

Kibitzer

A publication of the Chicago Contract Bridge Association February/March 2021



President Tom Dressing



Vice President Mark Stein



Secretary Jan Churchwell



Treasurer Joe Connelly

Meet Newly Elected 2021 CCBA Board of Officers

Tom Dressing was re-elected president at the CCBA board meeting following the Annual Meeting on January 30. Mark Stein was elected vice president, succeeding Loring Knoblauch; and Jan Churchwell and Joe Connelly were reelected secretary and treasurer, respectfully. For the first time, the Annual Meeting was held via Zoom, due to the pandemic. Usually the meeting is held during WinterFest and follows a delicious dinner.

ACBL Overhauls Alert Procedure and makes changes in Announcements

The ACBL Board of Directors unanimously approved a comprehensive update to the ACBL Alert Procedure at their November meeting, the first major overhaul in 20 years. The new procedures went into effect January 1. The full document, which can be found on the ACBL website, follows:

Bridge has never been a game of secret agreements. Your opponents are entitled to know just as much about what your bids mean as you do. Alerts have always been about making that process easier. Whether or not a call requires an Alert, you have an obligation to explain all of your partnership understandings re-



lated to that call upon the request of an opponent.

Pre-Alerts

The first changes are at the beginning of the round. As before, you must pre-Alert the opponents if you play canape methods or different systems depending on seat or vulnerability (but not just because you play different ranges for opening 1NT). Additionally you now are required to pre-Alert if you play a system that includes at least one one-level opening bid that is not natural or that is forcing. This can be as simple as saying, "We play a strong club" or "We play 1♣ could be short." You are no longer required to pre-Alert if you lead low from small doubletons. However, if you play this, it must be included in your answer when a declarer asks about

your leads and carding.

Alert changes

The new Alert procedure starts from the principle that natural calls are not Alerted, and that artificial calls are Alerted. It then gives the deviations from that principle, spelling out the natural calls that must be Alerted (for example, a response to a one-level opening bid that is not forcing), and the artificial calls that do not require Alerts (for example, Stayman). The most common calls that have had their Alertability changed are as follows:

- In an uncontested auction, no natural jumpshift (whether weak, intermediate or strong) requires an Alert.
(Continued on page 7)

President's State of the Unit Address



Good evening,

2020 is a year that many of us are glad to see gone. But it is probably a year we will not forget.

One reason we will remember 2020 is because we could no longer get together to play bridge in person at the clubs and at tournaments. And this year, because of continuing health and safety concerns, the Chicago Contract Bridge Association's Annual Meeting is being held via Zoom. Usually this meeting is held during the WinterFest tournament in January, and follows a delicious all-you-can-eat dinner. This year there is no dinner or tournament. Nevertheless,

we will conduct our required business, which you can attend in the comfort of your own home, with a glass of wine or water.

Sadly, WinterFest was the only tournament we were able to hold last year. At the time, I don't think the board had any idea that it would be not only the first - but the last tournament of the year.

After the pandemic hit, we cancelled the 2020 spring Stars of Tomorrow 499er tournament. Then, in consideration of health concerns and safety for our members, SummerFest was cancelled, and then - like dominoes - the Labor Day, FallFest, and Central States Tournaments fell off the calendar. That meant we had to renegotiate with those facilities where we had previously signed contracts.

In regard to scheduling tournaments, 2021 may not be any better than 2020. This year, as you're probably aware, the ACBL has cancelled all sectionals and regionals through April, as well as the sanctions for any remaining Non-Life Master Tournaments or other bridge tournaments through April.

At the beginning of 2021, the CCBA board members were hopeful that in May we could have our Stars of Tomorrow tournament, which is a popular event with non-life masters; however, we have decided not to go forward with that tournament. If the safety of the players should no longer be a concern due to the vaccine, we may try to hold that tournament this fall. We will not schedule that tournament, or any other, if there are any health concerns.

Meanwhile, due to cooperation between the ACBL and Bridge Base Online, bridge games are available online. I'm sure many of you have found the site and have adapted. There are many options. For example, you can play with robots, against other people, for fun or for masterpoints, and can even earn masterpoints in club games and at tournaments. Although many of us enjoy the online games, there's really no substitute for sitting across the table from your partner and your opponents.

Some players have expressed concerns about the possibility of cheating. The ACBL records every call and every play, and there are automatic surveillance tools to alert the game operators of potential cheating. If a player is caught cheating in an ACBL sanctioned game, that player will be barred from BBO and may be subject to discipline by the ACBL.

