

THE KIBITZER

August 2004

A NEWSLET FOR THE CONNECTICUT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Volume 9 • Number 10



Optipism

by Harold Feldheim

In "Winning Swiss Team Tactics," I invented a word called OPTIPISM. Simply stated, when playing or defending a hand, if the contract looks ironclad, look for what might go wrong. Be a pessimist. But if the contract looks terrible, play for miracles. Wild optipism is the name of the game. Violating this principle can be very costly.

In this case, West failed to find the killing lead (almost impossible on the bidding as given), but a generous declarer decided to forego the gift and a grand slam went a-begging.

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

Dealer: South
Vulnerability: None

South	West	North	East
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♣	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
7 ♥	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

The auction was intelligent and rather straight-forward. After hearts were supported, South started a cue-bidding sequence, leaping to seven hearts over the North's second cue bid. East's double was designed to let partner know that a special lead was needed. West correctly determined that partner was looking for a ruff and, with little to go by, chose his longest suit and led a club. Needless to say, a spade would have provided the defense an instant trick but it was not to be.

South won dummy's ace, pitching his losing diamond, drew trump, and cashed the ace of spades. When East showed out, no amount of squirming could avoid a spade loser.

"Just my luck," whined South. "I was a 90% favorite."

"Actually," said North, "you were 90.4%"

"I couldn't make it," continued South

"Right," said North. "It was 100% cold but you couldn't make it."

Do you see it?



Harold Feldheim

Easy as pie. At trick one, pitch the 10♠ and draw trumps. Cash a high spade, if everybody follows, you claim, using a trump as an entry to the spades. In this case, East shows out so you cash your remaining two high spades, cross to dummy with a trump, ruff a spade setting up the suit, cross back with the last trump, and finally pitch your losing diamond, making thirteen tricks.

Remember to make optipism a part of your play arsenal. It could be worth dividends.

Head's Up

Next Sectional
Sept. 17 - 19
Knights of Columbus Hall
2630 Whitney Ave.
Hamden

The directions:

WILBUR CROSS PARKWAY:

From North - Exit 62 South. Go right at end of ramp on to Whitney Ave. Hall is 1.5 miles on left.

From South - Exit 61 North. Go right at end of ramp. You are now on Whitney Ave. Hall is 1.5 miles on left.

I 91 North and South - Exit 10. Bear left at the fork; continue to traffic light on your right. At end of this connector, turn left onto Whitney Ave. K of C Hall will be on your right.

Call Mary Witt for more information: 860-658-9395.



The 'Can't Cost' (CC) Principle Chapter IV

By John Steifel

To review CC: if you know a particular play can't cost, just do it. You don't need to figure out if or how it might gain, only that it can't lose. Said another way, it's often easier to figure out a "can't cost" play to an early trick than all the details of what might happen later (deep thought or DT).

CC Chapter 4 features this hand from the final session of the National Open Pairs in Reno.

Dealer: South

Vulnerability: Both

Auction:

1♣ P 1♠ P 1NT All Pass

Opening Lead – 8♥

North
♠ A 10 6 3
♥ 5 4 3
♦ A 8 7 3
♣ 8 7

South (Dealer)
♠ K 4
♥ K J 7 2
♦ K 9 4
♣ Q J 5 2

At trick one, East plays the 10♥ and you win the jack. At trick 2, with nothing better to do, you try the 9♦ from your hand. This rides to East's jack and a low club comes back. You play the queen and it holds. At trick 4, your K♦ drops East's Q and you lead a low diamond at trick 5, West following low.

What now? A♦ or 8♦? Counting "empty spaces" suggests you should play for the drop. West is marked with five hearts (as East didn't return a heart at trick 3) and has already played three diamonds and one club so he has four unknown cards, while East has one heart and has already played two diamonds and one club so he has nine unknown cards. (The fact that a round of clubs was played doesn't affect this reasoning as it was virtually certain that each opponent had at least one club.)

On the other hand, "restricted choice" suggests that you should finesse. (Restricted choice says "had to play a card" is more likely than "chose to play a card instead of an equal other card.")

