

# TABLE TALK

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

VOL. 64 No. 3

FALL 2023

## SEMBA ROARS INTO ACTION

Welcome to the Southeast Michigan Bridge Association, SEMBA, Unit 256. SEMBA is the product of the MBA-SOMBA merger and is one of five total Units in ACBL District 12.

SEMBA encompasses the following counties: Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne. SEMBA will continue to host the nine regularly scheduled local tournaments. As a single Unit, SEMBA will be able to offer efficient support for clubs, effective player recruitment and retention strategies, and seamless education and competition opportunities.

In 2023, average tournament attendance in Southeast MI rebounded to over 50% of pre-2020 rates. The MI Bridge Connection also hosted two sold-out events: A Pro/Am game in April, and a memorial game for Grant Petersen in October. Our bridge community is one of the more active in the country, and SEMBA is poised to help pave the way for the future of the game. But, we can't do it without you!

**WE WANT TO  
HEAR FROM  
YOU!**



The SEMBA Board welcomes feedback from all 1400+ members. If you have ideas, suggestions, or other input on Unit activities, please feel free to get in touch with a Unit officer or a club manager.

The Michigan Bridge Association began Table Talk (TT) over 60 years ago. Here, you will find event schedules, educational and humorous bridge content, member achievements, and more. The SEMBA Board is evaluating the costs and benefits of TT in its current format - three issues per year by mail. We invite your input on the value of this publication, the merits of mailing physical copies vs. email, and any suggestions for features, topics, or special issues.

Contact information for SEMBA Board members and the TT editor is on page 18 and the last page.

# FEATURES & COLUMNS

- 1 | SEMBA Roars Into Action
- 4 | Remembering Our Leaders
- 5 | Bridge De-“myth”-ified
- 6 | Arbitration Station
- 6 | Decoding Bidding (answer)
- 7 | It’s Your Bid Expert Panel
- 14-15 | Intermediate/Newcomer Nook
- 16 | A Grand Ole Time
- 19 | MBA Trophy Winners
- 20 | Decoding Bidding

# PEOPLE & EVENTS

- 2-3 | Tournament Schedules
- 3 | New Members & Memoriam
- 4-5 | Unit, District, ACBL News
- 6 | NAP District Qualifiers
- 12 | SEMBA Website
- 13 | SEMBA Club Directory
- 16-17 | New ACBL Milestones
- 17 | Club Manager Contacts
- 18 | SEMBA Board Roster
- 18-19 | Tournament Results

## ***Southeast Michigan Bridge Association’s*** **Michael Graham Ann Arbor Sectional**

**January 27—28, 2024**

**Washtenaw Community College**

**Morris Lawrence Building**

**4800 East Huron River Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48105**

**734-677-5060**

<b>Saturday January 27</b>	Handicapped Stratified Swiss Teams 10:00 a.m.
<b>Sunday January 28</b>	Handicapped Stratified Swiss Teams 10:00 a.m.
<b>Stratified Swiss Teams</b>	<p>All teams compete in the same field, but for masterpoint awards, your score is only compared with others in your stratum.</p> <p>A handicap will be given to B and C teams when they are matched against higher ranked teams. The stratifications and handicaps will be determined as the attendance warrants.</p>
<b>ACBL Regulations</b>	<p>Proof of COVID vaccination is <b>120</b> required to play. Mask requirement will depend on ACBL regulations at time of tournament. Please check the ACBL website for updates on tournament regulations.</p>
<b>Other Information</b>	<p>The <u>Morris Lawrence Building</u> features ample parking, a drop-off area, and accessibility throughout the space. There is a large, open atrium overlooking a pond, and public art gallery adjacent to the playing room.</p> <p>Free coffee and snacks will be provided throughout the day.</p> <p>There will be a break for lunch. Arborland Center and Washtenaw Avenue are nearby with many options.</p> <p>Entry fee: \$12 per person per session</p>
<b>Contact Information</b>	<p><u>Tournament Chairs</u> Jane Gardner: janegard@umich.edu, 248-719-2941 Bob Katz: rkkaa@yahoo.com , 734-657-3091 <u>Partnerships</u> Marcy Toon: mtoon@umich.edu, 734-478-3394</p>

## WELCOME

### **New Members**

Dennis Cavanaugh   Mickey Shield  
Lou Counihan   Patricia Small  
Katherine Daldin   Sue Ver Hage  
Barbara Denman   Christine Zelenock

### **Transfers In**

Sue Fritz   Dale Dallaire  
Michelle Henning   Rod Dallaire  
Judy Lynn   Barbara Gehring  
Robert Olmstead   Jim Spensley  
James Parker

## IN MEMORIAM

*Phyllis Cohn*  
*Connie Griffith*  
*Subhash Gulati*  
*Michael Hermoyian*  
*James Lee*  
*Bruce Ridley*  
*Mary Smith*



## **Valentine Sectional - February 8-10**



The Michigan Bridge Connection, 26776 W 12 Mile Rd, Southfield, MI 48336  
248-356-6254

Sponsored by the Southeast Michigan Bridge Association

### **Thursday February 8**

10:00 a.m.

Stratified Open Pairs (SS)  
Stratified 0-500 Pairs (SS)

2:30 p.m.

Stratified Swiss Teams (SS)  
Stratified 0-1000 Pairs (SS)

### **Friday February 9**

10:00 a.m.

Stratified Open Pairs (SS)  
Stratified 0-500 Pairs (SS)

2:30 p.m.

Stratified Open Pairs (SS)  
Stratified 0-1000 Pairs (SS)

### **Saturday February 10**

10:00 a.m.

