



THE DECLARER



Summer 2018

Volume 61 Issue 2

Peter Wright, Editor

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THE DECLARER

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NEW TROPHY!

The NJBL is inaugurating a new trophy to be presented to the winners of the Flight A Double Knockout winners.

Anyone interested in sponsoring this trophy, in honor of someone or as a memorial to someone who has passed away, is asked to contact **Arnie Kohn**.

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NJBL PLAYER PHOTOS

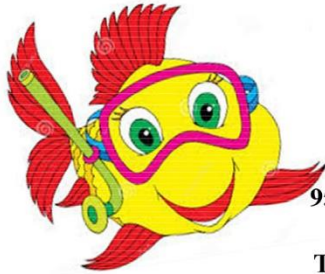
MAY 2018

BRIDGE BULLETIN

In case they escaped your notice, go back and check out the photos on the pages (listed below) of the May *Bulletin*, documenting big splashes made by Unit 140 players at the last Philadelphia NABC. You should be prepared to recognize royalty when you next do battle against them.

p. 20 **Steve Arshan, Rich Ross, Peter Stein**
(and Len Helfgott from another unit),
winners, **0-10,000 Swiss Teams**.

p. 68 **Jiang Gu**, now a **Grand Life Master**
with 10,000+ mps.



New Jersey Bridge League SUMMER SECTIONAL July 20-22, 2018

Hungarian-American Citizens Club
95 Port Reading Avenue, Woodbridge, NJ 07095
Playing site phone: 732-634-9697
Tournament Chair: Arnie Kohn at 732-216-5579



Friday, July 20

10:00 AM: ● Open Stratified Pairs ● Stratified 299er Pairs
2:30 PM: ● Open GRASSROOT Stratified Pairs ● GRASSROOT 299er Stratified Pairs

Saturday, July 21

10:00 AM: ● Open Stratified Pairs ● Stratified 299er Pairs
2:30 PM: ● A/X (X=0-4000) GRASSROOT IMP pairs (open to all)
● B/C/D GRASSROOT Match Point Pairs (3000/2000/1000)
● Stratified 299ers GRASSROOT Pairs

Sunday, July 22

9:30 AM: ● Light breakfast
10:30 AM: ● Seven-round Bracketed Round Robin Teams. Team average master points will determine your bracket, or your team may play in the top (Swiss) bracket by choice. We will have a short break in mid-afternoon for a complimentary lunch with bagels, rye breads, spreads, salads, and hummus.

Stratifications: Open Pairs A (3000+) B (1000-3000) C (0-1000)
299ers Pairs A (200-300) B (100-200) C (0-100) (May be varied based on participation.)

In pair events, strats will be based as an average of the total master points of the pair. In any event or flight with a master point upper limit, no individual's MP total may exceed that limit.

Guaranteed Partnerships: We guarantee partners for you in both the Open and 0-300 games for all Friday and Saturday sessions. You **MUST** request a partner by Tuesday July 17th, to be guaranteed a partner. Email your request to George Browne at brownege4111@gmail.com or call him at 973-819-0308. Also, please contact George if you have questions about the tournament or need help putting together a team.

Food: Between sessions Friday and Saturday, we will serve pizza for \$1/slice (cheese) or \$1.50/slice (with a topping), small salads for \$1/each and cans of soda for \$1/each. Sunday's complimentary food includes our light breakfast, mid-afternoon lunch, and snacks throughout the day.

NJBL Website: Visit our website www.njbl.net to read about upcoming tournaments and events, past results, bridge clubs, THE DECLARER (NJBL's online newsletter), and many other useful bridge links.

ACBL Membership Required: The ACBL has mandated that, in order to play, non-members must join the ACBL on an annual basis or, alternatively, obtain a temporary one month membership for \$7.99.

Entries: \$28/pair Friday & Saturday; \$112/team Sunday. The ACBL has mandated that we charge an additional \$4 charge per session to ACBL members whose membership fees are not current.

DIRECTIONS

From NJ Turnpike Exit 12: At the tollbooth, bear to the extreme right, and keep bearing to the EXTREME right at the ramp, following the signs to RAHWAY. The off ramp will put you on Roosevelt Ave. You will pass a Holiday Inn on your right. The third traffic light (about ¾ mile) is Blair Road (BP station on the SE corner). Left onto Blair Road and proceed past the first traffic light, staying on Blair Road into the Industrial Park. After about ¾ of a mile from the light, the road narrows, and you will cross a freight RR track. Shortly thereafter the road curves right. Stay to the extreme right, which is Port Reading Ave, go another two blocks, and turn right into the parking lot.

From other routes: NJ TPK Exit 11, Southbound GSP exit 129, Northbound GSP Exit 127, follow to Route 9 North. Once on Route 9, take Main St. Woodbridge Exit (Route 514). Turn right and go 1 mile to railroad overpass. Look for monument. Turn left BEFORE monument and continue on route 514 East. Go to 2nd traffic light and turn right onto Port Reading Ave. Club is ¼ mile on left.

From 287: Stay southbound, past exit 1 and NJ Tpk exit, and take the Route 9 North exit. Once on Route 9, take the Main St. Woodbridge Exit, and proceed as above.

