



THE DECLARER



Summer 2021

Volume 64 Issue 2

Peter Wright, Editor

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THE DECLARER

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*** ANNOUNCEMENTS ***

The NAP (North American Pairs) district 3 final is scheduled for Saturday, October 9, 2021. This will be a virtual (online) tournament.

District 3 will NOT be holding an October regional in Danbury, Connecticut.

ROUGH WATERS VS CALM SEAS

by Francis Gupta

The 7 NoTrump Bridge God

Bridge gods love to have fun. There is the High Card Points (HCP) bridge god who controls the distribution of HCP across the four hands and chuckles when you look at your hand excitedly and realize that even your dog, who can count to two, could tell you the HCP you hold (a howl means zero). Then there is the bridge god who controls Suit Distributions across the four hands. You can hear this one laughing when you open excitedly with 4♥ because you hold eight Hearts, but your RHO overcalls 4♠ because *she* holds as many Spades. Of course, these two bridge gods work closely together to determine the final layout for every bridge deal. One can imagine them sitting down every evening and recapping the “most aggravating deals of the day” over a glass of wine.

Besides these two, there are the Part-Score, Game, Small-Slam, and Grand-Slam bridge gods. For every possible bridge deal in this universe, about 5.36×10^{28} (please click [here](#) for calculation), these gods, depending on their moods, look with favor or disdain upon N-S and E-W pairs.

In addition to all these, there are the Twin gods of Finessing Honors and Deep Finesses. With AQ10 on the board, you play low to the 10 and later low to the Q. If you happen to be in the good books of both Twins, you will win all three tricks. If only the god of Finessing Honors is happy with you, while the other Twin is in a sour mood, you will earn two tricks losing only the 10 to the Jack offside. If both Twins are in a rotten mood, the KJ will both be sitting offside, and assuming the god of Suit Distributions is on your side, you will score only the Ace. But if for some reason, the Twins *and* the god of Suit Distribution want to ruin your day, you might not even score the Ace, which might be ruffed on the 3rd round of the suit. There you have it: the bridge gods having a good time at your expense.

For those of you who may have seen the movie Bruce Almighty, you will recall that there are rules to playing god. In the case of bridge gods, the *first* rule is that they cannot mess with the deck of playing cards: every deck has to contain four suits with 13 cards in every suit, each going up in hierarchy from the deuce to the Ace for a total of 52 cards. The *second* rule that bridge gods have to abide by is what God (played by Morgan Freeman) tells Bruce Nolan (played by Jim Carey) before handing him omnipotent powers: that gods cannot mess with free will. For bridge players, this means that the bridge gods cannot interfere in the how players choose to bid their hands, or how players choose to play or defend a hand.

Now amongst the gods of Makeable Contracts, the god of all gods, or Zeus so to speak, is the 7NT Grand-Slam bridge god. This contract earns the highest possible score in bridge.

However, the 7NT god only makes an appearance once in a blue moon. Many a time, even if this deity is willing to grant a pair this contract, players choose to play in a safer 6NT or 7-of-a-suit contract. In a recent club game on BBO, my partner and I were fortunate to run into this rarely seen idol, not as the ones receiving the favor but as the opponents of the pair who bid and made 7NT. Nevertheless, it was fascinating to see the manner in which this contract was bid and made.

East had a two-suited hand and opened 1♥ with 15 HCP.

♠A9 ♥AK652 ♦KJ954 ♣6

West responded 1♠ with 16 HCP.

♠KQ1043 ♥1097 ♦A102 ♣AK

East jump-shifted to 3♦, to which West responded by bidding a grand slam in NoTrump.

N (Partner)	E	S (Me)	W
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	7NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Here is the full deal*:

	<u>North (HCP = 4)</u>	
Dealer: East	♠ J	
Vul: N-S	♥ 843	
	♦ Q86	
	♣ J97432	
	<u>West (HCP = 16)</u>	<u>East (HCP = 15)</u>
	♠ KQ1043	♠ A9
	♥ 1097	♥ AK652
	♦ A102	♦ KJ954
	♣ AK	♣ 6
	<u>South (HCP = 5)</u>	
	♠ 87652	
	♥ QJ	
	♦ 73	
	♣ Q1085	

*Source: Shrine-JBC on BBO.

Partner led the ♣4, I played ♣Q, and West won the trick with the Ace. West played the ♠3 and partner dropped the stiff Jack, won by the Ace in dummy. With the ♠J fallen, the ♠9 in dummy was good, together with all West's remaining Spades. Next, West played the ♥A. Since I held the doubleton ♥QJ, I dropped the Queen, hoping to mislead declarer into believing the Jack was in North's hand. But West did not fall for the ploy. E-W had the blessing of the 7NT Grand-Slam bridge

ROUGH WATERS vs CALM SEAS**[concluded]**

god. West continued with ♥K from dummy and my Jack fell. That makes all the E-W Hearts good. After this, the math was simple: five Spades, five Hearts, the ♣AK plus the ♦AK equals 14 tricks in the opponents' hands.

