

Kibitzer

A publication of the Chicago Contract Bridge Association August/September 2020

Ralph Katz Opens Up About Journey To The ACBL Hall Of Fame

From the beginning, it was evident that 16-year-old Ralph Katz was not going to be an ordinary bridge player.

Just a few weeks after he and his cousins were introduced to the game by his Uncle

Lou during a rainy summer day, he convinced his uncle to take him to a tournament.

"We had played a few nights of rubber bridge. I had no idea about signals on defense. He led a king vs. a suit, and the dummy had QXX. I played high with a doubleton to get a ruff. It's nothing special, but he was impressed I did that without knowing you can even signal on defense," said Ralph, who is now a member of the ACBL Hall of Fame.

He went on to win his first national tournament at age 22 in Las Vegas.

Three years later he won the coveted Spingold. Since then he's gone on to win two more Spin-



golds, five Vanderbilts, and 16 other North American Championships, as well as the Open Team Trials seven times. He has an ACBL Player of the Year win to his credit, which is given to the player who wins the most platinum points in a year, and he has a total of approximately 27,000 masterpoints. He is a World Grand Master and an ACBL Grand Life Master.

He has a number of international wins including the Bermuda Bowl, and was a runner-up in the Rosenblum Cup and the World Open Pairs Championship. (He took a second in the Bermuda Bowl and won a bronze medal from the 2000 World Bridge Teams Olympiad with local player George Jacobs.) That's just a few of his many wins.

Ralph, however, may have never become a bridge champion if he had not blown out his knee, suffered several concussions, and experienced several broken bones while playing sports as a youth.

"I was attending college at Ohio University, and I was planning to transfer to Kent State to play baseball. My parents did not want me to do that because of my previous injuries. They said that if I gave up baseball, they would approve of my playing more bridge," Ralph said.

He eventually transferred to the University of Steubenville in Ohio, not far from his home, and earned a degree in accounting.

When asked how to become a good bridge player, he said that conventions are not very important. He gave three steps to improving. "First, learning to count out the oppo-



Katz, left, at a major tournament. At the table, clockwise, Steve Robinson, partner Nick Nickell, and Peter Boyd, all ACBL Hall of Famers.

nents shapes and high card points are extremely important. Then processing that information is a must.

"By reading books from authors like Lawrence and Kantar, players can learn how to process that information."

"And by learning from your mistakes and not getting upset when making them. Getting upset probably will cause you to make more mistakes."

Ralph prepares for tournaments, which can be long and tiring, not by playing a lot of bridge, but by reading, doing focus exercises, and playing some games online. An NABC team event, for example, lasts six days and 360 boards, if one gets to the finals. The NABCs are 10 days and The World Championships are 14 days. Ralph said it is adrenaline that keeps him from getting tired during tournaments. "Each hand is different and fascinating."

"Not playing affects table presence, so I'll probably play 10-15 hands with my team prior to a tournament. Getting ready for tournaments is a lifetime of work."

(Continued on page 4)



Ralph, wife Martha, and Maz



ACBL Important Message

2020 Tournaments canceled

Dear ACBL Members,

Due to the ongoing risk posed by the coronavirus, the ACBL is **canceled the 2020 Fall North American Bridge Championships**, scheduled for November 26-December 6, 2020, in Tampa FL.

With this same concern, **ACBL will not staff any sectionals or regionals with tournament directors for the remainder of 2020.** This removes any possibility for face-to-face tournaments awarding ACBL masterpoints® during the balance of the year.

It is the right thing to do. The safety of our members – the community most at risk for COVID-19 – and our employees is of paramount importance to us. At this time, we cannot ask players or staff to travel and risk exposure.

ACBL management and the Board of Directors found this a difficult decision to make. However, the facts are clear, and we must act based on the well-being of our membership and our staff.

We will continue to offer chances to play and win black, silver, red and gold masterpoints on [Bridge Base Online](https://www.bridgebase.com). Details of ongoing and special events along with Virtual Clubs can be found at [acbl.org/virtual](https://www.acbl.org/virtual).

Sincerely,

Joseph Jones
ACBL Executive Director
June 18, 2020



Joseph Jones
ACBL Executive Director



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Opinions of columnists are their own and may not represent those of the CCBA. For more information, go to www.bridgeinchicago.com or call the CCBA at 630-235-4718.



WANTED!

LOOKING FOR

Nominations to CCBA Board and Prestigious Awards

The CCBA Board of Directors want your nominations for a seat on the board and for Unit 13's prestigious awards. If you know someone (perhaps yourself) who would make a great addition to the CCBA Board of Directors, now is the time to nominate that person. To be eligible, you must be a member of the ACBL and a member in District 13.