Here, your decision is whether to play East for HH or HHH (where H means an honor); but there are three possible HH holdings (Q J, Q 10 and J 10) and only one possible HHH holding (Q J 10).

So "empty spaces" suggests that playing the A is 2 to 1 while "restricted choice" suggests that finessing the 8 is 3 to 1.

There is one more consideration – the opponents play "upside-down" count. From my experience, "upside down" people give accurate count more often than "standard" people and West played low-high on the first two rounds of diamonds (suggesting 4).

At any rate, you play the 8♦ and it wins! Now you have 7 tricks – 3 diamonds, 2 spades, 1 heart and 1 club. You've made your contract, so take your ace of diamonds now and cash out for a good score, right? No – not right – how can it cost to play a second round of clubs now?

So:

Trick 6 - club, East's K wins

Trick 7 - spade (East's best play), you win your K

Trick 8 - spade to dummy's A, both follow, West plays the Q

Trick 9 - now take your A♦ and pitch a small club from your hand

This is the 4-card end position with dummy on lead.

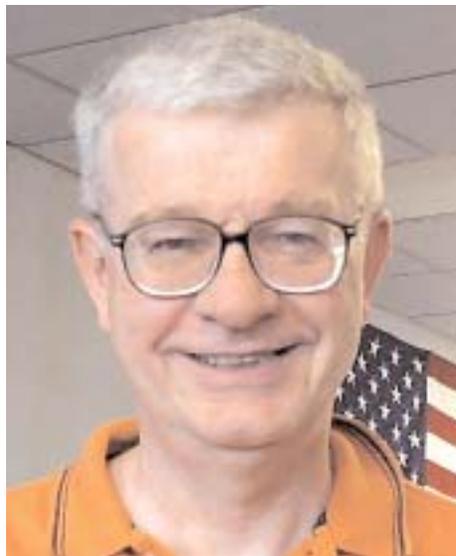
North
♠ 10 6
♥ 5 4
♦
♣

West
♠
♥ A Q 9 6
♦
♣

East
♠ J 9 4
♥
♦ A
♣

South
♠
♥ K 7 2
♦
♣ J

You pitched your club at trick 9 to keep three hearts because you knew that West would be down to all hearts. Now ducking a heart gives you one more trick and +120 for an excellent (instead of good) score. Greed pays when declaring, as long as it "can't cost."



John Steifel

The Kibitzer is published quarterly by the Connecticut Bridge Association, Unit 126 of the American Contract Bridge League.

All comments, news, items (including cartoons) related to the bridge world and of interest to our readers are welcome. Please send all items for the next *Kibitzer* by **October 15**. All ads must be received by October 1.

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Practice Makes Perfect?

By Tom Smith

A hoary story goes something like: Tourist to New Yorker, “How do I get to Carnegie Hall?” New Yorker to tourist, “Practice, practice, practice!”

For many years, I was convinced that sound declarer play came with years of experience after actually solving a myriad of problems that arise at the table.

Now I'm not so sure. Like most other aspects of this complex, wonderful game, the ability to take the tricks that are your due seems to be inborn and can never really be learned. Either you have it or you don't.

If you doubt the veracity of this belief, consider these examples from high-stakes rubber bridge, then judge for yourself. In each case, declarer was a player with at least 40 years of bridge experience.

Dealer: South
Vulnerability: Both

North

♠ A 8 7 3 2
♥ K 6
♦ J 4 3
♣ 10 4 3

West

♠ 5 4
♥ Q 10 8 4
♦ K 6 2
♣ A 6 5 2

East

♠ K Q 10 9
♥ J 3 2
♦ 10 9
♣ Q J 9 7

South

♠ J 6
♥ A 9 7 5
♦ A Q 8 7 5
♣ K 8

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	pass	1 ♠	pass
1 NT	pass	pass	pass

Opening lead: 4♥

This seems pretty straightforward. Win the K♥, lead a diamond to the ace (in case West has a singleton king), then continue with a diamond to the jack when nothing good happens. As long as diamonds split 3-2, you are home with four diamond tricks, two hearts, and the ace of spades.

