

TABLE TALK

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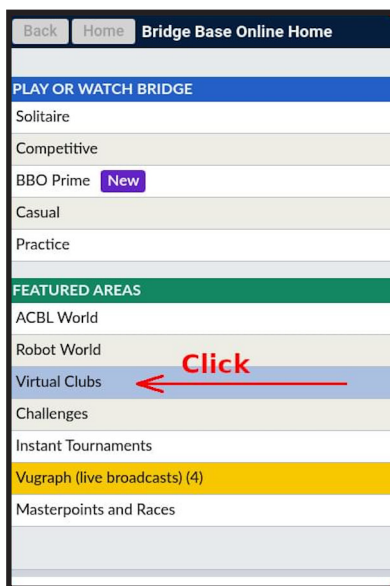
FALL 2020

DARK TIMES

BY DICK TEMKIN
MBA PRESIDENT

As you may know, the ACBL has canceled all tournaments through February, 2021. While this is certainly understandable, it does not make it any easier to realize that we will not have a local tournament until next April, at the earliest. Let's hope that we will have a vaccine and/or effective treatment in time for us to sit down at the table for the sectional scheduled for April 8-11, 2021.

In the meantime, we are reduced to playing duplicate bridge on the computer. As for me, while much better than nothing, it is a far cry from sitting at the table. Having said that, I would encourage all of you to support your local club's virtual game at Bridge Base Online. Your club needs your support and we want to help assure that they are not one of the small businesses that fail to survive the pandemic. An article on how to play at your virtual club is on page 14.



Having lost all but one of our 2020 tournaments and, most importantly, the regional, the MBA board has taken a number of measures to reduce expenses. We are estimating that the loss for 2020 will be about \$2,500, which will still leave us with a balance of about \$33,500. The board is continuing its quarterly meetings on Zoom and a full report will be provided in the next issue of Table Talk.

Please continue to stay safe as we face the seasonal flu season in addition to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis.

TOURNAMENT UPDATES

ACBL has canceled live tournaments through February 2021.

The next possible event hosted by MBA is the Michigan State Sectional to be held in Southfield from April 8-11.

Updates will be announced as soon as possible as the situation evolves.

Didn't receive an emailed copy of Table Talk in September?

Check your ACBL profile to ensure you are subscribed to **electronic communications.**

Reminder: you can access TT on District12Bridge.org under "Newsletters." Want to opt out of paper TT issues? Email:

Jarbit24@gmail.com

Please note, we will omit certain TT features to curtail length until further notice. We will also only send one copy per household going forward.

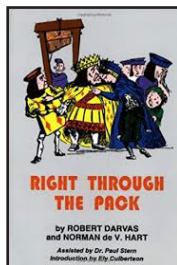
A note on hesitations from the Spring issue: If partner hesitates, you are **NOT** barred from bidding. The onus is on **YOU** to bid only **YOUR** hand, ignoring any inferences from tempo. If called, the director may choose to poll peers to determine course of action.

BOOK REVIEW

BY JULIE ARBIT

Right Through the Pack

by Robert Darvas & Norman de V. Hart



A whimsical take on bridge storytelling, this book vividly sets scenes, peppers us with bridge humor, and expertly relays “cute” hands of

varying difficulty, each featuring a different card in the deck, right down to the ♣2. For the humor and delicate bridge nuance enthusiasts, this will be hard to put down!



POSITION POSTING

Paul Pomeroy, who has held the unit Secretary position for 20 years, will be 80 later this year. He would like to mentor someone willing to assume the duties when he is no longer able to perform them. The position entails three separate responsibilities which can be divided among multiple people: Membership Chair, Tournament Coordinator, and Secretarial duties.

The position has a monthly stipend of \$200 and does not require one to be a Board member. If you are interested in learning more about these duties, please contact Paul at 734-421-0193 or ppommd@aol.com.

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Toon, Allan Tushman

TEST YOUR PLAY SOLUTION

(FROM LAST PAGE/BACK COVER)

IMPs. All Vul. N/S hands:

	♠ 843	
	♥ T42	
	♦ 8742	
	♣ AJT	
♠ T962		♠ 7
♥ 98763		♥ J5
♦ J		♦ AQT9
♣ Q95	♠ AKQJ5	♣ 876432
	♥ AKQ	
	♦ K653	
	♣ K	

Contract: 4♠

Lead: ♦J

Note: This is an ADVANCED problem that illustrates general strategy.

