



THE KIBITZER

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CONNECTICUT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Volume 22 • Number 11 • December 2023

CAN'T COST – CHAPTER 52

By John Stiefel

In this deal from a recent Swiss Team game, declarer made a thoughtful “can’t cost” play to make a slam that went down at the other table.

Dealer: East

Vulnerability: Both

NORTH

♠ 8 5 3

♥ Q 6 4

♦ A Q J

♣ K J 9 2

SOUTH

♠ A K 2

♥ A K 5 2

♦ K 4 3

♣ A 8 5

Bidding: 2NT – 4NT – 6NT (East-West pass throughout)

Opening lead: ♦8 (4th best or top of nothing)

The bidding was fairly straightforward. South opened 2NT, showing a balanced hand with 20-21 HCP. North might just bid 6NT (since the partnership would presumably have the requisite 33 points needed for slam), but he contented himself with a 4NT bid because his 4333 distribution was unattractive and there might be (and was) duplication in diamonds. South, of course, bid 6NT as he had a maximum for his 2NT opening. As it turned out, there were only 10 top

tricks. So, South had his work cut out for him.

Only hearts (with a 3-3 split) or clubs (with a successful finesse against the queen or a 3-3 split or both) offered any possibility to develop tricks.

There was no hurry to play hearts; so South tried leading a low club to dummy’s jack. The jack won. Only 1 more trick was needed. There were 3 obvious possibilities – hearts or clubs could be 3-3 or the next club lead of the ace could drop East’s 10 of clubs, allowing declarer to use dummy’s 9 for a second successful finesse against West’s queen.

There was no hurry to try any of these possibilities. So, South made the “can’t cost” play of leading the 8 of spades from dummy and ducking when it was covered by West’s 10 of spades. West returned a spade and South won this with his king.

At tricks 5 and 6, South cashed his ace of clubs and led his 8 to dummy’s king of clubs. At trick 6, West played the 10 of clubs and East discarded a diamond. There was no hurry to try for 3-3 hearts. So, South cashed his remaining diamonds at tricks 7 and 8. East followed suit to trick 7, but she had to make a discard at trick 8 from a holding of QJ of spades, J983 of hearts, _ _ . When she discarded a heart to protect her spade honors, the slam was made!



What’s Inside

Can’t Cost - Chapter 52 1

John Stiefel

Leading Trumps Defensive Tips
. 2

Al Wolf

I Sniffed The Bear 3

Burt Saxon

What’s New

Larry’s Little Tips 4

Larry Lau

Ask the Expert 5

Greg Woods

Leave’em Up 6

Bill Segraves

Bridge Book Nook 7

Robin Sanders

In The Spotlight 8

Up and Coming Juniors

Bill Segraves

Club News 9-11

Recognition 6

Achievements. 13

Upcoming Events

Connecticut Spring Sectional

March 15-17, 2024

To stay up to date on events

please visit <https://ctbridge.org/>

Continued on page 3

BRIDGE AT THE LUNATIC FRINGE: #32

– OPENING LEAD

How your trump holding influences defensive strategy

by Al Wolf

The following is the Professor's treatise regarding the opening lead, and how your trump holding influences defensive strategy.

Lead shortness looking for a ruff?

With a trump holding where you have sure or likely tricks by virtue of intermediate trump honors, such as J10xx, Qxx or even better, QJx, looking to ruff should be avoided almost without exception. At best, a ruff will be an equal trade-off for a trick that you had coming naturally and at worst, it will be costly. Only in the unlikely scenario of getting two ruffs should this strategy be employed.

When your trump holding is Axx or Kxx or xxx, looking for a ruff makes much more sense.

However, with a 4-card trump holding headed by the A or K, you should consider a "tapping" strategy, rather than looking for a ruff. A tapping strategy is one in which you force declarer to ruff in the hand longer in trumps (usually 5 or 6), hopefully running declarer out of trumps while you still have some. This is usually called for if you think you have your own non-trump suit with which to force declarer.

Lead trumps?

The main reason to do this is because you have a good holding of several honors in a secondary suit that declarer is known to have. By leading trumps, you hope to limit declarer's ability to ruff secondary suit losers in dummy, presumably short.

However, avoid leading trumps with a doubleton honor. Even with Jx or 10x, the trump lead will often cost a trick.

The following deal shows one way that taking an ill-advised ruff can be costly:

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ 6 4 2		♠ A K 10 7 3	
♥ J 7 3		♥ A 5 2	
♦ 9 7 5		♦ K Q J 3	
♣ K Q 5 2		♣ A	

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

In a 4♠ contract, West leads the singleton diamond, and ruffs the second round, that will be the last trick for the defense. Now the A K of trumps will pull them, and the ♠6 will provide an entry to dummy to cash club winners, and pitch heart losers.

In the final round of the Tuesday duplicate at the Lunatic Fringe club, Minna and Majorca met up against Warren and the Professor, with the following deal.