So what actually happened? Declarer played a low heart from dummy at trick one and ducked East's jack! Now the roof fell in. East, a fair-country defender, knew partner had led from a four-card suit and that declarer must be sure of at least one heart trick from the failure to put up the K♥ at the first trick. Thus, greener pastures had to be searched for, and clubs were the obvious lead.

The Q♣ went to the king and ace, and back came a club to the 9. After cashing out clubs, East shifted to the K♠. In desperation, declarer took the ace and led a diamond to the queen. West gathered in the king and reverted to spades, allowing the defenders to take three tricks there and nine in all. Down three vulnerable for a -300 instead of +140 (including 100 points for making a part-score on the last deal of Chicago rubber bridge).

If you think that performance was sickening, our hero was at the helm of another botched deal.

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

North

♠ K Q 4 3
♥ 4 3
♦ K 2
♣ A Q J 9 8

West

♠ 10 6 5 2
♥ K 10 7
♦ Q 10 8 3
♣ 6 2

East

♠ 9 8
♥ J 9 8 5 2
♦ 6 5 4
♣ K 7 4

South

♠ A J 7
♥ A Q 6
♦ A J 9 7
♣ 10 5 3

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 NT	pass	2 ♣	pass
2 ♦	pass	4 ♣	pass
4 NT	pass	6 NT	pass

Opening lead: 3♦

In the casual, cut-around, rubber bridge game, a great many jumps to four clubs are treated as Gerber. That makes a great deal of sense on this sequence ... what other meaning could four clubs have?

After South showed three aces, North wasted no more time in getting to the top spot, although it was entirely possible that the slam belonged in clubs.

West got off to a perfectly normal, albeit unfortunate, lead of a low diamond, won in hand with the jack. The 10♣ was run to the king, and East returned the 2♥. Without a moment's thought, declarer inserted the queen for down one. "Sorry, partner," moaned declarer, "both finesses were wrong."

Had North been privy to the previous deal, which he was not, it was North who should have apologized for this fiasco. After all, if South couldn't count to seven tricks, how could North possibly expect this person to count to 12 here! Of course, after the diamond lead, that is exactly what declarer had...four clubs, four spades, three diamonds, and the A♥, so the heart finesse was superfluous. Our hero simply couldn't count his tricks.

continued on page 4



Tom Smith



Practice Makes Perfect *continued from page 3*

In every rubber bridge game there is always at least one character who whines long and loud about the horrible cards he or she is dealt. Is this true? We all get our share of the cards, but those who complain most often about "bad" hands seem to regularly minimize the good ones.

Here is a case in point. Pay special attention to the part-score, vulnerability and auction, then decide if North must share in this debacle.

Dealer: South

Vulnerability: North/South with 60 on score

North
 ♠
 ♥ K J 3
 ♦ 8 6 4 3
 ♣ A K J 9 5 2

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

South
 ♠ A Q J 9 2
 ♥ A Q 10 6
 ♦ K 2
 ♣ Q 3

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
Pass (!)	Pass		

Opening lead: 9♥

To explain the five heart response to Blackwood, North-South used a version of Key Card, so the response promised either two aces or one with the king of trumps.

This one is real simple, until our bad card holder gained the helm. Declarer won the heart in hand, ruffed a spade, crossed to the Q♣ and ruffed another spade. Two more rounds of clubs were played, West ruffing as south pitched a diamond and when the smoke cleared, the contract was down two. Count 'em if you don't

believe me. All declarer took were six trump tricks, two clubs, and the A♠.

Yes, knowing South's talent for telescoping 11 tricks to nine, North is at fault for bidding over three hearts, but, in defense, it simply never occurred to North that partner would make a natural jump shift on a cheesy 18 count and only a four-card suit...not with a 60 part-score. Two hearts would have been quite adequate and North would have passed that with alacrity.