Seeing one Heart honor fall on the ♥A and then playing for the second Heart honor to fall on the ♥K is one way to making all the tricks in this hand. The other path to making all 13 tricks is for West to play a little Diamond from hand, finessing the ♦9 in the dummy unless North covers with the ♦Q, in which case West wins the ♦Q with dummy's ♦K, thereby making all of the Diamonds good. So either way, multiple bridge gods (Suit Distribution and/or the Finessing Twins) had to be bestowing favors on E-W for the pair to earn the 7NT grand slam reward.

One can imagine why the other two slam contracts went down; a Heart and/or a Diamond finesse taken the wrong way could very well result in down one or two tricks. Interestingly, five pairs chose to play this hand in game, and all of them made 12 or 13 tricks. Notice that the two pairs who played this hand in 4♥ made 13 tricks, probably by playing the ♥AK to draw trumps. Which is okay in a game contract but is betting on a very specific distribution when done in a slam contract. Obviously, the 7NT Grand-Slam bridge god was looking out for our opponents.

By the way, this board was played at eight tables at the club. Here are all the contracts and scores*:

Result	N-S	E-W	N-S (%)	E-W (%)
6♥E-1	50		92.9%	7.1%
7NTW-1	50		92.9%	7.1%
4♠W+2		480	64.3%	35.7%
5♥E+1		480	64.3%	35.7%
3NTW+3		490	42.9%	57.1%
4♥E+3		510	21.4%	78.6%
4♥E+3		510	21.4%	78.6%
7NTW=		1520	0%	100%

A TASTY CLUB SANDWICH

by Jay Korobow

Returning to online (BBO) IMP play after a hiatus, it was a pleasure to have a reliable partner, Jim from New Jersey, whom I used to see across the table from me “back in the da Day.”

	<u>North</u>		
Dealer: West	♠ K765		
Vul: All	♥ J84		
	♦ KQ7		
	♣ K104		
		<u>East</u>	
<u>West</u>		♠ 942	
♠ QJ1083		♥ 962	
♥ 107		♦ J10953	
♦ A86		♣ J8	
♣ Q52			
	<u>South</u>		
	♠ A		
	♥ AKQ53		
	♦ 42		
	♣ A9763		

The bidding:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Picking up a tasty four-loser South hand, I thought the prudent opening was nonetheless a simple 1♥. When LHO overcalled 1♠ and Jim cuebid 2♠ as a passed hand to show a limit raise in Hearts, I could picture KQ in both minors or some other variation that would provide adequate play for 6♥. Even four trumps and a doubleton Club might suffice. How to proceed was the problem, especially since the opponents might quickly cash two top Diamonds if I somehow cast science aside and simply bid Blackwood, or even jumped to 6♥ to make the best opening lead a bit more of a problem to find.

I once employed (with Jim, I think) a cute gimmick where an unusual jump to five of an unbid suit (if not obviously Exclusion Blackwood – another gadget) asked about second-round control in the suit to avoid two fast losers. The gimmick had some obvious pitfalls, such as telegraphing what the best opening lead should be, but here the bigger problem was that partner might have ♦AKQ and three small Clubs; slam would be hopeless opposite that.

Fortunately, 3♣ by me over 2♠ – which was not a game force – was ostensibly a helping suit game try, asking partner to have as far away from “xxx” in Clubs as possible in order to bid game in Hearts. Like all game tries, sometimes it is a veiled slam try, since one will carry on to game (as I would have done here) even if partner signs off in three. With a super-max passed hand including some Club “help,” Jim jumped to 4♥, even though he might have cuebid something on the way if he thought that was desirable info.

When I trotted out a bit of science with a 4♠ cuebid to “learn more,” Jim thought a 5♣ cue would be of interest. I fell in love with my hand then and leaped to 6♥, but after the ♠Q opening lead, a rather disappointing dummy came down, as shown in the diagram. Even with the ♦A onside, there were only two pitches. So, barring a miracle lie of the cards, such as QJ doubleton in Clubs, I had an inescapable Club loser as well.

The best news, actually, was that West only followed to two rounds of Hearts, increasing the possibility that he had three-card length in Clubs. Since West was known from the bidding to have five Spades, only they could protect against the long Spade in dummy from becoming high, so there might be some “squeeze” pressure.

In fact, after ruffing one Spade in my hand, I arranged to reach this position:

	<u>North</u>		
	♠ 7		
	♥ –		
	♦ –		
	♣ K104		
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>	
♠ J		♠ –	
♥ –		♥ –	
♦ –		♦ J10	
♣ Q52		♣ J8	
	<u>South</u>		
	♠ –		
	♥ 3		
	♦ –		
	♣ A97		

As I cashed my last trump, West had to discard a Club to keep their high spade, so the slam now made when my third Club became a winner for trick #12. That was rewarded with 13.5 IMPs as West muttered, “Science be damned,” or maybe it was something a bit more colorful if audio had been available.

YOUTH BRIDGE

by Barbara Clark



BridgeWhiz is an online teaching program for middle schoolers to learn how to play bridge. Sponsored by the American Contract Bridge League Educational Foundation, a national model will be implemented the week of October 25, 2021. The 20 weeks beginner class will run until April 2022. Graduates will receive follow-up improver classes and exciting activities to sustain their interests and to continue to develop their bridge skills.

