2 points for each singleton, 1 point for two or more doubletons, and 4 points for a void. (See "Slam Bidding Made Easier" by Marty Bergen, pp. 75-76). Like Mark, my partner Mike Borushok has been hard to convince that this does not constitute double counting. I decided to write Marty Bergen and put this question to him for an explanation. After all, what would be a better source for comment than the "horse's mouth?" I have found that Marty has been quite generous of his time in responding to bridge questions put to him. I reproduce the exchange of correspondence that I had with Marty below:

Jay:

I have read a number of your books including, "Hand Evaluation: Points, Schmöints!" You say that once partner raises your suit, trump length AND short suits are both relevant. You would add points for *each* of these assets, adding 2 points for a singleton and even more for extra length in the trump suit. My partner insists that this is double counting, and he can't understand why extra points should be added both for length and for a singleton in declarer's hand...when he's going to win whatever trump tricks in his hand

anyway...to be contrasted with getting a ruff on the short side. How would you answer the "double counting" question?

Marty:

After partner raises your spades, do you two think these 3 hands are equal?

Axxxx Axx Ax xxx

Axxxx Axx Axxx x

Axxxx Axxx Axxx -

I do not.

Jay:

I can readily understand why the hands with the void and the singleton are better because there is the opportunity to ruff with a trump card that may not win anyway. It's harder for me to understand the following:

AKQxxx KJx xx xx

AKQxxx KJx xxx x

In each hand declarer expects to win 6 spade tricks in his hand so it's hard for me to see how he will win any extra tricks in his hand in the second hand just because he has shortness.

Marty:

Imagine that responder has:

xxx Qxxx Ax Axxx...

among many other possibilities.


As you can see, Marty responded by giving examples, and not by giving an explanation such as that suggested by Ingi. It would be useful and interesting to me, and I think, to the readership of *Table Talk* who are following this issue, if the editors would comment further on this situation and this exchange of correspondence.

Editor's comment from Ingi. Marty's last example is a nice illustration of my explanation. Not only do you need a way to make 10 tricks in order to make the Spade game, but you must also avoid losing 4 tricks along the way! The singleton Club does not add a trick, but it does prevent a Club loser.

Editor's comment from Mark. I stand corrected. I appreciate the difference between: (a) gaining a winner through ruffing in the short trump hand; and (b) eliminating a loser in the long trump hand as a result of shortness, and I am extremely happy that my off-hand comment generated such an informative discussion!

Safety Play (A Guest Article by Mark McKenzie)

Playing with Jay Friedenson in the Swiss Teams at the 2017 Manchester Sectional, I picked up the following hand sitting North, not vulnerable:

<p>♠ AK8643</p> <p>♥ AQ94</p> <p>♦ -</p> <p>♣ 874</p> 	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>Sitting East-West were Wayne Hersey and Paul Reardon. The bidding went as follows:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>3♦</td> <td>3♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	2♦	2♠	3♦	3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>										
2♦	2♠	3♦	3♠										
Pass	4♠	All Pass											

Wayne put the ♦ A on the table, and Jay tabled south's dummy:

♠ AK8643

♥ AQ94

♦ -

♣ 874



♠ J95

♥ KJ63

♦ 864

♣ K96

My initial thought on seeing the dummy was that we had missed a better game in ♥. My second thought was that the contract looked pretty solid, as long as Wayne (East) held the ♣A, which was likely on the bidding. So, I ruffed the opening trick in-hand, put my ♠A on the table... and could no longer make my contract when West showed out. I recovered as best I could by then leading a trump towards the ♠J in dummy, but Wayne jumped up with his ♠Q and was able to keep tapping me in ♦, eventually scoring a 2nd trump trick in addition to his ♣A and another ♣ trick. Since our opponents found the 4♥ contract at the other table, the swing here was 10 IMPs.

After the match, Jay and I had a brief discussion of how we could have bid it differently to find the Heart contract. This was useful for future reference, BUT there was a safety play available to me that would have assured making 4♠ against any distribution of the missing trumps, barring a freakish distribution of ♥ or ♣. Do you see it?