Actually, south was positioned to score a real coup by bidding and making an excellent slam on a 4-3 fit, since the play in five hearts should be exactly the same as in six. Win the opening lead in hand with the 10♥, ruff a spade, cash K♥ and return to hand with the Q♣. A, Q♥ will hopefully draw the remaining trumps after which the A♠ and the rest of dummy's clubs round out the total to 12.

Why play this way in five hearts when simply cashing top winners delivers the contract?

To answer a question with a question, are you all that concerned about 5-0 clubs here or any suit splitting 6-1 or 7-1 for that matter?

If you are, you are a losing player, but you fall into the same category if you fail to consider more realistic divisions such as 5-2, 5-1, or 4-1. By taking a spade ruff in dummy before drawing trumps, you have some small chance of recovering from 5-1 hearts on this deal.

By the way, if you think south should have bid six hearts after finding sufficient key cards opposite, so do I! But in truth, that would have resulted in an extra under-trick. After all, when a "bad card" holder is declaring, counting 12 tricks has to be beyond his ken.

Elect Paul Burnam

Paul Burnam is running for representative to the State House from the 143rd district on the Democratic ticket. The district is most of Wilton and a bit of Norwalk. Let's send a bridge player to the House...vote for Paul!

Milestones Congratulations to:

Gold Life Master

(2500 master points)

Joan Brod
 Susan Leege
 Esther Murphy
 Marilyn Winthrop

Silver Life Master

(1000 master points)

Claire Girard
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Bronze Life Master

(500 master points)

Janet Hunsicker
 Rob Rising
 Marilyn Sugerman

Life Master (300 master points)

Charles Schness
 J. Gail Schulze

Coming Up

2004 North American Pairs!

Make sure to qualify!

Players who qualify at the club level will play in the district final on **Oct. 9 and 10** at the Sturbridge Host Hotel in Sturbridge, MA. Those winners compete in the national final held at the Spring 2005 North American Bridge Championship in Pittsburgh.

For more information, contact Kay Howe, NAOP Coordinator, at 203-299-1630 or email to naopcoord@nebridge.org

New England Regional

September 1 - 6

Marriott Hotel, Springfield, MA

Chairs: Helen Pawloski 413-562-7118 &
 Pat Smith 413-787-9969

Danbury Regional

October 18 - 24

Sheraton Danbury, Danbury, CT

The Sid Cohen Sectional

December 3 - 5

Knights of Columbus, Newington, CT

Call Mary Witt at 860-658-9395

Trouble With Doubles

By Gloria Sieron

Let us imagine the curtain opening on Act IV, Scene I, of Shakespeare's Macbeth. A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron. All three witches chant the following:

"Double, double, toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble."

While this may sound like the description of a few ACBL tournaments we have attended, are there any of the 15 words of bridge that give us as much toil and trouble as the double, and the redouble? When we first learn bridge, the takeout double and the penalty double confuse us. But we get to know that a takeout double is at a low level before partner has bid and the penalty double is usually at the game level or beyond and the message to partner is, "I believe I can set this contract for a substantial profit. Leave it stand."

Today, most players have toil and trouble dealing with the many forms of double and redouble during an auction. In a Shakespearean context, there is the Rosenkranz double, and Rosenkranz redouble, as well. When Guildenstern joins the ACBL, who knows what doubling theory will be forthcoming.



Gloria Sieron

Other doubles and redoubles – the reopening double, the negative double, the maximal double, the competitive double, support double, double of 1NT as in DONT for single-suited hands, SOS redouble, and we must remember the striped-tailed ape double.

Further, we are told, that all doubles are considered cooperative and, according to one's best duplicate bridge judgment, may be left to stand or taken out.

This hand gave responder a problem in John Farwell's 7:00 p.m. Friday night Milford game.

Dealer: North
Vulnerability: North/South

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

North opens 1NT. After a pass by East, South playing the transfer bid, bids 2♦. West bids 2♠. North passes, indicating only 2♥. East raises to 3♠.

South's turn to bid. South isn't 100 percent sure North has a spade stopper but has the ten points required for a game contract. Should South gamble and bid 3 NT or double?

