

Kibitzer

A publication of the Chicago Contract Bridge Association April/May 2021

ACBL ok's reopening of clubs

The ACBL has approved the return of face-to-face play in the clubs, which have safety protocols in place. It will be up to each individual club to determine when it will reopen.

The next phase of in-person play will be the return of Sectionals, probably beginning in August, and the following phase will be the return of Regionals, probably in October. At this point, all tournament sanctions have been canceled through the end of July.

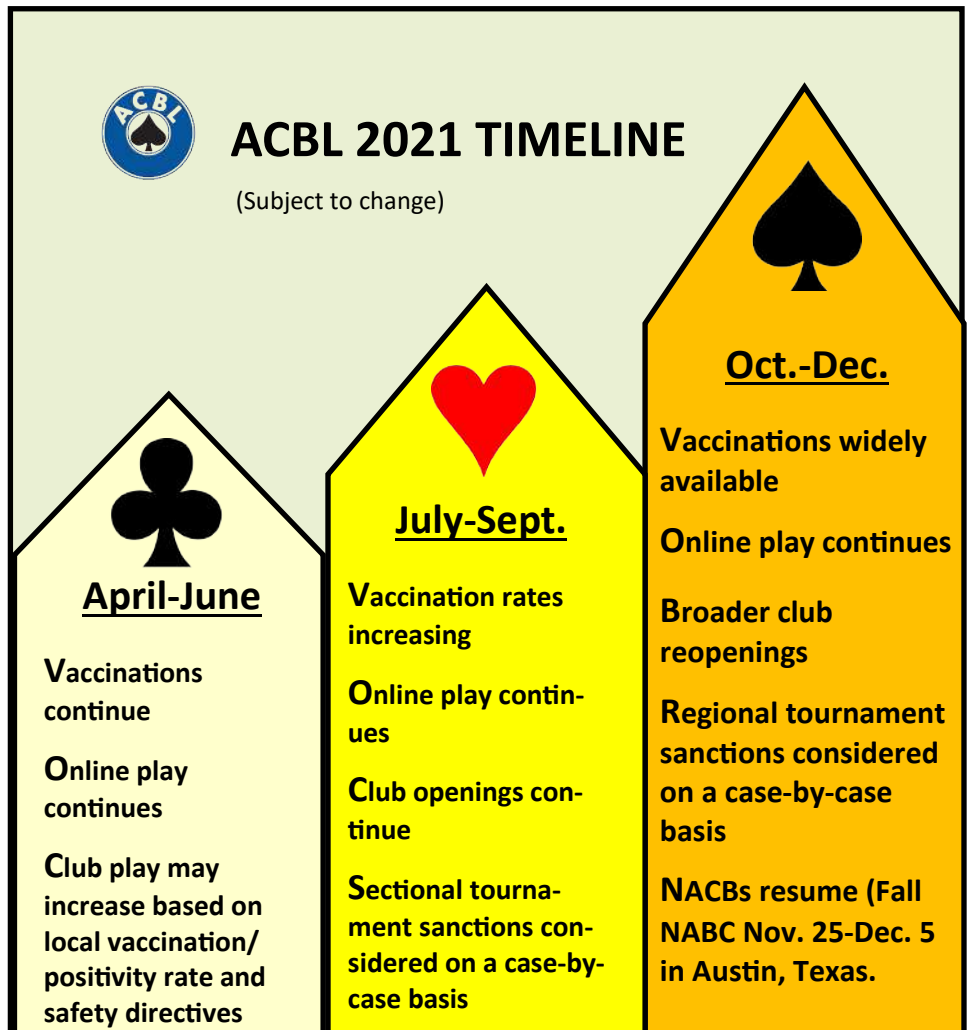
The final phase will be the resumption of the North American Bridge Championships (NABC). The Fall 2021 national tournament will be held November 25-December 5 in Austin, Texas. The 2021 Summer NABC, which was to take place in Providence, Rhode Island, was canceled. It will be held at the same location next year.

The reason that face-to-face bridge is returning is "largely due to access to vaccines and the progressing travel needs to play..." wrote ACBL Executive Director Joseph Jones in a letter to ACBL members. "We are very excited for the return of face-to-face tour-

namment bridge. In the meantime, there are daily opportunities to play online, with many special events."

"Thank you so much for your support this past year," he said.

See page 3 to find out when local clubs plan to open. Learn what safety precautions and changes they plan to make. Also, read the interesting comments made by club owners.



Proof of Vaccination may be entry to clubs



President Tom Dressing

The ACBL has given the green light to clubs opening their door and to tournaments being held in-person this fall.

By that time, many of you will have received a COVID vaccine. I strongly suggest that you keep the paper or slips that shows you have had the vaccination because I suspect some clubs will require you to show that paper to prove that you have had the shot before they will allow you to play.

At this point, I do not know what, if anything, will be required at tournaments. Like many of you, I am eager for the day when we can gather with friends and fellow bridge players in clubs and at tournaments. The CCBA Board is discussing what steps need to be taken at tournaments to ensure players' safety, a top priority.