Bracketed Swiss Teams\*  
Play through

\*All teams are divided into two or more brackets based on the average masterpoints of each team. Each bracket is a separate event with its own masterpoint awards. The purpose of bracketing is to establish groups within which each team is competitive. The number of matches in each bracket is determined by the number of teams in the bracket.

### **Stratifications**

A = 3000+   B = 1000-3000   C= 0-1000

0-500 events will be stratified 0-100, 100-300, and 300-500 or as attendance warrants.

0-1000 events will be stratified 0-250, 250-500, and 500-1000 or as attendance warrants.

Average masterpoints will be used for stratifications.

Proof of COVID vaccination is NOT required to play

All Events: \$12 per person per session

### **Tournament Chair**

Deepak Dighe  
248-345-1444  
[DeepakDigheusa@gmail.com](mailto:DeepakDigheusa@gmail.com)

### **Partnerships**

David Cleveland  
248-229-1968  
[cleveland03@gmail.com](mailto:cleveland03@gmail.com)

# REMEMBERING OUR LEADERS

The SE Michigan bridge community lost two prominent leaders in 2023: Grant Petersen and Posh Gulati. Both strong bridge players, Grant and Posh were also instrumental in creating the vibrant community centered around the Bridge Connection (BC) in Southfield. Grant, as an MBA Board member and co-owner of the BC and Posh, as SOMBA president, contributed to many collaborative efforts that ultimately set the stage for the recent Unit merger. Longtime MBA Board member Dick Temkin recalls:

*In 2013 the BC was looking to move to a new location. Grant approached me with the idea of holding all of the local sectionals at a new, bigger site in Southfield that they would be able to afford with the guaranty of revenue from them. The only problem was that MBA would need SOMBA's approval to hold our tournaments in its territory. After extended negotiations [with SOMBA leadership], in February of 2014 an Agreement was reached to allow this, and all of our local sectionals have been held there since then. Another product of those negotiations was that an MBA sectional would become a Joint MBA/SOMBA one. Working together on the joint tournament was the first step in what eventually resulted in the recent merger of the two Units. Without [these initiatives], none of this*

# SEMBA NEWS & UPDATES

» SEMBA currently hovers around 1400 members, varying seasonally. The unit's active membership is around the 50th percentile among all 289 ACBL units.

» The 2023 Masterpoint Races and Unit trophies will be awarded to former SOMBA and MBA members separately. Winners will be notified in early 2024.

» The annual tournament occurring at the end of June has been upgraded from a sectional to a regional for 2024. The tournament will fall during the weekend of June 21, but the start date is TBD.



The Grant Petersen Memorial Game featured heartfelt remembrances and attracted 36.5 tables worth of players.

*would have occurred. And it's not at all clear that our tournaments would have survived Covid had the BC not been available.*



## DISTRICT 12 & ACBL NEWS

» **Save the date: April 28** - GNT District Finals for Toronto NABC

» ACBL membership continued to decrease in 2023, but at a slower rate than in 2020-2022. Net membership has not increased since 2015.

» Effective January 1, 2024, ACBL member dues will increase from \$49 to \$59 annually.

» ACBL has launched its "Bridge 4 Friends" website. The site offers features to find clubs and teachers, play "minigames" to practice playing and declaring, and access articles and social media, all only a couple of clicks away at: **[www.acbl.org/bff](http://www.acbl.org/bff)**

## Bridge De-"myth"-ified: Ironing Out the Learning Curve

(Beginner/Intermediate)

As advertised in the last TT issue, in 2020 an expert player posted an article on BridgeWinners.com titled: Most Pervasive "Bridge Club Myths" re Bidding? The article garnered hundreds of comments from players around the globe contributing obscure "bridge-isms" that their local players insist are true. In this new TT series, we'll begin breaking down some of these myths:

**1.** *"You can't open 1N with a worthless doubleton."* → You absolutely can, and should! Bidding is a limited language, and can't differentiate a balanced 15-17

count with small doubleton from one without. Compare the following hands:

♠AQ ♥KT87 ♦KJ43 ♣K92 | ♠72 ♥AKT8 ♦KJ43 ♣KQ9

You'd be doing a disservice to your partner if you open one of these hands 1N but not the other. If we do not open 1N, partner needs to be able to assume we do not have a balanced 15-17 count, regardless of our specific honor location.

**2.** *"The best bridge players use a lot of bidding conventions."* → This is by no means true. Many 21st century world championships have been won by pairs with simple systems. Sure, some conventions can solve pesky bidding problems. But using a bid conventionally means we lose something else, so the convention has to be incredibly helpful to be worth it. For instance, using Stayman over 1N openings means that we can never play the contract of 2♣ after partner opens 1N. Stayman is certainly worth the loss, but that isn't always as clear.

The memory strain for remembering conventions is relevant, too, and can zap our mental energy. What good does it do us to go to the effort of using a fancy convention to get to the best contract if we're too tired to play it properly?

» Have you been told conflicting "rules" or do you disagree with the maxims other players are loyal to? Send your examples to the editor at: **[Jarbit24@gmail.com](mailto:Jarbit24@gmail.com)**; Mailing address on back cover.

## NORTH AMERICAN PAIRS QUALIFIERS

Congratulations to the District 12 representatives for the NAP Final at the 2024 Spring NABC in Louisville!

### **Flight A**

*Kurt Dasher - Mike Alioto  
Owen Lien - Zach Wasserman  
Julie Arbit - Christian Jolly*

### **Flight B**

*Sharon Bacon - Ross Richardson  
John Lusk - Sally Lusk  
Arun Desouza - Bob Ondo  
Xiaoping Wu - Song Lin*

### **Flight C**

*James Yi - Tengyun Tony Cao  
Mark Migdal - Shaul Englender  
Paul Kubicek - Asher Howarth  
Gillian Andrews - Mike Andrews*

## ARBITRATION STATION: RULING THE GAME

### **What happens if partner misses an alert in face-to-face bridge?**

In the ACBL, when you make an alertable bid, you are not allowed to know if and how partner alerts and explains it. You must act as though partner alerted properly, even if you know they haven't.