Five people will be elected to three-year terms on the 15-member board at the CCBA Annual Meeting in January. Each year one-third of the terms expire. This year the terms of Tom Dressing, Mark Friedlander, Loring Knoblauch, Phil McPeck and Joe Stokes expire.

Also, the Board is soliciting nominations for two important awards, the Harmon Wilkes (CCBA's highest honor) and the Art and Greg Gran Sportsmanship.

Submissions should make the case for the nominee's suitability for the two awards based on the following criteria:

- ♦ Abides by the rules of the game,
- ♦ Always plays fair and with integrity,
- ♦ Respects the other players' efforts,
- ♦ Is never demeaning or quarrelsome,
- ♦ Offers encouragement to his/her partner and teammates,
- ♦ Accepts the judgment calls of the directors, and
- ♦ Is consistently pleasant and gracious in victory and in defeat.

In addition to those criteria, the Harmon Wilkes Award winner exemplifies the following qualities:

- ♦ Has contributed to the preservation and development of duplicate bridge and to the maintenance of its good reputation,
- ♦ Competes at a high level,
- ♦ Has in-depth knowledge of bridge, and
- ♦ Is gracious in sharing his/her expertise with less experienced players.

Nominations for the awards and for board membership are due by September 30, and must be in writing (e-mail is okay) to Genny Cesario, nominating committee chair, at gennycesario@hotmail.com or 386 Addison Avenue, Elmhurst, IL 60126.



Last year's Harmon Wilkes Award winner Eldad "Gino" Ginossar with his son at the CCBA Annual Meeting.

Nickell Team uses BBO to practice for USBF Invitational Tournament

The Nickell Team (Ralph Katz, Nick Nickell, Bobby Levin and Steve Weinstein, Eric Rodwell and Jeff Meckstroth, and team coach Eric Kokish) frequently uses the BBO online platform to practice for serious team events.

Here is a recent hand from the Pre-Bulletin of the United States Bridge Federation Invitational I Tournament, where Ralph and his regular partner, Nick Nickell, were practicing against Bobby Levin and team coach Eric Kokish. It was a one-table IMP Pairs Event.

On this board, of the 16 pairs in play, only Levin and Kokish bid the slam. Levin's 4♥ bid was alerted and explained as a slam try. Loaded with second round controls and a great trump holding, Eric jumped to slam.

Nickell led the ♥J. Levin won in dummy. He played a club to the ace and king and cashed the ♥A, discarding a spade from Kokish's hand. A spade followed, won by Nickell with the ace. The ♥10 gave Levin a ruff and sluff. Levin ruffed in dummy and discarded a low spade. Levin led the ♣5. He was at the crossroads. He ruffed with the ♦J. This play failed because dia-

Bridge Base Online						
IMP Pairs						
Table	Results	By	NS Score	EW Score	NS IMPs	EW IMPs
6	3♠-1	W	100		0.3	
7	4♥=	W		620		5.3
8	5♦x=	S	550		11.7	
9	4♠+1	E		650		6.3
10	1NT=	E		90	3.3	
11	3NT-2	E	100		5.1	
12	3♠=	S	140		5.1	
13	2♠=	W		110		3.4
14	4♥x-1	E	100		6.1	
15	4♠=	N	620		4.9	
16	6♦-1	W	100		9.0	
17	4♠-1	E	50		1.5	

nickell ♠ A ♥ J10965 ♦ 10872 ♣ 1076	levin ♠ J6543 ♥ A7 ♦ AJ96 ♣ AK	EOK ♠ K2 ♥ K ♦ KQ543 ♣ 98532
ralphk ♠ Q10987 ♥ Q8432 ♦ ♣ QJ4		

levin	nickell	EOK	ralphk
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	6♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

monds are 4-0. A chance that occurs 9.6 percent of the time.

(Note that it can also fail when clubs break 4-2 and one opponent holds Txx in the trump suit.)

Levin's play was reasonable. Unlucky for him, the clubs were 3-3 and trumps were 4-0.

Kokish, affectionately referred to as "Koach", proved a challenging opponent for Ralph and Nick, and a fun night was had by all! Anyone wishing to kibitz online practices need only go to BBO, look for "ralphk" and tune in on the action!

(Submitted by Suzi Subeck)

Must Be "Friend of Game" To Play in Virtual Club Games

To play in a virtual club game, you must be a "friend of the game", meaning you had previously played in that club.



To attend a virtual club game, start at the main menu, select "virtual clubs", then "ACBL Virtual Clubs", and then search for your club's name. You should then be able to see the sessions that your club offers.

It costs Bridge Bucks (BB) to play in these games. BB can be purchased with your credit card at the exchange rate of one BB per \$1.