At trick two, I should lead a low ♠ towards dummy's ♠J. On the actual layout, Wayne is forced to go up with his ♠Q – otherwise, the ♠J will win, I will draw two more rounds of trump, lead a ♣ towards dummy's ♣K, and take 10 tricks no matter what. Any return other than a ♦ will allow me to draw trump and set up dummy's ♣K while still having a master trump in my hand, so Wayne must return

a ♦ at trick 3. I can counter this by tossing a Club loser from my hand. Now I can safely ruff the next ♦ lead in my hand, lead towards the ♣K, and claim 10 tricks. A 4th ♦ lead from Wayne can be ruffed with dummy's 9, leaving me with just enough high trumps to pull his 10-7-2. If East shows out on the lead of the low trump at trick two (unlikely, but possible), I can survive by going up with the ♠J (losing to the ♠Q), pitching a losing ♣ on the initial ♦ return, ruffing the next ♦ in hand, and leading towards the ♣K. I can again ruff a 4th ♦ in dummy if necessary, and pick up East's remaining trumps by leading the ♠9 through him. If ♠ split 3-1, I will lose only one ♠ trick and two ♣ tricks. If Spades split 2-2, I will do the same, having given up a meaningless overtrick. In fact, leading out the top ♠ only makes a real difference if they split 2-2 AND West has the ♣A, which is unlikely given his pre-empt. A good lesson...and Jay, my apologies.

In Memoriam (Submitted by Mark McKenzie)

Robert Smith passed away this past February after a battle with ALS. Bob ran the Manchester and the Mountains club for many years and of course needs no introduction to the Vermont Bridge community. I first met him at his club game in early 2014 and was fortunate enough to partner with him frequently over the next few years. He was a great teacher, a huge personality, and had a boundless love of the game. I'd like to share an example of Bob's rare insight, feel, and (frequently) unorthodox bidding at the table.

Playing with Bob in the open pairs at the 2015 Spring Sectional in Manchester, with both sides vulnerable, we were playing against Connie Pypers and Susan Wright. I picked up these cards sitting West:

♠ 7	
♥ 1076543	
♦ KQJ102	
♣ Q	

South dealt and passed. I liked my shape for a pre-empt, but not my suit, so I also passed. Things proceeded as follows:

Dealer South : All vulnerable

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣	2♣	3♣...


I took Bob's 2♣ bid as Michaels. My hand was clearly worth a bid now. I thought about jumping to game, but since we played Michaels as mini/maxi, I decided a 3♥ bid over South's ♣ raise would show my values. The bidding continued:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣	2♣	3♣
3♥	4♣	4NT	Pass...

We played 4NT as RKCB 1430; clearly Bob had a "maxi" Michaels hand. It didn't take me long to count up my key-cards for ♥. Bob went to slam anyway. North doubled, and Bob promptly re-doubled. So the complete bidding was:

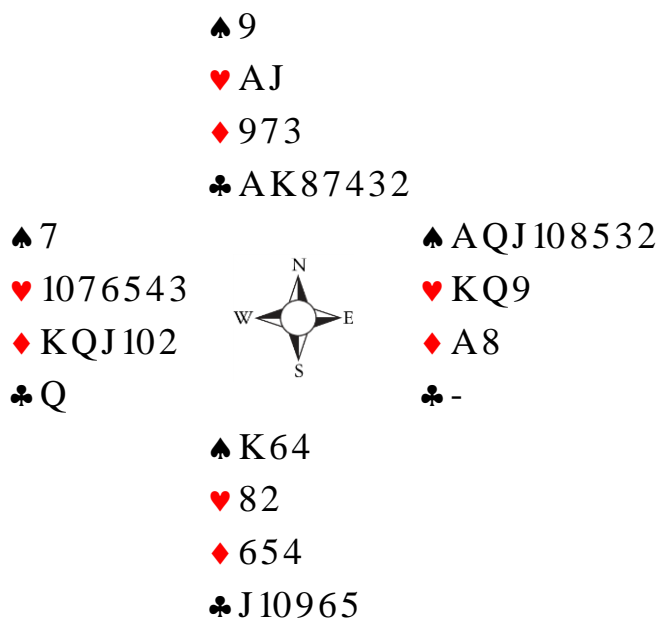
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣	2♣	3♣
3♥	4♣	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Rdbl	All Pass