Holding tournaments is a primary function of the CCBA. It is through the entries paid at tournaments that we obtain a majority of our funds, and it is on tournaments that we spend most of our money. It may surprise you to learn that we actually lose money on some of the tournaments. The other primary income source is the ACBL, which reimburses part of the membership fee, and a percentage of the club fees paid to BBO. (Thanks to all of you who are supporting the local clubs.) CCBA is in a very strong position financially because we have had few expenses this year.

CCBA's financial state was among the topics discussed at the annual membership meeting, which was held on Zoom this year. Everyone was invited via the CCBA webpage, as well as via a direct email campaign; however, we were disappointed because few attended. In 2022, we hope to have our usual WinterFest tournament and annual meeting, and look forward to discussing our last two years' operations at that time.

CCBA is a non-profit organization, and we are eagerly anticipating the time when we can begin to bring you first class, fun and exciting tournaments.

We exist to serve the bridge community and to promote bridge. I am looking forward to playing in person and seeing our friends - and opponents. Until then, please continue to enjoy bridge online.

For more information about the reopening of face-to-face play, please refer to the articles on pages one and three.

Hoping to see you soon at the table,

Tom Dressing

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Future will differ from past

Club owners reveal future opening plans, entry requirements

The reaction of club owners to the return of face-to-face play varies widely, but no matter when clubs open, one thing is certain: the experience will not be the same.

Approximately half of club owners responded to a survey taken by the Kibitzer, and below are some of their comments.

A majority said they had no plans to open soon. Three owners, however, said they hope to open in May. Those include Ron



Helman's **Un-usual No Trump**, Sue Erickson's **Olympia Club**, and Jerry

Scholle's **Lawson Bridge Studio**. Daryl Novick said he hoped to open the **Ace of Clubs** during the summer "after everyone is vaccinated."

Ron said a requirement for entry will be a signed release from liability. "We'll be taking forehead temperatures, and nobody with a fever will be allowed to play," he said.

Jerry said that, at least in the beginning, masks will be required. "Whenever we open, requiring a vax card is questionable, as it may violate HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), and this needs guidance from the CDCP (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) as to what state health people say. Also, how do you handle the anti-vaxxers and those who cannot take the vaccine for health reasons. We should be attuned to what is happening in this area for guidance in opening bridge games."

At Olympia, only face masks will be required for entry, and in the beginning, larger tables will be used, according to Sue.

Daryl said his safety plans include masks, a vax card, and a temperature check. "I plan to space the tables farther apart, clean the cards and tables after every session, and have hand sanitizer at every table. Masks and gloves will be available

for those who want them."

Nancy Miller, owner of the **New Lenox-Joliet** and **All Bridge Saint Clubs**, said she



will follow IDPH (Illinois Department of Public Health) guidelines, "what-ever they are at the time of reopening."

Nancy and the following owners said they had not set a date for opening.

Patt Quinn, who was manager of the **Chicago Duplicate Bridge Club**, which ran about 14 games per week in the city, said no opening date has been set. The board of the member-owned club plans to survey the members to learn when and if members will be returning. Such information is needed before the club can seek a new site. "It is too early to say when we will reopen," Patt said.

Mary Schultz of **Fox Bridge** said, "I'm waiting for guidance on what vaccinated people should expect for safely gathering. I will follow CDC, state and local guidelines, including mask use and room capacity."

Jeff Schuett, owner of **New Eazy Wednesday**, said he does not know when he will open but believes it will be after July 1. His safety steps will include masks in the beginning and "hand sanitizer everywhere." Janie Strauss of the same club said it is unclear whether they will be able to use the previous game site. Jeff may make one big change. "We might have a section using iPads and no bidding boxes or cards."

Karl Anderson who directs and/or owns clubs in **Wheaton, Aurora, and St. Charles**, said he was waiting for more information before reopening.



Pat Valiska whose **South Suburban Bridge Center** in Lynwood closed in July 2020 is looking for a new site "for when face-to-face bridge resumes after the COVID-19 crisis has passed." She previously ran games Monday through Friday and on Sunday, and has virtual club games Monday through Wednesday, as well as Saturday and Sunday. "Look for Hins/SSBC/Cal," she said

Several owners expressed concern about whether players will return to the bridge table, because some players have indicated they have health concern and are worried about social distancing. Others now prefer online bridge. Others have said they will go back to the clubs, but not as frequently as prior to the pandemic.

Now for the important question. Who will be serving food. Most clubs will provide individually packaged snacks, as well as water and/or coffee. Sue said she plans to serve food like she has in the past. Jeff said that if his club decides not to serve food, he will reduce the entry fee. Mary was among those who said that she does not plan to serve food.

Most of those responding to the survey said at this time their answers are guesses because due to the pandemic, circumstances have changed and are expected to continue to change.

Maxson becomes newest board member

Robert “Bob” Maxson is the newest member of the CCBA Board of Directors.

He was appointed to complete the year remaining on the term of Genny Cesario, who passed away last year.