THE DOMINO THEORY

by Jay Korobow

Dealer: East
Vul: none

North

♠ 5
♥ AJ8
♦ K97632
♣ K63

West

♠ 6
♥ K652
♦ AJ4
♣ AQ952

East

♠ Q10
♥ Q10743
♦ Q1085
♣ 104

South

♠ AKJ987432
♥ 9
♦ —
♣ J87

It was nice to take a random seat (North) in the Middle* of the Night (online) Imp Pairs on BBO, and to find I wouldn't be starting with a yarborough. In fact, with no one vul, ♠5 ♥AJ8 ♦K97632 ♣K63 seemed a decent set of tickets. It's always better to have spade length of course, but who knows . . . maybe partner would open 1♠ and after 2♦-2♥-2NT-3NT I would be declarer, always a plus in these events. Well, not always a plus score, but if you ever sat as dummy watching the Butcher of Belarus declare, you would know what I mean!

Things started nicely when LHO passed, and after quite some time Partner then opened 4♠. The pause possibly meant we had a slam, so ethically it might be difficult to find a call other than pass. I would certainly pass with most of my regular partners, but a BBO 4♠ opening tends to be about two aces stronger than face-to-face traditional bidding. However, I was rescued from my dilemma when RHO next bid 5♣, which I wasted no time in doubling. Even with a sub-optimal opening lead, this was headed for +500 (or even +800), not bad versus the +420 we were entitled to.

Partner now went into another trance, so while it could just be a slow internet connection, it surfaced again whether slam would be there for us, and could I ethically bid it over 5♠? Again, I was rescued, as Pard actually pulled 5♠* to 6♠! Tempted to teach Pard a lesson with a raise to 7♠, discretion made me pass, and the opening lead and play now became the more interesting focus.

Leader had to choose the opening lead from ♠6 ♥K632 ♦AJ4 ♣AQ952. One might think relief from having escaped from 5♣* would satisfy, but on this day a greedy double broke a legendary rule I had once heard: if you don't know what to lead after doubling, maybe you shouldn't double? I would be tempted to try the ♣A and see what dummy and partner's signal brought to the picture. The hand in question actually chose the singleton trump, a lead many will never make, but at least it gives nothing particularly away. It also gains nothing, not even a useful signal from partner.

With ♠AKJ987432 ♥9 ♦— ♣Jxx, we see why partner was slow to choose his bids; it's not exactly a yummy 1♠ call, but with nine of them really too good for 4♠. Some jokers might try 2♣ and end up all right on many occasions. I have no clue what is right, or best on any given day, and even have some affection for passing and "walking the dog," awaiting developments that hopefully won't be four passes to start. Once partner heard me double 5♣, potentially with some help in his paltry second suit, 6♠ is actually far from absurd at this juncture. Sure, if you or I did it, we would find partner with ♣Qxx and a couple other cards, and after a defender holding ♣AKxxxx gives partner a ruff, +500 becomes -500!

If you saw ♠5 ♥AJ8 ♦K97632 ♣K63 hit as dummy opposite ♠AKJ987432 ♥9 ♦— ♣Jxx, you might not have very high expectations of a plus score, especially if doubled. But if you get a spade lead and realize how likely it is that your LHO has ♥KQ, ♦A, and ♣AQ, you should be pretty perky. What, for example, will LHO's last five cards be after you play out eight of your nine Spade winners? ♥KQ, ♦A, and ♣AQ, all tight? Claim!

We can see that West, discarding all four Hearts and defending carefully, will indeed set 6♠, but, with no real way of knowing this is the answer, I'm sure many of us will find ourselves -1210 (for an 11 IMP loss) in a similar position. Once this particular defender came down to ♣AQ tight, it was essentially all over but the counting.

I'm not sure what the lesson is here, or even if there is one! To open 4♠? To let the opponents play 5♣? Or to take up dominoes at 3AM for less drama?!

MILESTONES

CHANGES IN RANK: APRIL – MAY

Sapphire Life Master

Elizabeth Evans	Mountainside
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Silver Life Master

Akshay Shah	Somerset
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Bronze Life Master

Michael Fried	Edison
Anne Lightburn	Point Pleasant Beach
Chung-Zong Wan	Somerset

Life Master

Arnold Fox	Eatontown
Jeremy Glaser	North Caldwell
Thaddeus Gora	Kinnelon
Prem Gupta	Monroe Township
David Weinberg	Brick

Advanced NABC Master

Edward Andrews Jr	Skillman
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NABC Master

Helene Buckwald	Princeton
Manoj Kanti Deb-Roy	Hillsborough
Jaishree Gupta	Monroe Township
Lynn McLaughlin	New Vernon

Regional Master

Jill Feder	Roseland
James Francoeur	Maplewood
Geraldine Lumelleau	Mendham
Alisa Crowe	Middletown
Jon Wilkinson	Shrewsbury

Sectional Master

Robert Ayers Jr	Toms River
Lauretta Ayers	Toms River
Bhagya Chari	Parsippany
Barbara Cohen	Jackson
Jay Fisher	Florham Park
Joy Hochstadt	Holmdel
Maureen McLaughlin	Princeton
Donald Slaght	Mantoloking
Rona Stein	Harvey Cedars

Club Master

Norma Adams	Mount Arlington
Barbara Berger	Wharton
Julie Bernhardt	Nutley
Hildegard Bucking	Morristown
Heather de Laszlo	Rumson
Leslie Degeorges	Millington

Club Master (cont'd)

Norman Friedman	Livingston
Susan Glynn	Middletown
Andrew Harris	Pennington
Joan Larkin	Verona
Jacqueline Lipper	Landing
Rise Meyers	Jersey City
Douglas Murray	Great Meadows
John Paltiel	Maplewood
Jaime Serrano	Belleville
Howard Solomon	Somerset
Trudy Sykes	Lawrenceville