An important part of tonight's business is electing five directors to the CCBA Board. There are 15 directors, with five terms expiring each year. This year my term and the terms of Mark Friedlander, Loring Knoblauch, Phil McPeck, and Joe Stokes expire. Due to other obligations, Mark and Phil decided not to seek election. The new nominees to the board are Bill Anspach and Phyllis Bartlett. Following the Annual Meeting, the board will meet to choose its officers.

Tom Dressing
Unit 123 2021 President

2021 CCBA Officers/ Board Members

President
Tom Dressing

Vice President
Mark Stein

Treasurer
Joe Connelly

Secretary
Jan Churchwell

District 13 Director
Suzy Subeck

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Bill Anspach
Phyllis Bartlett
Jim Diebel
Todd Fisher
Guy Franklin
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Steve McConnell
Jamie Rubenstein
Joe Stokes

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DeMaris Johnson

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Mini-McKenney Winners

The Mini-McKenney winners are the CCBA players who earned the most masterpoints in the category in which they started the year. L. James Phillips (pictured at right) won in the 10,000+ category. The winners are as follows.



Category	Winner	MPs Earned
0-5	Jack Regan	63.43
5-20	Peter Bush	212.13
20-50	Joy Sweet	81.62
50-100	Shelley Johnson	83.36
100-200	Kunal Pujara	151.89
200-300	James Sturtevant	163.57
300-500	Aleksandar Lishov	199.77
500-1000	Judi Katz	245.29
1000-1500	Paul Prez	194.34
1500-2500	Stephen Donahue	816.93
2500-3500	Tom Fogarty	429.37
3500-5000	Kendra Bridges	247.09
5000-7500	Craig Allen	685.60
7500-10000	Amin Hakim	407.33
10000+	L. James Phillips	473.72

Helen Shanbrom Ace of Clubs Winners

The award is given to the person in each category who won the most masterpoints in Unit 123 club games during the previous year. Pictured is Craig Allen, who won the 5000-7500 category. The winners, the categories in which they won, and the number of masterpoints they earned during the year are listed below.



Category	Winner	MPs Earned
0-5	Jack Regan	63.43
5-20	Peter Bush	179.0
20-50	Joy Sweet	79.59
50-100	Shelley Johnson	83.36
100-200	Kunal Pujara	123.70
200-300	James Sturtevant	145.41
300-500	Donald Ferris	155.89
500-1000	Judi Katz	220.21
1000-1500	Edward Margulies	182.54
1500-2500	Stephen Donahue	609.83
2500-3500	Tom Fogarty	302.21
3500-5000	Sedar Ogut	177.61
5000-7500	Craig Allen	526.76
7500-10000	Amin Hakim	341.03
10000+	L. James Phillips	384.45



2021 CCBA Board of Directors

Pictured top row, left to right: Bill Anspach, Phyllis Bartlett, Jan Churchwell, Joe Connelly, Tom Dressing, Loring Knoblauch, Jim Diebel. Bottom row: Todd Fisher, Guy Franklin, Steve McConnell, Jamie Rubenstein, Mark Stein, Joe Stokes, and Suzi Subeck.

Bridge, a lifelong activity, for new CCBA board members

Phyllis Bartlett, a bridge teacher and director, said that she joined the board “because bridge has given me so much pleasure over the years that I feel like it is my turn to give back to the game.”

Prior to the pandemic, she was directing the two games she co-owns with Daryl Novack, as well as other games owned by Daryl and at games owned by Tom Dressing.

“It is different being a director at BBO club games. I miss being at the table and being with people. We try to make it as personal as we can by chatting with players, but it’s not the same.”

“I believe there may be fewer competing on BBO than played at club games due to the technology issues. Those who do play on BBO are playing as often or more than they previously did. It has been a perfect diversion during the pandemic and filled a lot of hours,” she said.

“Daryl and I are running a virtual game daily. The attendance at those games are smaller than our pre-Covid club games.

“Perhaps we can get back into the clubs by fall. Hopefully, most older people will be vaccinated by then and will be willing to come back.”

Phyllis expects attendance to be less than it was before the pandemic, because people have gotten used to deciding to play at the last minute, and playing online.

As a board member, she is looking forward to being part of the team assisting in the transition back to the clubs by determining policies and guidelines, particularly those pertaining to safety issues such as whether to use screens and how to sanitize bridge hands.

Regarding the future of bridge, she said, “I am not as optimistic as some.