It is suggested that you do not use Apple Pay, as there is a 30 percent uplift charge, making the exchange rate one BB per \$1.30.

Katz 's Journey to ACBL's Hall of Fame

(Continued from page 1)

The amount of anxiety he feels depends upon the type and magnitude of the tournament. "There's some anxiety, but it's not while playing. It is before it starts and sometimes after the session," Ralph said.

"Winning is a great feeling in a major tournament. If you are leading by a lot in the finals, the adrenaline is already down, but it is still a great feeling."

Ralph attributes his success to a lot of people, including his family. "It's a group effort." His wife, Martha, is a former World Junior Teams champion, and she and their son, Sam, are former winners of the ACBL King or Queen of Bridge Award. The bridge pro and his wife live in Burr Ridge, where Ralph, a trader, said he has no plans to retire from bridge or from running his biotech fund.



With son Sam and wife Martha

Ralph's thoughts on the future of bridge are that the game will come back after the pandemic, online bridge will be stronger than before, and

there may be fewer regionals because it is expensive to travel.

He believes recruiting should target the 40- and 50-year-old age group. "Often those younger than 40 are busy with careers and raising families."

"Bridge is a terrific game because it can be played at different levels, it gets people out of their shells, and it is a great way to make friends. The bridge community is made up of a lot of good people," he said.

Schuetts stress importance of context in bridge, 2 quizzes



By Ginny and Jeff Schuett

2 NO TRUMP BIDS

Oh no! My partner bid 2NT again. What does she mean this time?

Do you have trouble with this bid?

It comes up often and probably should come up more often except you are not sure how your partner will interpret it.

You, of course, always get it right. Before the panic sets in, check the position of your partner's bid - which chair, passed hand or not, opening side or opposition side, etc.

Opener's 2NT Bid

Opening 2NT = 20-21

Opening two clubs and rebidding 2NT = 22-24

Opening one of a suit and after responder bids on the ONE level, the opener, your partner, jumps to 2NT = 18-19

Opening one of a suit and after responder bids on the TWO level, the opener, your partner, rebids 2NT = 12-14 (If playing 2/1 could even be 18-19. Since you made 2/1 this 2NT will never be passed and opener can bid on with the bigger hand.)

Responder's 2NT Bid

Opening one of a minor and responder bids 2NT=11-12

Opening one of a suit, responder bids one of a suit, opener rebids 1NT and responder rebids 2NT = 11-12

Opening one of a suit, responder bids one of a suit, opener rebids her suit and responder bids 2NT = 11-12

A Little Quiz: How many points does the NT bid show:

1. 1H P 1S P
2NT = ?
2. 1C P 2NT = ?
3. 1D P 1H P
2C P 2NT = ?
4. 1S P 2H P
2NT = ?

5. 1H P 1S P
2H P 2NT = ?

Answers: 1.18-19 2.11-12 3.11-12
4.12-14 5.11-12

COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Opening one of a suit, opponent bids one or two of a suit, and responder bids 2NT or jumps to 2NT = 11-12 (with stopper(s) in opponent's suit)

Opening one of a suit, responder bids one of a suit, and the next opponent bids a suit on the one or two level, opener passes, next opponent passes, and now responder rebids 2NT = 11-12 (with stopper(s) in opponent's suit)

Opening one of a suit, and opponent overcalls one of a suit, and you pass, and the next opponent passes. Opener, your partner, rebids 1NT = 18-19. No need to jump to 2NT if your partner may have no points.

Opening one of a suit Pass Pass and balancing chair bids one of a suit. Opener, your partner, rebids 1NT = 18-19. No need to jump to 2NT if your partner has fewer than six points. Sound familiar?

Opponent opens one of a suit and your partner overcalls 1NT = 15-18. If the responder passes, all systems you play are on.

Opponent opens a weak two and your partner overcalls 2NT = 15-18. If the responder passes, all systems you play are on. Notice the similarity!

Opponent opens one of a suit followed by two passes and now your partner jumps to 2NT = 19-21 with stopper(s) in opponent's suit.



Opponent opens a suit on the one level and your partner jump overcalls 2NT = the unusual 2NT showing weakness (5-9 high card points) and the two lowest unbid suits.

Note: All NT bids show stopper(s) in the opponent's suit(s).

A Little Quiz: How many points does the NT bid show:

1. 1H (1S) 2NT = ?
2. (1D) 2NT = ?
3. 1S (2H) 2NT = ?
4. 1C (1H) 1NT (P)
2NT = ?
5. 1H (P) 1S (2C)
2NT = ?

Answers: 1.11-12 2.Unusual 2NT 3.11-12 4.18-19 5.18-19



Bridge players reveal what they have been doing during the pandemic

Steve McConnell

The pandemic hit me early on and I found myself positive for the virus.