North opened with the ♣A, and Bob put east's dummy on the table:

♠ 7		♠ AQJ108532
♥ 1076543	W	♥ KQ9
♦ KQJ102		♦ A8
♣ Q		♣ -

Somehow, holding an 8-card suit, Bob had managed to bid 4 times without directly mentioning it... made a Michaels bid with only 3 cards in an unbid Major... and had landed us in the slam that makes (6♥) instead of the slam that doesn't make (6♠). The play was trivial – I ruffed the opening lead in Dummy, played the trump King (ducked by North), continued with the trump Queen (♥ splitting 2-2), and claimed for +2070.

The full deal was:



Bob, thanks again for the lessons, mentoring, and friendship. You are missed.

ACBL's Electronic Device Policy (6.21.18)

N.B.: This Policy Is In Effect In All Vermont Sectionals and Unit Games

This policy applies to all events at NABCs. The policy for Other Events applies to events at Regional tournaments. It is strongly suggested that sponsors of Sectional tournaments adopt and apply this policy as well. Except for health-related equipment, or by permission of the Director-in-Charge, any electronic equipment or device capable of receiving or sending an electronic signal, or capable of communicating in any way, may not be operated or functioning in any manner in the playing area during a session of play. Any such equipment must not be visible

during the session and must remain off at all times. The above restrictions apply to all players, captains, coaches, kibitzers and play recorders, except those persons granted permission by the ACBL, and are in force throughout any playing session or segment of play. Further restrictions and requirements apply in events involving live internet and/or VuGraph coverage. A violation of any of the above restrictions will result in an automatic penalty, pursuant to Law 91 of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, as described below: In NABC+ Events: First offense of any kind, in a session: one full board, 12 IMPs or 20% of the maximum available VPs per match, at the respective form of scoring Second offense, in the same session or third offense within the event: Disqualification of the pair or team from the event. In Other Events: First offense, in the same session, ringing only: one-quarter board, 3 IMPs or 1 VP, at the respective form of scoring. First offense, in the same session, answering or initiating a call, texting or browsing: one-half board, 6 IMPs or 2 VPs, at the respective form of scoring. Second offense, in the same session: two full boards, 20 IMPs or 50% of the maximum available VPs per match, at the respective form of scoring. Third offense, in the event: disqualification of the pair or team from the event. Kibitzers violating this policy will be removed from the playing area for the remainder of the session. Sponsors of Sectional tournaments may choose to substitute a warning in lieu of the penalty for the first offense (ringing or both) or may insert a warning as the first item in the schedule of penalties.

Vermont and Nearby Clubs

Lyndonville Bridge Club

**70 Depot Street
Colby Library
Lyndonville, Vermont 05851
Jeanie Clermont; (802) 684-2156
Saturday, 1:00 p.m.; semi-monthly; stratified**