If your side ends up declaring, you must inform your opponents that there was a missed or misexplained alert at the end of the auction. If your side is defending, you must do so at the end of the hand. The opponents may call the director at this time.

## DECODING BIDDING ANSWERS (FROM LAST PAGE)

### SOUTH

♠ 874  
♥ KT76  
♦ AJ2  
♣ J84

None vul  
MPs

<u>WEST</u>	<u>NORTH</u>	<u>EAST</u>	<u>SOUTH</u>
	1♣	1♠	X
2♠	P	P	?

### » How many spades does partner likely have?

The opponents are advertising a spade fit, implying eight total spades. Accounting for our three, partner likely has two.

### » What are partner's two most likely shapes?

2=3=3=5 and 2=4=3=4

Partner has at most two spades, has at most four hearts, and shouldn't have 4+ diamonds after opening 1♣ (unless 4=5 or 4=6 in the minors).

### » What action should you take? Bid 3♣.

At matchpoints, try to avoid letting the opponents play at the 2-level when neither side is vulnerable (unless you have good reason to think you're beating it). So, you definitely want to act here.

Bidding 3♣ gets us to our club fit if partner is 2=3=3=5; partner will correct to hearts with 2=4=3=4. Making a takeout double isn't unreasonable, but implies a stronger hand and/or shorter spades.

# It's Your Bid

The TT Expert Panel welcomes former SOMBA members Mike Crane, Debra Eaves, Jerry Grossman, and Christian Jolly to the updated SEMBA panel. Thank you to all panelists for their participation!

Scores are determined based on how many panelists bid the same way. Readers, feel free to email or mail in your responses for the next issue to compete. The winning panelist and reader after the next three consecutive issues will receive a free session at the Motor City Regional in October 2024.

## PANEL SCORES

Brenda Bryant.....500  
Joe Chiesa.....490  
Bob Katz.....480  
Irv Rosenstein.....480  
Dick Temkin.....480  
Debra Eaves.....470  
Marty Hirschman...470  
Myles Maddox.....470  
Jerry Grossman...460  
Bob Webber.....460  
Willie Winokur...460

Kurt Dasher.....450  
John Koschik.....450  
Jonathan Fleischmann...440  
Christian Jolly.....440  
Owen Lien.....430  
Mark Bendure.....420  
Linda Perlman.....420  
Gene Benedict.....410  
Mike Crane.....380  
Morrie Kleinplatz...370

## READER SCORES

Neil Manley.....420  
Paul Chirgwin.....400  
J. Morris Swiger.....400  
David Graff.....390

## HOW THE PANEL VOTED

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Mark Bendure	X	5♣	X	3N	2♠
Gene Benedict	3♣	4♣	2♦	5♦	2♠
Brenda Bryant	P	5♣	P	5♦	2♠
Joe Chiesa	P	4♠	P	5♦	2♠
Mike Crane	3♣	3♥	2♥	4♣	2♣
Kurt Dasher	P	3♠	X	4♣	2♣
Debra Eaves	2♠	3♠	P	5♦	2♠
Jonathan Fleischmann	2♠	3♥	X	4♣	2♠
Jerry Grossman	P	5♣	P	4♣	2♣
Marty Hirschman	P	5♣	P	3N	2♠
Christian Jolly	P	3♥	X	4♦	2♠
Bob Katz	P	3♥	X	5♦	2♠
Morrie Kleinplatz	3♣	4♥	2♦	4♥	2♠
John Koschik	P	4♠	P	6♦	2♠
Owen Lien	2♠	4♠	P	5♦	2♣
Myles Maddox	P	3♠	P	5♦	2♣
Linda Perlman	P	3♣	2♥	5♦	2♠
Irv Rosenstein	P	3♠	X	4♣	2♠
Dick Temkin	P	3♠	2♦	5♦	2♠
Bob Webber	P	4♠	2♦	4♣	2♠
Willie Winokur	X	5♣	P	5♦	2♠

## 1. IMPs. None Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠T9832 ♥6 ♦2 ♣QT7543

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

	1♦	1♥	P
2♥	P	P	?

*This problem was submitted by a panelist who encountered it in an expert team match. Most panelists passed, even at a vulnerability that favors bidding. Many were worried about a misfit with partner, and some mentioned that they'd have bid 1♠ over 1♥. On this deal, North's hand was:*

♠AKJ6 ♥K853 ♦AT9 ♣K2

*In the match, both North players passed, but others may choose to double back in.*

Action	Votes	Score
P	13	100
3♣	3	70
2♠	3	70
X	2	60

**Bob Katz (P):** *Partner chose not to bid over 2♥. He may have 4 hearts together with some diamond length. They have at fewest 22 points, maybe more.*

**John Koschik (P):** *Partner may have as many as nine red cards. This could be an adverse double part-score deal, but that's no different than going for 300. I would bid 2♠ at MPs. DBL is dangerous because it might be left in.*

**Irv Rosenstein (P):** *Maybe we have a part-score in a black suit,*

*but likely a big misfit, with partner 4-5 in the red suits.*

**Dick Temkin (P):** *Not enough to bid and it's hard to imagine this is our hand when partner couldn't take a second call.*