Luckily, it was more like a strange flu with a lot of congestion. It took about a week before I started feeling better, but I

was quarantined for a few weeks. During the quarantine, I was fortunate because a friend brought me groceries, and I had zoom calls each week with friends and family. Bridge took a backseat for a while. That said, a good friend of mine was also home, and as you can see, he had quite the scrabble game. Unfortunately, I was unable to join them. (See photo below.)



Mark Friedlander

I have been using the pandemic time to get healthy. I started a program of diet and exercise and have lost nearly 40 pounds. To my wife's chagrin, when people comment on my weight loss, I tell them that my wife hasn't fed me for three months.



Linda Sweig

Linda Sweig, of Evanston, and long a familiar face among players at Chicago Duplicate, Lawson Bridge, and Ace of Clubs, is finding the online network---in particular Bridge Base---a haven for building both long-lasting bridge and personal friendships. Her simple techniques of "choosing friendly and compatible partners," "sometimes starting a chat about things we have in common and then ask-

ing if they would like to play again" has worked well. "I have been fortunate in making new friends--20 like Tim In California, Jerry in Ireland, Peter in Poland and Hison in Egypt, and lots more."

"Of course, I get to play with many friends at the Chicago clubs," acknowledged Linda, who has 1,300 MPs and plays online three times a day. But staying home playing late at night or early in the morning has hardly been a distraction from her many other interests, including producing mosaic art in her kitchen/studio. An avid reader, she participates in a Zoom-based book club, and plays online both three-dimensional Scrabble and Upwards. She also cares for two birds, Abbie and Buddy, "which keep me company."

"Since I have asthma, I am very cautious and rarely go outside of my condo except to walk out on my balcony," says Linda. "I recently got a face shield which I really like and makes it much easier to breathe than with a mask."

Many Chicago bridge players who know Linda have fond memories of her late husband, Mitch, an expert player who died of Parkinson's in 2019. "My first date with Mitch was a dinner and duplicate bridge. We played duplicate for two years and got married anyway."

(Written by Jamie Rubenstein)



Julie McCutcheon



I have been playing bridge online with friends and with the robots. In addition, I've been supporting a local club. Also, I've also been gardening, golfing, and walking 3 1/2 to 7 miles per day. As a result, I have lost 10 pounds.



Joe Connelly

I am finally a Silver Life Master. Just about half of my masterpoints are online points. That seems like a lot but I had two good reasons to play bridge online. I cared for my mother from June 2008 and until she passed away in December 2014 at age 90. She would



get up very late in the morning, so I would play bridge on OKB. I earned around 460 masterpoints and met my black point requirement. I became a Bronze Life Master in June 2015, having over 750 masterpoints.

I have run my own bridge club in Mundelein IL since December 2015, and have not played a lot of bridge in the last four years. However, I needed only black points to become a Silver Life Master, so I started playing bridge again, this time on BBO. And in late April 2020, I became a Silver Life Master after earning over 20 masterpoints on BBO.

You know they say, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade!



Loring Knoblauch

I am taking the opportunity to have a knee replacement, so now I have two reasons not to go out. I am playing a lot of bridge online at Virtual Clubs BBO so I can support my local bridge club!



Sharon Trube



The lockdown has allowed me to pursue my creative talents and I've had time to work in multiple media. When the weather warmed up, I spent my time

creating my small spaces patio garden. It's actually been nice to have more time to do the things I like to do.



Continued on page 9

Here's a chance to see how the pros bid challenging hands

Here is an interesting hand from the Pre-Bulletin of the United States Bridge Federation Invitational I Tournament.

Bumportant-Rodwell-West
Jjmeck-Meckstroth-East
Zanna9-North
Septiembre-Madala-South

Naninga=Lucena
Luchi200=Rizzo
Fnickell=Nickell
Ralphk=Katz

Meckstroth and Rodwell did well to bid the cold 6H slam after Madala opened extremely light in third seat. Rodwell likely smelled a rat since he was looking at 22 high card points and five diamonds.

When Meckstroth came in freely with 2S response to the takeout double, it was even more likely that Madala had stretched to open.

Madala, on lead against East, led the DK. Meckstroth won with the ace, played the ace and queen of spades and ruffed a diamond to his hand. He cashed the SK, shedding the CT from dummy. He crossed to the CA and cross ruffed for 13 tricks, +1010.