Bob has played bridge since he was a child. “I never had any lessons. I learned from watching my parents, grandparents, and a great aunt play.

He learned how to improve his game by reading books and magazines, and he recommends that anyone wanting to up their game do the same.

“I played some from about age 27 to 44, and played early on with some partners who went on to become outstanding players, including George Jacobs, Tom Dressing and Jim Diebel,” he said.

He gave up bridge in his mid-40s when family and work responsibilities took priority. So, he took up a new hobby, long distance running.,

He has run in 20 marathons, including the Boston Marathon twice. Two years ago, the 67-year-old developed a neck problem, forcing him to give up running.

Five years ago, he retired as a clinical and school social worker, but still teaches a class at Aurora University.

Now that he has more free time, Bob hopes that he can contribute to the game of bridge. He wonders if there is a way to translate online play to getting young people involved in bridge since they like to play games online.

When players have the choice of going to the clubs or competing online, he is unsure how the clubs will fare.

“I hope the clubs come back. I prefer playing in person, and I play better in person. I think tournaments will still be popular and may come back with a vengeance,” he said.



Robert Maxson

Robert Jackson Passes

Robert (Bob) Jackson, 80, a Platinum Life Master, passed away February 27 from complications from liver cancer. He graduated with a degree in mathematics from Southern Illinois University in 1963, where he was first introduced to bridge. He took to it quickly and established regular partnerships with soon-to-be central Illinois stalwarts, Mark and Gary Kessler.

He held various jobs, including teaching junior high school and accounting. While in these day jobs, bridge became a passion, and he even became a Certified Director, at times helping out with Sectionals in the area. Given any Howell movement, he could tell you which pairs were sitting at each table, during every round, and what set of boards they were playing. He returned to northern Illinois in the 1970s, and established himself as one of the top players in the Chicago area, winning many Regional and Sectional titles. In the early 1990s he volunteered at a Pro-Am event. He was randomly paired with Sharon Pobloske, who had decided to pick up the game she hadn’t played for years. They became partners not only at the bridge table, but also for life. Their wins included the coveted Chicago Invitational Pairs trophy – the most prestigious event on the Chicago calendar.

Transitioning back to face-to-face playing a major topic at ACBL Meeting

The following is a report by District 13 Director Suzi Subeck on the ACBL Board of Directors meeting held on Zoom from March 10-12:

There was much discussion of how to successfully transition from today’s online only play to a proper balance of online and face-to-face (F2F) going forward. Consultations with players are mixed. Some are desperate to get back to “normal” at the brick-and-mortar clubs while others are happily playing online.

Security had been a challenge with the online games, and we are working on a functional process to protect the integrity of the game on this platform. We have added staff to the Ethics Department at headquarters, and they are working full time on this.

The Board of Directors hopes to see a robust return to face-to-face while still maintaining a strong online presence. pre-pandemic, evening games were all but non-existent. Perhaps one alternative is to

run more F2F daytime games and online nighttime games.

All of this is in the talking stages, but know that it is being addressed seriously and if you have thoughts, I would be happy to hear them at stansubeck@prodigy.net. I will keep you updated.

The Providence NABC for 2021 has been cancelled. It is rescheduled to summer 2022. The GNTs will be played online in 2021 in July. Our 2020 qualifiers will represent us.

The ACBL is in good shape financially. The online games have been a lifesaver.

Many of our employees have returned from furlough but are still mainly working from home.

The League is implementing new marketing initiatives to promote membership. In a few months, we will be evaluating these programs to see if they are working.

Keep playing and having fun! Stay safe. Hope to see you when things return to normal!



Confessions of a grateful and frustrated BBO Director

By BBO Director Jim Diebel

Back in November, when things looked darkest, I fell into a dream job as an online director for BBO ACBL tournaments. The money couldn't have come at a better time. Now a bright person would accept this job as the miracle that it is, and not jeopardize it. I'm just not that bright.

I log into BBO, usually seven days per week, and field calls from players who have called the director with a complaint. My job is to greet them with cheerful enthusiasm, and offer to help solve whatever their issues might be. I am finding it increasingly difficult to do that while remaining cheerful, because they often get angry, especially if I point out the errors of their ways.

I get no thanks for opening their eyes to the beauty that bridge can be. In order for you to better understand what I'm talking about, let me walk you through my average day at BBO.

West: Director! South didn't alert 2D as a transfer to hearts.

Me: *Ok, so what did you think it meant?*

West: That doesn't matter. He has to alert, doesn't he?

Me: *Yes; but unless you've been damaged, I can't do anything other than warn him for the future.*

West: I could have been damaged. I want Average plus.

Me: *We don't do that unless there has actually been damage. Also, if your experience should have suggested the likely meaning of the call, you have an obligation to protect yourself.*

West: Never mind.

In the hand below, South called the director.