Junior Master

Michael Absatz	Eatontown
Karl Barna	Manchester
Kathleen Burke	Montclair
Stanley Chen	East Brunswick
Patricia Delellis	Nutley
Barrie Fahey	Fair Haven
Sarah Fischell	Fair Haven
Gregory Gauthier	Princeton
Beverley Gould	Maplewood
William Heller	Farmingdale
Thomas Hennessy	Freehold
Rebecca Holman	Monroe Township
Chidigo Iherobiem	Springfield
Michael Jeary	Rumson
Niels Johnsen	Colts Neck
Kirby Kanarek	Livingston
Marshall Klein	Monroe Township
Polly Krupnick	Mountain Lakes
Lisa Mayle	Bernardsville
Lesley Miller	Short Hills
Mary Ann Moore	Summit
Larry Nirenberg	Ashbury Park
Grant Parr	Morristown
Allan Schwartz	Manalapan
Jaime Serrano	Belleville
Ricardo Serrano	Belleville
Adam Seyhan	Farmingdale
Nancy Shepard	Montclair
Karen Silver	Iselin
William Vamvas	Ocean
Joseph Zawadzki	Marlboro

PREEMPTS & DOUBLES ROUGH WATERS vs CALM SEAS

by Francis Gupta

For the Advancing Player

[Author's note: With respect to skill, expertise, and experience, bridge players come in a wide assortment. Yet bridge can be enjoyed by all. But for those of us who wonder how players in the "rough waters" (Open section) evaluate and bid hands versus players in the "calm seas" (Non-Life Masters section), this column tries to shed some light. The objective here is to illustrate the value various bridge conventions bring to competitive bidding for players at all levels.]

This column uses a hand from a duplicate game played at the Princeton Bridge Center (PBC) to illustrate the use of preempts and doubles in a competitive bridge auction. It is an interesting hand in that N-S and E-W each have 20 HCP and each have a significant combined holding in a major suit. N-S hold a total of ten strong Hearts, missing only the 10, 6 and 2. And E-W hold a total of nine Spades, missing the AK, in addition to the 9 and 2 spots.

		<u>North</u>	
Dealer: South		♠ 2	
Vul: All		♥ AKQ8743	
		♦ 763	
		♣ J3	
		<u>West</u>	<u>East</u>
		♠ J8543	♠ Q1076
		♥ 10	♥ 62
		♦ J10542	♦ AK
		♣ 54	♣ AKQ62
		<u>South</u>	
		♠ AK9	
		♥ J95	
		♦ Q98	
		♣ 10987	

In spite of the strong Hearts, N-S do not have game in the suit; they lose two Diamond tricks and two Club tricks. On the other hand, even though E-W are missing the ♠AK, they have game in the suit – they have only two trump losers and one Heart loser. (Note that if West were holding a doubleton Heart instead of a lonely singleton, then there would be no game in this hand for either side). In summary, N-S can make 3♥ and E-W can make 4♠. This means that E-W have an immense advantage on the board, as they are not only holding the higher suit in the bidding hierarchy (Spades versus Hearts) but they can take more tricks as defenders (four versus three). Therefore, in a competitive auction, E-W must not let N-S buy the contract in Hearts unless they are pushed to the 5-level.

Also, in theory, assuming E-W bid 4♠, for N-S to steal the contract at 5♥ would be a good sacrifice, as E-W will score 620 making 4♠, but will score only 500 if they double N-S in 5♥. Therefore, in an all-knowing world, the optimal contract for this hand is 5♥ doubled by North, going down two tricks for a score of 500 for E-W. In essence, that is the par result for this board.

So now that we've covered the theory, let's see what happened in practice. How did this board play out at the club game? The exhibit below presents all of the contracts for the board and the number of tables at which the various contracts were played in the two sections.

Contract	Declarer	Number of Contracts	
		Rough Waters [Open]	Calm Seas [NLM]
2♥	N	-	1
3♥	N	-	2
3♥ (x)	N	1	-
3♠	W	2	2
3NT	S	1	-
4♣	E	1	-
4♥	N	1	4
4♠	W	6	1
4♠ (x)	W	1	-
5♥ (x)	N	-	1
5♠ (x)	W	-	1
# of Tables		13	12
Hand Played			

Note: Thanks to Bill Miller of PBC for sharing the traveler for this board.

Since in reality players are not all-knowing, this hand played out in a whole variety of contracts ranging from 2♥ to 5♠ doubled. Anyone who has spent some time at the bridge table can (approximately) decipher the bidding processes that generated many of the observed contracts.

Before moving on, it is worth noting that nearly 50% of the tables (6 out of 13) in the Open section found game in Spades, but in the NLM section, only one of 12 tables bid that contract. On the other hand, only one table in the Open let N-S have the contract at 4♥, while four NLM tables did so. Finally, none of

[continued next page]

PREEMPTS & DOUBLES ROUGH WATERS vs CALM SEAS

[concluded]

the N-S pairs in the Open bid 5♥, willing to go down two, as a sacrifice against the opponents' 4♠, which we know would have returned a better score for them even if E-W were to double.

If one were to surmise a bidding sequence as to how the E-W pairs found game in the Open, a most likely scenario would be as follows:

S	W	N	E
Pass	Pass	3♥	Dbl
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

In the Rough Waters, most North players would very likely open this hand with a preemptive bid of 3♥ essentially communicating to partner the ability to take seven tricks if hearts are trump, or the willingness to go down two tricks, given equal vulnerability. A preemptive bid of 2♥ on this hand is misleading to partner because it shows a six-card suit.