“I feel it is important to get into the colleges and high schools to introduce students to the game.

“As a bridge teacher for the past 12 years, I’ve found that is so much easier to learn the game when you are young.” Phyllis learned to play as a college student. “Bridge became a lifelong activity - both my avocation and vocation.”



Phyllis Bartlett

Also joining the board is **Bill Anspach**, who has played bridge since he was a child. “I learned by watching my parents play. I can’t remember not knowing how to play.”

He was especially active in bridge during his 20’s, “but then I got married and started a family, so I took a break from the game for a couple decades. I think that is a fairly common occurrence.”

Bill retired as a lawyer at a Chicago firm in January, and decided to contribute to the game by serving on the board.

“I am especially interested in getting the young people involved so that bridge will survive. Today the young people have more games and different kinds of entertainment than I did growing up.”

Bill admitted that he enjoys playing online, and he likes the faster pace, “but there is something missing. I like the sociability that you find in the clubs. I hope when the clubs open, that people will support them.”

He believes that players will also support the sectional and regional tournaments, although the number of tournaments and the numbers participating may be smaller.

“I believe people will continue to go to the nationals.”

He often attends the summer nationals, and has been on three or four Grand National Teams at the NABC’s. At a summer national in New Orleans about 10 years ago, he won his division in a three-day Life Master Pairs event.

“That’s my claim to fame at nationals,” he joked.

Regarding night games, Bill said that due to the aging bridge population, those games will not make a comeback.

“When many of us were working, we supported the night games, but today it seems most players are retired. Retired people prefer day games,” he commented.



Bill Anspach

Congratulations Rank Advancers

Junior Master

Ann Devries
Ron Emmerman
William Florida
Monica Gieser
Helen Gretz
David Hoppe
Sherry Jost
James Langan
Anne Lipford
Joe Miller
Katherine Miller
Mary Quirke
Larry Rapsky
Gary Salit
Wilma Schultz
Kaci Smith
Susan Taylor
Kathleen Vondran

Club Master

Sheryl Bauer
Sandra Bishop
Timmie Block
Julie Campbell
Patty Delony
Gabrielle Fischer
Anne Frantzen
Arnold Friedlander
Cynthia Harris
William Kennedy
Sue Ladley
Kathleen Obrien
Suzanne Parks
James Reeder
Jakob Reinke
Lewis Sita
Wilma Smelcer
Diane Spanier
John Spokes

Sectional Master

Mary Anderson
Gregory Benesh
Susan Eck
Marcia Peterson
Brian Scheff
Linda Smoke
Wendy Watkins
Patricia Wood
Richard Wood
Zhao Yan
Gerry Yeggy

Regional Master

Jacob Breneisen
Melissa Graves
Gerry Hart
Jill Hurwitz
Robert Pappano
Patricia Roszkowski
Ginney Qian Ye

NABC Master

Jill Bergner
Charles Burton
Marsha Gentile
Kim Guinan
Gaijin Li
Sid Mitchell
Rene Ortman
Walter Pollack

Bronze Life Master

Lori Anzine
Linda Garmisa
Jay Henderson
Wilma Tunick
Ralph Weinberg

Silver Life Master

Carol Duffy
David Findley
Eric Kraskian
Robert Kucaba

Ruby Life Master

William Cape
Edward Cohen
Janet Nachman



Gold Life Master

Stephen Donahue
Marshall Levine
Marcia Plonsker
Joyce Schneiderbauer

Sapphire Life Master

Frank Redman

Diamond Life Master

Adrienne Cohen

Platinum Life Master

Robert Jackson



CANCELLED

ACBL cancels tournaments planned through April

The ACBL is cancelling the 2021 Spring North American Bridge Championships (NABC) that were scheduled for March 11-21 in St. Louis, MO.

In addition all sectionals and regionals scheduled through April have been cancelled. Also, the ACBL is cancelling the sanctions for any remaining Non-Life Master Tournaments or other bridge tournaments through April where ACBL Tournament Directors are not technically required.

ACBL Executive Director Joseph Jones said that the decision was made “because the coronavirus pandemic continues to surge and the vaccine roll-out is slower than anticipated. Please know the health and safety of our members and our employees is of paramount importance to us.”

He added, “We will continue to offer chances to play and win black, silver, red, and gold master-points on Bridge Base Online. Details of ongoing and special events along with Virtual Clubs can be found at acbl.org/virtual.”

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.”