North		East	
♠ J875		♠ K9643	
♥ 87		♥ KJ4	
♦ 973		♦ 6	
♣ JT52		♣ Q864	
West		South	
♠ QT		♠ A2	
♥ T6532		♥ AQ9	
♦ AK84		♦ QJT53	
♣ A9		♣ K73	

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1NT	2H
Pass	Pass	2NT	Pass
Pass	DBL	All Pass	



South: Really, not supporting your pd then heart lead?
ME: *What was strange? You had limited your hand, and East felt you had bid too high. Did you expect West to pull the double?*

South: Okay, forget about it. We don't play the same bridge. Sorry I called you.

Me: *What's the point of support? Looking for a game?*

South: You are right. Forget about it.

That day I held my tongue. I really wanted to reply that I would never have considered bidding 2NT.

Look at another hand where I was called:

North		East	
♠ 843		♠ Q	
♥ 64		♥ KT75	
♦ T43		♦ AJ62	
♣ K8752		♣ AQJ3	
West		South	
♠ T972		♠ AKJ65	
♥ J3		♥ AQ982	
♦ KQ5		♦ 987	
♣ T964		♣ ---	

North	East	South	West
2S	1C	2C*	DBL
Pass	DBL	Pass	3C
All Pass	Pass	3S	DBL

The opening lead was the Queen of Spades. No other card was played, and the time ran out. With even mediocre defense, this contract is destined to go down two.

EW probably makes 3NT, although they won't likely get there. Some merciful director adjusted this score to 3Sx, down one. (-100). I was called to the table because South thought this wasn't fair and wanted his score adjusted to Average Plus.

Here's a hand where a takeout double was questioned.

North		East	
♠ K4		♠ JT83	
♥ K		♥ JT85	
♦ AQ985		♦ T72	
♣ Q432		♣ A7	
West		South	
♠ Q9		♠ A7652	
♥ A2		♥ Q9643	
♦ KJ43		♦ 6	
♣ KJ865		♣ T9	

North	East	South	West
DBL?	Pass	Pass	1D
Pass	1H	1S	2C
	2D	All Pass	

Not surprisingly, 2D didn't fare all that well. West was upset with North's takeout double.

West: Could you look at board two? They did a takeout double

Me: *I will review*

Me: *The double was questionable, but I see bad bids like that every day. Opening 1D with your hand led to a poor diamond part score. It was a system failure.*

West: I beg your pardon?

Me: *I apologize. In my experience, opening 1D with longer clubs will predictably lead to less than optimum diamond contracts. We agree that the double was crazy, but I see doubles that bad all the time.*

West: I didn't ask your opinion about my bid or my style. We are taught by our teacher to bid 4-5 hands like that. I wanted a ruling on the inappropriate double, and for your information I am not used to getting poor diamond part scores

Me: *I teach bridge as well, and one of the things I frequently UNteach is the 4-5 1D opening. You are certainly not alone in bidding your hand in that manner. In response to your request, there is no law against a bad bid.*

Me: *The double was terrible, but not illegal.*

West: Great. You are allowed to teach any way you want but I feel very harassed.

Me: *It was not my intent, and I apologize again.*



(Continued on page 9)

COUNT TRICKS, NOT JUST POINTS OR ACES & KINGS TO BID GOOD GRAND SLAMS

By Ginny & Jeff Schuett

Nothing is as exciting in bridge as bidding a slam, and even more exciting a Grand Slam! Most players consider the points each player hold and the aces and kings shown through Blackwood, but when long solid suits are held, it is also important to count tricks. Remember, all the aces and kings total only eight tricks, but holding long suits, you might have 13 tricks with just one long solid suit or maybe two solid suits and missing one or two kings. Look at the following:

D 1	N North	W N E S
	♠ 7 ♥ KQ8 ♦ J54 ♣ AKQJ64	
W West		E East
♠ QJ105 ♥ 743 ♦ K1076 ♣ 108		♠ 86432 ♥ 92 ♦ Q92 ♣ 753
	S South	
	♠ AK9 ♥ AJ1065 ♦ A83 ♣ 92	
Rewind Previous Next Options GIB Play		

The bidding on this hand begins

N	E	S	W
1♣	P	1♥	P
3♣	P	3♥	P
4♥	P	4NT*	P *regular Blackwood
5♦	P	5NT	P
??			

If NS are playing RKC

N	E	SW
1♣	P	1♥ P
3♣	P	3♥ P
4♥	P	4NT* P *RKC
5♠	P	5NT P
??		

North's jump to 3♣ shows a strong 6+ card ♣ suit with about 16-18 points. It is natural and invitational, but not forcing. South's 3♥ is forcing with 5+♥ and only promises enough for game, so a wide range of strength of about 8+ points. North players will raise to 4♥. South has plenty to look for slam, bidding 4NT. If playing regular Blackwood, North's 5♦ shows 1 ace. If playing Roman Keycard, North would bid 5♠ to show 2 keycards and ♥Q.

(Continued on page 11)

Experts know it is wise not to ask unnecessary questions during auction



Winning with Wimpy
By Jim Diebel

As this is the topic that seems to cause the most friction on BBO, I am going to use this month's column to address a problem that many people do not know they have - asking opponents unnecessary questions regarding the meaning of a bid during an auction, slowing the game down to a crawl.