We need to avoid losing two more diamonds. If the remaining four spades divide 2-2, we can cash our club and get to dummy in trumps to shed a diamond loser on the ♣A. But alas, not today.

After winning the heart return, pull two rounds of trump. East shows out. Our only hope now is to be able to pitch a diamond loser on something in dummy. That means we both need to set up a winner in dummy and force an opponent to let us over there. No easy task!

Start by pulling the last trump. Cash another heart, noting the fortunate fall of the Jack from East. Dummy's ♥T is looking better. Now, play the ♣K, overtaking with the Ace from dummy. Lead the ♣J, *pitching the ♥Q* from hand to unblock. As luck would have it, West has the ♣Q and is forced to play a club or heart, both of which lead you to dummy to pitch your diamond losers on the established Tens. It won't always turn out this way, but when you're in a pickle, remember to take ALL your chances before conceding.

WELCOME

New Members

Mk Barkley	Dennis O'Brien
Mary Brown	Kathleen Pustell
James Cook	David Schatz
Molly Fallon	Patricia Schatz
Carla Gutow	Charlotte Stearns
Abdul Khandker	Alexander Vargo

Transfers In

Robert Freeburn
Adam Kind
Shirley Shaw
Greg Sluka
Mark Weiss

IN MEMORIAM

Patricia Becker
Frank Drinan
Richard Menczer
Sherwin Newman
Gerald Peplowski
Mary Anne Zinn

Table Talk

It's Your Bid

Thank you to the readers who submitted answers for this issue - reader responses were up by nearly 50% compared to Spring! Given the cancellation of the 2020 Motor City Regional, *the highest scoring panelist(s) and reader(s) for Spring-Summer 2020 combined will receive a free play at a 2021 MBA tournament of their choice.* The next issue marks a new contest cycle, so be sure to submit your answers! Next issue's hands are listed at the end of the article.

PANEL WINNERS

Chuck Burger
Jonathan Fleischmann
John Koschik
Dick Temkin

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Suzy Burger	Dennis Kasle
Kurt Dasher	Bob Katz
Joe Chiesa	Owen Lien

READER WINNERS

Val Enache

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Irv Hershman
Jerry Jeffries
Neil Manley
George Pope
J. Morris Swiger

CURRENT ISSUE SCORES

Joe Chiesa.....500
Bob Webber.....500
John Koschik.....490
Dick Temkin.....490
Gene Benedict.....480
Brenda Bryant.....480
J. Fleischmann.....470
Dennis Kasle.....470

PANELISTS

Bob Katz.....470
Willie Winokur.....470
Suzy Burger.....460
Kurt Dasher.....460
Don Rumelhart.....460
Mark Bendure.....450
Bob Brent.....450

Chuck Burger.....450
Owen Lien.....450
Myles Maddox.....450
M. Kleinplatz.....440
Marty Hirschman...430
Linda Perlman.....430
Sheldon Kirsch.....410

Neil Manley.....490
Val Enache.....470
Thomas Goodwin...470
J. Morris Swiger...460
Ray Gentz.....450

READERS

Gary Boyers.....450
Jerry Jefferies.....440
George Pope.....420
Kerry Lafer.....420
Dick Bauman.....420
Doris Jefferies.....400

Irv Hershman.....390
R. AnafShalom.....380
Ed Lough.....360
Elie Chidiac.....350
Gerald Wahl.....310
Paul Chirgwin.....290

HOW THE PANEL VOTED

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Mark Bendure	5N	1N	2♥	3♠	P
Gene Benedict	5N	P	2♣	3♠	P
Bob Brent	5♣	1N	2♣	3♠	4♥
Brenda Bryant	3♦	P	2♥	3♠	4♥
Chuck Burger	5N	1N	2♥	3♦	4♥
Suzy Burger	3♦	P	2♥	3♦	4♥
Joe Chiesa	5N	P	2♣	3♠	4♥
Kurt Dasher	4♣	P	2♥	3♠	4♥
Jonathan Fleischmann	3♦	P	2♣	3♦	4♥
Marty Hirschman	5N	X	2♥	3♦	4♥
Dennis Kasle	5♣	P	2♣	3♠	4♥
Bob Katz	3♦	P	2♣	3♦	4♥
Sheldon Kirsch	4♣	1N	2♣	3♦	P
Morrie Kleinplatz	5N	1N	2♣	3♦	P
John Koschik	5N	P	2♥	3♠	4♥
Owen Lien	5N	P	2♥	3♦	P
Myles Maddox	4♣	1N	2♣	3♠	4♥
Linda Perlman	5♣	X	2♣	3♠	4♥
Don Rumelhart	3♦	P	2♥	3♠	P
Dick Temkin	3♦	P	2♣	3♠	4♥
Bob Webber	5N	P	2♣	3♠	4♥
Willie Winokur	3♦	1N	2♣	3♠	4♥