Use Big Double when overcall not enough



By Ginny and Jeff Schuett

A takeout double shows one of two hand types:

- Shortness in opener's bid suit, and
- About 12-17 points (including shortness), and
- Good support (at least 3+ cards) in all unbid suits

Or any hand of 17+ points with good enough hand and suit to bid his own 5+card suit later or bid NT later with a good 18+ points and a balanced hand.

This is the type of hand where you don't want partner to pass an overcall since you might make game with 4-6 points in his hand and support. This type of double is often referred to as the Big Double.



Let's look at a few examples, many I have watched recently on BBO where the simple overcall got passed out, making 10-12 tricks in most cases.

1. ♠ AQ9 ♥ AKJ974 ♦ Q7 ♣ KQ – RHO opens 1♦, what next? With 21 HCP, seems obvious to double first, and then bid ♥ to show your big hand. Do you expect partner to respond to 1♥ overcall with something like ♠ K43 ♥ Q32 ♦ 8642 ♣ 543?

2. ♠ AKQ1097 ♥ AK97 ♦ 7 ♣ K4 – RHO opens 1♣, what next? Double and jump in spades, with your likely 9+ winners, partner needs little for game.

3. ♠ AK97 ♥ K9 ♦ AKJ1073 ♣ 4 – LHO opens 3♣, passed to you. What next? Double and hope partner bids ♠ or 3NT. Don't just bid 3♦, way too strong.

4. ♠ K107 ♥ AK9 ♦ AJ103 ♣ KJ10 – RHO opens 1♣ - your bid? The big double is also used to show a hand too strong for a simple 1NT overcall. Double and over partner's 1♥ or 1♠ response, you should rebid 1NT showing a good 18-20 balanced hand.

5. ♠ AK7 ♥ 9 ♦ AKQ1073 ♣ A84 – RHO opens 2♥, what next? Double and if partner bids 2♠ or 3♣, try cuebidding 3♥ to show a very big hand and hope partner can bid 3NT.

6. ♠ AQ87 ♥ KJ43 ♦ 7 ♣ AK84 – RHO opens 1♦. Double and if partner bids 1♥ or 1♠, this hand is worth jumping to 3 of his suit. This strongly invites, but partner might have ♠642 ♥9752 ♦J94 ♣1053, so don't jam him into game, just invite.

Always keep in mind the option to make the big double when partner needs very little to make game. And when responding to a hand that makes a big double and bids his own suit or raises yours, keep bidding with a few helpful values.

When partner shows a big hand, you won't have a good hand often, but those 4-8 points and a fit can be enormously valuable to partner.

Ginny & Jeff Schuett – bridge teaching, directing, play phone 847-940-7236
Email=jgschuett2@comcast.net



That's So Funny

The public safety officer came up to a large mob of people outside a department store and asked, "What's happening?" A mall officer replied, "These people are waiting to get the new Barbie doll." The public safety officer shook his head and muttered, "Who can resist a Barbie queue?"

Did you hear about the two silk worms in a race? It ended in a tie!

Someone stole my toilet and the police have nothing to go on.

Having sex in an elevator is wrong on so many levels.

Last time I got caught stealing a calendar I got 12 months.

What do you call a laughing motorcycle? A Yamahahaha.

A friend of mine tried to annoy me with bird puns, but I soon realized that toucan play at that game.

I wasn't originally going to get a brain transplant, but then I changed my mind.

A termite walks into a bar and says, "Where is the bar tender?"

I saw an ad for burial plots, and thought to myself, this is the last thing I need.



ACBL Overhauls Alert Procedure

(continued from P.1)

- A direct cuebid that is not Michaels (showing both majors over a minor, or a major and an unspecified minor over a major) requires an Alert.
- Support doubles and redoubles no longer require an Alert.

An opening 2♣ bid that does not meet the definition of Very Strong requires an Alert. (This tends to apply to partnerships who agree to open 2♣ on hands with good playing strength, but many fewer high cards than normal. See the Convention Chart for the exact definition to see if it applies to you.)

Announcement changes

There were also a few changes to Announcements, with the biggest change for transfers. Instead of saying the word "transfer," the Announcement is now the name of the suit being transferred to. For example, in the auction 1NT-2♥, where partner's 2♥ showed spades, instead of Announcing "transfer," you will now Announce "spades."

This Announcement is used in any situation where your partner is showing length in a specific other suit, as well as for doubles or redoubles that show the next suit up. For example, if you play that 2♠ shows clubs in the auction 1NT-2♠, then you would announce "clubs." However, if you play that 2♠ shows either minor in the auction 1NT-2♠, then you must say "Alert," even if the 1NT opener is expected to always bid clubs.