This program is free of charge to participants. Please share in recruiting kids, grandkids, friends or others interested in learning this intriguing game. We know the obvious benefits; let's find ways to attract kids who may not readily volunteer to sign up, but would enjoy national free youth bridge competitions with kids from all over the world. Bridge is a game that can be played by average to the highest performing kids. A free ACBL membership card, awards and gift certificates will also be incorporated into the program.

BridgeWhiz is designed with interactive teaching techniques to pique kids' interest and curiosity, reward collaboration and socialization, and to be fun! It is directed by Albert Bender of the Seattle Bridge for Youth Program. Classes will be held after school in all time zones from 4:00 to 5:30 pm.

ACBL Districts and Units are also encouraged to be sponsors of a class, groups, or kids from the District or Unit. Flyers will soon be made available for registration and posted on the NJBL website. Parents are required to register their kids.

For additional information please contact Al Bender, albert.bender@b4youth.org. Please also feel free to contact me at bsyllab@aol.com if I can be of assistance.

Thanks for helping to ensure that New Jersey is represented in this national bridge initiative and that we are continuing our commitment to promote bridge for youth.

MASTERPOINT RACES

Standings by Range as of August 6, 2021

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 source and color 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.

Masterpoint range	MINI-MCKENNEY			ACE OF CLUBS		
	Name	Location	Points	Name	Location	Points
0 – 5	Jili Zou	Princeton	59.31	N Chiddi	East Brunswick	45.65
	N Chiddi	East Brunswick	48.48	Mark Powell	Fanwood	20.49
	Mark Powell	Fanwood	20.49	William Asch	Princeton	14.96
	William Asch	Princeton	14.96	Marcia Geltman	Randolph	10.47
	Marcia Geltman	Randolph	10.47	Liz Barrett	Verona	9.98
5 – 20	Susan Rothbard	Fairfield	48.53	Susan Rothbard	Fairfield	48.53
	Danette Alderoty	Rumson	40.52	Danette Alderoty	Rumson	40.52
	Peter Agnew	Glen Ridge	31.57	Peter Agnew	Glen Ridge	31.57
	Susan Berry	Bay Head	17.42	Susan Berry	Bay Head	17.42
	Ellen Ehrlich	Rockaway	15.11	Ellen Ehrlich	Rockaway	15.11
20 – 50	Rosalie Ginda	Somerset	77.76	Rosalie Ginda	Somerset	76.09
	Kathryn Wagenseller	Somerset	77.76	Kathryn Wagenseller	Somerset	76.09
	Tracy Ferry	Little Silver	50.11	Tracy Ferry	Little Silver	50.11
	Kim Gimblette	Lakewood	44.10	Kim Gimblette	Lakewood	37.67
	Robert Morse	Madison	37.60	Robert Morse	Madison	33.15
50 – 100	James Brown	Manahawkin	91.45	James Brown	Manahawkin	91.45
	Jeanie Cleary	Shrewsbury	60.29	Jeanie Cleary	Shrewsbury	60.03
	Roberta Elliott	South Orange	54.94	Roberta Elliott	South Orange	54.94
	Yvonne Shepard	Flemington	53.63	Yvonne Shepard	Flemington	53.63
	Judith Smith	Beach Haven	52.74	Judith Smith	Beach Haven	52.74
100 – 200	Ranjan Dutta	East Windsor	145.62	Ranjan Dutta	East Windsor	132.66
	George Kalb	Millington	127.73	George Kalb	Millington	104.83
	John Overdeck	Short Hills	119.95	Susan Wyrsh	Barnegat	88.12
	Susan Wyrsh	Barnegat	88.12	John Overdeck	Short Hills	80.95
	Mary Kingsbery	Rumson	72.43	Mary Kingsbery	Rumson	71.84
200 – 300	Manish Mehta	Chatham	291.73	Manish Mehta	Chatham	257.09
	Adarsh Bajaj	Princeton	99.54	Adarsh Hajaj	Princeton	99.54
	Ronald Whitney	Bloomfield	93.34	Barbara Simpson	Morristown	93.15
	Barbara Simpson	Morristown	93.15	Jean Yoder	Summit	88.09
	Jean Yoder	Summit	88.09	Ronald Whitney	Bloomfield	83.38
300 – 500	James Lawlor	Princeton	131.71	James Lawler	Princeton	125.96
	Tehmtan Tehsildar	Hillsborough	112.31	Gilbert Meierhans	Metuchen	103.25
	Gilbert Meierhans	Metuchen	109.90	Lauretta Ayers	Toms River	94.07
	Robert Ayers, Jr.	Toms River	103.20	Robert Ayers, Jr.	Toms River	94.07
	Lauretta Ayers	Toms River	102.21	Patricia Thomas	Little Egg Harbor	90.71
500 – 1000	Lawrence Gordon	West Orange	223.37	Ginny Mason	Princeton	191.98
	Ginny Mason	Princeton	208.46	Lawrence Gordon	West Orange	191.60
	Bobby Willig	Princeton	179.43	Romesh Arora	Waretown	166.94
	Romesh Arora	Waretown	166.94	Bobby Willig	Princeton	163.84
	Steven Siegel	Mendham	157.85	Lew Lefkowitz	Somerset	125.64

[continued next page]

MASTERPOINT RACES

Standings by Range as of August 6, 2021

[concluded]