What information would the double convey? Is it penalty or cooperative?

South doubled and North let the double stand. East/West went down only one trick for -100.

At all other tables, North/South scored a vulnerable NT game for +600.

Your CBA

President	Charlie Halpin	860-347-5223
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Tournament Director	Peter Marcus	860-645-0063
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CBA web site	www.ctbridge.org	

Your Link to the Board

If you have something to say, suggest, or complain about ...tell your representative.

Central	Kay Frangione	860-226-7067
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Northeastern	Ausra Geaski	860-528-3807
Northwestern	Mary Witt	860-658-9395
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Southern	Susan Rodricks	203-874-1184
Southeastern	Burt Gischner	860-691-1484
Southwestern	Paul Burnham	203-899-3327
Members-at-large	Phyllis Bausher	203-248-3653
	Sandy De Martino	203-637-2781
	Joyce Stiefel	860-563-0722

Darien Bridge Club

Following are the winners of the January through May, 2004, session of Monday afternoon duplicate bridge at the Darien Community Association:

1. Robert Towne
2. Constance Bergin
3. Marilyn Tjader
4. Martha Hathaway
5. Al Spelbrink
6. Betty Hodgman
7. Martha Murphy
8. Janet Soskin
9. Mary Richardson
- 10/11. Pat Brasher & Dossie Sullivan

Stamford

Our annual meeting and dinner was again held at Pellicci's restaurant in Stamford and was well attended.

Election of officers saw:

Joan Martin - President;
 Dean Montgomery - Vice President
 Terry Lubman - Secretary
 Bud McMaster - Treasurer
 Rita Doucette - Assistant Treasurer
 Board of Directors - Natalie Cohen, Aimee Housholder, Carlos Munos, and Phil Silverstein.

Trophies were awarded:

Mayor's Cup - Dorothy Kolinsky and Peter Schneidau

Women's Pairs and Charity Game - Doris Greenwald and Natalie Cohen

Men's Pairs - Phil Silverstein and Paul Burluson

Open Pairs - David Babson and Betty MacInnis

Mixed Pairs and High Average - Frances and Bernard Schneider

Non Life-Master High Average - Martha Keller

Congratulations to Rita Doucette, our newest life master, and to Charlotte Dunlop and Terry Lubman for achieving bronze life master. Also many thanks to Allan Clamage for his years of work as newsletter editor. Bernard Schneider has graciously offered to carry on. Come join us Friday evenings at 7:30 p.m., at First Stamford Plaza. Directions? Call Betty MacInnis at 203-964-9016 or billbett@optonline.net

Branford Bridge Club

Fritz Reimers and Alan Blake, playing East-West with a 67.70 percent game, were the overall first-place winners in a North American Pairs Game played at the Branford Community House on July 14.

Jean and Jim Haglind were first North-South and third overall in the NAP game. Others placing overall in the 11-table game included:

2. Malcolm & Marion Lang
3. the Haglinds
4. Eleanor Tucker & Dee Altieri
5. John McGuire & Joan Panico
6. Marvin Jamron & Robert Kidd.

Marvin Jamron and Robert Kidd were first-place winners in three consecutive games in April (the 7th, 14th and 21st) scoring a 73 percent game on the 14th. They also were in first place East-West in late May and again on June 23.

Jeannette Murphy and Louise Wood were the first-place winners of the Unit Game at the Community House in early May. Jeannette and Betty Tobin were leaders in the Branford Club Championship in early June.

Arlene Leshine and Shirley Fruchter were winners of the June StaC game.

Leading with master points for the second quarter of 2004 at the Branford games are:

Betty Tobin	8.44
Marvin Jamron	6.71
Robert Kidd	6.71
John McGuire	4.90
Joan Panico	4.90
Karen & Vincent Abate	4.71
Louise Wood	1.90
Alan & Barbara Blake	1.51

Games at the Branford Community Center are scheduled every Wednesday at 10 a.m. (There will be no games August 25 or September 1.) Call Director Lois Flesche at 488-3585 for partners or information.