An example of the rule for doubles is if you play that after a 1♣ opening is overcalled with 1♦, that a double shows hearts (and says nothing about spades as a traditional negative double would), then you would announce "hearts" when your partner doubled. Traditional negative doubles are never Alerted or Announced.

Instead of saying "could be short" for a non-forcing minor-suit opening that might contain fewer than three cards, you must say the minimum number of cards in the suit, as in "Could be one."

If you have the agreement to routinely bypass a four-card spade suit to bid a forcing or semi-forcing 1NT over 1♥, then you add "could have four spades" to the "forcing" or "semiforcing" Announcement. This is most likely applicable to pairs playing Flannery.

Delayed Alerts

The rules for delayed Alerts have slightly changed, with the main difference being that at the end of the auction, the declaring side should explain any delayed Alerts and point out any control bids that were made during the auction without a requirement for the defense to ask about them. By having the declaring side explain these calls without prompting, there should be fewer cases of the person not on lead asking about calls before they should.

Learning curve

In any time of change, there will be people who make honest mistakes trying to apply the new rules, and there are no automatic penalties for making a mistake. Be guided by the principle that the goal of the Alert procedure is to let the opponents know what you play.



2020 Winners of Most Masterpoints

The Unit 123 member winning the most masterpoints in 2020 was Stephen Donahue with 816.93. Placing second was Craig Allen with 685.60. Next was L. James Phillips with 473.72, followed by Tom Fogarty with 429.37, Amin Hakim with 407.33, Robert Kent with 373.38, Ron Smith with 360.59, and Ellen Kent with 325.18 masterpoints.

Online 2020 Races

Category	Winner	MPs Earned
0-5	Lewis Seta	162.95
5-20	Stanley Moreyno	266.04
20-50	Gail Abrams	250.46
50-100	Joe Nolan	227.14
100-200	Daniel Cox	118.32
200-300	Sue Roess	115.72
300-500	Matthew Stahlman	298.92
500-1000	Jeffrey Kintzle	524.82
1000-1500	Dennis O'Dowd	344.80
1500-2500	Charles McDonough	539.40
2500-3500	Betsy DeLange	282.86
3500-5000	Don Lussky	688.15
5000-7500	Judy Zhu	495.22
7500-10000	Daniel Levin	795.81
10000+	David Yang	434.00



Wimpy has an interesting hand for you to tackle



**Winning
with Wimpy**

A friend sent me an interesting hand the other day and I confess that I misplayed it. I gave it to several strong players, and despite the fact that there was nothing extraordinary or extreme about it, nearly all failed to successfully make the contract. Assume you find yourself in 4H in a team game from the South hand.

I don't know how the weak hand ended up declarer, but that is of no importance to the problem. Perhaps the pair was playing a strong club.

♠ A87
♥ KQJ
♦ KQJ9
♣ AJ6

♠ 3
♥ A6432
♦ 8542
♣ T84

The opening lead is the ♥9 and RHO follows with the ♥10. This play should catch your attention. Indications are that trumps are 4-1, and indeed, if your next play is to draw another trump, East will show out, pitching a spade.

This unfortunate turn means that you can't overtake the ♥J with the ♥A to draw the last trump. The only convenient hand entry is ruffing a spade, and if you choose to do this, you will be forced to play the remainder of the hand in No Trump. Once trumps are gone, you will be at the mercy of the spade suit, and they still have the Ace of Diamonds.

So this appears to be a timing play. You are going to have to delay drawing trumps and dislodge the ♦A while you still have a spade control in dummy. What is the opti-

mum sequence to avoid having a diamond ruffed? Is there a better way?

I don't want to prejudice you any further before setting you loose to tackle this problem. Diamonds aren't 5-0 or even 4-1. Can you do better than me and my group of so-called experts that butchered this? Take some time and decide your line of play before reading on.

Nearly everyone I had given this problem to had seen something like it before. They were vulnerable in a side suit (spades), and couldn't draw trump, so a key stopper had to be forced out.

After three rounds of trumps, the King of Diamonds was led. All ducked as expected. Next, the Queen of Diamonds was led and East took the Ace. Now a diamond was returned and ruffed by West. West exited with a spade, and eventually, declarer had to lose 2 club tricks.

They shrugged their shoulders, said that they'd given it their best shot, and lamented that had the hand with 4 trumps also had 3 diamonds, that their play would have succeeded. Did you do better?