Professor (North)

♠ 6 5
♥ Q 7 5 4
♦ 9 7 5
♣ A 6 5 4

Minna (West)

♠ A 8 3 2
♥ J 10 9 5
♦ 6
♣ Q 10 7 3

Majorca (East)

♠ 9
♥ A K 8 4 3
♦ A 8 3 2
♣ J 8 2

Warren (South)

♠ K Q J 10 7 4
♥ void
♦ K Q J 10 4
♣ K 9

As dealer, Warren opened the bidding 1♠. With a big two-suiter, it is generally good practice to open with one of your suits. The professor responded with a forcing 1NT. Majorca overcalled 2♥, and Warren jumped to 4♠, concealing his secondary diamond suit. He reasoned that he needed from partner one of three Aces, or the club Q to have a good shot at making 4S, even if the diamonds were a better fit.

On opening lead, Minna was highly tempted to lead her singleton diamond, reasoning that she would gain the lead with the trump Ace, and if she could then get to partner with a heart lead, Majorca could then give her a diamond ruff.

It must be noted that this line of defense was doomed to fail with declarer's heart void, and if Majorca tried to cash a heart trick when she was in with the diamond Ace, declarer would ruff, and make an overtrick. In fact, making 5 was the most common

Continued on page 3



I SNIFFED A BEAR

by Burt Saxon



In October, Steve Emerson and I played in the NYC Regional at the World Manor in Astoria. We played against Zack Grossack, now considered one of America's best bridge players. Zack and his partner won the event, but Steve and I received well over half the match points from the four hands we played head-to-head.

We had all the cards against Zack, but that did not stop him from jumping to 2♠ three times. The highlight was Steve making 5♣ doubled with an overtrick. Zack Grossack saved some match points on that one. Without a spade lead, Steve would have made seven and outscored a couple pairs that bid the club slam.

The real thrill was having my grandson Sam kibbitz the second session. Sam kept a poker face, but he did whisper to me, "That was a massacre." when Steve entered 750 into the tiny computer on the table.

I like bridge because there is an element of luck involved, which allows the average schmuck to beat the Bear once-in-a-while. I like scrabble and backgammon for the same reason. Chess I can do without because no luck is involved. My grandson Max does not beat me every time - only 90% of the time!

Zack Grossack seemed pleasant enough against a partnership that began before he was born. Steve and I are still ranked Flight B after 44 years. I think placing second in Flight B gave us our nine gold points. 5th overall would have been a bit less had we been Flight A players. All and all, it was a nice haul and a memorable game.



Can't Cost — Chapter 52

by John Stiefel

Continued from page 1

Note that declarer's play of ducking a spade at trick 3 is necessary to squeeze East between hearts and clubs if he started with 4 cards (or more) in each of those suits.

At the other table, declarer played hearts too early, and the defense prevailed, West keeping her clubs and East keeping his hearts.

The entire deal was:

NORTH			
♠ 8 5 3			
♥ Q 6 4			
♦ A Q J			
♣ K J 9 2			
WEST		EAST	
♠ 9 6 2		♠ Q J 10 7	
♥ 1 0 7		♥ J 9 8 3	
♦ 8 7 6 2		♦ 10 9 5	
♣ Q 10 4 3		♣ 7 6	
SOUTH			
♠ A K 4			
♥ A K 5 2			
♦ K 4 3			
♣ A 8 5			



Bridge at the Lunatic Fringe: #32 — Opening Lead

by Al Wolf

Continued from page 2

result at other tables.

But Minna reconsidered her opening lead, and having just recently read the Professor's treatise on this topic, she decided to give it a try, and go for a tapping defense.

With this in mind, she lead the ♥J. Warren ruffed and led a top spade. Minna ducked once, but she won the second round when dummy was out of trumps. Now the Heart continuation forced Warren to ruff a second time, and now Minna had equal trump length with declarer; and the Ace of diamonds yet to be played. If Warren pulled trumps, and then gave up a diamond, the defense would have 3 heart tricks to cash. If instead, he led a diamond, Majorca could win the Ace, and persist in hearts, giving Minna control of the trump suit. Either way, the contract was down 2 for a top result. (Note that Minna must be careful to unblock the ♥9.)

The Professor, although disappointed in the result, was quite proud of his former student Minna, who had read his treatise, and put it into practice.



LARRY'S LITTLE TIPS

Thinking in patterns ala Eddie Kantar

by Larry Lau



Eddie Kantar said:

“Players who don’t count make many more defensive errors than players who do. That’s a given.”

“It all boils down to this: Declarer has thirteen cards. Just like you do. These cards have to be divided into some distributional pattern just as yours are. Your job is to try and figure out what the pattern is before the hand is over.”

If you desire to elevate your game to the next level, improving your counting technique is guaranteed to accomplish this goal.

The fastest and most efficient way to improve your counting technique is to train the brain to think in patterns. Thinking in patterns will accelerate the time it takes to visualize the various hands.

You will be able to more quickly figure out hands without counting to 13!

There are “only” 39 generic patterns from 13-0-0-0 to 4-3-3-3. Of these 39, there are 13 which I highly recommend you commit to memory. These 13 patterns occur approximately 95% of the time. The four and five patterns together occur approximately 75% of the time.

Start with the four patterns and memorize them so they become “automatic.” Then move on to the five patterns and finally the six patterns. It takes time and effort, but the results will be gratifying.