1. IMPs. N/S Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠AT8 ♥AKQT54 ♦KT65 ♣Void

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

P 1♥

P 2♦* P ?

*Game forcing, 4+♦

At IMPs, it is generally more important to get to the right level than the right strain. Here, with such a powerful dummy in diamonds - being able to ruff clubs in the short hand and use the

hearts for pitches - establishing the diamond fit is the priority. Some players may choose to “go slow” by bidding 3♦, leaving plenty of room to exchange information. This is one of the huge advantages of 2/1 - partner cannot pass short of game after the 2/1 response of 2♦. Others may choose a more advanced bid showing club shortness and slam interest (4♣ as a “Splinter” or 5♣ as “Exclusion” asking for keycards OUTSIDE of clubs). Others still will opt to bid 5NT, classically

referred to as “Grand Slam Force” which forces the partnership to at least small slam, and invites a conversation about whether to go to grand slam. With the ability to ruff club losers from partner’s hand, a strong heart suit to pitch any other black-suited losers, a first-round spade control, and partner showing about 13+ HCP with their 2/1 bid, establishing a slam force straight out of the gate is also a good option.

Action	Votes	Score
5N	9	100
3♦	7	90
4♣	3	70
5♣	3	70
2♥	0	30
3♥	0	20
4♥	0	20
2♠	0	20

Joe Chiesa (5N): If I fail to Josephine now and partner raises hearts I may not be able to locate the AQ of diamonds. 3-1 or 3-2♦ and 4-2♥ splits produce a claimer. Less friendly splits may also suffice.

Marty Hirschman (5N): Grand Slam Force. If I beat round the bush with 2♥ and a later raise of diamonds, 5N after that will no longer ask about diamond honors but will be "pick a slam" in the modern style. Alternatively, I could try 5♣ which ought to be Exclusion Blackwood, but that would help the opponents find a spade lead against 6♦. Either way, it's now or never for finding out if partner has ace and queen of diamonds so we can get to 7♦.

Don Rumelart (3♦): Show support with support. Depending on partner's next call, a 5♣ exclusion call will tell me how high we can go.

Willie Winokur (3♦): Let the cue bidding begin.

2. MPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠K42 ♥AT73 ♦9765 ♣AK

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♥	?

Action	Votes	Score
P	13	100
1N	7	80
X	2	60

Borderline problems such as these highlight stylistic differences among experts. Some tend towards avoiding disasters that may ensue if we make an off-shape takeout double (due to the club shortness) or overcall 1NT a bit shy of the typical 15-18 range. Others prefer to “get in on the ground floor” and bid immediately - even if the bid is a small stretch - to avoid having to decide whether to come in later when it may be riskier, or even impossible.

Gene Benedict (P): No place to run if I get doubled in 1N, no place to run if I make a takeout double and partner bids 2♣.

Brenda Bryant (P): Tough, but we are all vulnerable, defending looks better than declaring.

Jonathan Fleischmann (P): I'm loathe to overcall 1NT vulnerable on shaky values, and I'm not fond of offshape takeout doubles. Partner never seems to cooperate. I'll leave that to the Blue Team.*

Owen Lien (P): If NV I might venture a 1NT overcall, but why should I go down in 100's when it might be their turn to go down :)

Mark Bendure (1N): A bit shy in HCP, but it is all Aces and Kings, and the T of hearts probably takes a trick. If I don't get in the auction now, it may be even more difficult later.

Chuck Burger (1N): 10 of hearts sways me. A personality bid. Dbl and pass have their flaws.

Marty Hirschman (X): It is losing bridge to pass in this position with 14 HCPs, so I have to double or bid 1NT. Dbl is safer. If partner shows a good hand we can still move toward game in notrump.