At the other table, Katz passed in third seat, Rizzo opened 2NT on his 22 high card points. Lucenia bid puppet Stayman

Bridge Movie

#4393 Teams NICKELL VS MIKADINHO

MIKADINHO: 25 IMPs

NICKELL: 19 IMPs

Other Table

Host: sassolino8

Event type: Teams

Scoring: IMP Pairs (Cross IMPs)

	Table	Results	By	NS Score	EW Score	NS IMPs	EW IMPs
1	4♥+1	S	450			—	—
2	3NT+1	E		430		—	—
3	4♠+2	N	480			1	
4	7♠=	N	2210			—	—
5	6♥+1	E		1010			11
6	4♠+2	W		680		—	—
7	1NT-2	N		200			7
8	2♠-3	E	150			2	
9	1♦=	N	70			3	
10	3NT-1	W	100				7
11	2♥=	S	110				1
12	4♠=	S	620			—	—
13	4♠x-3	W	800			12	
14	3NT+1	N	430			—	—
15	3NT-2	E	100			—	—
16	4♠+1	E		650		—	—

5

Zanna9

♠ 763

♥ 92

♦ 54

♣ KQ9753

bumportant

♠ AQ

♥ AKJ7

♦ A8732

♣ A10

jjmeck

♠ K10942

♥ Q1053

♦ 6

♣ 862

septiembre

♠ J85

♥ 864

♦ KQJ109

♣ J4

NS: 0

EW: 0

	bumport	Zanna9	jjmeck	septiem
		Pass	Pass	1♦
Dbl		2♣	2♠	Pass
2NT		Pass	3♥	Pass
4♣		Pass	4♦	Pass

Send

Clear

Open

Save

Next

Prev

Help

and Rizzo showed at least one four-card major. Lucena showed 5S and 4H with his 3S bid. Rizzo's 4C cue was doubled by Nickell and Lucena's 4D cue was doubled by Katz. Rizzo bid 4H and Lucena happily passed on his five count.

Nickell, on lead against West, led the D5. Rizzo won, pulled two

naninga	fnickell	luchi200	ralphk
	Pass	Pass	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Dbl	4♦	Dbl
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

rounds of trump and cashed the ace and queen of spades. He pulled trump. He claimed 12 tricks for +480. 11 IMPs go to Nickell.

Light third seat openers have become so commonplace their effectiveness has diminished. It is still intriguing when opening ahead of the "big" hand results in the opponents bidding slam, and passing ahead of the "big" hand results in the opponents bidding game.

Nickell and Katz's doubles of the cue bids put just enough doubt in the opponents' minds to keep them out of slam.

(Submitted by Suzi Subeck)



Master defending skills and your results will skyrocket



*Winning
with Wimpy*

In these days of quarantine, it's easy to forget the basics. This information is from a column several years ago, but it's a lesson that most need to review.

I've been spending quite a bit of time recently playing online against a wide variety of skill levels. The number of tricks dropped on defense is staggering.

While occasionally, the winning line may be a complete guess, far more often the information you need will be right in front of you. Master the simple skills outlined in these few paragraphs, and your results will skyrocket.



When you are defending a suit contract – do not attempt to cash tricks in suits that cannot disappear!

This is often true in notrump contracts as well, but it's especially important against suits.

Of all of the easily correctable errors I see, this is one of those things that lesser experienced players seem to get wrong over and over again.

Defending accurately is difficult. To be a good defender, you have to know what declarer's plan is going to be before he even starts it. On top of that, you need to recognize whether or not a particular hand needs

to be defended aggressively or passively. How can you know?

Most of the time, the answer will be staring you in the face. Look at the dummy. It usually will provide the necessary clues. Let's look at a couple of simple examples. Suppose the auction goes:

West	North	East	South
2S	pass	3S	all pass

and partner leads a low diamond. How do you defend differently if you hold hand (A) or hand (B)?

(A)

(Dummy)
♠ A J 5
♥ Q 7 4
♦ 7 6
♣ A Q T 8 5

(You)
♠ 9 6
♥ K T 6
♦ A J 9 5
♣ K J 9 3



(B)

(Dummy)
♠ A J 5
♥ Q 7 4
♦ 7 6
♣ A Q T 8 5

(You)
♠ 9 6
♥ K T 6
♦ A J 9 5
♣ 9 6 4 3



You win the Ace of Diamonds and now have to decide how to continue. With hand (A), there is no rush to do anything. You have the club suit under control, and you shouldn't take a chance of developing anything for declarer.

Return a trump. Declarer will ruff a diamond if he can, but you shouldn't break the heart suit unless you are forced to do so. In other words, nothing is going away, so defend passively.

With hand (B) however, changing two cards changes the defense dramatically.

You don't know who has the King of Clubs, and even if partner has it, it can be

finessed. An alarm should be ringing in your head that tricks are going to vanish if you don't take them.

It's time to defend aggressively. Switch to the 6 of hearts. Partner rates to hold the Ace, and if you're lucky, he will return the Jack.