Madison Duplicate Bridge Club

Gernot Reiners and Dick Augur were the overall first-place winners of the two session Tuesday evening Gil Graziano Madison Club Championship played in early May. A trophy hand-crafted by William Graziano was awarded to the two winners.

Gernot and Dick were also first-place North-South winners and Margaret Mason and Deanna Mozzochi were first-place East-West winners in the club's unit wide charity game on June 1.

Dick and Marylyn Augur were North-South first-place winners and Joan Panico and Denise Lombard were first-place East-West winners in the unit wide game played in May at the Madison Duplicate Club.

First-place North-South winners in the early June StaC game were June Hearrell and Terry Fidler. Charles Halpin and David Hyatt were first East-West.

Dibirma Burnham and Karen Abate were first-place overall winners in the June 10 StaC game. Other winners of that game were:

2. Donald Stiegler & Larry Bausher
3. Roy Andrews & Deanna Mozzochi
- 4/5. Alan Blake & Frederick Reimers
Joan Panico & Lenny Russman
6. Margaret Mason & Jackie Zwilliger

Jackie Zwilliger and Deanna Mozzochi were overall winners in the North American Pairs game on June 22. Other overall winners in that game included:

2. Joan Panico & John McGuire
3. Lenny Russman & Denise Lombard
4. Margaret Mason & Frances Moffett
5. Richard Blair & Peter Czuba
6. Don Brueggemann & Esther Watstein.

The Scott Loring Club Championship on May 20 was won by Hollis and Gery Barry. Other winners were:

2. Lynn Gallagher & Jackie Zwilliger
3. Margaret Mason & Roy Andrews
4. Sylvia Alpert & Nancy Ramseyer
5. David Hyatt & Lee Herdle
6. Alma Douglas & Lawrence Stern

The North American Open Pairs game on Thursday, June 24, was won by Henry Arnold and Selden Henry. Others were:

2. Sarah Hart & Mary Grier
3. Arlene Leshine & Dee Altieri
4. Alma Douglas & Jane Smith
5. Jackie Zwilliger & Lois Flesche

Winning the two-session Thursday Gil Graziano Club Championship were Joan Panico and Lenny Russman. Other winners in that competition included:

2. Roy Andrews & Deanna Mozzochi
3. Margaret Mason & John McGuire
4. Fritz Reimers & Alan Blake
5. Barbara Blake & Louise Cotsales
6. Claire Sauer & Janice Bruce

The top ten leaders in the Master Point Race in Madison for the second quarter of 2004 are:

Lenny Russman	27.41
Margaret Mason	25.51
Gernot Reiners	17.92
Roy Andrews	17.35
Denise Lombard	14.52
Deanna Mozzochi	14.25
Dick Augur	13.72
Don Brueggemann	13.16
Joan Panico	12.88
Ogden Bigelow	12.86
Helen Kobernusz	12.54

The Madison Club meets Tuesdays at 7:15 p.m. and Thursdays at 10 a.m. at the Old Town Hall on the Town Green. Call Directors Lois Flesche at 488-3585 or David Hyatt at 488-7027 for partners or information.

Hartford Bridge Club

It's been a very good summer for The Hartford Bridge Club. On June 30 The Zachs Family Foundation made a contribution of \$600 to the Club. Henry and Judith Zachs, through their Foundation, have been past supporters of HBC, and have manifested their generosity again this summer. This family is a credit to the general Hartford community and we are truly grateful. In addition, we are pleased to have their matriarch, Louise, as one of our most highly regarded members.

The growth of our membership is another positive development. As of this writing, the membership stands at 428 bridge players, a nice little increase over last year at the same time. This just doesn't happen by accident. It is the result of a lot of hard work by our manager, the people who work on novice games and lessons

and several others who make the Hartford Bridge Club a pleasant place to spend one's leisure hours. We are proud of this growth, knowing that it will lead to even better times and better bridge at HBC.