**Mike Crane (3♣):** *if I bid 2♠ can't get to clubs; 3♣ allows me to get to spades over 3♥.*

**Debra Eaves (2♠):** *If they have a fit then we have a fit. I didn't make a negative double originally, so bidding 2♠ now shows five spades and very few points.*

**Owen Lien (2♠):** *Partner is marked with 18-19 balanced (or nearly so). I can bid 2♠, and this can't just be a lot of spades. I didn't make a weak jump shift on the first round, so I must have another place to play in case partner is 1=4=5=3 or 1=4=4=4.*

**Willie Winokur (X):** *Opener has Heart length and 17/18 points. Their Hearts are 5/3 (advancer did not jump raise/mixed raise). Points feel like 12/13 to 7/8. My original pass showed too weak to negative double or bid 1♠. So, a penalty pass is unlikely unless he is looking at 6 solid tricks. I think the final contract will be clubs unless opener is 4=4=3=2 with 18.*

Editor's note: Kudos to Willie for correctly calling out North's hand!

## 2. MPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠void ♥K9732 ♦J94 ♣KJT72

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

			P
1♠	2♣	2♠	?

*This problem netted a near record*

number of unique responses. Many raised clubs, but this ranged from a simple 3♣ raise to a 4♠ splinter. Others felt it was important to introduce the hearts. An advantage of jumping in clubs is that it can leave the opponents guessing. More descriptive bids, such as a splinter or showing hearts, may better help partner evaluate what to do if the auction progresses to a high level.

Action	Votes	Score
5♣	5	100
3♠	5	100
3♥	4	90
4♠	4	90
4♥	1	60
4♣	1	60
3♣	1	60

**Mark Bendure (5♠):** *Could be a make or a good sacrifice. Now let the villains guess.*

**Marty Hirschman (5♠):** *Normal action.*

**Debra Eaves (3♠):** *Bidding 3♣ would be too weak for the strength of this hand and 3♥ doesn't show our fit in clubs [...] Choices are now 3♠ to show a strong raise of clubs or 4♠ to show a splinter. I hate to punish partner so I vote for 3♠ and leave the decision of bidding 5♣ to partner should they bid 4♠.*

**Jonathan Fleischmann (3♥):** *A former partner of mine used to describe this as a fit-showing non-jump, characterized by the idea that such a bid by a passed hand could be justified only by some fit for partner's suit.*

**Christian Jolly (3♥):** *Over 3N, I plan to bid 4♠. At MPs you can't*

*afford to miss a heart fit.*

**Joe Chiesa (4♠):** *Although 5♣ may be superior. Hoping partner will know what to do if they say 5♠.*

**John Koschik (4♠):** *It's possible that it's right to bid 6♣ over 5♠, and this seems like the best way to tell partner about that.*

**Morrie Kleinplatz (4♥):** *I expect to be alone in bidding this, but I think it is bridge logic to have this be a fit jump rather than a splinter.*

**Linda Perlman (3♣):** *For now. I doubt auction will end here. Maybe I'll know better next time. Partner probably doesn't have 4♥.*

**3. MPs. E/W Vul. SOUTH holds:**

♠Q85 ♥76 ♦AT953 ♣Q94

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			P
P	1♥	P	1N
2♣	P	P	?

*The editor faced this divisive problem at a local club game. Many panelists passed, eyeing a likely misfit and slow, defensive values. Others balanced with a double, which implies this shape having already denied 4+♠ and 3+♥. Still others balanced into a red suit, hoping to either make or go -1, a small price if the opponents are making 90 or 110 in clubs.*

Action	Votes	Score
P	9	100
X	6	90
2♦	4	80
2♥	2	60

**Brenda Bryant (P):** *Partner is in third chair and doesn't have to have much, my RHO could have trap in hearts...*

**Joe Chiesa (P):** *I have 8 flat with no known fit opposite a third seat opener. Thinking about it is an overbid.*

**Jerry Grossman (P):** *No reason we can make anything, and they might go down. My guess is that the panelists will go for double.*

**Owen Lien (P):** *Partner didn't make a takeout X. Opps are vul against not, and I have a death holding in clubs (one where we might lose the first 3 tricks).*

**Willie Winokur (P):** *Plus 100 should be OK.*

**Kurt Dasher (X):** *Maximum and tolerance for all suits, and if partner can sit for penalty that will work.*

**Christian Jolly (X):** *Partner should expect almost exactly this hand. I don't play penalty doubles under the bidder, I can't have four spades, can't have three hearts.*

**Bob Katz (X):** *I wish I had a slightly better hand but I do have the right distribution.*

**Gene Benedict (2♦):** *Since I am not vulnerable, I can take a chance here.*

**Dick Temkin (2♦):** *-50 beats -90!*

**Bob Webber (2♦):** *I think W has done the right thing.*

#### 4. MPs. N/S Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠K ♥A ♦AKT9864 ♣A874

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1♠ 3♦\* 3♠ ?

\*Weak

No set of panel problems is complete without a "freak" hand. Many made a practical bid of 5♦, which may make depending on the clubs, and forces the opponents to guess what to do at the 5-level. Others showed the club suit on the way to bidding more, and a couple of "heros" in the bunch chose 3N, hoping the ♠K was enough of a stopper.