With South having passed and North preempting, East feels confident with 18 HCP to compete, even though West is a passed hand. To show strength, and hoping to find a fit in Spades, East first doubles for takeout. West, with no controls (Aces or Kings), and who until now had expected to be touching nothing else but the "Pass" card in this auction, can smugly pick out the 3♠ card from the bidding box, showing partner four+ Spades. East, who also holds a four-card Spade suit, a doubleton ♦AK, and a five-card Club suit headed by the AKQ, promptly raises the bidding to 4♠.

Since 4♠ makes on this board, readers might be inclined to think that the raise to game on the part of East (after West showed Spades) was somehow insightful. In fact, E-W were just fortunate in that West held a stiff heart; that is the key to making the contract. If West instead held a doubleton Heart, E-W would go down one. Therefore, East's decision to raise

partner to 4♠, was not based on HCP per se, but on the premise that it was very likely partner had some values, since N-S have shown weakness, respectively, by passing and opening with a preemptive bid. Even though the goal of the preemptive opening by North was to disrupt bidding for the opponents, in this case it actually might have backfired by pushing them to game.

Since North holds 10 HCP and 3 length points for a total of 13, it can be argued that this hand is too good to open weak and that North should open this hand 1♥. In this case, the bidding might have gone something like this:

S	W	N	E
Pass	Pass	1♥	Dbl
2♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	Pass	Pass or 4♥	

These bidding scenarios mean this hand could have been played in 3♠ by West and also in 4♥ by North. These two contracts as well as 4♠ are all legitimate and account for 14 of the 25 contracts. The others are a result of miscommunication in bidding amongst partners (especially regarding doubles) and/or overly conservative or aggressive bidding.

Finally, a word about performance. In the long run, better bidding is the key to finding the right contract. A better outcome on a specific board, however, does not necessarily imply better bidding. In the example above, 4♠ could have easily gone down one trick. Therefore, E-W pairs that stopped at 3♠, or let N-S have the contract in 4♥ (down one), could have fared much better than those who went to game in Spades. In fact, in the Calm Seas, all of the E-W pairs that let N-S have the contract in 4♥ and set them got above-average boards.

Takeaway: clarify the meaning of preempts and doubles with your partner.

YOUTH BRIDGE

by Barbara Clark and Denise Harlem

[Barbara Clark is Educational Liaison for Unit 140. Denise Harlem is Technology Coordinator at Park Avenue Elementary School in Orange, NJ. Denise and Barbara have worked closely together for many years in promoting Youth Bridge.]

On Saturday, March 3, 2018, 12 of the 17 students from Park Avenue School's Bridge Club participated in an online Bridge tournament using BBO (BridgeBase Online). In a tournament jointly organized by Barbara Clark and BBO, the students from Orange, NJ competed with peers from Canada, New York, and New England. A total of 35 students tested their skills in a series of eight hands, always with "bot" (robot) partners and bot opponents.

Players could choose from either of two modes:

- Bidding, declaring, and/or defending hands as in regular Bridge
- Becoming the declarer on each hand

Some students chose to enter in **both** modes. Two of Park Avenue's students, Tamyra Rumble and Aryssa Black, came in 2nd and 3rd, respectively.

This was a beta trial, the first Involvement for these students in an online tournament. Things went so well that we are looking forward to future rematches, a Google Hangout with the challengers, and an enjoyable lunch together via video conferencing.



To learn more about the world of online bridge, visit

- <http://www.bridgebase.com>
- <http://www.bridgebase.com/mobile/>.

Park Avenue Elementary School Bridge Club students organized a raffle as part of their fund-raising efforts for their planned trip to the Atlanta NABC in August.

Special thanks go to prize donators Cheryl Angel of Shrine Center Bridge Club, Livingston, who donated a **32" Kent Super 32 Unisex Beach Cruiser bicycle**, and to Maria Beaghen, 4th grade teacher at Park Avenue Elementary School, who donated a **Graber Guardian 2 Bike Rack**.



Park Avenue's fundraising efforts continue as the students plan their trip to the Nationals in Atlanta. The items were raffled off at the school during the months of April and May, with the drawing being held on Friday, May 25th, Memorial Day weekend summer kickoff.

The bicycle hung on display for all to see in Park Avenue's lobby. While everybody loved the bike and many bought chances to win it, only one lucky ticket was pulled. Congratulations to Samantha Cave, a 4th grade student at the school (holding the handle bars in the photo). As you can see from her big smile, Samantha is very excited about winning.

The Park Avenue Elementary School Bridge club is very grateful to the prize donors and to all those who bought raffle tickets. Your contributions will be of crucial importance in enabling the students to participate in the Atlanta NABC.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

by Peter Wright

Last round, last hand at a local club game, and I pick up a two-loser, Mt. Denali-type hand with slam written on it like the familiar “Hollywood” sign on that LA hillside.

The opponents graciously refrained from intruding, intimidated either by their vulnerability or by the lightning sparks emanating from my ears, eyes, and who knows from where else?

Dealer: West Vul: E-W		<u>North</u> ♠ K532 ♥ QJ107 ♦ 94 ♣ 1085	
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>	
♠ AQ84		♠ J10976	
♥ 8432		♥ A65	
♦ 8752		♦ Q3	
♣ 7		♣ 962	
		<u>South</u>	
		♠ –	
		♥ K9	
		♦ AKJ106	
		♣ AKQJ43	

I delivered the inevitable thunderclap with my firm placement of a 2♣ opening salvo on the table. We were playing “controls,” so I alerted partner’s 2♥ bid. “Whazzat?” asked East. Artificial, sez I, showing either one Ace or two Kings.