FOUR PATTERNS

4-3-3-3
4-4-3-2
4-4-4-1

FIVE PATTERNS

5-3-3-2
5-4-2-2
5-4-3-1
5-4-4-0

5-5-2-1
5-5-3-0

SIX PATTERNS

6-3-2-2
6-3-3-1
6-4-2-1
6-4-3-0

Applying the patterns begins with the bidding. Her is a common auction.

SOUTH	NORTH
1 ♠	1NT*
2 ♥	All Pass

The opening lead is the club 2 (fourth best). Dummy and you have the following patterns.

NORTH (dummy)

S	H	D	C
1	4	4	4

EAST (you)

S	H	D	C
4	3	4	2

What are declarer’s inferential patterns?

First, we know that declarer has at least 5 spades and 4 hearts.

Second, clubs are known to be 4-4-2-3. Your partner lead is 4th best club. So, 4+4+2 means declarer has 3 clubs.

Therefore, declarer’s known patterns are:

S	H	D	C
5	4	1	3
5	5	0	3
6	4	0	3

If you have trained your mind to think in patterns, you have narrowed declarer’s holding to 3 possible patterns **at trick one without counting to 13.**

You win the first trick and shift to a diamond – which declarer ruffs!

Declarer’s pattern is now narrowed to two possibilities:

5-5-0-3

6-4-0-3

Declarer now proceeds to cash two high hearts – your partner showing out on the second heart. Hearts are therefore 1-4-3-5.

Declarer’s pattern is now known to be: 5-5-0-3.

Through the technique of “thinking in patterns” you have determined declarer’s pattern after trick 4 – without counting to 13!



ASK THE EXPERT

Spiral into Control

by Greg Woods



Greg, can you explain the value and basics of “spiral” bids?

Here are a couple of examples:

My Partner opens the bidding one of 1♣/1♦ and I respond 1♥ or 1♠. Or my partner opens 1♥ and I bid 1♠.

My partner raises to two of my major. I have a hand that has invitational to game values.

How should I proceed?

Most of us think that when opener raises partner’s major that the opener must have 4-card support. Not always. Let’s take a look.

There are hands that it simply makes sense to raise with only 3 cards:

1♣ - 1♠ - ?

♠ Q 6 2 ♥ 5 2 ♦ K 5 2 ♣ A K J 6 3

It seems that a raise to two spades makes sense, as this hand looks more suit-oriented than NT with 2 small hearts (Remember: trumping in the hand that has the short trumps, generates extra trick(s)).

This is another example for a 3-card raise of responder’s 1♥ bid.

♠ 5 ♥ K J 2 ♦ Q J 4 3 ♣ A J 8 6 3

How is responder to know if partner has raised with 3 or 4 pieces?

When the responder has a hand that is invitational to game, the Spiral Convention is used.

The Spiral Convention used by the responder asks the opener what their hand looks like. There are a couple

(maybe more) ways to play this convention. I will keep it simple here.

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
2♠	2NT*

Asks Opener to describe their hand.

3♣ = 3-card raise, with a minimum opening hand (11-13 HCP)

3♦ = 3-card raise, maximum opening hand (14-15 HCP)

3♥ = 4-card raise, with a minimum opening hand (11-13 HCP)

3♠ = 4-card raise, with maximum opening hand (14-15 HCP)

Spiral System Goals

1. The system should be as natural as possible, while promptly separating 3-min, 3-max, 4-min and 4-max hands from each other.
2. When the opener has a 4-max, game will always be bid. Expose no features of opener’s hand unless responder tries for slam, but do preserve space for slam exploration, with cue bidding.
3. When the opener has other than a 4-max, it assures the auction can always end at three of the major.
4. When the opener has a 3-min, it permits stopping at three of the minor, but also permits exploring for 3 NT. (The system also lets responder offer a choice between 3 diamonds and the major, when the minor is clubs.)
5. When the opener has a 3-max, you can explore reliably for 3 NT.



IN MY OPINION — LEAVE'EM UP

by Bill Segraves



I write today to ask you all to try something a little different - leaving the bidding cards up at the end of the auction until the opening lead has been faced.

No more “May I have a review, please?” by any of the players. It’s right there. No more having difficulty going through required delayed alerts (1) or other explanations that players may request without being able to see the full auction in front of us. No more incorrect reviews. No more Directors having to ask what the auction “was” when a failure to alert means that the auction may need to be re-opened. The auction is right there for everyone to see.

In much of the bridge-playing world beyond the ACBL, this is normal practice. Per the English Bridge Union’s Blue Book: “At the end of the auction, the calls should remain in place until the opening lead has been faced and all explanations have been obtained, after which they should be returned to their boxes.”

In a poll of players who have experience with this practice, those who like it outnumber those who dislike it by about nine to one. Nearly four times as many players think that it saves time, as think it takes extra time. About nine times as many say there are no disadvantages, as report

other disadvantages. My partners and I have been doing this at many tournaments this year and have been finding it works well. A lot of our opponents have liked it, too. A few have even remarked “Why doesn’t everybody do this?”

No one is going to tell you that you must do it anytime soon, but why don’t you give it a try? You just might find you like it, too.

1 - Per the new Alert Procedures instituted in 2018, most alerts above the level of 3NT are properly made after the conclusion of the auction.