Action	Votes	Score
5♦	10	100
4♣	6	90
3N	2	70
4♥	1	60
6♦	1	60
4♦	1	60

**Gene Benedict (5♦):** *This could be a double game swing. All partner needs is a doubleton club.*

**Brenda Bryant (5♦):** *May have slam, but I really want to play the hand not defend...so let them guess and make it look like I'm guessing.*

**Joe Chiesa (5♦):** *Probably playing 5♦ or defending 5♠. 4♣ culls the right lead when we defend but 5♦ better forestalls 5♠. 6♦ is too hard to find.*

**Jonathan Fleischmann (4♣):** *I'm hoping partner can cuebid a club singleton to justify bidding a diamond slam. If not, I'll settle for 5♦.*

Table Talk



**Jerry Grossman (4♣):** *I will bid 5♦ next, and probably bid 6♦ over 5♠. If partner gets very excited after my game try, then I suppose I might bid 6♦ freely.*

**Mark Bendure (3N):** *This probably won't get a lot of votes, but it is one of those MP hands calling for a bad bid at a good time. I'm betting that LHO has the A of spades and won't lead it. [...] There is some risk and I will look like a fool if they run the first 5 or 6 spade tricks, but I think that the odds are on my side. Two tops and one bottom make for a great matchpoint score.*

**Marty Hirschman (3N):** *Can't resist going for the top here, which I will get pretty much whenever LHO has the ace of spades, as is likely. (Ready to congratulate them if he/she leads it.)*

**Morrie Kleinplatz (4♥):** *Again, I expect to be alone in this bid. My reason is tactical. Our most likely result is 5♦ making 5. If I bid 5♦ directly, or 4♣ along the way, their likely double fit will prompt them to sacrifice. I want to give them the wrong impression so that they will leave me there, or perhaps even double me.*

**John Koschik (6♦):** *First, it's just possible that slam is cold. Partner could have a singleton club or king-doubleton. Also, I have real concern over our ability to beat 5♠. The opening lead will be a diamond that gets ruffed (even a ruff-sluff is possible). Declarer will pull trump (or at least fell my king) and lead a heart. I'm back in with nothing good to lead.*

## 5. MPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠A63 ♥void ♦QJT85 ♣87543

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	1♠	P	?

*A simple evaluation problem: Most panelists showed a simple raise here, but some viewed the hand as a limit raise for spades.*

Action	Votes	Score
2♠	16	100
2♣	5	70

**Marty Hirschman (2♠):** *With just three trump, the void is only worth 2 or 3 points. Also, partner rates to be short in diamonds, so QJ will have limited value. No reason to stretch at matchpoints.*

**Christian Jolly (2♠):** *These hands always play worse than you think. Voids are infinitely more useful in a 9-card fit. Here they just lead trumps twice and partner's four heart losers blow up in our face.*

**John Koschik (2♠):** *I don't think my void justifies thinking I have a limit raise.*

**Bob Webber (2♠):** *Nice hand, but partner has lots of hearts to deal with. By the way, E has 4+ hearts. Why no negative double? Opener or partner has a good hand.*

**Mike Crane (2♣):** *Looks like a limit raise to me*

**Owen Lien (2♣):** *Hand is worth a limit raise so that's what I'll show.*



## Spring 2024 Hands

### 1. IMPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠J9832 ♥6 ♦KQT7 ♣752

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
P	1♠	P	?

### 2. IMPs. None Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠JT97654 ♥A42 ♦void ♣A98

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			?

### 3. MPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠5 ♥A3 ♦AQT ♣AKT9873

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	P	P	1♣
	P	P	?

### 4. MPs. E/W Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠KJ6432 ♥void ♦KJ72 ♣AQ8

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
P	2♥	P	2♠*
P	3♣	P	3♦
P	4♣	P	?

\*6+spades

### 5. MPs. N/S Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠8 ♥KQJ6 ♦QJT754 ♣QT

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
P	P	P	?

Readers, submit responses by Feb 11

Email & mailing addresses on  
back cover

## SEMBA Website Updates

Looking for a  
**face-to-face or virtual  
club** to play in?

Want to see your and  
your friends' names in  
lights for reaching  
**new masterpoint  
ranks?**

Seeking the **schedule**  
or a **partner** for an  
upcoming  
tournament?

For all this and more, visit:

[www.bridgewebs.com/  
sembaunit256/](http://www.bridgewebs.com/sembaunit256/)

**Coming in 2024\*:  
Table Talk Special Issue  
“Taking the Lead”**

All about leading at  
Trick 1 and beyond

\*Pending continued SEMBA  
support for TT

# SEMBA CLUB DIRECTORY

No MP restriction unless otherwise noted  
See page 17 for Club Manager contact info

## **Ann Arbor:**

- Ann Arbor BC: 2114 Pauline, 48103; Ray Gentz | **Wed: 7pm**
- Ann Arbor City Club: 1830 Wastenaw Ave, 48104; *Invitational*; Ronnie Meade | **Mon, Tue, Fri: 1pm**  
Julie Grygotis | **Thu: 1pm (0-499)**
- Burns Park: 1320 Baldwin, 48104; Matthew Evett | **Thu: 12pm**

## **Bloomfield Hills:**

- Mackinaw BC: 190 E Long Lake, 48304; *Invitational*; Josie Doherty | **Wed: 1pm**
- Mid Week BC: 38651 Woodward Ave, 48304; Anthony Faint | **Wed: 11am**
- Winners Bridge: 38651 Woodward, 48304; Dave Fletcher | **Mon: 11am**

## **Clinton Township:**

- Bridge Central: 17200 Dove St, 48304; Victoria Vallone | **Fri: 11am (Open)**  
**Tue: 11am (0-2500)**

## **Dearborn/Dearborn Heights:**

- Ford DBC: 3640 Madison St 48126; www.facebook.com/FordBridgeClub  
Ellen Silverest | **Tue: 6pm**
- Eton Center DBC: 4900 Pardee, 48125 Joyce Kozma | **Wed: 11am**