We didn’t have the bidding tools to explore for anything better than a small slam in Clubs, so I soon got us there. Of course, given my hand, partner couldn’t hold two Kings, and I hoped her “Ace” would be red rather than black, but if not, I figured LHO might lead a Spade, allowing me to pitch one of my two potential Heart losers. For insurance, I began sending West insidious but persuasive signals to lead the Master Suit.

But hold on! East – who would *not* be the opening leader – now asked the meaning of 3♥. I called the director, who said that at this stage of bidding, East had a right to ask but must also be very wary about suggesting a lead from West. I then characterized 3♥

as natural, the director noting that, if not natural, 3♥ would have required an alert. Finally, East doubled. I now departed from grace by pulling out the redouble card, a petty crime at matchpoints, and 6♣ doubled was going to be a top or bottom board anyway. Still, a matchpoint “penalty redouble” opportunity occurs rarely, so if not now, when?

The bidding:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	6♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Redbl
All Pass			

Dummy looked good, albeit a King short of what had been “promised.” North, who should have responded 2♦, later apologized for having forgotten how to bid “one control” in response to a 2♣ opener.

Had West led a Spade (the Ace, as he should have in deference to my silent but urgent mental transmissions), I would have ruffed, drawn two trumps, knocked out the ♥A, and, after regaining the lead, would have led to the ♣10, drawing the last trump. and pitching three Diamonds on the ♠K and two good Hearts.

But West led a Heart. East took the Ace (King from me) and returned a Diamond. I won and drew two rounds of trumps (too bad, a 3-1 split). Needing to dispose of three potential Diamond losers, I played my other top Diamond, intending to ruff the 3rd round with the high ♣10 on the board and to pitch two more Diamonds on the good Hearts . . . if East was kind enough not to ruff either of them. When the ♦Q fell doubleton, however, it was all over.

Did West lead a Heart because of East’s inquiry about the meaning of North’s 3♥ bid? A question impossible for even West to answer.

East, if asked, might be able to furnish a rationale for doubling. As for my redouble, why, isn’t it obvious? Beelzebub made me do it.

PLAYER of THE YEAR RACE

Standings by Range as of June 1, 2018

Player of the Year Masterpoints are those earned in Unit 140-sponsored events only. These comprise the annual Awards Brunch game, the four sectional tournaments held each year, the Autumnfest Newplicate and Autumnfest Charity Swiss events, and the Double Knockout team matches.

Player of the Year standings format has caught up with modern times and no longer lists separate categories for men and women. It is now consistent with the listings for Mini-McKenney and Ace of Clubs standings.

Masterpoint range

0 - 50	Chantel Frantzen	Princeton	10.87
	Robert Frantzen	Princeton	10.87
	Hamilton Slye	Bridgewater	2.83
50 - 100	Maria Vikan	Berkeley Heights	2.71
	Paul Vikan	Berkeley Heights	2.71
	Dan Robinowitz	Somerset	2.12
100 - 300	Pramod Khanna	East Windsor	8.76
	Edward Fisher	Manalapan	8.71
	Lewis Lefkowitz	Edison	8.49
300 - 1000	Piotr Oleszewski	Hackettstown	23.13
	Fred Hankins	Flemington	16.60
	Jacqueline Hewlitt	Bridgewater	16.60
	Michael Hewlitt	Bridgewater	16.60
	John Routel	Flemington	16.60
1000 - 2500	Dorothy Koernig	Summit	23.77
	Arnold Dorin	Manalapan	19.22
	Ruth Yeselson	Highland Park	18.18
Unlimited	Jiang Gu	Mountain Lakes	38.98
	Arnold Kohn	Monroe Township	25.35
	Dorothy Koernig	Summit	23.77

MASTERPOINT RACES

Top Three Leaders as of June 6, 2018

Mini-McKenney medallions are awarded to the players in each Unit, one per ranking level, who earn the **most total master points** during the previous year. All points of any color and source are counted. **Ace of Clubs** certificates are awarded to the players in each Unit, one per ranking level, who earn **the most master points in club games** during the calendar year. Only black points are counted; points earned in STaCs and other special games paying "pigmented" points don't count. The awards are not mutually exclusive; it's possible to win either or both in the same year. The level you compete in is the one within which you started the year.