CAREER HIGHLIGHT

Jeff Goldman Brings Home the Gold (and Platinum) in Atlanta

by Bill Segraves



Jeff Goldman of Norwalk put an exclamation point on an astounding run over the last year with a runaway win in the 0-10K IMP Pairs at November’s North American Bridge Championships in Atlanta.

Jeff and partner Will Ehlers of Boynton Beach, Florida rode a huge +96 IMP 3rd session to a comfortable 35 imp victory over the second-place pair.

Goldman hasn’t been playing a lot of tournaments, and it would be easy for his results to fly under the radar, but he has been scoring virtually every time he plays. Jeff’s run began fittingly when he and Ehlers won a regionally

rated pairs event a year ago at the Fall NABC in Phoenix. Jeff started the year well with a teams win at the January Regional in Suffern, NY. Over the next 9 months, he racked up pairs and team victories at Sectionals in Orange in April, Poughkeepsie in May, and Orange in October, along with numerous Sectional seconds and thirds. At the 2023 Summer Online Regional, he scored a convincing win in a large side game. On the way to his win in the IMP pairs, Jeff warmed up with a 2nd place tie finish in the Swiss in Atlanta on the preceding Sunday. During his year-long run, Jeff has averaged nearly 61% in Regional, Sectional and NABC matchpoint pairs play.

Neither Goldman’s consistent success, nor his collegiality, have gone unnoticed in the Connecticut bridge community. Rich DeMartino commented that he has “great respect for Jeff both as a player and as a great guy.”

Goldman and IMP pairs partner Will Ehlers have known each other since high school, when they used to play at the Stamford Bridge Club. Sandy DeMartino fondly remembers them in that era as “nice young men and enthusiastic about the game” and remarked on how pleased she was to see them win in Atlanta. Jeff and Will haven’t played often in the years

Continued on page 7

BRIDGE BOOK NOOK

Ask Jerry — The Best of Helms

by Robin Sanders



No contributor to ACBL's monthly *Bulletin* amuses me or enlightens me more than Jerry Helms. His Ask Jerry columns are pithy, funny, and punctuated with "JERRY-ISMS" that stay with us all our bridge-playing days. I hear myself repeating them constantly: "The one who knows, goes!"; "Look for reasons to bid, before finding excuses to pass" and my favorite, "Before you make your first bid, always plan a rebid." Sadly, sometimes I didn't know to whom to give attribution.

Happily, I now do know. Jerry has put together a compilation of his most popular columns and lectures illustrating his "ISMS" with great conciseness and clarity. The Best of ASK JERRY is 82 pages packed with expert advice on 60+ topics that we face daily playing bridge. He has a gift for reducing information to what you need to know so that it remains memorable.

I'm sure Jerry won't mind my sharing this example on NT openings.

Should I open INT with two doubletons?

Dear Jerry,

A friend of mine who has taken many bridge lessons tells me, "Never open 1NT with two doubletons."

Do you agree?

Steve

Dear Steve,

I try to avoid words like, "never" and "always" when discussing bridge. I prefer terms like "usually," "generally," "probably," "tends to be," etc. The JERRY-ISM: Plan a

second bid before you make the first" is appropriate for your question.

Holding ♠AQ, ♥AQ, ♦QJ75, ♣J9542, I cannot imagine opening anything other than 1NT. If you open 1♣, what is your plan after your partner responds 1♥ or 1♠?

2♦? The "reverse" suggests your values, but describes an unbalanced hand with strength in the two suits.

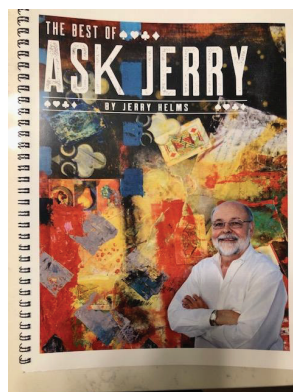
♣? This minimum rebid would understate your values and over-emphasize your club suit.

Another option would be to open 1♦, planning to rebid 2♣. This action distorts your shape and does not express your values. A good thing to remember is the best action available must often be selected from imperfect options. Do not let "rules" stop you from thinking. It is always best to:

JERRY-ISM: THINK AND THEN BID, RATHER THAN BID, AND THEN THINK!

Jerry

If you're looking for The Best of Ask Jerry or other Helms' books, go to www.jerryhelms.com



Career Highlights

by Bill Segraves

Continued from page 6

since those days in Stamford, but that clearly hasn't gotten in the way of success when they do.

Frances Schneider saw Goldman in Atlanta shortly after the game and described his reaction as characteristically modest. Indeed, Goldman credited his win to being in the right place at the right time when the opponents made errors. Those who have played with or against Jeff know how he turns this into a formula for consistent success: he doesn't make any errors of his own.

Few know Jeff better than Connecticut partner Brett Adler. "Jeff is a great friend and bridge partner, but I'd hate to play poker against him. Every time I put my hand down as dummy, I have no idea if Jeff is going down a lot or making with over tricks – he is incredibly focused on every hand. Jeff is also a great mentor for youth players and goes out of his way to foster juniors, playing with them or partnering with them as teammates when he gets the chance."

Indeed, Jeff was a regular in helping to make sure that the Yale Bridge Club kept going online during the challenging spring of 2020.