## **Grosse Pointe/Grosse Pointe Farms**

- Alger Center BC: 32 Lakeshore Rd, 48236; Dave Fletcher | **Tue: 12pm**
- Country Club of Detroit: 220 Country Club, 48236; *Invitational*; Dave Fletcher | **Weds: 12:30, Thu: 5pm**
- Neighborhood Club: 375 Lothrop Rd, 48236; Anthony Faint | **Thu: 12pm**
- War Memorial: 32 Lakeshore Rd, 48236; Anthony Faint | **Mon: 12pm**

## **Highland:**

- Highland DBC: 444 Beach Farm Cir, 48357; Jim Perna | **Fri: 12:15pm**

## **Plymouth:**

- Plymouth DBC: 525 Farmer St, 48170; Jim Perna | **Tue, Wed: 12:30p**

## **Port Huron:**

- Blue Water Bridge Club: 600 Gd River, 48079; www.bluewaterbridgeclubs.com  
Fred Goodell | **Mon: 12pm**

## **Southfield:**

- Michigan Bridge Connection: 26776 W 12 Mile Rd 48034; Mike McDonald  
**Mon-Fri: 12pm; Sat: 12:30pm**  
**Thu: 11am (0-1000)**

## **Southgate:**

- Downriver BC: 14680 Dix-Toledo Rd, 48195; Cono Emanuele | **Tue: 10:30a**

## **St. Clair & St. Clair Shores:**

- St. Clair DBC: 308 S 4th St, 48079; www.bluewaterbridgeclubs.com  
Fred Goodell | **Fri: 12pm**
- Fun DBC: 21800 Marter Rd MI 48080; Jane Hall | **Wed: 12pm**  
**(semi-monthly, 0-99)**

## **Trenton:**

- Trenton DBC: 2700 Westfield 48183; Bob Ondo | **Thu: 6:30pm**

## **Virtual:**

- As of August 1, ACBL members are permitted to play in any ACBL virtual club; Go to Bridge Base Online and click Virtual Clubs then ACBL - North America to find upcoming games
- Contact your local club to inquire about their virtual games

# INTERMEDIATE/ NEWCOMER NOOK

## Bidding: Learning the Language

When learning a new game, one of the hardest parts can be learning its language. In card games, this may include knowing what each card is called (e.g. “king of spades”), what we call a set of cards played by each player in turn (a “trick”), or what it means to “ruff” with a “trump.”

In bridge, the auction introduces a host of vocabulary that isn’t too common in other card games. Bidding is complex and full of integrated rules and exceptions, but learning the language can help streamline some of these principles.

The following are examples of common confusions in bidding language, and how understanding them can simplify bidding overall:

### “Game Forcing” vs. “Forcing”

A GAME FORCING bid tells partner they are not to stop bidding below the game level.

A FORCING bid tells partner they must bid again, but not that we’re necessarily going to game. This is sometimes called “forcing for one round” or “F1.”

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	P	1♠	P
3♣			

→ West’s 3♣ bid is a **game forcing** jump shift. East has only promised about 6+ HCP by responding 1♠. Thus, West shows about 18+ to force to game here.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	1♠	2♠	

→ East’s 2♠ cuebid is **forcing** but does not promise enough to force to game opposite a minimum opening. East is showing 3+ card support in hearts and at least an invitational hand. In this case, West opened at the 1-level, so East’s minimum to invite is around 11 HCP.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♠	P	3♦	

→ Again, East’s bid of 3♦ is **forcing** but does not promise enough to force to game opposite a minimum Weak 2. East is showing at least invitational values. In this case, over a Weak 2, East’s minimum to invite is around 15 HCP.

Internalizing the distinction here can help solidify HCP ranges as opener and responder. Remember to bid assuming partner has a minimum for what they’ve shown. It is up to partner to tell you if they happen to have extras.

### “Distribution points”

#### “Shortness/length points”

Hand evaluation is one of the toughest parts of the game. This is an area where rules are meant to be broken, and it requires a keen eye to know when to do so.

High-card points (HCP) are limiting in how they translate to the strength of a given hand. Consider the following two 10-counts:

♠AKT953 ♥K85 ♦874 ♣3  
♠T953 ♥K85 ♦A87 ♣K43

The first hand has a **6-card suit** and **concentrated honors**. It is a better hand than the second, which is balanced with scattered honors. Yet, they still both add up to 10 HCP.

Many players learn to use “distribution points” to overcome these HCP woes. A common method is to assign a point for each card beyond the 4th or 5th in a suit, or assign 3 points for a void, 2 for a singleton, and 1 for a doubleton.

There are two issues here: First, counting both length and shortness is double counting, because having a longer suit means you will also have a shorter one. Second, these methods overvalue shortness when we don’t know yet if our shortness meshes well with partner’s hand.

There are some useful principles in distribution points; for instance, **having shortness generally helps hands play better**, but not if the shortness is in partner’s long, strong suit. Similarly, **having a 5+ card suit can be good in NT as a source of tricks**. However, this is less true if the suit is something like 86532.

To elevate your game, try to move beyond distribution points. Look for:

- » **Honors clustered in long suits**
- » **Prime honors (A/K) vs. soft honors (Q/J)**
- » **Honors and T/9’s that support each other** vs. being scattered
- » A shape that can provide a **source of tricks** (e.g. ruffing partner’s losers, or running in a NT contract)

These are positive features that help you consider the whole context of a hand and whether you hold a “good” or “bad” 10-count, for instance.