MINI-McKENNEY

ACE OF CLUBS

Masterpoint range

0 – 5	Julie Bernhardt	Nutley	21.36	Julie Bernhardt	Nutley	18.19
	Ricardo Serrano	Belleville	9.57	William Heller	Farmingdale	6.95
	Gregory Gauthier	Princeton	7.60	Adam Seyhan	Farmingdale	6.95
5 – 20	Stephen Hopkins	Montclair	21.08	Stephen Hopkins	Montclair	20.66
	Rise Meyers	Jersey City	19.04	Victor Silverstein	Princeton	16.19
	Victor Silverstein	Princeton	16.19	Rise Meyers	Jersey City	13.98
20 – 50	Lawrence Harte	Livingston	32.75	Graham Oakes	Montclair	21.58
	Robert Frantzen	Princeton	27.43	Lawrence Harte	Livingston	20.00
	Chantal Frantzen	Princeton	27.43	Alan Jacobs	Short Hills	16.86
50 – 100	Tony Gribin	Ocean	31.43	Sheila Holderness	Montville	27.22
	James Francoeur	Maplewood	30.86	Esther Eisenberg	Holmdel	20.22
	Sheila Holderness	Montville	27.22	Timothy Corey	Spring Lake	17.56
100 – 200	Eric Sonenblum	Monroe Township	41.95	Chris Schwinger	Rockaway	37.01
	Chris Schwinger	Rockaway	39.84	Martin Eisenberg	Holmdel	29.09
	Charles Tomlinson	Princeton	38.55	Loretta Standing	Chatham	26.10
200 – 300	Narayanan Sanker	Jersey City	62.13	Ira Tarnow	West Orange	31.74
	Ira Tarnow	West Orange	54.80	John Shotliff	Tinton Falls	31.35
	Edward Fisher	Manalapan	53.55	Marcia Michaels	Montville	27.97
300 – 500	David Weil	New Vernon	73.50	Bruce Williams	Oceanport	31.16
	Charles Dvorkin	Manalapan	65.43	Joseph Wright	Westfield	28.73
	Joseph Wright	Westfield	62.24	Charles Dvorkin	Manalapan	28.15
500 – 1000	Piotr Olszewski	Hackettstown	252.61	Piotr Olszewski	Hackettstown	139.48
	Foster Osborne	Summit	116.48	Chung-Zong Wan	Somerset	49.98
	Chung-Zong Wan	Somerset	92.08	Stephanie Austin	West Caldwell	49.80
1000 – 1500	Martin Singer	Verona	142.60	Martin Singer	Verona	71.57
	Ashok Agarwala	Edison	101.42	Barbara Codispoti	Mount Arlington	50.97
	Mark Savedoff	Lakewood	70.20	Mark Savedoff	Lakewood	49.90
1500 – 2500	Wendy Lee	East Hanover	173.74	Michael Rosen	Freehold	102.57
	Neil Jaffe	Belle Mead	128.31	Summer Freedman	Short Hills	73.65
	Chorng-Hour Yang	Parsippany	108.11	Wendy Lee	East Hanover	70.80
2500 – 3500	Stephen Cooper	Belle Mead	196.75	Stephen Cooper	Belle Mead	87.85
	Nat Zucker	Monroe Township	151.14	Elyse Menashe	Deal	62.59
	Julia Zucker	Monroe Township	137.83	Elizabeth Evans	Mountainside	60.33
3500 – 5,000	Joan Brody	Livingston	238.00	E Freeman Bunn	Chatham	130.51
	E Freeman Bunn	Chatham	162.35	Dave DuBois	Westfield	84.06
	Donna Dulet	Ocean	122.21	Joan Brody	Livingston	83.54
5000 – 7500	Peter Stein	Hillsborough	202.28	Judy Rothstein	Livingston	138.55
	Dori Burnes	Morris Plains	195.52	Bruce Witzel	Scotch Plains	73.52
	Judy Rothstein	Livingston	164.43	Dori Byrnes	Morris Plains	71.07
7500 – 10,000	Jiang Gu	Mountain Lakes	371.69	Abe Pineles	Jackson	97.24
	Dennis Thompson	Lake Hiawatha	251.72	Dennis Thompson	Lake Hiawatha	64.08
	Abe Pineles	Jackson	187.98	Cheryl Angel	Livingston	55.45
10,000+	Alexander Allen	Annandale	202.29	William Esberg	Long Branch	40.24
	William Esberg	Long Branch	84.56	Lester Sokolower	Verona	39.54
	Lester Sokolower	Verona	40.74	Alexander Allen	Annandale	36.72

ST. PATRICK'S ♦ 7

by Rich Valpey

You reach the semifinals of your bracket in the opening knockout event at the 2018 NABC in Philadelphia.

Sensing the match is even, you pick up a hand with possibilities in the last board: ♠AQJ8 ♥104 ♦AJ872 ♣83.

Expectations rise immediately when partner in first seat, white on white, opens 1♣. RHO passes, your 1♦ is doubled by Lefty. Partner comes to life and bids 3♣. You bid your pattern with a 3♠ call. Instead of partner's expected 3NT, he surprises you by inviting slam with a 4♦ call. You probe further with a 4♠ cue bid and partner bids 6♦ in tempo.

Why did partner bid 6♦? He does not have the ♥A. And since the lead is coming into declarer, he has a singleton. You settle in the non-vulnerable small slam. Lefty leads ♥Q and you are surprised when partner takes more than promised.

Outside the venue, Philadelphia's St. Patrick's Day parade is marching and revelers are imbibing while you casually state, "Beer is in play." This seems to go over your opponents' heads, but not partner's. You think to yourself, "How can I make 6♦ and take the last trick with the 7 of Diamonds?"

But there are more important things to take care of first. You return attention to the problem at hand. You are looking at

♠ 10		♠ AQJ8
♥ AK	opposite your	♥ 104
♦ K1043		♦ AJ872
♣ AKJ762		♣ 83

and you remember the auction:

North	East	South	West
1♣	Pass	1♦	Dbl
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

LHO has provided a blueprint. Clearly he has the ♠K and the ♥QJ. You must cater to his also having the ♣Q. If so, it is probably ♣Qxx. Did he double with 6 or 8 HCP? He is a conservative bidder who took no fliers in the first 23 boards. His most likely holding is ♠Kxxxx ♥QJxxx ♦— ♣Qxx. He could also have a more distributional hand without the ♣Q. If the latter, playing off the ♣AK risks getting over-ruffed. If he has the former hand, there may be insufficient trumps to ruff out the clubs when trumps are 4-0, depending how the play goes.

To test your hypothesis, you win with ♥A and call for the top trump. You are rewarded in your analysis when Lefty plays the ♠3, but disappointed the layout eliminates any chance of a beer at the break before the finals. Your attention turns to

focusing on the delicacy at which the hand must be played. You call for a small trump and cover Righty's ♦9 with the Jack while Lefty effortlessly pitches a Heart.