Bridge Forum (Hamden) Second-Quarter News

Friday: The Player of the Year lead switched several times during the spring. In the end, first-quarter leader Arlene Leshine recovered from a May slump with a strong June to reclaim first place, followed by Jean Shepler-Miller and Ginny Anderson. With few partnerships playing together on a regular basis, the top pairs are bunched closely together. Carl Yohans and Janice Bruce are in front of Mary Mendillo and Burt Tenner and last year's top pair, Jan Lewis and Helen Molloy.

Aldyth Cliborn Cup: The three-week final was devoid of drama. In a dominating performance reminiscent of Secretariat at the Belmont, Louise Wood took a 32% lead into the final week and added a little more to her margin of victory. The win was Louise's tenth cup victory and gave her possession of five of the six cups. Fredda Kelly, Marcel Bratu and Jean Shepler-Miller finished 2nd through 4th.

Tuesday: The Player of the Year lead has gone back and forth between Fredda Kelly and Muriel Romero, with Muriel ahead at the end of the quarter and a chasing pack of ten players well behind the leaders. Fredda Kelly and Helen Molloy have the lead bidding to repeat as top pair, with a fair lead over the resurgent pair of Billie Hecker and Jean Shepler-Miller. Hill Auerbach and Tracy Selmon are a distant third.

Leonora Stein Cup:

The three-week final had all the drama missing from the Claiborn Cup. Judy Pieper went ahead in the first week, then fell back, while Billie Hecker caught up from behind, and Muriel Romero took a slight lead. The trio passed the lead back and forth during the first half of the last game. Helen Shields dropped well behind, then began a huge comeback as Billie and Muriel, both former Stein Cup holders, were plagued by one fix after another. In the end, it came down to one 4♠ contract which seemed to be headed for defeat when the heart suit divided 4-1. However, the defender with the singleton heart held 0-1-6-6

distribution and couldn't trump the fourth round. A defensive ruff would have made Helen the first player to win both the April-finish (Claiborn and Stein) cups. Instead, Judy, who had qualified only 28th of 32 competitors and who had survived five elimination rounds on her way to the finals, pulled off an upset similar to Gaston Gaudio's win at the French Open.

Tuesday/Friday Combined: Helen Frank Cup: When Louise Wood raced into the lead at the start of May in her attempt to be the first player to win a particular cup four times, she seemed to be as sure a bet as Smarty Jones appeared to be at this year's Belmont. Louise was never out of first or second place as she turned back a series of challengers: Jean Shepler-Miller in mid-May, Janice Bruce in early June, Fredda Kelly in mid-June. As those three challenged and fell back, Carl Yohans stalked the lead throughout but never made a serious move. It was up to Muriel Romero to close like Birdstone. A 71% game on June 15 vaulted Muriel from 11th place to third. She moved up on Louise each game, went ahead in the penultimate round, and at the end of June closed out her fourth cup win overall and her first since the 2002 Stein Cup.

New Britain Bridge Club

The New Britain Bridge Club has moved to Meriden until further notice. The Monday game is now located the same as the Wednesday and Friday games at the First Baptist Church on Broad St.

We wish Winnie Clarke enjoyment and good health in her retirement.

Norwalk Senior Center Quarterly Results

Congratulations to Judy Israel playing with her favorite partner Phelps Clark. They were the top performing pair at the Center this quarter.

Finishing second were Steve Lanzit playing with Ken Hershon, followed by Mary Brennan pairing with Fran Kondrasko. The Senior Center enjoyed hosting its first STaC game this June. The STaC game was well attended, with 5 of the 14 pairs ranking in the state. The game is not limited to seniors; it is open to all players and is handicapped accessible.

Memoirs of a Bridge Player

by Paul Burnham

I was Dimitri's (not his real name) first serious bridge partner - he used our partnership as a stepping stone to greater things, winning the Board-a-Match Nationals in 1991.

Dimitri had a few words of advice after our lackluster performance in the first session of the Open Pairs II at the Spring Nationals at Reno.