# Cardplay: Counting Practice (Quiz)

Answers: page 17

## NORTH (DUMMY)

	♠ J43
	♥ T953
	♦ Q72
	♣ K94
WEST	
♠ 986	
♥ KJ762	
♦ A93	
♣ Q5	

1. We are West. South opens 1N and everyone passes. We lead the ♥6 to the 3, 8, and declarer’s queen. Declarer plays ♠A, ♠K, and another spade; partner wins the ♠Q and now plays the ♦8. Declarer follows with a small diamond. *How many HCP has declarer shown up with? What should we do now?*

WEST		EAST
♠ 3		♠ AK976
♥ AJ76532		♥ KQT
♦ 5		♦ AQT2
♣ A832		♣ 6

2. Hearts are trumps. *How many winners do E/W have and what are they? What is the plan for declaring?*

WEST	
♠ 86	
♥ 64	
♦ T8543	
♣ AT53	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
P	2♦	2♠	1♥
P	3♥	P	3♦
			4♥

3. *What do you lead?* Page 15

# NEW ACBL MILESTONES

## Junior Master (5)

<i>Arlene Cobau</i>	<i>Ellen Kaufman</i>
<i>Laura Creagh</i>	<i>Lisa Nguyen</i>
<i>Donna Figlik</i>	<i>Mark Nosal</i>
<i>Jennie Fox</i>	<i>Stephen Pierce</i>
<i>Michelle Henning</i>	<i>Jayant Shah</i>

## Club Master (20) ♠

<i>Piyush Desai</i>	<i>Margaret La Feldt</i>
<i>Shaul Englender</i>	<i>Nancy Smith</i>

## Sectional Master (50) ♠♠

<i>Mark Migdal</i>	<i>Karen Stunkel</i>
<i>Stephanie Stanton</i>	

*Cont'd on following page*

# A GRAND OLE TIME

AT THE MOTOR CITY REGIONAL

(Advanced)

The odds of a grand slam making on any given hand are under 3%. This narrows to ~1% for 7N specifically, which translates to a ~23% chance that 7N will make on at least one hand in a set of 26. In the Friday Open Pairs at the Motor City Regional, there were three making 7N contracts across two 26-board sessions. One of them was not a particularly "good" grand (i.e. it is just lucky that it makes), but the other two were both good contracts and reasonable to bid with solid agreements.

A good rule of thumb here is: Don't bid a grand unless you can count 13 tricks on the auction. See the following two hands from the Regional:

**Difficulty:**

Int./Advanced

♠ KQJ2

♥ AJ4

♦ Q3

♣ K986



♠ A8

♥ KQ9652

♦ A72

♣ AJ

WEST

1N

4♥

5♣

7N

EAST

4♦

4N

5N

West opens 1N; East makes a Texas Transfer (6+♥). East asks for keycards, then bids 5N to ask for kings, which also confirms that we have all five keycards and the ♥Q. West can now count 13 tricks: 4♠ 6♥ 1♦ 2♣. West bids 7N rather than 7♥ because it pays better and isn't subject to an unlucky ruff on opening lead.

**Difficulty:**

Advanced

♠ AKJT54

♥ K

♦ A7

♣ AJ73



♠ Q

♥ AQJ4

♦ KJT63

♣ K85

WEST

1♠

2♠

4♣

4N

5♦

6♦

7N

EAST

2♦

3N

4♠

5♣

6♣

7♠

Assume E/W play 2/1. East sets up a game force; West shows 6+ spades. Because jumping takes up precious space in 2/1 auctions, jumps should have very precise meanings. It is useful to play the jump to 3N here denies 2+ spades and shows 15-17 HCP. West now shows their clubs, and East bids 4♣ having already denied 2+ in the suit. West asks for keycards and the trump Q with spades as trump, and learns that East has the following honors: ♠Q ♥A ♣K. West can count 11 tricks (6♠ 2♥ 1♦ 2♣) but this assumes only 9 HCP for East. The honors unaccounted for are the ♥QJ, ♦KQJ, ♣Q. If East has the ♦K (trick #12) s/he still needs 3+ more HCP which would have to include a queen for trick #13. West asks for the ♦K, East shows it by bidding 7♠, and West corrects to 7N.

## Club Manager Contact Info

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## I/N Nook - Counting Practice (Answers)

1. We led a small heart at trick 1, and partner would've played the ♥A if they had it. So, declarer has the ♥AQ and has also played the ♠AK for 13 total HCP. Partner switched to the ♦8 - leading a high card in the middle of the hand implies nothing higher in the suit. So, declarer also has the ♦KJ for 17 total HCP. Partner must have the ♣AJ, so we should win the ♦A switch to the ♣Q to lead through dummy's ♣K.

2. E/W have 13 tricks available: 2♠ 9♥ 1♦ 1♣. We have 7 hearts in the East hand, plus two club ruffs with dummy's hearts (so long as we ruff the clubs before pulling trumps).

3. A diamond - the opponents advertised a diamond fit on the auction. We have the other five, so partner is likely void and able to ruff a diamond lead.

## NEW ACBL MILESTONES

### Regional Master (100) ♠♠♠

*Catherine Gay  
Paul Kubicek*

### NABC Master (200) ♠♠♠♠

*Michael Garcia  
Christi Hoagland  
Cagliyan Kurdak*

### Adv. NABC Mast. (300) ♠♠♠♠

*Mike Andrews  
Norm Kakarala  
Julian Prince*

### Life Master (500) ♠♠♠♠

*David Donegan  
Diana Donegan  
Anthony Faint  
James Ver Hage*

### Bronze LM (750) ♠♠♠♠

*Gay Garcia  
Joel Grossman  
Gerald Wahl*

### Silver LM (1,000) ♠♠♠♠

*Alan Hassoun  
Beth Kordt  
Chun Zhou*

### Ruby LM (1,500) ♠♠♠♠

*Kenneth Geisler  
Dan Sutherland  
Fran Wigod*

### Gold LM (2,500) ♠♠♠♠

*Joan Bentz  
Kerry Lafer*

### Emerald LM (7,500) ♠♠♠♠

*Kurt Dasher*

### Platinum LM (10,000) ♠♠♠♠

*Jonathan Fleischmann*

# SEMBA Board Roster & Contact Info

## Officers

**President:** Steve Jacob  
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**Treasurer:** Dave Fletcher  
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Jane Hall  
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Jean Hellekjaer  
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# APPLE CIDER SECTIONAL RESULTS