There is an amazingly simple solution to this problem that everyone, including myself, had missed. We were familiar with a similar type of problem where we had to delay drawing trump until we had knocked out a key honor in a side suit. If the side suit got ruffed, there was probably no way the hand could be made. It's a common theme.

This problem was similar to those, but not identical, because there was no side suit vulnerability yet.

The Ace of Spades had not yet been forced out, so the opponents could not run the spade suit if and when they got in with the Ace of Diamonds.

While it's true that the only way we can get to our hand is with a spade ruff, there's no law that says we have to lead the Ace of Spades before we do it.

If there hadn't been a singleton spade in our hand, the solution would have been considerably more obvious. We'd play



out dummy's three trumps, ruff a spade, draw the last trump, and knock out the Ace of Diamonds. Easy peasy.

Now we never intended to take 11 or 12 tricks on this hand. We were always prepared to lose three tricks, and which three didn't really matter. Whether a diamond and two clubs, or a diamond, one club and one spade, we never really cared.

Do you now see the solution?

It was staring you in the face the whole time: Draw three trumps, and then duck a spade! The defense has no counter.

If another spade is led, we can ruff in hand and draw the last trump. Then we can force out the Ace of Diamonds in near-complete safety.

We score 5 hearts, 3 diamonds, 1 spade and 1 club. If a club is led from East, they can't get a second club trick.

If a club is led from West, we can duck it and the 10 of Clubs in our hand prevents E from winning cheaply or continuing the suit.

It was an elegantly simple solution that evaded nearly everyone. How did you fare?

The whole hand:

♠ A87	♠ QT962
♥ KQJ	♥ T
♦ KQJ9	♦ AT6
♣ AJ6	♣ K953
♠ KJ54	♠ 3
♥ 9875	♥ A6432
♦ 73	♦ 8542
♣ Q72	♣ T84

USBF win qualifies team for Transatlantic Senior Cup

Below are two hands played by Steve Garner and Jeff Wolfson (CCBA members) in the USBF Senior Team online competition sponsored by the Polish Bridge Federation and the Canadian Bridge Federation in January. Winning the event qualified the team to play in the Transatlantic Senior Cup. The team members were Captain Jeff Wolfson, David Berkowitz, Mike Becker, Bruce Rogoff, Steve Garner, Larry Cohen, Howie Weinstein, and Bob Sartorius.

♠ J109743		N Steve Zolotow
Bd 73, Dlr N	♥ J542	
3NT= E	♦ —	
W Steve Garner	♣ 763	Jeff Wolfson E
♠ Q65		♠ AK8
♥ A		♥ Q8
♦ KQ98763		♦ J1042
♣ 95		♣ K842
	♠ 2	W N E S
	♥ K109763	2♠ P P P
	♦ A5	3♦ P 3NT P
	♣ AQJ10	P P
Andy Goodman S		

The ninth match got off to a rousing start in the Wolfson/Goodman match.

In one room Steve Zolotov preempted 2S, despite his bad suit, lack of high cards and four-card heart holding. Jeff Wolfson passed with his flat 13-point hand. With no support for spades, Andy Goodman also passed. Steve Garner balanced with 3D and Wolfson bid 3NT.

Hoping to take three club tricks as well as the DA and either a heart or spade trick, Goodman led the CQ. Wolfson won the club, drove out the DA and claimed nine tricks for +600 E/W.

It would have been a different story if Goodman led a heart, but the club lead was certainly logical.

♠ J109743		N David Berkowitz
Bd 73, Dlr N	♥ J542	
4♥X+1 S	♦ —	
W John Schermer	♣ 763	Neil Chambers E
♠ Q65		♠ AK8
♥ A		♥ Q8
♦ KQ98763		♦ J1042
♣ 95		♣ K842
	♠ 2	W N E S
	♥ K109763	P 1♠ 1♥
	♦ A5	2♦ 4♥ P P
	♣ AQJ10	X P P P
Larry Cohen S		

In the other room, David Berkowitz passed the North hand. Neil Chambers, East, opened 1C and Larry Cohen overcalled 1H. John Schermer bid 2D and Berkowitz raised to 4H. This was passed around to Schermer.

With 13 HCP, playing a sound opening bid style, Schermer balanced with a double. Chambers had good defense and passed the double. Schermer led the DK. Larry Cohen won the diamond and trumped a diamond in dummy. Cohen led a club to the queen and exited with a spade. Chambers won the SK and played a small heart to Schermer's ace. John exited with a spade. Cohen cashed the CA and led a club to take the rest of the tricks for +690 N/S. 15 IMPs to Wolfson.