Connecticut congratulates its native son Jeff Goldman on his great year and his victory in Atlanta and looks forward to seeing him at the top of the results many more times in the years to come!



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Star Juniors Reese Koppel and Michael Xu May 2023

Bill Segraves interviews, the up-and-coming young stars



Bill: Thanks so much for joining us, Reese and Michael. It's great to see you. We have 2018 King of Bridge Reese, finishing his senior year at Yale, and Michael, a sophomore at Amherst...

Reese: And founder of the Youth Bridge Association.

Bill: Right, and renowned for his efforts in youth Bridge, including his great leadership of the Amherst team that brought eight members to our CBA Sectional in Orange last fall.

Michael and Reese are not strangers to each other either at or away from the table: they finished second playing together in the 2019 National Youth Pairs.

Let me start by asking you a little bit about yourselves and how you got started in bridge.

Michael: So, I started playing bridge when I went to a Silicon Valley Youth Bridge organization pizza party. I had never heard of bridge before, and nobody in my family played bridge, but my mom sent me to this event because she wanted me out of the house on a Sunday afternoon, and there was free pizza.

Reese: That's awesome, man, because mine was very similar. We didn't have free pizza, but we had awesome desserts at the (Louisiana) Bridge Center. I started playing online with my grandma and my great grandfather. From there I found the Bridge Center. Great food, great people, I felt very welcome. A lot of people would play with me. I just thought it was a captivating game and never looked back.

Michael: Yeah, I relate to what Reese said. When I first started playing bridge, there were a couple of young good adults who were just willing to play with me and mentor me; so, I felt really welcome at the club.

Reese: Absolutely. I'm very, very grateful for all that. And my home unit. I mean, they're the best.

Bill: Any specific people you want to give a shout out to?

Reese: Oh, so many people, personally. My first partner, Audrey Cerise. I played with John Onstott a bit (John Onstott passed away on June 28, a few weeks after this interview). It was pretty much everyone in the club, though. Honestly it was kind of waste-of-time playing with me. I knew so little. I'm also grateful to Doug de Montluzin and his late wife Jane. They were phenomenal, they were directors, and they would be sure everyone got a partner; so you would just show up and the director would play with you, which was great.

Bill: That's great. John Onstott's a big name, too.

Reese: John's an incredible player and a good mentor.

Bill: And how about you, Michael?

Michael: Yeah, for me, one of my first mentors was a man named Ron Karr. He unfortunately passed away recently. But he was one of my first mentors, and he would come play with me sometimes on Friday nights at like a youth event called Casual Fridays, which was like a weekly casual game with pizza for only 4 bucks. and he would sometimes just show up and play with us young kids. So yeah. Rest in peace, Ron. I really appreciated him for being one of my first mentors.

Bill: I'm sure he'd be very proud of you and delighted to know that that he lives on in the things that you do.

Funny small world side note: You got your start at the Palo Alto Bridge Center, right?

Michael: Yeah.

Bill: That's where I got my own start, too. It was in a different location, a couple of miles away. But what a funny coincidence.

So, tell me about what your most memorable experiences are? The things that particularly stand out so far in your bridge careers?

Reese: I'll take this one and start with it. Honestly, you touched on it. A lot of those youth events were super memorable because we didn't really have much of a structure at our home unit for junior bridge and there wasn't a ton of enthusiasm among kids in New Orleans for bridge. It was really exciting to go to youth bridge camps and to go to bridge tournaments. You're already pretty inclined to like any other kid who plays great. You think that's so cool. It was about 4 or 5 years after I started playing that I met the first kids that also played bridge. So. I think that the ACBL does that as well as how generous and inviting they are, and the efforts they put into promoting very casual, very informal youth Bridge. They even have an informal card group pairs to go along with the National youth stuff. Those are certainly emblazoned on my mind. It's iconic.

To read the complete interview, please go to <http://www.CTbridge.org>



Reese Koppel and Michael Xu at the 2019 National Youth Pairs

From the Clubs

BRANFORD BRIDGE CLUB

Congratulations to Margaret Macilvain, who passed the ACBL Club Director exam in November, and will join Don Brueggemann and Rick Seaburg in directing games in Branford.

Branford is growing, adding a Face-to-Face game on Thursday at the Branford Community House. There are now 3 Face-to-Face games in Branford - "open" games on Monday and Thursday, and a "299'er" game on Friday. Game time for all Branford games is 12:30 PM. There is always an extra player available in Branford, so everyone that comes will play!

BRIDGE FORUM

The Bridge Forum continues to run three online games each week, on Tuesday at 6:45 PM, Wednesday at 1:00 PM and Friday at 10:00 AM. Leaders for the first three quarters of 2023 are:

- 1 Kevin Hart-Jeff Horowitz 17 wins
- 2 Rita Brieger-Harold Miller 6 wins
- 3 Harold Miller-Bob Silverstein 6 wins
- 4 Lee Herdle-Mark Stasiewski 5 wins
- 5 Mark Blumenthal-John Farwell 5 wins
- 6 Mike Harfenist-Ken Steele 5 wins
- 7 Lin Li-Helen Benson 4 wins
- 8 Paul Proulx-Don Stiegler 3.5 wins
- 9 Bill Segraves-Jordan Winick 3 wins
- 10 Martin Arnold-Judy Palotta 3 wins

The Bridge Forum looks forward to continuing to bring face-to-face bridge back to the Greater New Haven area, beginning with another I/N Sectional

in early 2024 and with a return to regular face-to-face club games later in the year.