## Open Pairs

**Thurs AM:** Gary Luoma - Duaine Benard (60.30%)

**Thurs PM:** Suzanne Stevenson - Rose Burke (63.46%)

**Fri AM:** Alan Hassoun - Gary Boyers (63.76%)

**Fri PM:** Bob Webber - Mike Crane (66.35%)

## Team Games

### Sat:

**Bkt I:** Kurt Dasher - Mike Alioto - Jonathan Fleischmann - Morrie Kleinplatz (77 VPs)

**Bkt II:** Kathy Twomey - Suzanne McIlhiny - Lakshmi Vora - Ellen Silverest (113 VPs)

**Bkt III:** Bob Ondo - Dan Irish - Paul Kubicek - Asher Howarth (87 VPs)

### Sun:

**Flight A:** Jonathan Fleischmann - Julie Arbit - Kurt Dasher - Mike Alioto (103 VPs)

**Flight B:** Victoria Vallone - Barb Ferrera - James Walter - Dave Fletcher (66 VPs)

Timur Aydin - Cristina Tita - Ching-Po Wang - Yanping Zhang (66 VPs)

**Flight C:** Paul Kubicek - Asher Howarth - Bob Ondo - Dan Irish (58 VPs)



# 2023 MOTOR CITY REGIONAL

## Two-Session Swiss Teams

**Tues Flight A:** Steven Winokur - Sheldon Kirsch - Morrie Kleinplatz - Owen Lien (94)

**Tues Flight B:**

Barbara Kalnick - Marilyn Crane - Christi Hoagland - Ann Haycock (61)

Marica Janisse - Moira Escott - Joseph Sabga - Joe Bevacqua (61)

**Tues Flight C:** Duaine Benard - Gary Luoma - Paul Stunkel - Bill Gregg (58)

**Thurs Bracket I:** Mike Curley - Jonathan Fleischmann - Bob Webber - Bob Mendelson (66)

**Thurs Bracket II:** Suzanne Baker - Gary Theis - Joedy Patrick - Katherine Jernigan (93)

**Thurs Bracket III:** Daniel Rose - Ronald Whitney - Alan Hassoun - Gary Boyers (93)

**Sun Bracket I:** Mike Curley - Jonathan Fleischmann - Kurt Dasher - Mike Alioto (69)

**Sun Bracket II:** Suzanne Baker - Gary Theis - Katherine Jernigan - Joedy Patrick (84)

**Sun Bracket III:** James Potter - Dan Irish - Maria Conti - Bill Gregg (71)

## Two-Session Open Pairs

**Mon:** Mike Alioto - Sheldon Kirsch

**Weds:** Kurt Dasher - Mike Alioto

**Fri:** Bob Bitterman-Morrie Kleinplatz

**Sat:** Kurt Dasher - Cono Emanuele

## Two-Session Gold Rush Pairs

**Mon:** John Caldwell - Joseph Reimann

**Weds:** Richard & Wendy Buttermore

**Fri:** Paul Tilly - Mike Roeder

**Sat:** Tracey King - Margaret Carden

## Single-Session Side Pairs

**Tu AM:** J. Morris Swiger-Dave Aderente

**Tu PM:** Nathan Banker-Bill Rouse

**Th AM:** Bob Bitterman-Mark Bendure

**Th PM:** Mercedes Barker-Laura Jones

## Overall Masterpoint Winners

### Motor City Regional:

Kurt Dasher - 109.91

Mike Alioto - 107.70

Bob Mendelson - 80.56

Bob Webber - 72.87

Jonathan Fleischmann - 72.24

Mike Curley - 67.13

### Apple Cider Sectional:

Jonathan Fleischmann - 36.14

Kurt Dasher - 28.37

Mike Alioto - 24.12

Jerry Grossman - 22.57

## Congratulations to the 2023 MBA Trophy Winners:

**Stein:** Bob Webber

**Bluth:** Barb Ferrera

**Winokur:** Cagliyan Kurdak

**Mouser:** Kurt Dasher

# Decoding Bidding One Matchpoint at a Time

(Intermediate)

SOUTH

♠ 874

♥ KT76

♦ AJ2

♣ J84

None vul  
MPs

<u>WEST</u>	<u>NORTH</u>	<u>EAST</u>	<u>SOUTH</u>
2♠	1♣ P	1♠ P	X ?

**You hold the South hand above.  
At this point in the auction:**

1. How many spades does partner likely have?
2. What are partner's two most likely shapes?
3. What action should you take?

***Solution, page 6***

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## TABLE TALK

**Official Publication of the  
Southeast Michigan Bridge  
Association, ACBL Unit 256**

**Julie Arbit**, Editor  
900 W. Maple Rd  
Milford, MI 48381

## Table Talk

Official publication of the  
Southeast Michigan Bridge  
Association, ACBL Unit 256

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## SEMBA Officers

Steve Jacob.....President  
Owen Lien.....Vice President  
David Dursum.....Chairman  
Diane Kosuda.....Secretary  
David Fletcher.....Treasurer

## Upcoming Tournaments

Jan 27-28: Ann Arbor Sectional  
Feb 8-10: Valentine Sectional  
Apr 4-7: Chuck Burger Sectional  
May 13-19: Wolverine Regional

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