*Editor's Note: The Blue Team is an infamous Italian bridge team from the mid-1900's who were long-time suspected of, and recently found out to be, cheating. One of their hallmarks was making "off-shape" takeout doubles (without support for all other suits) and not getting "punished" by a partner getting carried away thinking they have a fit when they actually do not. For more Blue Team fodder, check out the recent book "Under the Table" by Avon Wilshire.

3. MPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠Void ♥AKJ6 ♦AT9 ♣K75432

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

<u>Action</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Score</u>
2♣	13	100
2♥	9	90
1N	0	20
3♥	0	20
2N	0	20

This hand exemplifies stylistic differences in REVERSES. Some judge the hand to be worth the 16+ HCP guideline to reverse, but with only 15, a ratty club suit, and a void in partner's suit, many choose to go low with a rebid of 2♣. A jump to 3♣ would show ~14-16 HCP with 6+ clubs, but its flaws - the awful club suit and risk of missing a heart fit - are still prevalent.

Bob Katz (2♣): Reversing on 15 is not desirable but in this case not only is your first suit awful but having a void in partner's first bid suit further devalues your hand. A 2♥ rebid by responder should be played as non-forcing so that they may bid 2♥ with any strength 5-4 hand and club shortness.

Morrie Kleinplatz (2♣): Even at IMPS I would not reverse with a void in partner's suit. At MP's it's all about staying plus.

Linda Perlman (2♣): 2 and 1/2 clubs but will go low 2♣ because of club spots and void.

Bob Webber (2♣): *A little heavy, but not enough hand for a reverse. Clubs are not good enough for 3♣.*

Brenda Bryant (2♥): *Tad shy of points (yes I know partner bid spades), but my hearts are beautiful and where I live.*

Chuck Burger (2♥): *Must get pattern going despite spade void in partners suit.*

Suzy Burger (2♥): *A bit of an overbid, but lesser of evils.*

Marty Hirschman (2♥): *6-4 shape and pretty good honor structure promotes this hand into the intermediate-strength category. It would be premature at this point to demote your hand because partner bid your void suit; partner could have xxxx(x) in spades and all valuable cards elsewhere...and even a big fit for clubs or hearts. If partner shows a bad hand (via a Lebensohl 2NT relay or a probably weak 2♠ rebid) we can still land on our feet in 3♣.*

John Koschik (2♥): *Admittedly a stretch. However, 2♣ is as much an underbid as 2♥ an overbid, and the upside of 2♥ is greater.*

Owen Lien (2♥): *A little light in HCP, and spade void rates to be bad. To balance that, the shape is good, aces and kings, and I'm getting to show my shape. I often say "six-four, bid more." Jeff Meckstroth swears by "I'd rather overbid a little now than have to catch up later."*

4. MPs. None Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠K97 ♥64 ♦K32 ♣86543

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♠	P	2♠
P	3♣*	P	?
*Help Suit Game Try (Natural, 3+)			

Action	Votes	Score
3♠	14	100
3♦	8	80
4♠	0	20

Help suit game tries (HSGT) are a staple in modern bidding, especially at matchpoints where it pays much more to stay out of "thin" games, even if they happen to make. Partner's HSGT in clubs usually show a broken, 3+ card suit (e.g. AJ8, KJ3, Q94), seeking a fitting card, or shortness. While we do have five clubs with partner (and thus an 8+ card fit), with no club honors and minimum HCP for the initial raise, it is not enough to zoom directly to game. However, the potential ruffing value in hearts and club fit make a 3♦ "counter-try" fairly attractive.

Kurt Dasher (3♠): *Minimum and no club honors.*

Joe Chiesa (3♠): *Particularly if I am playing 2♠ is a constructive raise (in that instance I have bid my all). My club holding is of dubious value. The form of scoring counsels caution.*

Dick Temkin (3♠): *Five small is no help when partner needs an honor to fill the suit.*

Don Rumelart (3♠): It's MPs, pluses are good. At IMPs, I may bid 3♦ if I thought I needed a board.

Jonathan Fleischmann (3♦): I'm not sure whether my club length will be useful to partner, but my spade king will. I'll let him know about the diamond card as a counter try to help him evaluate.

Sheldon Kirsch (3♦): Maybe these will help.