♠ Q8643		N Steve Zolotow
Bd 74, Dlr E	♥ KJ6	
3NT+1 N	♦ Q632	
W Steve Garner	♣ 3	Jeff Wolfson E
♠ A75		♠ KJ2
♥ Q8532		♥ A1097
♦ K		♦ 10974
♣ 8652		♣ 104
	♠ 109	W N E S
	♥ 4	P 1♠ P 1♠*
	♦ AJ85	P 3NT P 3♠
	♣ AKQJ97	P P
Andy Goodman S		

On the following board, Wolfson's team gave back most of what they'd just won... Goodman/Zolotow bid to 3NT on a straightforward auction after Goodman opened 1C and rebid 3C on the South hand. Wolfson had to choose a red suit to lead. He chose the DT which was ducked to Garner's king. Steven switched to the HQ, covered by the king and won by Wolfson's ace. Jeff continued hearts and declarer claimed ten tricks for +630 N/S.

At the other table, Larry Cohen opened a strong 1C bid. Berkowitz responded 1S showing game forcing values and a five-card or longer spade suit. Cohen's 2C and Berkowitz's 2D were natural. Cohen's 3H bid was a splinter and 3NT ended the auction.

Since North had shown natural diamonds and spades, Neil Chambers led the H9 to West's queen and declarer's king. Berkowitz took the diamond finesse. Schermer won the DK and E/W cashed four hearts and three spades defeating 3NT by four tricks for a score of -400 N/S. 14 IMPs to Goodman.

W	N	E	S	
P	1♠*	P	1♠*	→ W=Schermer
P	2♦*	P	2♣	N=Berkowitz
P	3NT	P	P	E=Chambers
P				S=Cohen

Learn how and when to use splinter raises

The splinter bid is a useful addition to any pairs' bidding arsenal. It is a specialized type of raise that sometimes allows a partnership to bid a game or slam that might otherwise be missed. A splinter raise is an unusual jump that shows four-card or longer support for the last bid suit, game-going values and shortness (a singleton or void) in the suit in which the jump occurred. For example:

Opener	Responder
1♥	4♣

Responder shows at least four hearts, opening values (approximately; more on this later) and club shortness.

How can you tell which jumps are splinters? They're usually defined as any new-suit response higher than a jump raise. That means that after a 1♥ opening, 3♠, 4♣ and 4♦ are all splinter raises, each showing a different singleton or void. After a 1♠ opening, 4♣, 4♦ and 4♥ are all splinter bids.

Why are these bids useful? Let's look at an example:

Opener	Responder
♠ A K 6 5 4	♠ Q 10 9 8 7
♥ K Q 6	♥ A 5 4 2
♦ 8 6 2	♦ 5
♣ A 6	♣ K Q J

After opener begins with 1♠, responder bids 4♦. From opener's point of view, this is good news. She knows that her partner has at most one diamond, making it safe to explore for slam. Why? Opener doesn't have to worry about the three low diamonds in her hand.

Whether opener uses Blackwood or cuebids, 6♠ is easy to reach and almost certain to succeed. Notice that the partnership has a combined total of only 28 points, far less than the textbook 33 points suggested for bidding a small slam.

If responder had splintered in a different suit (hearts, for example) opener should take a more pessimistic view of things and settle for game only.

How strong does responder need to be to make a splinter bid? Partnerships may, of



course, define them as they please, but many players have found that restricting responder to 13 to 15 points (which includes distribution) makes it easier for opener to know what to do. With a weaker hand, other types of raises are available to responder. The same is true for stronger hands.

Opener may make a splinter bid as well. Here's an example:

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

After 1♦ by opener, responder bids 1♠. Opener then jumps to 4♥, a splinter bid. What does it mean when opener uses this type of jump? It shows a fit for responder's suit (at least four cards), an excellent hand (remember, responder could have a minimum hand, as in the example) and shortness in the bid suit.

Responder will retreat to 4♣ after the 4♥ splinter, but will be pleased when he

sees the dummy. With only 23 combined HCP, the spade game is a virtual lock, and 11 tricks are possible if the club finesse works.

Note that if splinters weren't being used on this deal, opener might have rebid 3♠. Responder, with such a weak hand, would certainly have passed, and the good game would have been missed.