If he returns a different heart, take your King, and try to cash one more diamond before all defensive tricks disappear on the club suit. When the dummy (or the auction) suggests that there is a secondary source of tricks for declarer, the defense must attempt to cash or develop their side suit winners as quickly as possible.

This principle arises often under many disguises. Suppose you are defending a heart contract, declarer is known to be out of, say, diamonds, and dummy has been exhausted of trumps. You have the choice of leading the Ace of Clubs, or a diamond.

Following our guidelines, it's clear to continue leading diamonds. If declarer has any clubs, they're not going anywhere. You can win it later. Furthermore, you don't risk establishing a possible King of Clubs in declarer's hand.

When defending, always stop to ask yourself before you lead a card: "Do I need to cash this card now, or can it wait?"

"If declarer has any of these, can he pitch it somewhere? Is there a danger of something going away?"

If the answer to all of these questions is "no", play safely and passively.

Go to www.wimpy.biz/bridge for practical tips on bidding, play, and defense.

NOTE: Jim will be directing the Naper-Chicago game at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesdays.

ONE CAN NEVER PLAY



TOO MUCH BRIDGE

Congratulations Rank Advancers

Junior Master

Sheryl Bauer
Gregory Benesh
Barbara Bowman
Derek Briggs
Paul Cantwell
Karen Ciciora
William Ciciora
Marcia Desmond
David Gookin
Evelyn Howe
Stephanie Kiefer
Sue Ladley
Lenette Hertz Ortega
Debra Overstreet
Joan Schniedwind
Diane Spanier
Susan Youngs
Jeffrey Zhang
Jorge Zhang

Club Master

Jacob Breneisen
Linda Buyer
Anthony Cervini
Barbara Comiskey
Leslie Cunix
Siv Ferguson
Madhavi Gullapalli
Anne Heynen
Rose Hoeksema
John Knoepke
Marcia Kraus
Kathleen Lubawski
Jessica Nielsen
Janet Nolan
Joe Nolan
Janice Peterson
Jack Regan
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Elise Schreiber
Leif Sorenson
Wendy Watkins
Katherine White

Sectional Master

Jean Atchison
Sid Bennett
Jerry Blake
Max Brock
Peter Bush
Gail Conder
Arilyn Freeman
Ellyn Eisner
Linda Glick
Fred Henry
Robin Josephs
Alison Kohlmeyer
David Kovacs
Susan McVicker
Maureen Naidenovich
Nancy Quinn
Sheri Schneider



Henry Shi
Joan Traynelis

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Suzanne Helfrich
Jayne Krol
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Jim Skaggs

NABC Master

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Barbara Gomberg
David Junge
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Joan Sharfstein

Life Master

Leslee Johnson
Valy Lev
Kathleen Lewin
Ellen McGregor

Bronze Life Master

Donald Ferris
Jo Hannan
Polly (Mary) Larned
Kathleen Lewin
Stewart Margolis
Charles Wiggins, Jr.

Silver Life Master

Joseph Connelly
Steve Kimmel
Candace Timson
Ellen Walsdorf

Ruby Life Master

Edward Margulies

Gold Life Master

Daniel Blum
Geoff Bridges
Michael Devine

Sapphire Life Master

Amin Hakim

Emerald Life Master

Larry Cohen

More Pandemic Stories

(Continued from page 5)

Ron and Phyllis Fogel

Ron and I are watching old movies. We take turns choosing and have enjoyed The Godfather Parts 1,2,&3, Doctor Zhivago (3.5 hours long), the Natural, A League of Their Own, The Man Who Came To Dinner, and others. We are debating War and Peace (another 3.5 hours).



I have continued doing lots of reading with unread books on my bookshelves plus the non-fiction books *The Splendid and the Vile* by Eric Larson and *The Woman Who Smashed Codes* by Jason Fagone, and the fiction books *A Woman is No Man* by Estaf Rumi and the *Dutch House* by Ann Patchett.



We are missing real bridge at the table but are slowly adjusting to playing on BBO.

Have done two fun jigsaw puzzles: I Am White Tiger and I Am Cow. Tiger pictures shown. Also completed several detailed coloring pages and am exercising most days. It is a brighter world after successful cataract surgery.

Biggest discovery so far, I work better under a deadline!

DeMaris Johnson



After 30+ years of not painting, I bought some new brushes and oil paints, and I'm back at it. I'll never be more than a dauber, but I enjoy it and find it relaxing. Also, I'm playing bridge online with friends, and have started to have to our home another pair that we played team games with prior to the pandemic.



Bridge Groaners

If someone said that Bobby would be a nicer guy if he didn't Wolff down his food, it would probably get a groan in bridge circles. How many of these famous players can you identify by the intended puns?