Masterpoint
range

MINI-MCKENNEY

ACE OF CLUBS

Masterpoint range	MINI-MCKENNEY			ACE OF CLUBS		
1000 - 1500	Jacqueline Hewlitt	Bridgewater	191.71	Jacqueline Hewlett	Bridgewater	191.71
	Michael Hewlitt	Bridgewater	191.71	Michael Hewlett	Bridgewater	191.71
	Chung-Zong Wan	Somerset	103.29	Chung-Zong Wan	Somerset	101.93
	Garry Goldberg	Scotch Plains	84.94	Audrey Egger	Princeton	84.24
	<u>Audrey Egger</u>	<u>Princeton</u>	<u>84.24</u>	<u>Merle Poller</u>	<u>Westfield</u>	<u>78.96</u>
1500 - 2500	Foster Osborne	Summit	230.32	Foster Osborne	Summit	230.32
	Jeffrey Halle	Middletown	126.20	Jeffrey Halle	Middletown	126.20
	Francis Nance	Chatham	94.24	Francis Nance	Chatham	94.24
	Barbara Codispoti	Mount Arlington	92.36	Barbara Codispoti	Mount Arlington	92.36
	<u>George Browne</u>	<u>West Orange</u>	<u>80.11</u>	<u>Karen Herbstman</u>	<u>Boca Raton</u>	<u>79.92</u>
2500 - 3500	Piotr Olszewski	Hackettstown	563.22	Piotr Olszewski	Hackettstown	548.13
	Wendy Lee	East Hanover	193.89	Wendy Lee	East Hanover	193.29
	Chorng-Hour Yang	Parsippany	170.53	Chorng-Hour Yang	Parsippany	170.53
	Edward Bauman	Verona	119.86	Edward Bauman	Verona	118.56
	<u>Mark Brighthouse</u>	<u>Towaco</u>	<u>66.56</u>	<u>Mark Brighthouse</u>	<u>Towaco</u>	<u>66.56</u>
3500 - 5000	Elizabeth Evans	Mountainside	209.27	Elizabeth Evans	Mountainside	209.27
	Mark Mohr	Springfield	191.92	Mark Mohr	Springfield	191.92
	Himanshu Joshi	Chester	107.92	Himanshu Joshi	Chester	103.05
	Jin-Ming Liao	Skillman	90.41	Jin-Ming Liao	Skillman	80.53
	<u>Barbara Clark</u>	<u>West Orange</u>	<u>77.95</u>	<u>Barbara Clark</u>	<u>West Orange</u>	<u>64.89</u>
5000 - 7500	Stephen Cooper	Belle Mead	683.97	Stephen Cooper	Belle Mead	644.26
	Stephen Garreffa	Randolph	340.90	Stephen Garreffa	Randolph	340.90
	Bruce Witzel	Scotch Plains	228.40	Bruce Witzel	Scotch Plains	228.40
	Joan Brody	Livingston	174.67	Donna Dulet	Ocean	131.47
	<u>Donna Dulet</u>	<u>Ocean</u>	<u>131.47</u>	<u>Peter Stein</u>	<u>Hillsborough</u>	<u>124.98</u>
7500 - 10,000	Judy Rothstein	Livingston	618.58	Judy Rothstein	Livingston	616.68
	Cheryl Angel	Livingston	298.76	Cheryl Angel	Livingston	298.76
	Jesse Reisman	Livingston	298.65	Jesse Reisman	Livingston	298.65
	Alex Perlin	Metuchen	90.27	Anthony Aukstikalnis	Harvey Cedars	80.02
	<u>Anthony Aukstikalnis</u>	<u>Harvey Cedars</u>	<u>80.02</u>	<u>Betty Cox</u>	<u>Randolph</u>	<u>8.50</u>
10,000+	Lester Sokolower	Verona	202.79	Lester Sokolower	Verona	202.79
	Jiang Gu	Mountain Lakes	69.33	Alexander Allen	Annandale	19.26
	Alexander Allen	Annandale	19.26	<u>Abe Pineles</u>	<u>Jackson</u>	<u>2.70</u>
	<u>Abe Pineles</u>	<u>Jackson</u>	<u>3.73</u>			

TROUBLE NOISY QUACKING DUCKS

by Eli Duttman

The following interesting deal came up recently on BBO. In our partnership, my hand (South) qualified as a strong 2♦ bid. (Yes, we play a 2♦ opening as a strong, natural game force.) Given the lack of intermediates in both my suits, however, I decided to bid only 1♦. Partner responded 1♠ and we got too high.

	<u>North</u>		
Dealer: West	♠ J974		
Vul: Both	♥ Q85		
	♦ QJ9		
	♣ J52		
		<u>East</u>	
<u>West</u>		♠ K1082	
♠ Q53		♥ AKJ	
♥ 1097632		♦ 10532	
♦ 7		♣ 106	
♣ K94			
	<u>South</u>		
	♠ A6		
	♥ 4		
	♦ AK864		
	♣ AQ873		

[hands rotated]

The bidding:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	5♦

The crux of this article is what North should bid at his first turn. The winning action is **Pass!**

Charles H. Goren presented adjustments to Milton Work's 4-3-2-1 point count system that today's players **frequently** ignore. He imposed a 1-point penalty for being Ace-less and also, under certain circumstances, having 4-3-3-3 distribution. Applying those penalties to North's hand brings the net hand value down from 7 to 5 HCP, making Pass definitely possible.