Can you use splinters after a 1♣ or a 1♦ opening? Yes, as long as you discuss this with partner. After a 1♣ opening, 3♦, 3♥ and 3♠ would all be splinter bids. If opener starts with 1♦, 3♥, 3♠ and 4♣ would be splinters.

There are other applications for splinters in different auctions. Consider this:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
2♥	3♠

Since the partnership has already agreed on hearts, should 3♠ be a natural bid? Many partnerships believe that it should not. Instead, they treat it as a splinter raise, showing game-forcing values and spade shortness.

Remember, you must discuss this treatment with partner. It's important to specify the strength of splinter raises as well as whether they can be used in other constructive auctions such as the last example.



From rock stars Imagine Dragons to Microsoft founder Bill Gates, players of all generations and walks of life enjoy the trick-taking game of bridge.



BBO popular, but miss in-person club games

Although online games appear to be working well and have become part of the daily routine in the homes of many players and club managers in Unit 123, players interviewed say they miss the personal contact experienced at conventional club games.

One of those is Judy Isenberg, of Highland Park, who plays at Temple Jeremiah in Northfield.

“BBO is a life saver for me, but I am not a happy camper at the loss of in-person club games. I wear a mask, do all the right things and am a good girl, but I fear in-person club play could be years away.”

Daryl Novick, owner with his wife Rita, of the Ace of Clubs in Northfield, said, “2020 sucked. Lots of our club players were lost, and while the games we run online are fun and time consuming, they are not profitable.”



Daryl and Rita Novick

Looking ahead, Daryl said that he hopes to stay healthy, get a vaccine, and get back to running a great club. “I just want to return to friendly competitive in-person bridge, because life is too short to sit at home in front of a computer.”

Daryl said he spends most of his time at home, where he plays online bridge. “We venture out just to go to the grocery store or gas station, or to take a walk in the neighborhood.” While home, he plays online bridge.



Jim and Georgann Humphrey

despite the pandemic, which is changing our lives in major ways and in other ways, not at all.”

Jim and Georgann Humphrey, of Highland Park, remain upbeat about the game’s future in Chicago

Georgann said her schedule, which includes two daily BBO games - one afternoon and one evening, “are just about right.” She added that the alternative would have been “to clean closets, and who wants to do that.”

“Jim (an Emerald Master) matches his daily schedule to suit all of his partners, like he has always done,” Georgann said. “He’s now in bridge heaven with three games a day except on Sunday, when he leaves time for a sports event.”

The couple wonders if people will return to the clubs when it is safe to do so.

Mary O’Donnell, of Lake Forest, said that several of her cohorts in a Zoom group of north suburban players have debated the issue with some saying that they do not miss the in-person games, and do not expect to return to the clubs. Mary, however, said that she greatly misses being with friends at the table on a regular basis.

She enjoys chatting online with bridge friends in a twice-a-week “Virtual Cocktail Party” via Zoom. But like others, Mary also finds that online bridge “has saved my life.”

Jerry Scholle, manager of the Lawson Bridge Studio, is tracking the impact of the virus on seniors playing the game. Jerry, a retired quality assurance manager, has drafted a new article entitled, “Contract Bridge Game: A Good Game for Seniors’ Mental Health.”

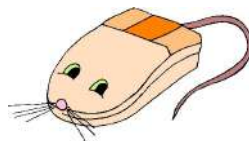


Jerry Scholle

He said that the article focuses “on my statistical studies of bidding made on 17, 400 bridge hands using a convention card system.”

The large number, he explained, is because of the small occurrences of the many bids and their nuances by position during individual rounds.

(Article submitted by Jamie Rubenstein)



ACBL 2021 SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY

13-14 Valentine’s Weekend

Upgraded masterpoints awards in Virtual Clubs

18-21 Hollywood Magic

Regionally rated events

22-28 Educational Foundation Week

Upgraded masterpoints awards in Virtual Clubs

MARCH

6-8 Spring 2021 NABC Robot Individual

NABC Robot Individual tournament

11-21 Spring 2021 North American Online Bridge Championships (NAOBC)

Knockout event and pair event

22-28 Stardust Week

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

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.



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	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876)	
Monday	6:30 pm	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	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876)	
Wednesday	6:30 pm	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	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876)	
Thursday	6:30 pm	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 las year)
Saturday	10:10 am 1:00 pm	Jeremiah and BJBE (vacb162636)	
Saturday	12:15 pm	Chicago DBC and Lawson (private message ChicagoDB) (vacb270876)	
Saturday	6:30 pm	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	
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)	