You play the ♠A. Both opponents follow low. To give Lefty the impression his partner has the ♠Q, you play the Jack. Lefty does not cover, and you ruff with the ♦10 while righty follows with a higher card than his first Spade, indicating an odd number of cards in the suit. You play dummy's last Diamond. Righty does not cover. Preserving the beer card, you play the ♦8 and Lefty pitches a Spade in tempo. You extract the pesky ♦Q with the Ace and take thought. Lefty goes into the tank, eventually pitching the ♥9 rather than a Club lending support to your inference he holds ♣Qxx.

You can score your beer by hooking the Club and pitching your losing Spades on the Clubs. However, if Lefty started with ♠Kxxxx ♥QJxxx ♦— ♣x or related major suit distributional hand, your finesse will lose and you will not have enough trumps to ruff out the Clubs. You are confident Lefty's hand was ♠Kxxxx ♥QJxxx ♦— ♣Qxx, but you cannot risk the match. That well-earned beer will not taste good if you miss the finals.

You play to the ♣A. Lefty plays a low club. You play the ♣K and sure enough, lefty finds another Club. You call for a low Club and painfully trump it with the beer card. Heart to the dummy, pitching the remaining Spades on the good Clubs. 6♦ making 7 for +940. You lost a perfectly well-earned beer.

At the other table, your teammates' opponents, who did not hear a double after 1♦, bid 3NT over 3♠, which ended the auction for a score of +400. You compare scores and realize this board propelled you to the finals. You won by 11 IMPs, the gain you scored on this board. The full deal was:

Dealer: North		North	
Vul: None		♠ 10	
		♥ AK	
		♦ K1043	
		♣ AKJ762	
		West	
		♠ K9653	♠ 742
		♥ QJ952	♥ 8763
		♦ —	♦ Q965
		♣ Q95	♣ 104
		South	
		♠ AQJ8	
		♥ 104	
		♦ AJ872	
		♣ 83	

REMEMBRANCES

The Board of Directors of the New Jersey Bridge League offer their condolences to the family and friends of the following member of ACBL Unit 140. He will be missed at our bridge tables. We would like to remember all who support and participate in this great game. Please notify Kelly Kiefer at Paul.Kiefer619@gmail.com of any deaths within our membership, and indicate, when known, dates of passing and club(s) attended.

Alan Echikson
d. January 20, 2018
Frequent player at Shrine Center

Harold Small
d. April 28, 2018
Frequent player at Shrine Center and Bridgewater

Len Wood
d. February 20, 2018
Frequent player at Shrine Center

KOHN'S KORNER

by Arnie Kohn

Overcalls

Opponents often ask me, "How many points do I need to make an overcall?" or "Must I have an opening bid to enter into the auction?" The answers are, points and an opening bid are **not** the criteria one should follow. The primary reason to overcall – enter the auction, after your opponent has opened the auction – is to **tell your partner what to lead**. Should the vulnerability be favorable, do not hesitate to overcall 1♠ with ♠AKxxx ♥xx ♦xxx ♣xxx.

If the stakes are higher and your side is vulnerable, another Ace or a few honor cards in other suits would improve your bid. Overcalls at the **2-level**, should have **six cards** in the suit or more sufficient high card values. Jack-high suits, no matter how many high card points one has, are unacceptable. The absolute minimum value suit I would overcall with is Q10xxx. Remember, if you do overcall, partner will lead your suit. Don't embarrass him.

BIG GAMES

(must have at least 5 tables to qualify)

April – May

OPEN		
73.64%	Robert Brolin / Henry Stadelmann	Jersey
72.89%	David Katzen / Stephen Garreffa	Essex
72.87%	Alexander Allen / Richard Ross	Princeton
72.45%	Dennis Thompson / Sam Borenstein	Shrine
72.12%	Dave DuBois / Doree Sobel	Essex
71.73%	Lee Schwartz / Leo Fisher	Shrine
71.67%	Patricia D'Adamo / Peter Brudner	Jersey
71.65%	Bernard Mechlowitz / Alice Tarlach	Toms River
71.50%	Paul Fried / Eli Duttman	Freehold
71.50%	William Esberg / Muffie Gur	Jersey
71.35%	James White / John Dellosso	Scotch Plns
70.83%	Burton Schlosberg / Ronald Panitch	Monroe
70.67%	Richard Levendusky / Mary Ann Wagner	Spring Lake
70.42%	Beau Norton / Dolores Ballard	Stafford
70.31%	Cynthia Schneider / Sandy Manshel	Essex
70.31%	Dorothy Koernig / Piotr Olszewski	Shrine
70.24%	Renee Geist / Dan Goldstein	Essex
70.19%	Sharon Hait / William Hait	Essex
70.17%	Helen Nugent / Ellen Hyslop	Spring Lake
70.15%	Judy Rothstein / Jacek Leznicki	Essex
70.03%	Ronald Kraft / Ronald Panitch	Grand Slam