HARTFORD BRIDGE CLUB

In the 2½ years since reopening in June of 2021, the Hartford Bridge Club has seen a steady increase in attendance at all our in-house games. We currently offer live games every day of the week and online games via BBO four days a week. Our weekly menu of in-house games includes four open games; a Sunday Hi-Low game at which at least one member of each partnership must have fewer than 750 masterpoints; three limited-point games (0-1500, 0-750 and 0-100); two supervised novice games with a mini-lesson; and Swiss team games several times a year. The Sunday Hi-Low game is very popular with the mentors and mentees in the club's ongoing mentor program, while our newest players are always enthusiastic about the supervised novice and 0-100 games.

In addition to our regular weekly game schedule, HBC offered several special events and educational opportunities during the past year.

We ran two very successful I/N sectionals, one in March that drew 56 tables in one day of play and one in October that drew 36 tables.

Also in March, Bill Watson presented a well-received lesson on the Standard American Yellow Card to 28 grateful novice players.

In May, the West Hartford Fire Department provided club members with CPR and AED training in conjunction with HBC's purchase of a new AED (Advantage Emergency Device).

On June 20, HBC participated in the Alzheimer's Association's Longest Day event. The day featured three consecutive duplicate games (including an individual tournament that drew 52 players), raffles and other fundraising activities, raising more than \$12,000 for Alzheimer's treatment and research.

During July and August, 24 new players joined Laurie Robbins and Bill Watson for a series of Basic Bridge Classes. The classes, which consisted of five in-person lessons and four online lessons, also featured play-of-the-hand experiences using Shark Bridge.

Biweekly throughout the year, Dan Finn concludes our Friday afternoon 0-750 games with expert analysis of the day's most interesting hands as well as a Q&A with the game's participants.

Sadly, in July, John Willoughby, president of HBC's board of trustees, died suddenly. On August 5th, more than 150 members of John's immediate family, friends, and bridge family came together at the club to honor John's contributions to the club and his love of the game of bridge. The club received more than \$5000.00 in donations in John's memory, including a very generous donation of \$1500.00 from the Willoughby family. Some of those funds will go toward expanding our growing library of bridge books, particularly those geared to new players, who were John's priority during his tenure as president.

For further details about our past events or for information about our plans for bridge and educational events during 2024, please visit our website at www.hartfordbridgeclub.org or call us at 860-953-3177.



NEWTOWN BRIDGE CLUB

Newtown Bridge Club has three weekly in-person games: Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 12:30. Mondays and Wednesdays, we have both Open and 299er games, and Tuesdays, we have Open, 499er and 49er/Newcomer games. Newtown [CT] virtual club games on BBO are Friday through Sunday mornings, with our 749er game at 10:00 and Open at 10:05.

New and advancing players are welcome at Newtown Bridge Club with limited games every day as well as other opportunities to play and learn. Our 49er/Newcomer Reception on May 30th was attended by 34 enthusiastic players and kicked off our weekly Tuesday afternoon 49er/Newcomer game. Prior to each of our three in-person games, our free 30-minute Lunch & Learn lessons offer pre-game tips before the games at 12:30. Chat Bridge on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 is supervised play for those who want to ask questions during bidding and play. Our mentor program provides 1-on-1 learning for players with 5-200 masterpoints. An eight-week class for true beginners on Saturday mornings began on September 30, and a five week "2-over-1 Game Force" class ended on October 17. More classes will be offered this winter.

Our 7th annual Longest Day event was held in June. Our in-person games (morning, afternoon and evening) on Tuesday, June 20, had 45 tables of Open, 499er and 49er/Newcomer players. A yummy potluck lunch, dinner provided by local restaurants, and live jazz music during the dinner hour added to our festivities. Our

BBO games on Saturday, June 24, and Sunday, June 25, had an additional 36 tables of Open and 499er players. Many generous players and their families and friends helped us donate over \$16,000 this year, bringing our total to over \$60,000 for the Alzheimer's Association. Thank you so much to all who supported this worthy cause.

Newtown Bridge club hosted a seminar by Michael Berkowitz on Wednesday, September 13. Michael's two topics included both a lesson and practice hands. After his morning session, "Declarer - Don't Grab", lunch was served and then he presented "8 Tips for Defense". Michael was an excellent presenter and his seminar was enthusiastically received by the attendees.

Our club also hosted an Intermediate/Newcomer Sectional Tournament for 499ers/Non-Life Master players, with a separate section for 49er/Newcomers on Friday, September 29. Despite the torrential rain and flooding, we had a great turnout and the players, including several from New York, enjoyed this opportunity to earn silver points at our local tournament. In October, we held three days of Swiss Team games and many were excited to earn their first gold masterpoints.

Up-to-date information about games and lessons can be found on the club's website www.newtownbridge.org.