1. Bill doesn't play very often, but he knows which team to _____ for.
2. Al converted his investments to a _____ I.R.A.
3. Eric went fishing and got his reel all tangled, but he held the _____.
4. Bob ordered _____ eggs for breakfast.
5. Lynn was a good student except for the occasional _____ on her report card.
6. Richard got his parole and is now a _____.
7. Michael joined the Navy and became a _____ First Class.
8. Kathie said there was no _____ she could lose.
9. Nick wouldn't give a _____ for his chances to win the Vanderbilt.
10. Billy held up his glass and proposed a toast: "It's _____ time!"

1. Root 2. Roth 3. Rodwell 4. Hamman
5. Deas 6. Freeman 7. Seamon 8. Wei 9. Nickell 10. Miller

Unusual Paragraph

Good slam bidding, or a lack of it, is a major downfall of most aficionados of our popular indoor sport. It is just too common to find good old Blackwood as an automatic slam-bidding tool. I doubt that any solution would bring unanimous approval, but my proposal is to ban all four-notrump bids from this day forward. I would also found an institution for violators — call it a Blackwood Asylum — so that stubborn fanatics could bid four notrump ad infinitum. What is unusual about this paragraph?



The paragraph contains no "e" — the most common letter.

Matthew a 'Lifesaver' in Clearing Tech Barriers at CDC

By Jamie Rubenstein

One leading Chicago player in the thick of helping young college-age players as well as club veterans cope with online machinations amidst the pandemic is Matthew Dyer, tech guru and vice president of the Chicago Duplicate Bridge Club. Indeed, Pat Quinn, the club owner, calls Matthew, a tremendous force and lifesaver in assisting players navigate the online Bridge Base game.



Matthew Dyer

"He has taught me so much," confides Patt, with Matthew on his own praising the Chicago bridge community "with sticking together and being bonded."

He calls Bridge Base "a long standing teaching and playing tool for college and high school students." Northwestern University, for one, notes Matthew, has been running a weekly session "using a combination of BBO and Zoom

with live chat and breakout rooms which brought together our players from around the country."

Matthew also lauds Chicago Duplicate Club managers "for leaping into action as soon as clubs" across Chicago closed in mid-March.

"Within a week, Chicago Duplicate had a BBO solution allowing players to enjoy free games designed for our players," said Matthew. The Chicago Duplicate link-up on BBO "allows our players to interact with multiple people they know online and the directors can design games to maximize interaction."

Matthew also notes that twice a week Gino Ginossar, an Israeli club owner and Unit 123 honoree, "brings players together for a lesson on the hands played that afternoon on Zoom."

Applying Gino's expertise, players "are using new technology for the first time and we have been there to hold their hands," acknowledges Matthew.

Woeful Bridge Limerick

by Harland London



I must have been in a daze
I missed partner's Bergen raise.
So, to my shame
We missed a game.
My stupidity ceases to amaze.

I think I overbid just a smidge,
Left partner hanging out on a ledge.
When all the smoke cleared
Down one as I feared.
But as they say, down one is good bridge.

Playing game in a four-four fit.
I needed a three-two split.
Whatever the odds
Those lousy bridge Gods
Gave me four-one, oh spit.

Murphy's Law for good or for ill.
Says if the worst can happen, it will.

You can swear gosh damn
Off two in a slam,
But getting set is a bitter pill.

I have not had good cards all night.
Averaging 8.76 just ain't right.
What can I say?
Only four scores our way.
The evening was not a delight.

I always get very annoyed
When partner in my suit is void.
It takes some grit
To play 5-0 fit.
How can that be enjoyed?

There are many classic bridge coups.
Bath, scissors or trump, you choose.
Try as you might,
You don't get it right.
Down two, left singing the blues.



Is it wrong to open a weak two when holding a four-card major ?

Conception: "Don't Open A Weak 2-bid with a side 4-card major"

The Truth: Preempts can be made with a variety of shapes.

Players love rules. Bridge teachers sometimes give in to the temptation to give players lots of them.

I can't tell you how many bad things I hear after a sentence starts, "My Teacher told me ..."

The truth is that preempts are entirely too complicated to describe with rules.

None of the following are good rules: "Don't preempt with a void" or "Don't open a weak two-bid with a side four-card major" or "You need two of the top three or three of the top five honors in the suit."

So many rules. So much nonsense.

Deciding what a preempt is depends a lot on seat and vulnerability. In first seat, favorable (not vulnerable

against vulnerable), you might catch me opening two spades with as little as

♠ KJ9876
♥ 8764
♦ 8
♣ 72

However, if you make my side vulnerable or had my RHO passed first, I wouldn't dream of bidding.