The Losing Trick Count for North is another indication that Pass is correct. A 4-3-3-3 hand with zero HCP has 12 losers. The fourth and subsequent cards in a suit are arbitrarily assumed to be winners. The North hand counts

initially as ten losers, but two Queens and zero Aces result in an unfavorable one-loser adjustment to 11, with zero Quick Tricks and two "plus values."

The South hand starts with a Losing Trick Count of 4, one in each suit, but Aces outnumber Queens 3 to 1. That results in a downward adjustment to from 4 to 3.

A 3-loser hand containing 4½ Quick Tricks fulfills the requirements for a strong 2♦ opener, but since both long suits are minors with weak intermediates, a non-forcing opening seems preferable. If partner passes a bid of 1♦, a missed game is unlikely.

There are several reasons for playing a 2♦ opening as a natural game force, in spite of its infrequent occurrence. Weak 2♦ bids are **not** effective pre-empts. When Diamonds is the primary long suit and an auction proceeds 2♣-Pass-2♦-Pass-3♦, "wrong-siding" occurs (the big hand is exposed as dummy) and bidding space is consumed. The most significant advantage to playing 2♦ strong, however, is how opening 2♣ auctions benefit. 2♣ is forcing to game, except for the 2♣-Pass-2♦-Pass-2NT sequence. Remember that, when 2♣ is opened, it is known that a primary long Diamond suit is **not** held. A sequence of 2♣-Pass-2♦-Pass-3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ all show a primary long Club suit and additional distributional information. The 3♣ rebid shows a one-suited hand. Big 6+/4+ hands with Clubs and another suit are well described by the 2♣ opening bid and subsequent rebid. The only suit the **weak** hand might declare is Diamonds.

Holding fewer than 1½ Quick Tricks, responder bids 2♥ ("Herbert negative") over an opening 2♦. Opener's 2NT rebid after a 2♥ negative shows 4+ Hearts, but 3NT in this last sequence ends the auction. A 2NT response to 2♦ is a Heart-positive that allows opener to declare the Heart suit. The 1½ Quick Trick requirement for positive responses to strong 2♦ opening bids goes back to Culbertson. A positive response to a strong 2♦ bid suggests that a slam is at least likely. Responder needs coverage for two or more losers before suggesting slam. For obvious reasons, holding the ♦Q and any Ace warrants a positive response to a strong 2♦ opening.

REMEMBRANCES

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

Frank Askin

d. July 1, 2021
frequent player at
Shrine and Essex

Bill Barnes

d. July 31, 2021
frequent player at
Essex and Shrine

Horace Buchanan

d. June 24, 2021
frequent player at Bridgewater

Janet Glickson

d. June, 2021
frequent player at Monroe

Alan Melgood

d. May, 2021
frequent player at
Freehold, Monmouth County Aces,
and Princeton Bridge Center

Stephanie Steidley

d. July 20, 2021
frequent player at Essex

Harold Wousaniker

d. July 8, 2021
frequent player at Essex

KOHN'S KORNER

by Arnold Kohn

How Good It Is!

Some of our Clubs have reopened and it is a wonderful experience to enjoy the sociability of real live people. For the last year and a half, we were relegated to playing on BBO against random opponents, who fought to see which pair could give us the most Matchpoints. The rewards that BBO and the ACBL awarded, were disproportionate to the results. Very often one would finish in the top 2 or

3 percent of a 400-pair game and receive 1.5 MPs.

Now that some of our clubs are reopened, we should fully support them. Players have to show proof of vaccination, and the chance of infection is minimal. One should wear a mask to be doubly sure. Please support our clubs, or we will find them closing and will be back playing on line.

THE STUDENT OR THE TEACHER?

by Ken Trock



IMPs, vulnerable vs not. You are North, in 2nd seat. Sitting to your left (East) is a world champion, who is playing with a client/student (West).

You hold: ♠ J9874 ♥ J10 ♦ AJ83 ♣ A9.

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	2NT ⁽¹⁾
3♠	??		
(1) Hearts and Clubs			

The client seems to have stepped in unwisely. Double by me is pretty easy.

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	2NT ⁽¹⁾
3♠	Dbl	3NT	Pass
Pass	??		
(1) Hearts and Clubs			

It's one thing to double an amateur player, but now the pro will likely be declaring. Before you decide what you'd do, I can tell you that lefty is one of the most winningest bridge players in North American history.

Do you still dare double? Yes! Your partner made a vulnerable overcall that would have forced us to the 3-level. My hand has a couple of outright tricks and is loaded with valuable spot cards. We're not playing basketball against Michael Jordan or doubles tennis vs. the McEnroe brothers, where the sky could be the limit. Declarer can only play the 26 cards they're given.

I don't care who they are on this deal: if partner has even a bare minimum for their overcall, declarer is nowhere near making 3NT. I double and it gets passed all around. Sure enough 3NT is destroyed. And this one is definitely on West, the client.