Owen Lien (3♦): I have the secondary club fit which is definitely a plus. 2 kings and a ruffing value are also nice. However, no club honors is sad. So, will make a counter-try to express where I have some value, and that I'm not hopeless for partner.

5. MPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠KT87 ♥Void ♦AKQ53 ♣AJ96

<u>WEST</u>	<u>NORTH</u>	<u>EAST</u>	<u>SOUTH</u>
	3♥	P	?
<u>Action</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Score</u>	
4♥	16	100	
P	6	80	
3N	0	40	
4♦	0	20	

Another close call at matchpoints - at these colors, a lot depends on partnership trust. When vulnerable, opening 3♥ should show a fairly solid suit (some have agreements like KJT8xxx is the "worst" one could have, for instance). So, playing in game with a void in partner's suit is reasonable. Game in

hearts rates much better than in NT, as we may lack any entry at all to partner's hand. Time and again, though, we see that "going plus" is a tried and true matchpoint strategy.

Bob Brent (4♥): You have the requisite three quick tricks and then some.

Chuck Burger (4♥): I can't expect a side Queen or two for 3NT but pard will have a good suit.

Willie Winokur (4♥): Oh, that is the Queen of Diamonds. Darn.

Gene Benedict (P): If partner has xx AQT8xxx xx xx, he might not even make 3♥. Since we are playing matchpoints, there is no big advantage to bidding under 50% games. If you play in 3N, after attacking diamonds, you may be locked in your hand and forced to lead away from your spades or clubs.

Morrie Kleinplatz (P): You keep giving us these borderline MP decisions. Much depends on partnership style. At first I was tempted to bid 4♥, and I definitely would do so at IMPS. But the void is a problem because of communication. Declarer will have to get to his hand, likely twice, to draw trumps, while preventing the opponents from finding a ruff or simply cashing 4 tricks. Picture partner with xxx, KQJ10xxx, x, Jx Even if they don't lead spades there are plenty of hazards, including a trump promotion if you pitch on the diamonds before forcing out the ace of hearts. The kicker: wouldn't it be great if LHO balances?

WINTER 2020 HANDS

Thank you to our panelists for their time and effort! Readers, submit your responses by November 11 via:

Jarbit24@gmail.com

OR

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

1. IMPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠AT ♥T ♦AJT53 ♣KJ732

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	1♥	P	?

2. IMPs. All Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠Void ♥K ♦AKT42 ♣AKT9643

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
P	P	3♠	?

3. MPs. None Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠A742 ♥A3 ♦T ♣AQJT86

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	X	3♠	1♣ ?

4. MPs. Unfavorable. SOUTH holds:

♠AQ753 ♥AJT8 ♦K7 ♣A5

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

		P	1♠
P	3N*	P	?

*(4333) shape with 3 spades and unknown 4-card suit; 13-15 HCP

5. MPs. None Vul. SOUTH holds:

♠QJT ♥QT97 ♦JT632 ♣A

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1♠	X	P	?
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MBA BOARD UPDATE

The MBA Board welcomes Marcy Toon as our newest member. Marcy came aboard to fill the vacancy resulting from Stacey Tessler moving away from Michigan. Marcy will fill the role of Recording Secretary. Thank you Stacey for your 14+ years of service to MBA!

The terms of six incumbents end this October. With no additional candidates having been recruited, we proposed to the ACBL that under the circumstances created by the pandemic all six be re-elected by default and no election via voting is necessary. The ACBL has approved that proposal.

CHEATING SCANDALS ROCK ONLINE WORLD

Multiple cheating scandals in online play have prompted increased oversight from BBO, national bridge leagues, and player-organized events. Cheating takes many different forms online, including discussing hands with others before they've been played, or communicating outside of the bidding and play. Another prevalent method is known as "self-kibitzing." Most of us have heard of kibitzing, coming from the Yiddish *kibetsn* "to look on." While harmless in live play, kibitzers in some online events can view all four hands at the same time, leading to a host of security issues - players and kibitzers can discuss hands illegally offline, or create a "dummy" account on another device to watching oneself play with all hands showing.

Two top players, one Polish and one American, recently submitted admissions of guilt on Bridge Winners. Both were allegedly on the verge of being exposed by BBO, and both called upon a range of excuses including a newborn baby, stress related to current events, and the addictive high of seeing how well one could score while looking at all the hands. ACBL and BBO are working hard to develop technology to monitor and track such activity, and streamline the investigation processes. Luckily, most ACBL and Virtual Club games do not allow kibitzing. Further, a new ACBL Ethical Oversight Committee exclusively for online bridge is working

diligently to investigate reports of suspicious activity. As online bridge persists, governing entities will presumably continue to hone these efforts to make online bridge just as "clean," if not more so, than live bridge.