"They don't know you, so they think you're an expert. Don't do anything to make them think otherwise, especially on the first board. This is what they think you do for a living. Get into a normal day at the office mind set, but don't wear that business suit - only Grant Baze or maybe Mike Huston

could get away with it. And by the way don't carry around a bridge book unless you or I or somebody now deceased wrote it - you don't want to have the author arrive at our table with you indicating he knows something you wish you did.

"Don't show disgust when declarer catches your doubleton queen behind his Ace, King, Jack by leading from the top ... he just acted on inferences that would be available to anyone ... never apologize - if you have to say anything after misdefending yell at me if it's the first board ... something about my failure to understand that this was or was not the time for an upside-down Smith Echo. Always call the card from dummy by its full name - so they'll wonder about its particular significance. No lame attempts at humor as you show your dummy. Never huddle as a defender at trick 12. And think on their time, not on yours. Always play a card from the middle of your hand not from the edge. No yelling during the second post-mortem. Lead the jack from dummy's jack, ten, nine, eight, rather than the eight if you want RHO to duck, and the eight if you want him to

rise with the ace. Don't think at trick three - certainly don't think about the card you play from dummy and from hand on the same trick. Constantly vary your tempo when you're on lead. Remember the Somnax Coup is often effective, especially after the round has been called ..."

And this went on for forty-five minutes and, as Arlo Guthrie would say, I couldn't understand a word he was saying.



Paul Burnham

The European World Class Opponents (the EWCOs) arrived for the second round of the evening session. North, in second chair, opened one diamond, and South alerted and explained that the bid was much the same thing as a Precision One Diamond opening bid in

their system. Dimitri's message had registered, otherwise I would have asked LEWCO (the EWCO on my left) to explain a Precision One Diamond opener.

Having the ace of hearts and the right colors, I jumped to 2 hearts to direct the lead if LEWCO became declarer, and otherwise to inhibit a NT contract, and South closed the proceedings with a bid of two spades. Dimitri duly led a heart, REWCO displayed a 3-1-4-5 distribution with an 11 count, including the queen, jack, ten of spades.

I took my ace and fired back my singleton trump. Dimitri ducked with ace, king, fourth and routine defense held the EWCOs to an average minus.

Then I found myself with a balanced 21 count, ♠Kx, ♥Axx, ♦AKJxx, ♣AQx and opened 2NT. Dimitri transferred the contract to 3♥ and then bid 4♣. Well, we did have an agreement that 4♣ is never Gerber except directly over NT but I didn't know what I would do if I bid 4♦, and Dimitri then bid 4♥, so I decided to show my aces with a bid of 4NT, suppressing temporarily my three

hearts and pretending we had an agreement we most certainly did not have. LEWCO now asks if we have any agreements as to what four clubs means, and cannot believe we have none except that 4♣ is not Gerber. (Guess I did something right on the first board.) So he asks how many times we have played as a partnership. I answered, "Five times in the last thirty years," which was certainly a true statement even if he did not believe it, at which even LEWCO probably thinks he was being fixed.

In any case Dimitri had had enough of the auction and I found myself declaring 4NT instead of 5 or 6 hearts. LEWCO led a low spade to REWCO's ace, and another spade came back to my now singleton king. I now had eleven tricks to run (1 spade, 2 hearts, 5 diamonds and 3 clubs) and the only issue was whether I could squeeze out a fourth club or find the queen of hearts for the last trick. Since each EWCO had a gudzillion spades, the former didn't seem likely. But I ran diamonds, with clubs thrown in from time to time to add a confusion factor, maybe even EWCOs can get confused if declarer switches suits when cashing winners, and LEWCO needed to find four discards. Not wanting to throw away good spades, holding four clubs, and figuring from the bidding that I couldn't have three hearts, LEWCO discarded all three of his hearts and thereby allowed me to gobble up REWCO's doubleton queen. So I get my twelfth trick and a near top since finding the doubleton queen of trumps behind the jack in a six heart contract proved beyond the ken of our NCAs and WCAs (national and world class adversaries).

LEWCO and REWCO recovered nicely and ended up in the top ten of the four session event. As for Dimitri and me...

(Stay tuned)