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	2NT ⁽¹⁾
3♠	Dbl	3♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	
(1) Hearts and Clubs			

Dealer: West
Vul: N-S

North
♠ J9874
♥ J10
♦ AJ83
♣ A9

West
♠ AQ1032
♥ 542
♦ Q102
♣ 76

East
♠ 6
♥ A83
♦ K7654
♣ KJ105

South
♠ K5
♥ KQ976
♦ 9
♣ Q8432

On this next deal you're again playing against a world champion/student combination. We won't reveal their directions yet. You are sitting West in first seat, not vulnerable vs. vulnerable, at matchpoints.

You hold: ♠ 10752 ♥ 9652 ♦ K95 ♣ 95

And the bidding goes:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	2NT	Dbl
3♦	Dbl	All Pass	

How are you feeling about this? I'd say, pretty good. They must have a pure 8-card major suit fit, or two good 7-card major suit fits, and game prospects.

North (client)
♠ AKQ86
♥ KQ3
♦ 6
♣ AJ74

West
♠ 10752
♥ 9652
♦ K95
♣ 95

East
♠ J4
♥ J
♦ QJ1083
♣ K10832

South (pro)
♠ 93
♥ A10874
♦ A742
♣ Q6

THE STUDENT OR THE TEACHER?

[concluded]

They beat it by two tricks for a N-S +300, but we see that's a bad score for them, as they indeed have an easy game in Hearts or NoTrump. (4♠ goes down on good defense.) So what happened? North, the student, made a takeout double that South wasn't sure how to interpret. These auctions involving the Unusual NT aren't well defined. I think North should steer clear of doubling and bid a new suit to avoid this type of misunderstanding.

Next up, against yet another pro/client pair. second seat, none vulnerable.

You hold: ♠ AKQJ932 ♥ 5 ♦ AQJ5 ♣ 8
Partner holds: ♠ 74 ♥ A763 ♦ 64 ♣ KJ732

and the bidding goes:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
Pass	2♣	2♥	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	6NT
All Pass			

This is a horrible contract, but hopefully the opponents don't know that.

	<u>North</u>	
	♠ AKQJ932	
	♥ 5	
	♦ AQJ5	
	♣ 8	
<u>West (client)</u>		<u>East (pro)</u>
♠ 65		♠ 108
♥ K92		♥ QJ1084
♦ 1098		♦ K732
♣ Q10654		♣ A9
	<u>South</u>	
	♠ 74	
	♥ A763	
	♦ 64	
	♣ KJ732	

East led the ♦2, won with the Queen by declarer, who, in desperation, led the ♣8 to the Jack, losing to West's Queen. The ♦9 return from West was won by the Ace. Declarer, still alive, started cashing Spades. On the ♠QJ, East pitched both the ♦7 and ♦K.

The hand was now over, since North now had 12 tricks: seven Spades, the ♥A, and four Diamonds. In all fairness, I remember that we were running out of time and our opponents may have been rushing at the end. But to give up the ♦K seems wrong. Surely, we'll see that the client did this.

No, wow! The *pro* coughed up the diamond king after deciding to lead a Diamond instead of their Heart sequence! Sure, the client could have raised Hearts, and I would have had no chance if we still got to 6NT.

The point of all this? I suppose a solid club player could feel they have a chance against the best players. Maybe so, but it is important to note that even bridge professionals can have misunderstandings at the table with their partners, especially if their partners are students. Perhaps next quarter we'll see what it's like to play against a professional team when they're in sync.

The moral is: don't hesitate to double a bridge professional when you "have the goods."

ADVANCED VOCABULARY

by Peter Wright

The game, Best Beloved, was reaching its nadir as the following hand flitted around the virtual room. (You **do** know what a “nadir” is, right? That’s what spouse #2 types in reply when spouse #1 types, ever so cooingly, “Would you prefer to play in **your** suit rather than **mine**?”)

Nine Wests had already played this hand at 5♦. Seven of them fell one trick short. One of them found a way to go down **two** tricks, but equilibrium was restored when one defending pair achieved a nadir of untold fathoms by figuring out a way to donate a full 11 tricks to East. (You **do** know what “equilibrium” is, right? That’s when every shelf in your living room has the same number of books by Kantar as by Lawrence.)

The rawest rookie West, aglow with all those Diamond carrots, would probably drive all the way to the 9-level, if pushed, without breaking a sweat. But the last three Wests to hold this hand were perspicacious enough to open 3NT! (You **do** know what perspicacious is, right? That’s when you **start** sweating.)

	<u>North</u>	
Dealer: East	♠ KQ6	
Vul: All	♥ A1074	
Contract: 3NT	♦ 642	
	♣ K54	
	<u>West</u>	<u>East</u>
	♠ 8	♠ J10732
	♥ J	♥ Q93
	♦ AKQJ10875	♦ 93
	♣ A82	♣ Q107
	<u>South</u>	
	♠ A954	
	♥ K8652	
	♦ –	
	♣ J963	

Small wonder about the 3NT declarers; all of them were hand-hogs. In fact, on the 10th iteration of the board, the Hideous Hog Himself took the helm. Neither the Grinch (North) nor Bo-Peep (South) had the wherewithal to compete. As for HHH’s partner Rumpelstiltskin, it didn’t matter what button he pressed; by prearrangement with online authorities (i.e., HHH’s bribe), Rumpy’s bidding pad registered only “Pass.”