Photos on the next page

THE COUNTRY CLUB OF DARIEN

A. Joan Bergen and Meredith Dunne

B. Barb Foley and Deb Suckow

C. John Wolcott and George Gilliam

SALISBURY DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

We are coming up on the last month of another successful year of bridge in the Northwest Corner. Not many bridge clubs can say that their players hail from 3 States! In the 19 weeks from mid-May until mid-September, we hosted 257 Tables - an average of 13.5 tables per game! That's over 1000 players! Thank you not only to the snowbirds of summer, but to our hearty year-round "bridgees" who keep our club humming all year long.

Starting next week, and continuing through March, we will be adding a Thursday afternoon session to our regular Monday schedule. There will be no game on Monday, December 25th of course. However, we will be ringing in the New Year on January 1st. Rumor has it that we will enjoy wine and cheese to welcome in 2024!

Our club is fortunate to be able to utilize the parish hall of the Salisbury Congregational Church located at 30 Main Street in Salisbury, CT. Our maximum capacity is 18 tables. All our games are Open rated stratified to account for all skill levels and use hands from The Common Game with results sent to players via Live for Clubs.

If your travels take you to the beautiful Berkshires or Litchfield County, we

From the Clubs ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣

11

would love to have you join us for any of our afternoon games, beginning at 12:30. We only ask that you send us an email SalisburyBridge@gmail.com at least a couple of hours before game time. We always remind our players that for our bridge game - the most important word is "game"! We love to give our folks a spirited 3 1/4 Hours of entertainment and hospitality.



Wayne Lubin watches Leo Ditkoff cut into his 100th birthday cake in Newtown



Michael Berkowitz at sell-out seminar in Newtown

TOKEKENE CLUB

Tokeneke Club Summer Session

1. Susan Mayo and Tom Hunter
2. Joan Bergen and Meredith Dunne
3. Stacey Weiss and Robin Saunders
4. Nancy Matthews and Carol Taylor

WEE BURN COUNTRY CLUB

Wee Burn Summer Session

1. Janet Soskin and Susan Mayo
2. Lynn Reilly and Joan Bergen
3. Meredith Dunne and Susan Kipp
4. Mary Richardson and Betty Hodgman

Wee Burn Fall Session

1. Meredith Dunne and Joan Bergen
2. Belinda Metzger and Barbara Johnson
3. Kim Nightingale and Deb Brennan
4. Janet Soskin and Susan Kipp



"TRUST ME, JOHN! JUST BECAUSE YOUR BRIDGE PARTNER DUMPS YOU... DOESN'T MEAN I WILL!"

FAREWELLS

With 2023 coming to a close, we take a bittersweet moment to say some farewells.

After more than 6 years as Editor of *The Kibitzer*, Robin Sanders will be stepping down from the helm. For many of us, Robin has become synonymous with *The Kibitzer* during this time. In an era when Unit newsletters have too often become a casualty of Covid or the modern world more generally, Robin has prodded authors and clubs, gathered data and pulled everything together into beautifully laid out issues that celebrate the endurance of *The Kibitzer*. Hers are big shoes to fill, but we are encouraged to know that Robin will not be a stranger and that she will be ready to help those who follow her in maintaining this fine tradition.

To put the dawn of Debbie Noack's service as Secretary of the CBA into perspective, consider an era when people didn't have smartphones. There are no online issues of *The Kibitzer* that don't list Debbie as Secretary. In a world with too few constants, Debbie's tireless 20+ year service to the CBA has been one of them. Debbie has kept us on track, relying on the minutes to make sure we were moving in the right direction, and even when she wasn't playing, we could count on her bringing her pleasant, helpful and friendly manner to our board meetings to make sure all was in order.

We are all enormously grateful for Robin's and Debbie's service to the CBA. We look forward to every opportunity to see them at the table and we wish them the very best in all their future endeavors.

Peter Marcus, President
Frances Schneider, Past President



Robin Sanders and Debbie Noack

REMEMBERING LARRY BAUSER

by Steve Becker



One of New England's top players, Larry Bausher of West Haven, passed away in late September after acquiring a sudden and mysterious neurological illness two months earlier. Larry was my regular partner for nearly 20 years, during which time we had many successes, which included representing New England in two NAOP events and one GNT. We also won the Super Senior pairs at the Denver NABC in 2015.

Those who knew him will acknowledge that Larry never said a harsh word to anyone, be it an opponent or his own partner. He was quiet and meditative at all times, and loved solving challenging puzzles of any kind, Sudoku and KenKen in particular. When playing bridge, each hand was a new puzzle to him, and if he failed to find the winning solution when he should have, he was very disappointed in himself.

Larry started playing bridge in college. He became more serious about the game while he was attending grad school at UCLA. It was not unusual for top notch players like Paul Soloway and Eddie Kantar to show up at the local bridge club. Playing against such tough competition challenged Larry to improve his skill at the table. When he moved to Connecticut in the early 1970's, he quickly found new bridge partners and became a "regular" at local games and tournaments. His first Regional win was in a Swiss team event at a tournament in Long Island in 1973.

Larry was also an avid birder and never missed an opportunity to look for new birds to photograph and add to his life list. Last January he reached his "bucket list" goal of 1,000 when he traveled to Costa Rica and saw enough new species to add to his list. However, according to his wife Phyllis, when he was in his final days, it was bridge, and not birds, that was on his mind, as he talked often about past bridge hands that defied finding the right bid or correct line of play.