First off, let's be clear. Your opponents have an obligation to alert most non-natural conventional calls. Let's further agree that this often does not happen. Sometimes the conventional call is very different from what it sounds like, but most of the time, we will have a fairly good idea about what is going on.

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	2H	?

Review for damages

Now online, when East does not volunteer that his bid is a spade transfer ("spades" under the new regulations), I am not confused. Quite the opposite. If it means anything *other* than a transfer to spades, I would be quite surprised. Was East supposed to announce the transfer? Yes. Was I damaged by this failure? Almost certainly not. Still, a half dozen times a day, I will get called to the table and told that East failed to announce a transfer. My answer is always the same: "I will review for damage."

Invariably, either the player calling will acknowledge that no damage occurred, or I will review and explain that I found no damage. Then the player admits that he knew full well there was no damage, but perhaps his side was entitled to some adjustment improvement. I politely explain that adjustments are only made in the case of damage, not because the opponents violated procedure. I privately remind East to announce transfer going forward and move on.

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	4H*	Pass
4S	All Pass		

This time it turns out that declarer opened 1NT with a small singleton. Under the new rules, this is illegal.

Call the director

This is a case where you absolutely should call the director. Now simply because West made an illegal call, it does not automatically follow that the result will be thrown out. As directors, we do not like it when players do illegal things. We will look for reasons to throw out the result, but sometimes they just aren't there.

The first thing we do is attempt to reconstruct the auction with what would likely happen if West opened one of a suit. The first and most obvious thing to see is that the contract would almost certainly be played from the other side.

We will inspect to see if a lead from the other side of the table might have led to a different result. The next thing we look for is whether the opponents could have successfully entered the auction over one of a suit (or one spade), which could have led to a different result or perhaps a sacrifice.

We will inspect to see if East had marginal values, and whether game might have been missed. If we are convinced that all reasonable bidding sequences lead to 4S by EW, with exactly the same number of tricks being taken, we allow the table result to stand. If 4S goes down, while other contracts might have been successful, we allow the contract to stand. What if West's small singleton is a spade? If it turns out that 4S is the only game contract which makes, and some Wests would be unlikely to ever support spades, leading to a possible inferior contract of 3NT, we will throw the result out.

If 3NT were not only successful, but takes as many or more tricks as 4S, we will once again let the table result stand. EW cannot profit from the illegal bid, but there is no guarantee they will be penalized for it. If we end up adjusting the score, it will likely be Average Minus for EW and Average Plus for NS.

Avoid questions

Now comes the big one. *When at all possible, you should avoid asking the opponents a question during the auction.* Let me attempt to explain why.

You are South holding: ♠ 65 ♥ K754 ♦ KJ7 ♣ Q973 and the auction goes:

West	North	East	South (you)
1S	Pass	3C	?

You suspect that 3 clubs is some kind of spade raise. You ask East for the meaning of 3 clubs, but East does not answer. After 10-15 seconds, you call the director, complaining that East will not explain his bid. Rather than scolding East, I ask you: "Why does it matter?" This, of course angers you. You tell me that you have a right to know, and it's my job to see that this rulebreaker answers.

I tell you that it is poor form to ask a question in a live auction, and that you should wait until the auction is over to ask these things. Angrily, you tell me you didn't pay your money to be lectured by someone whose job it is to enforce the rules - and that you'll be reporting me to BBO. I then give you the information you need to submit your complaint.

At no point in this altercation did you ever stop to think about what I was telling you. Whether 3 clubs is a spade raise, a forcing club bid, a weak club bid, or even a diamond



transfer, you were going to pass. It didn't matter what the bid meant. The answer was not going to affect your action in any way.

Did it matter

You wasted time, and you have missed the last board. And why? *Because you wanted to know.* Probably 80 percent of the time, East's hand is going to come down as dummy, and you will be able to see exactly what it was. If East does somehow become declarer, it is likely that the subsequent auction will make it obvious whether clubs was natural, and whether it showed a strong hand. If you are on lead and unsure, NOW is the time to ask these questions.

Expert players know that asking questions during a live auction will often do more harm than good. If the opponents were going to have a bidding disaster, these questions may tip them off that maybe they forgot something. On BBO, the partner of the player you are asking does not see the query, but he notices how long it takes for you to bid, and most bright players will piece it together.

Not during Blackwood

Another time it is totally improper to ask a question is during a Blackwood sequence. One opponent bids 4NT and the other answers 5D. You'd like to know what 5 diamonds means, and you are entitled to that information. However, *you don't need to know it NOW!* If the 5 diamonds bidder becomes the dummy, you will see exactly what it meant. If the 5 diamond bidder is declarer, you have the right to inquire at the end of the auction.

Right time to ask questions

Ok, so I've made my feelings known about asking unnecessary questions during live auctions. You might wonder if there are times that one *should* ask questions. What a great question! The answer is yes, absolutely! There are two cases where interrupting a live auction to ask a question is proper. In both cases, your next bid will be dependent on the meaning of the unknown call.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South (you)</u>
2D	Pass	2S	?