Similarly, third-seat preempts can be very wide ranging. Since you don't worry about partner having good values, you can easily preempt with a void or a four-card suit. Also, everyone has their own personal style (aggressive or passive). Most successful tournament players are aggressive preempters.

If you ask an expert for rules, they'll tell you that their preempts should resemble what partner expects given seat and vulnerability.

They paint a picture of your hand. So if your hand is "weak with hearts/

spades/diamonds" and that is what you want to convey, then open two or three of that suit.

How weak this can be, as I've said (I repeat myself as I get older) depends on seat, personal style and vulnerability. But a side void, a side ace, a so-so suit, a side four-card major -- all possible.

Here is one that violates all the "rules" -- Pass-Pass to me, at favorable vulnerability, I would consider it winning bridge to open two spades with:

♠ Q109765
♥ J765
♦ A32
♣ --

If you pass in this situation, you make it too easy for your opponents.

Larry runs and is the star of Bridge with Larry Cohen. He is a 25-Time National Champion, ACBL Player of the Year, ACBL Honorary Member of the Year, and ACBL Top 10 Living Most Influential in Bridge.



Virtual Games *(Earn Masterpoints Points) (Clubs listed below)*

Day	Time	Club	Fee
Monday	9:00 am 4:10 pm 6:30 pm	ACBL Games that support your local clubs	\$6 BB (Bridge Bucks) (66% of the funds will be distributed to clubs that you frequented last year)
Monday	10:10 am 1:00 pm	Jeremiah and BJBE (vacb162636)	
Monday	12:15 pm 6:30 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876) Chicago DBC (Dyer, Perkers, Quinn)	
Monday	11:30 am	Hinsdale, SSBC, Calumet DBC (Newcomers II:14 a.m.) vacb134098	
Tuesday	9:00 am 4:10 pm 6:30 pm	ACBL Games that support your local clubs	\$6 BB (Bridge Bucks) (66% of the funds will be distributed to clubs that you frequented last year)
Tuesday	10:10 am 1:00 pm	Jeremiah and BJBE (vacb162636)	
Tuesday	12:15 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876)	
Tuesday	6:15 pm	Hinsdale, SSBC, Calumet DBC (Newcomers II:14 a.m.) vacb134098	
Wednesday	9:00 am 4:10 pm 6:30 pm	ACBL Games that support your local clubs	\$6 BB (Bridge Bucks) (66% of the funds will be distributed to clubs that you frequented last year)
Wednesday	10:10 am 1:00 pm	Jeremiah and BJBE (vacb162636)	
Wednesday	12:15 pm 6:30 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876) Chicago DBC (Dyer, Perkers, Quinn)	
Wednesday	7:15 pm	Hinsdale, SSBC, Calumet DBC (Newcomers II:14 a.m.) vacb134098	
Wednesday	11:10 am	New Lenox, All Bridge Saints (vacb185751)	
Wednesday	6:15 pm	The Clare, U C Club (275776)	
Thursday	10:10 am 1:00 pm	Jeremiah and BJBE (vacb162636)	
Thursday	12:15 pm 6:30 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876) Chicago DBC (Dyer, Perkers, Quinn)	
Thursday	11:30 am	Hinsdale, SSBC, Calumet DBC (Newcomers II:15 a.m.) vacb134098	
Friday	9:00 am 4:10 pm 6:30 pm	ACBL Games that support your local clubs	\$6 BB (Bridge Bucks) (66% of the funds will be distributed to clubs that you frequented last year)
Friday	10:10 am 1:00 pm	Jeremiah and BJBE (vacb162636)	
Friday	12:15 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876)	
Friday	12:15 pm	The Clare, U C Club (vacb275776)	
Saturday	9:00 am 4:10 pm 6:30 pm	ACBL Games that support your local clubs	\$6 BB (Bridge Bucks) (66% of the funds will be distributed to clubs that you frequented last year)
Saturday	10:10 am 1:00 pm	Jeremiah and BJBE (vacb162636)	
Saturday	12:15 pm 6:30 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876) Chicago DBC (Dyer, Perkers, Quinn)	
Saturday	11:10 am	New Lenox, All Bridge Saints (vacb185751)	
Sunday	9:00 am 4:10 pm 6:30 pm 1:00 pm	ACBL Games that support your local clubs	\$6 BB (Bridge Bucks) (66% of the funds will be distributed to clubs that you frequented last year)
Sunday	12:15 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876)	
Sunday	6:15 pm	Hinsdale, SSBC, Calumet DBC (Newcomers II:14 a.m.) (vacb134098)	
Sunday	3:00 pm	New Lenox, All Bridge Saints (vacb185751)	

Note: There may be other virtual club games, but we have not been notified of their days or times.