From Left: Rich DeMartino, Geoff Brod,
Larry Bausher, Steve Becker
The win from Larry's last Tournament, April in Orange.

Achievements

MILESTONES FROM JANUARY 2023 - DECEMBER 2023

LIFE MASTER¹

John Desrochers • Wayne De Vries
Elizabeth Dwyer • Doug Eitelman
Allen Kasden • Sharon Kochen
Daniel Koeph • Riva Lewinter
Avery Silverstein • Laura Twersky
Deborah Walsh • Deborah Weill
Mrs. B.S. Willard

**300 MPs for players who joined ACBL prior to 1/1/2010; 500 MPs for all others.*

BRONZE LIFE MASTER² (750 MP)

Meredith Colket III • Elizabeth Dwyer
Doug Eitelman • Eric Frieden
Jason Grove • Allen Kasden
Jackie Kingston • Bernhard Kohn Jr.
Nancy Ramseyer • Nancy Rapoport
Patty Read • George Smedes
Laura Twersky • John Willoughby

***500 MPs for players who joined ACBL prior to 1/1/2010; 750 MPs for all others.*

SILVER LIFE MASTER (1,000 MP)

Carol Amaio • Haroula Dobyns
Elizabeth Grant • Peggy Laurencelle
Lori Leopold • Cindy Lyall
Mayank Mehta • Harold Miller
Jan Rosow • William Segraves
Carla Sharp • Kenneth Steele
Meredith Stravato • Lisette Voorhees
David Wright

RUBY LIFE MASTER (1,500 MP)

Helen Bensen • Hollis Berry
Jonathan Clark • Meredith Dunne
Robert Huntington • Kenneth Leopold
Caroline Molyneux • William Segraves
Roberta Smith • Roz Sternberg
Stacy Weiss

GOLD LIFE MASTER (2,500 MP)

Marie Abate • Daniel Finn

Thomas Gerchman • K. Hart
Mike Heider • Lawrence Lowell
Robert Rising

SAPPHIRE LIFE MASTER (3,500 MP)

Daniel Wilderman

DIAMOND LIFE MASTER (5,000 MP)

Jill Fouad • Jeff Goldman
Robert Hughes

IN MEMORIAM

Larry Bausher • Joan L. Brod
Phyllis C. Bronson • Janice Dean
Jean S. Donahue • Penelope M.
Glassmeyer • Vesna Hauptfeld
Karen Hoffman • Joseph J. Hurley
Margaret Mason • Dick Melson
Carl E. Palmer • Marvin Rosenblatt
Mark. A Rubenstein • Eddie Schatz

THE KIBITZER

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

All comments, news, items related to the bridge world and of interest to our readers are welcome. Please send all items for the next *Kibitzer* by **MARCH 1, 2024**.

EDITOR:

Robin Sanders
(203) 832-8707
kibitzereditor@ctbridge.org

**You can see The Kibitzer
in blazing color
at the CT bridge site:**

<http://www.ctbridge.org>

**If you would like to receive
The Kibitzer via email, let us
know. Email Robin Sanders
at robin_sanders@verizon.net**

Your CBA Board

Peter Marcus	President	(860) 558-7698	president@ctbridge.org
Bill Segraves	Vice President		vicepresident@ctbridge.org
Phyllis Hartford	Secretary		secretary@ctbridge.org
Cindy Lyall	Treasurer	(203) 249-2046	treasurer@ctbridge.org
Frances Schneider	Past President	(203) 542-0719	pastpresident@ctbridge.org
Kenneth Steele	Board of Directors – Central	(203) 271-3083	central@ctbridge.org
Mike Wavada	Board of Directors – Eastern		eastern@ctbridge.org
Linda Green	Board of Directors – Fairfield	(203) 292-7446	fairfield@ctbridge.org
John Lloyd	Board of Directors – Hartford		hartford@ctbridge.org
Sally Kirtley	Board of Directors – Northwest		northwest@ctbridge.org
Sandy DeMartino	Board of Directors – Panhandle	(203) 637-2781	panhandle@ctbridge.org
Paul Proulx	Board of Directors – Southern		rogerc51@icloud.com
Renee Clift	Board of Directors – Southwest	(203) 543-6215	southwest@ctbridge.org
Donna Feir	Board of Directors – At Large	(860) 508-3263	bod-a1@ctbridge.org
Debbie Prince	Board of Directors – At Large	(860) 604-1424	bod-a2@ctbridge.org
TBA	Board of Directors – At Large		bod-a3@ctbridge.org
TBA	Board of Directors – At Large		bod-a4@ctbridge.org
Robin Sanders	Kibitzer Editor	(203) 832-8707	kibitzereditor@ctbridge.org
TBA	Tournament Coordinator	(914) 772-6535	tourncoord@ctbridge.org
Debbie Benner	List Manager	(203) 259-3665	list@ctbridge.org
Don Stiegler	Unit Coordinator/STaC Chair	(203) 929-6595	coordinator@ctbridge.org
Bill Segraves and Jack Boge	Webmaster		webmaster@ctbridge.org