You hold ♠ K5 ♥ AKJ972 ♦ 7 ♣ KT84

(Continued on page 11)

Hands from USBF Justin Lall Online Team 2

32 teams entered the tournament which took place over two weekends. Marty Fleisher's team won. Rosenthal's team was second. It included Ginos-saur from Unit 123.

♠ A9732		N Steve Garner	
Bd 9, Dlr N		♥ 3	
6♥ = W		♦ Q1096	
W Steve Weinstein		♠ 932	
♠ 8		♠ KQ654	
♥ AKQ10865		♥ J974	
♦ 87		♦ K52	
♣ AJ10		♣ 4	
♠ J10		W N E S	
♥ 2		P P 3♠	
♦ AJ43		4♥ 5♠ 5♦ P	
♠ KQ8765		6♥ P P P	
Jill Meyers S			

♠ A9732		N Nick Nickell	
Bd 9, Dlr N		♥ 3	
5♥ = W		♦ Q1096	
W Kern Sanborn		♠ 932	
♠ 8		♠ KQ654	
♥ AKQ10865		♥ J974	
♦ 87		♦ K52	
♣ AJ10		♣ 4	
♠ J10		W N E S	
♥ 2		P P 3♠	
♦ AJ43		4♥ 5♠ 5♦ P	
♠ KQ8765		6♥ P P P	
Ralph Katz S			

Nickell/Sanborn

♠ A9732		N Jon Greenspan	
Bd 9, Dlr N		♥ 3	
6♥ = W		♦ Q1096	
W David Berkowitz		♠ 932	
♠ 8		♠ KQ654	
♥ AKQ10865		♥ J974	
♦ 87		♦ K52	
♣ AJ10		♣ 4	
♠ J10		W N E S	
♥ 2		P P 3♠	
♦ AJ43		4♥ 5♠ 6♥ P	
♠ KQ8765		P P P	
Glenn Eisenstein S			

♠ A9732		N Aaron Silverstein	
Bd 9, Dlr N		♥ 3	
4♥ = W		♦ Q1096	
W Bob Feller		♠ 932	
♠ 8		♠ KQ654	
♥ AKQ10865		♥ J974	
♦ 87		♦ K52	
♣ AJ10		♣ 4	
♠ J10		W N E S	
♥ 2		P P 1♠	
♦ AJ43		1♥ 1♠* 4♥ P	
♠ KQ8765		P P	
Andrew Rosenthal S			

Greenspan/Rosenthal

Bidding slam off two aces is usually a bad practice. However, when the opponents interfere at the five-level, guessing comes into play. On this hand even 5H is too high, since declarer should lose a spade trick and two diamond tricks.

Fifteen pairs played in 5H. Eight were defeated and seven made their contract. Five declarers received the ace of spades lead and all five were successful. A club lead (partner's suit) generally defeated the 5H contracts. The top result defending 5H went to Sandra Rimstedt and Gary Donner, who doubled the contract and defeated it with a trump lead. This was only a 3 IMP win, since Donner/Rimstedt's teammates played 5H undoubled and were defeated on a club lead.

The real excitement occurred in the Nickell/Sanborn and Greenspan/Rosenthal matches. Levin/Weinstein and Berkowitz/Migry bid 6H. Garner and Greenspan both led the SA. Their partners both followed with the SJ (standard carding). Both Garner and Greenspan continued spades (!) and E/W scored +1430 gaining 13 IMPs for the Nickell and Rosenthal teams.

Should North work out the diamond shift at trick two? Considering that West probably has seven hearts for his 4H bid, continuing spades is playing for South to have played a singleton SJ. In any other case, South's play should be a suit preference signal. There are clearly no more spade tricks available to N/S.

If the SJ is suit preference, a club play should be out of the question. Considering that Weinstein jumped to 6H after Levin's 5D cuebid, with no spade control, Weinstein almost certainly holds the club ace.

If South has a singleton spade and West has seven hearts, South's distribution would 1-1-4-7. No one would open a wimpy 3C on a 7-4 hand at favorable vulnerability.

What card would declarer play if he held ten-eight doubleton? The ultimate conclusion is that a diamond shift is fairly clear.

Confessions of BBO director

I was called for the next hand due to allegations of cheating.

	North		East
	♠ T94		♠ AKJ
	♥ 8432		♥ AJ95
	♦ 975		♦ AJT
	♣ 985		♣ T42
West		South	
♠ Q853		♠ 762	
♥ QT		♥ K76	
♦ KQ872		♦ 64	
♣ K7		♣ AQJ63	
North	East	South	West
Pass	1H	Pass	1D
Pass	3C	Pass	3D
Pass	3NT	All Pass.	

This, naturally, brought a protest from NS.

South: I bid clubs. E said 3NT with no slipper (sic). Her partner had K. Very suspicious.

Me: I will review.