NEW ACBL MILESTONES

Junior Master (5)

Badri Agarwal
Patricia Quick
D. Lynne Stanich
Marie Tront
Kenneth Vernon

Club Master (20) ♠

Linda Brandemihl
Cosette Campbell
Deborah Defever
Marlene Johnson
Norm Kakarala
Sheila Kasselmann

Sectional Master (50) ♠♠

Julie Grygotis
Betty Kaiser
Robin Wagner

NABC Master (200) ♠♠♠♠

Mary Robinson
Dr. Barbara Schiff
Paul Tilly

Adv. NABC Master (300) ♠♠♠♠

Gary Boyers

Life Master (500) ♠♠♠♠

Patricia Hill
James McNamara

Bronze LM (750) ♠♠♠♠

Michael Koscielski

Ruby LM (1500) ♠♠♠♠

Susan Morman

INTERMEDIATE/ NEWCOMER NOOK

One of the first things we learn in bridge is how to count trumps as declarer. We practice accounting for all 13, and often plan our play around “getting the kids off the street” (pulling trumps).

However, there is a much more streamlined method for counting trumps. Instead of counting all 13, *try counting ONLY the opponents’ trumps*. It doesn’t matter to us how many trumps we’ve played from our hand/dummy, only how many the opponents have left. So, at the beginning of the hand, say “aloud” to yourself, “they have x trumps.” Every time an opponent plays one, subtract it from the total. Don’t expend bandwidth and mental energy counting **UP** to 13 trumps; instead, count **DOWN** from the number the opponents started with. Extra tip: no one will mind if you keep track on your fingers! ☺

DISTRICT DIRECTOR UPDATE

Dennis Carman, District 12 Director, reports high levels of participation in ACBL online events. The second Online Regional had >13,000 tables, double the size of the first. The second Silver Linings Week had 13,629 tables, nearly identical to the first one. Virtual club attendance continues to increase, and there is now a 15% guest allowance in these games

2020 MBA MINI- MCKENNEY LEADERS

0-5: William Garcia - 14.61

5-20: Aneel Karnani - 30.62

20-50: Robin Wagner - 56.42

50-100: E J Chidiac - 21.47

100-200: Paul Tilly - 46.57

200-300: Barbara Schiff - 116.04

300-500: Deanne Spoor - 51.43

500-1000: Maralee Demorest - 74.96

1000-1500: Dan Sutherland - 54.88

1500-2500: Julie Arbit - 85.77

2500-3500: Grant Petersen - 86.52

3500-5000: Joe Monro - 97.87

5K-7.5K: Jonathan Fleischmann - 542.94

7.5K-10K: Sondra Schubiner - 161.63

Over 10K: Mike Levine - 321.46

(for players who haven’t played at the club in 2019-2020). The Longest Day raised nearly \$800K for the Alzheimer’s Association, including an ACBL donation of \$27K in sanction fees. ACBL is projected to financially break even for the year.

The Board of Directors officially passed the Board Reorganization Motion downsizing the BoD into 13 “regions” (find a full description of the plan in the Spring 2020 TT issue). A new Online Ethical Oversight Committee will manage issues of ethics and cheating in online play. Marty Hirschman, from MBA, was selected to serve a two year term on this 15 person group.



A GUIDE TO PLAYING BRIDGE ON BBO IN 2020

Bridge Base Online is the prominent destination for online and app-based bridge games. Programs like Fun Bridge and OKbridge serve more niche purposes, like hosting casual tournaments among a social group, or tracking lifelong ranks. BBO, though, has exclusive rights to ACBL online events, and a plethora of other options. A guide to getting started on BBO can be found on District12Bridge.org.

If you intend to play ACBL/BBO events that award masterpoints or cost money, be sure to add your ACBL number to your account, upload convention cards under your "Account" tab, and use the blue BB\$ button on the top right of the home screen to deposit funds via credit card/PayPal. Below, find a selection of popular BBO options and how to navigate to them:

VIRTUAL CLUBS

[BBO Home](#) > [Featured Areas](#) > [Virtual Clubs](#)

Play against familiar "faces" while earning masterpoints with your regular partners at online games run by any club you've played at

in 2019-2020. Find your club on the list and register up to two hours in advance of game time.