The Grinch was famous for doting upon honor cards. “My honors were placed on this earth to capture **inferior** honors,” was his mantra, which is why he never **led** nor **led away** from them. His choice of a Diamond spot opening lead was an inevitability, as the Hog had intuited instantly upon picking up his cards. Nine tricks later, the Grinch felt great pride that all four of his honors were still alive and well. As for Bo-Peep,

she spent the entire hand on the phone with Mary – you know, the one with the lamb – who, Bo-Peep thought, jolly well **ought** to know the whereabouts of her lost sheep. As HHH contentedly cashed his last trick, she pitched her ♠A in a fit of pique at Mary’s ovine ignorance. (You **do** know what “ovine” is, right? That’s what a wine connoisseur exclaims as he enthuses over a Rochambeau ’48 cabernet.) That ♠A pitch allowed the Grinch, whose four honors won all the remaining tricks, to preen assiduously at the excellence of his defensive prowess.

For iteration #11, the Wicked Witch of the West was in the broomstick’s seat. All passed, and the ♠K squirted forth from Red Robin Hood (North). Chicken Little (dummy) clucked and laid her eggs, a clutch of 13, as was her wont. WWW watched sullenly as Red **Robin** continued the ♠Q and a 3rd Spade to South’s Ace. Witchipoo needed to conjure up a widget to toss into the defensive gears.

Flicking a gnarled finger – more like a claw, really – and giving vent to an eldritch wail, WWW caused a spider to appear on South’s screen. It grew from itsy bitsy miniscule to mind-numbing enormosity (apologies for all this electronical arcana). After filling the screen, the spectral spider leapt **outward** and alit upon the defender’s sitting utensil – which we can now reveal to have been . . . a **tuffet**!

“Don’t muff it, Miss Muffet,” typed WWW. And, right on cue, the Southern Miss Muffet muffed it, abandoning her tuffet unceremoniously after returning her 4th Spade. To be fair: she was **pretty** sure, well, **hopeful** at least, that it was by now the boss Spade. Miss Muffet, you see, was of a delicate temperament: she studiously avoided any eye contact with dummies; they were all so . . . so . . . **exposed**!

Thus Witchipoo raked in ten tricks. But now, Best Beloved, we come to the thrilling climax of our tale: the near--legendary 12th iteration. Ear hath not seen, nor hath eye heard, the like.

It was Big Bad Wolfie who, with a blatant bicuspid snap, brought the bidding to an abrupt beginning and simultaneous end at 3NT. Big Bad’s take-no-prisoners bidding style galled his partner, Mr. Hatter, made him **Mad**, actually. So Mad, that Hatter wanted to take Big Bad out. Not to dinner, and not to Spades, mind you, but **take him out**!! But then he thought about Wolfie’s brawny bicuspid – did I mention they were brawny? – and passed meekly.

“Let me in, or I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll . . .,” typed Big Bad. He didn’t finish the threat, though, realizing that he was mixing up his stories. (Are you following all this, Best Beloved? Good, because there just might be a pop quiz.)

[continued next page]

ADVANCED VOCABULARY

[concluded]

On lead, Billy the Kid (North) mused that, since he had three suits stopped, that loopy lupine must have a freight train of Diamonds. Heavy rain on Wolfie's parade was *de rigueur*, and *pronto*. To retain the lead and ogle dummy, Billy fired off the ♥A, noting partner's encouraging high spot as Big Bad followed with an obviously solitary Jack.

Billy continued with a small Heart to South's advertised King. And just who was that Southern partner? Why, it was none other than Billy Goat Gruff. (You must understand, Best Beloved, that the Kid was Mr. Gruff's Kid. They were a class act: a double Billy.)

Attention now shifted to the elder Gruff as the audience held its collective breath. (OK, I lied. This was online bridge, there was no audience and no breath, especially of the collective ilk. Don't interrupt me again!)

Gruff Sr. won the 2nd Heart trick and paused to indulge in his favorite pastime: munching on a delectable tin can ("brain spinach," he called it). A 3rd Heart was *unthinkable*; a Diamond, *impossible*. That left the black suits. If Big Bad held *both* the

♣A *and* the ♠K, 3NT was ironclad, so he assumed Wolfie held just *one* of those two cards, along with a Diamond mine of fabulous proportions.

Now, if Big Bad held the ♠K, that meant the *Kid* must hold ♣AK, but no Kid of Billy would have led the unsupported ♥A in preference to ♣AK. Nope, Wolfie must hold the ♣A, So: *Spades*, then!

Ace of Spades – slam! King of Spades – wham!! Queen of Spades – bam!!! 3NT went down in flames, the execution carried out with merciful celerity. Still, a little gloating over their superb ratiocination would not go amiss. The Gruffs high-fived it, though the result was two slightly smudged screens, seeing as how Gruff Sr. was living above a Tombstone saloon and the Kid was still back in Dodge.

By the way, Best Beloved, in case you've been wondering, the other two Gruff brothers, the Kid's uncles, were off in some dive playing Texas holdem with a pinochle deck. In *that* game, a holding of five 9s beats a royal flush.