South: Thanks, and she had long hesitation also.

Me: W opened, and E has 18. I don't find it suspicious that E played partner for a club card.

South: This is why so many people I know have quit BBO.

Me: And what would you have done differently as E?

South: Never mind. It's over with.

	North		East
	♠ AQJT83		♠ K95
	♥ AT3		♥ K9876
	♦ J8		♦ A4
	♣ 63		♣ T85
West		South	
♠ 6		♠ 742	
♥ Q542		♥ J	
♦ K7653		♦ QT92	
♣ AQ4		♣ KJ972	
♠ 742			
North	East	South	West
1C	1H	2C	3C
3S	Pass	4C	DBL
4S	All Pass.		

This time the protest came from West.

West: North bid clubs and spades. South had a clear preference for clubs, but passed. spades. Very suspicious.

Me: I will review.

Me: It's fairly clear to me that N mislicked on 1C, as the 1C and 1S icons look very similar. Furthermore, if North wanted to play clubs, he would have passed 4Cx

West: I think they should be forced to go to 5C.

Me: I can't force them to go to 5C, and I believe any reasonable player would pass 4S.

I have plenty more stories, but I'm out of space for this month. I'll save some for next time. See my regular column on page 7 to learn about the most common avoidable call that BBO directors face on a daily basis.



SMILE

I'm giving up eating chocolate for the month. Sorry, wrong punctuation. I'm giving up. Eating chocolate for the month.

I was a bookkeeper for 10 years. The local library wasn't too happy about it.

Why did the party of ghosts ride on the elevator? They wanted to lift their spirits.

I can't stand jokes about German sausages. They really are the wurst.

A guy was taking his girlfriend to prom. Getting ready, he went to a tux rental shop. There was a huge line but he eventually got his tuxedo. He then went to the florist. Again, there was a huge line, but he got the orchid in the end. Then he went to the limo rental place, and there was a big line there too! But he eventually managed to rent one. They got to the prom and danced for a little bit, and then his girlfriend asked for some punch. He went to get it – but there was no punch line.

Foundation thanks donors for support

The following appears in the ACBL Educational Foundation's Annual Report:

In a year marked by COVID-19, racial injustice, and political upheaval, we are most grateful for your generous support to the ACBL Educational Foundation; we surpassed 2019 in all measurable categories. As country/western singer, Dolly Parton quipped back in March, "...if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain," and so we did.

We were saddened by the loss of F2F bridge-playing opportunities, but that created an entry into the world of online bridge technology.

Tricky Bridge received a grant to help hook young people on bridge through video-game-style teaching. It has since become a phenomenal success! Next up, we partnered with Trickster Cards to address the need for a social bridge website where non-duplicate bridge players could play across a virtual bridge table in a more friendly and relaxed environment. Lastly, we collaborated with ACBL and ABTA to fund the research and development needed to launch an online teacher training program.

We created our first online fundraiser honoring Peggy Kaplan, a champion for youth bridge, who is battling a life-threatening condition. The funds we raised are dedicated to teaching bridge to young people. We increased our number of donors, number of donations, our investment portfolio, memorial and honorary gifts from people and ACBL clubs, demonstrating our growth from \$1.6M in 2019 to over \$2M in 2020.

In a time and place where so many donors, rightfully, responded to the critical need for health programs, civil rights, political change, and basic human needs, we are pleased to welcome you out of the rain onto "Bridge Street."

With gratitude,

E. Kristen Frederick,
Executive Director

Joel R. Kramer,
President, Board of Trustees

For the full report, go to ACBL's website.

Congratulations Rank Advancers-You Did It

Junior Master

Linda Black
Susan Ditzler
Geraldine Ford
Donna Greenlimb
Mary Hasten
Kathryn Healy
Grazyna Myslinska
Marlene Psenka
Carole Quille
Mary Beth Schweih

Club Master

Derek Briggs
Dalsang Chaudhari
Catherine Denny
Gayle Grunberg
Mark Grunberg
Linda Hoblitzell
Sherry Jost
James Langan
Linda Martin
H Gael Neeson
David Sales
Colleen Strening

Sectional Master

William Amster
Kathleen Brugger
Karen Ciciora
William Ciciora
David Crow
Madhavi Gullapalli

Randee Johnson
John Knoepke
Connie Magnuson
Karen Page
Caro Parsons
Donna Petersen
Beth Reed
Rick Rosenthal
David Scharf
Joan Stelmack
Dianne Tesler
Elizabeth Wheelan

Regional Master

Colette Bourke
Max Brock
Lynn Cotteleer
Brian Gallagher
Lorraine McNally
William Price
Maureen Spinell
Joy Sweet

NABC Master

Peter Bush
David Kovacs
Julie Shelton
Les White

Advanced

NABC Master
Daniel Weiss

Life Master

Susan Doyle
Barbara Gomberg
Sarik Goyal
Aleksandar Lishkov
Claire McGuire

Bronze Life Master

Howard Emmerman
Claire McGuire
Jenny Schwartz
Marjorie Zolla

Silver Life Master

Ginger Griffin
Adriana Humada
Marcia Levine
Daniel Wright

Ruby Life Master

Susan Bass
Duke Bhatia
Mark Holle
Judi Katz
Jane Morrissey
Lynn Turner
James Wong
Gold Life Master
Caryl Brown
Judith Freeman
Charles McDonough
Cory Perkers



Sapphire Life Master

Bill Parrish

Emerald Life Master

Judy Zhu
Richard Strauss



ACBL warns against cheating



The ACBL issued the following warning. "When you play on BBO, every call and every play are recorded. If you cheat online, you will get caught.