LIMITED / INVITATIONAL		
78.40%	Steve Katzman / Alan Jacobs	Essex
77.93%	Paul Pritchard - Corky Lawrence	Rumson Nov
76.70%	Betty King / Bob King	Westlake
75.44%	Bill Parkins / Roy Knapp	Shadowfax
75.00%	Helga Brooks / JoAnn Sharkey	Essex
74.58%	Jennifer Mullins - Patricia Whittemore	Rumson Nov
74.45%	Suzanne Manelski / Laurie Smith	Rumson Nov
74.42%	Pamela Helmer / Richard Helmer	Essex
73.81%	Sean Manns / Bill Cassano	Essex
73.66%	Diane Bilicska Pereira / Laine Maurer	Essex
73.17%	Amy Cohen / Meg Jacobs	Essex
73.12%	Barry Levine / Linda Levine	Essex
72.32%	Cooki Gulkin / Lynn Goldberg	Essex
72.32%	Wendy Bregman / Mitch Firger	Essex
72.30%	Paul Pritchard - Ellen Lospinuso	Rumson Nov
71.94%	Graham Oakes / Julie Bernhardt	Essex
71.65%	Myung Bondy / Neil Grabel	Essex
71.53%	Kathy Arshan / Greta Pineles	Westlake
71.43%	Ira Tarnow / Mark Pesner	Essex
71.11%	Laine Maurer / Diane Bilicska Pereira	Essex
71.04%	Janine Beer / Norman Friedman	Essex
70.98%	Beverly Jeck / Dolores Cranley	Essex
70.88%	Martha Chamberlain - Bev Lawrence	Rumson Nov
70.83%	Marc Weil / Herb Shulman	Jersey
70.74%	April Sussman / Sharon Burke	Essex
70.73%	Mary Browne / Christine Mason	Essex
70.68%	Lynn Schlesinger / Alan Jacobs	Essex
70.44%	Michael Jeary - Don Devine	Rumson Nov
70.15%	Suzanne Manelski / Laurie Smith	Rumson Nov
70.00%	Allan Duff / Lee Delorenzi	Shadowfax
70.00%	Raymond Wier / Ralph Steinhardt	BCCNJ
70.00%	Edith Koenig / Lisa Phenev	Lakewood
70.00%	John Gimblette / R Levendusky	Lakewood

METTLE OF THE NIGHT TALES

by Jay Korobow

Making a Negative Double Great Again

3 a.m., and my random visit to the Middle of the Night Pairs on BBO finds me landing in a seat (West) that was dealt: ♠9765 ♥4 ♦KQ106 ♣Q952. Not much, but I see my partner (East) has already opened 1♣, so there might be some bidding action for me yet. I always bid the major with these limited hands, and after 1♣-1♠-4♠ might get that all-desirable declarer position! Unusually for 3 a.m., my partner is from the USA (good) but lists skill-level as “Novice” (not so good). Since many on-line novices actually self-label themselves “Advanced” or even “Expert,” when they are far from it, actually putting “Novice” in your profile is a bit frightening, but oh well.

Now, I am all for honesty.” If someone is indeed a novice and tells the truth about it, I will patiently sit opposite her or him with a sense of humor and even offer a tip or two. Of course, when I open 2♦ in third seat with ♠x ♥Qxx ♦KQT98 ♣J10xx not vulnerable after two passes, and later hear “Pard, you need six Diamonds to open 2♦!” my sense of humor does turn a bit “ill.” Not surprisingly, due to time zones, there are a lot Chinese players online at 3 a.m. Their skill level claims are funny in a different way, in that they almost always put “Novice” but then play like Zia. It’s probably accurate to say that long before “fake news” became a term *du jour*, “fake expert” and “fake novice” were bandied about on BBO!

Back to our nightly tale. My RHO spoiled the fun by overcalling 1♥. Obviously, a negative double is the perfect bid for the hand I hold; well, other than the fact that it means partner will be declarer if we have a Spade fit. The major pitfall, however, is that partner has no clue what a negative double is and would take it as penalty. I glanced at some of the earlier hands partner had played, showing on the session traveler off to the right of the screen, complete with bidding sequence, and -360 stood out to me. Someone playing with this very same USA novice partner earlier held four Spades and thought after 1♣-1♦-1♥, a double would show that. From -360 you can guess what ensued on that one!

The bidding:

East	South	West	North
1♣	1♥	Dbl	All Pass

But better to have bid and lost than never to have bid at all. So with that “fake” thought, I indeed make a negative double, and as can be seen from the diagram, it went “All Pass,” as I was afraid might occur. While I have stated that the lead of a singleton trump is possibly the worst lead in bridge, at least it would take away two of theirs. When partner won his ♥A and continued with the ♥Q, declarer had severe, unsolvable play issues. When the dust cleared they scored only two Heart tricks and the ♦A for down four, +800 to us!

I’m not sure how partner actually took the double, but at that vulnerability 4♠ is surely a better bid, and with careful play (ahem, yours truly at the wheel?), +620 was likely our due. But since not everyone bid game (or made it), +800 was a real “great” (Donald J.) triumph, winning 12 IMPs!

Honesty and “fake news” and all that aside, here’s what really happened. The bidding went as reported, but I helped declarer by leading partner’s suit, a club, not my singleton trump. Partner never was in a hurry to play trump, so declarer did a little of this and a little of that with impunity. We were lucky to set it one when the actual dust cleared. And +100 did not score well, -6 IMPs being the result. And so I genteelly typed “Sorry, have to go, someone’s at the door,” and removed myself from the foursome. But not before my “Novice” USA partner typed back, “At 3:15 a.m.? C’mon!”

North
 ♠ J43
 ♥ 832
 ♦ 87543
 ♣ K7

West
 ♠ 9765
 ♥ 4
 ♦ KQ106
 ♣ Q952

East
 ♠ AQ102
 ♥ AQJ10
 ♦ 9
 ♣ A1063

South
 ♠ K8
 ♥ K9765
 ♦ AJ2
 ♣ J84

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