MILESTONES

CHANGES IN RANK: May – June – July – August 2021

Platinum Life Master

Cheryl Angel	Livingston
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Sapphire Life Master

Richard Dubrovsky	Howell
Wendy Lee	East Hanover

Gold Life Master

Paul Fried	Monroe Township
Henry Gibson	Livingston
Jacek Leznicki	Verona

Ruby Life Master

Saul Blum	Monroe Township
Cheryl Dweck	Deal
Arthur Frank	Pennington
Jacqueline Hewlett	Bridgewater
Michael Hewlett	Bridgewater
Sid Jones	Randolph
Irving Peyser	Mountain Lakes
Merle Poller	Westfield
Chung-Zong Wan	Somerset

Silver Life Master

Karen Cane	East Windsor
Ronald Cane	East Windsor
Brian Dicker	Morris Plains
Eli Duttman	Monroe Township
Jeremy Glaser	North Caldwell
Rona Goldberg	Scotch Plains
Francis Gupta	Princeton
Marlene Levitt	West Orange
Dorothy Nutkis	Florham Park
J Eugene Salomon	Toms River
Steven Siegel	Mendham
Henry Van Handle	Succasunna

Bronze Life Master

Edward Andrews Jr	Skillman
Merle Barnett	Monroe Township
Marjorie Berkley	Montville
Beryl Blake	Bound Brook

Bronze Life Master (cont'd)

Stan Carol	Monroe Township
Pat Guadagno	Ocean
Dorid Lamb	Summit
Kathleen Riepenhoff	Skillman
Joseph Wright	Westfield

Life Master

Beryl Blake	Bound Brook
Manoj Kanti Deb-Roy	Hillsborough
Jonathan Eskridge	Morristown
Cynthia Prell	Morristown
Tehmtan Tehsildar	Hillsborough
Ronald Whitney	Bloomfield

Adv NABC Master

George Kalb	Millington
John Overdeck	Short Hills

NABC Master

Ranjan Dutta	East Windsor
Gloria Grumet	Neptune
James Lawler	Princeton
Tracey Moreno	Sea Girt
Ann Nelson	Mantoloking
Barbara Simpson	Morristown
Anthony Szulczewski	Middlesex
Eleanor Weisenberg	Monroe Township

Regional Master

Michael Absatz	Eatontown
Veena Arora	Waretown
Janice Beckmen	Summit
James Brown	Manahawkin
Jeanie Cleary	Shrewsbury
Joel Fierstien	Monroe Township
Rosalie Ginda	Somerset
Richard Jacobs	West Windsor
Mary Kingsbery	Rumson
Barbara Lawler	Princeton
Lynn Marsh	Pennington

[continued next page]

MILESTONES**[concluded]****Regional Master (cont'd)**

Joseph Masino	Summit
Barbara Robinton	South Orange
Joan Rudominer	Livingston
Patricia Savage	Middletown
Maddy Seeman	Shrewsbury
Cary Silverman	Mountain Lakes
Barbara Smith	Mantoloking
Edward Smith	Mantoloking
Pamela Stone	Summit
Arman Tookmanian	Budd Lake
Sherrerd Urner	Bay Head
Kathryn Wagenseller	Somerset

Sectional Master

Danette Alderoty	Rumson
Janet Aragon	Whitehouse Station
Pamela Clark	Chatham
Gail Connolly	Morristown
Candy Defalco	Fair Haven
Carol Gebauer	Springfield
Sharon Glauberg	West Caldwell
Stefani Gurkoff	North Caldwell
Michael Jeary	Rumson
Mary Kallstrom	Lebanon
Laurie Kramer	East Mill Stone
Valerie Levy	North Caldwell
Eliana Lomnitz	Westfield
Elizabeth McNally	Fair Haven
Linda Mitchell	Shrewsbury
Zoey Sanders	Monmouth Beach
Janice Schindler	Mountain Lakes
Linda Seyffarth	Glen Ridge
Laurie Taylor	North Caldwell
Gloria Tookmanian	Budd Lake
Nancy Waldenberg	West Orange
Jacqueline Walsh	Annandale
Linda Zissu	Short Hills

Club Master

Peter Agnew	Glen Ridge
Andrew Carlson	Summit
Lisa Conroy	New Providence
Janet Denoia	Little Silver
Karen Dubel	Colts Neck
Ellen Ehrlich	Rockaway
Virginia Ekstrom	Bloomfield
Alan Johnson	Middletown
Poonam Kapoor	West Windsor
Patricia Lawler	Hackettstown
Mark Powell	Fanwood
Naveen Rao	Short Hills
Joan Repetti	Spring Lake
Jane Ridolfi	Bay Head
Beth Robinson	Livingston
Abby Schenkman	Bridgewater
Stuart Scott	Morristown
Jerome Shilstat	Scotch Plains
Sheela Sonalkar	North Caldwell
Stefanie Spivack	Mountainside

Junior Master

Anne Armstrong	Chatham
Mark Armstrong	Chatham
William Asch	Princeton
Hope Cassano	Berkeley Heights
Susan Chiarulli	Summit
Linda Collins	Point Pleasant
Marcia Geltman	Randolph
Amanda Greenblatt	Summit
Joan Hearst	Montclair
Eunice Lipp	Monroe Township
Gail Middleton	Chatham
Miriam Pester	Short Hills
Laura Schaffer	Summit