"In addition to player reports by BBO, there are automatic surveillance tools to alert the game operators of potential cheating.

"If a player is found to be cheating in an ACBL sanctioned game, the club will bar that player from BBO. In addition, the player may be subject to discipline under the ACBL Code of Disciplinary Regulations. Both ACBL and BBO are doing everything possible to maintain the integrity of these online games so that honest players can be confident of a fair contest."



ACBL 2021 SCHEDULE

APRIL

12-18 Charity Week

Upgraded masterpoints awards in Virtual Clubs

22-25 Stay@Home, Play@Home

Regionally rated events

MAY

15-16 Grass Roots Weekend

Upgraded masterpoints® awards in Virtual Clubs

24-30 Silver Linings Week

Silver masterpoints® awards in Virtual Clubs

JUNE

1-30 North American Pairs (NAP)

Qualifying games for the North American Pairs

19-20 The Longest Day

Upgraded masterpoints® awards in Virtual Clubs

24-27 Endless Summer

Regionally rated events

All events tentative based upon BBO/ACBL IT capabilities and COVID-19 protocol changes



Count Tricks, Not Just Points

(Continued from page 7)

Part of the Blackwood rules is that South's 5NT shows all the aces (or all the keycards and Q of trump if playing RKC) and asks for North to show kings.

It invites a grand slam if possible. North should also try counting the tricks implied by South holding all the aces or keycards needed. South must have at least ♠A and ♦A with at least 5+♥ to the A so ♥Axxxx or better.

Counting tricks, we have 1♠ + 5♥ + 1♦ + 6♣ = 13 or more tricks. Note that South does not have the knowledge that North's club suit is solid, so when missing a king or 2 kings, will likely sign off in 6♥.

But North is the one who knows they have a combined 13 tricks, so rather than answer his number of kings, North should jump directly to 7NT.

After all, with 13 top tricks, 7NT is the best score you can get!! When holding long solid suits, try to count tricks, not just points or aces and kings.



Unnecessary Questions

(Continued from page 7)



You have every right to believe 2 spades is forcing, but I've seen many Wests pass it anyway. No need to ask any questions because forcing or not, I think you want to stick in a 3 hearts call. I doubt that you will be doubled, and your partner, on a good day, might even have enough to raise you to 4 hearts with ♠ 876 ♥ Q63 ♦ T853 ♣ AJ6.

Now change your hand to:

♠ 65 ♥ T3 ♦ KQJ985 ♣ A97

This time, you have strong evidence that the 2 diamond opening bid was NOT weak.. Assuming no one has alerted, you are thinking that West may have a Flannery hand with 5 hearts and 4 spades. If that is the case, even though there was a failure to alert, a director could later rule that you took insufficient precautions to protect yourself. You need to find out from West what 2 diamonds means. If it's diamonds, you are going to pass so fast you might crash the software. If, as you suspect, it's Flannery, you are going to balance with 3D right now, before the auction gets passed out in 2S.

The other case where you might need to know is when you have shortness in a suit your opponents have bid and jump raised.

West	North	East	South (you)
1C	Pass	3C	?

Or

West	North	East	South (you)
3C	Pass	1C	Pass
		Pass	?

You hold: ♠ Q7 ♥ KJ4 ♦ QT86 ♣ KQ94

Ok, that one was a test. Once again, you couldn't care less about what 3C means, as you are going to pass and hopefully defend. No reason to ask any questions. However, you hold: ♠ KQ73 ♥ Q985 ♦ KT72 ♣ 6

If 3 clubs is a limit raise, or any kind of strength showing call, you intend to pass and hope they do not bid 3NT. If 3 clubs turns out to be a weak call, you have just enough strength and distribution to contribute a double and hope your partner has a sense of humor.

It should be noted that in BOTH of the cases I outlined where asking a question is not improper, a director would very likely rule in your favor if the failure to alert damaged your side.

So to summarize: If you *never* ask a question in a live auction, you will be ahead of the game. You will also be taking your first steps toward becoming a better and more respected player. It is much easier than you think. Please consider it the next time you play.

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

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

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 am) 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 am) 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 am) 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 am) 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 las 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 las year)
Sunday	12:15 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876)	
Sunday	6:15 pm	Hinsdale, SSBC, Calumet DBC (Newcomers II:14 am) (vacb134098)	
Sunday	3:00 pm	New Lenox, All Bridge Saints (vacb185751)	