Manchester and Mountains DBC

**3624 Main Street
Multi-Purpose Room**

Manchester Village, Vermont 05254

Bob Smith; (802) 362-4224

Pat Homes; pathomes@comcast.net

Monday; 12:15 (12:30?) p.m.; June, July, August, September, October; stratified

Friday; 12:15 (12:30?) p.m.; open; stratified

Website: www.bridgewebs.com/manchestermountains/

Manchester Equinox Village Open

49 Maple Street

Manchester, Vermont 05254

Elizabeth VonRiesenfelder; (802) 362-5304

Tuesday; 1:00 p.m.; 0-200 MPs

Tuesday; 1:00 p.m.; open, stratified

Sunday; 2:00 p.m.; February, March; open; stratified

Multiple sites; call first; reservations requested

Taconic Card Club

2282 Depot Street

Manchester, Vermont 05255

Kim Likakis; (802) 379-1867

Thursday; 12:45 p.m.; open; reservations requested

Apollo Bridge Club

115 Main Street

Montpelier, Vermont 05602

Wayne Hersey; (802) 223-3922

Friday; 6:30 p.m.; open

Newport Club

84 Fyfe Street

Newport Center, Vermont 05855

Eric McCann; (802) 988-4773

Wednesday; 1:00 p.m.; exc. Jan, May, Oct, Nov, Dec; open; stratified

Barton Bridge Club

**34 School Street
Orleans, Vermont 05860
Linda Aiken; (802) 525-4617
Monday; 12:30 p.m.; open; stratified**

Rutland Duplicate Bridge Club

**66 South Main Street
Christ the King Church
Rutland, Vermont 05701
Raymond Lopes; (802) 779-2538
Monday, 12:00 Noon; open; stratified
Tuesday; 6:00 p.m.; open; stratified
Thursday; 6:00 or 6:30 p.m. (*time changes seasonally...call first*); open; stratified
*Multiple sites - call first for locations***

St. Albans DBC

**75 Messenger Street
St. Albans, Vermont 05478
Marsha Anstey; (802) 524-3653
Monday; 7:00 p.m.; open**

Burlington Bridge Club

**600 Blair Park Road
Williston, Vermont 05495
Phil Sharpsteen; (802) 999-7767
Monday; 6:30 p.m.; 0-500 MPs; stratified
Tuesday; 7:00 p.m.; open; stratified (call first November-April)
Wednesday; 9:15 a.m.; open; stratified
Wednesday; 1:30 p.m. 0-20 MPs; strat'd; *may resume Fall; pre-reg. & part. req'd*
Friday; 9:15 a.m.; open; stratified
Sunday; 1PM; open; semi-mo. exc. May, June, July, Aug; strat.; *call/check web*
Website: www.bridgewebs.com/burlingtonacademy/**

Norwich DBC

**43 Lebanon Street
Hanover, New Hampshire 03755
Michael Morris; (401) 215-4135
Tuesday; 6:30 p.m.; open; stratified**

Eastman Bridge Club

**57 Hanover Street
Knights of Columbus Hall
Lebanon, New Hampshire 03766
Jane Verdrager; (603) 865-5508
Tuesday; 1:00 p.m.; open; stratified; singles welcome/partner guar'd (Tues only)
Wednesday; 1:00 p.m.; open; stratified (partner not guaranteed for singles)
Friday; 1:00 p.m.; open; stratified (partner not guaranteed for singles)**

Keene DBC

**Elks Lodge
81 Roxbury Street
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
Anne McCune; (603) 352-2751
Monday; 12:00 Noon; open; stratified (partner available)
Thursday; 12:00 Noon; open; stratified (no partner guaranteed)**

Ticonderoga (New York) DBC

**109 Champlain Avenue
Ticonderoga, New York 12883
Michael Rogers; (518) 585-3322
Monday; 12:30 p.m.; open; stratified; reservations requested
Thursday; 12:30 p.m.; open; stratified; reservations requested**

Plattsburgh (New York) DBC

**5139 North Catherine Street
Plattsburgh, New York 12901
George Cantin; (518) 563-6639
Tuesday; 6:45 p.m.; open; handicap
Thursday; 6:45 p.m.; open
Friday; 12:30 p.m.; open**

Useful & Fun Links

ACBL	<u>www.acbl.org</u>
District 25	<u>www.nebridge.org</u>
Unit 175	<u>www.vermontbridge.org</u>
Bridge Base Online	<u>www.bridgebase.com</u>
OKBridge	<u>www.okbridge.com</u>
Bridge Guys	<u>www.bridgeguys.com</u>
Pattaya Bridge Club	<u>www.pattayabridge.com</u>
Larry Cohen	<u>www.larryco.com</u>
Mike Lawrence	<u>https://michaelslawrence.com/</u>
Marty Bergen	<u>www.martybergen.com</u>
Baron Barclay Bridge Supply	<u>www.baronbarclay.com</u>
Michael's Bridge Sanctuary	<u>www.mapiano.com/bridge.htm</u>
Power Rankings	<u>www.coloradospringsbridge.com/PR_FILES/PR.HTM</u>

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