Many clubs post their schedules on their websites. A majority of profit goes directly to your club manager and a local director. Contact your club if you need a partner!

Usually \$5-8/each, 18-21 boards (2-2.5 hrs.), ACBL MP awards

SUPPORT YOUR CLUB (SYC)

[BBO Home](#) > [Featured Areas](#) > [ACBL World](#)

The first type of SYC game mimics Virtual Clubs, but is not restricted to players of a certain club. There are three SYC games daily: 10am, 5:10pm, 7:30pm (EST). Register 2+ hours ahead.

The second type of SYC game is called a "Daylong." This daily game consists of 18 boards played at a table with three robots, scored using matchpoints against other players in the event. Once registered, play the hands at your own pace, any time before 1:00am. A majority of profit goes to clubs.

\$6/each, 18 bds., ACBL MP awards

DAILY ACBL & ROBOT GAMES

[BBO Home](#) > [Featured Areas](#) > [ACBL World/Robot World](#)

Speedballs (\$1.25) start every hour, 24 hrs/day, and consist of 12 bds. They allot 4.5 min/board and penalties are awarded for slow play. Each hour switches between IMP and Matchpoint scoring. A

Table Talk

partner is required. Slowballs are similar, but consist of 18 bds at 6 min/bd and are scored in MPs. They begin hourly from 10:15AM.

Other pairs events exist as well (NLM games, robot rewards which return your entry if you score well, etc.) at varying costs and times. Find a link to the ACBL BBO schedule on the District12Bridge.org home page.

CHALLENGES & INSTANT TOURNAMENTS

BBO Home › Featured Areas › Challenges/Instant Tournaments

Challenges and ITs are free mini bridge games played at a table with three robots. Challenge a friend (or group of friends), stranger, or robot to 4-16 boards of duplicate. Choose between IMPs and MPs each time, and whether or not South will have the most HCP (“best hand”). Players have 72 hours to complete challenges at their own pace.

IT’s allow you to play endless sets of 8 boards against a field of human competitors. Choose to play for BBO awards, ACBL MP awards, or in the weekly free tournament that resets each weekend.

\$0.25-1.25/each, 4-16 bds, awards vary

PRACTICE (FREE)

Head to the “Casual” side of BBO by yourself or with a partner to start or join a “just for fun” table (free, no awards or time limits). On BBO home, click “Practice” to start a bidding or teaching table. Use the “deal source” option Table Talk

in the blue horizontal line menu to set hand constraints to practice specific conventions or situations. Or, from the home screen, head to “Competitive” to start a team match or find other free tournaments.

Note I: If you are registered in an event, be sure to return from the “casual” side of BBO to the main page at least a minute before the event starts.

Note II: Virtual Club and SYC games pay black MPs, which count for ACBL MP races. They also give a majority of proceeds to club club managers. Other BBO games (even ACBL sanctioned ones) don’t count towards MP races.

VUGRAPH

Watch experts around the globe play against each other in practice and/or league-sanctioned events.

Depending on the event, you may see expert text/voice commentary, and/or view the event on a delay for security purposes.

BBO & ACBL SAVE THE DATES!

Oct. 15-18: Fall Into Bridge

› Regionally-rated events

Oct. 26-Nov. 1: Club Appreciation

› Upgraded awards in Virtual Clubs

Nov. 21-23: NABC Robot Individual

Nov. 23-29: Club Championships

› Upgraded awards in Virtual Clubs

Nov. 30 - Dec. 6: Fall NABC

› Knockout and Pairs Events

Dec. 17-20 Winter Wonderland

› Regionally-rated events

TEST YOUR PLAY

ADVANCED

IMPs. All Vul. N/S hands:

♠ 843
♥ T42
♦ 8742
♣ AJT

♠ AKQJ5
♥ AKQ
♦ K653
♣ K

Contract: 4♠

N/S land in 4♠ with no bidding from the opponents. West leads the ♦J to East's Ace. East leads the ♦Q back. West ruffs, and returns the ♥9. Trumps divide 4-1. How can you take all your chances here?

Solution, page 4

Many thanks to panelist Gene Benedict for providing this interesting problem!

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