



THE MICHIGAN BRIDGE CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

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Spring, 2017

BRIDGE CONNECTION SCHEDULE

ACBL Membership Game (Thursday April 6 – limited and open games). 100% sectional rated; black points. Anyone can play but both partners must be paid up ACBL members to win masterpoints.

Passover (Monday evening April 10) – closed.

Easter Sunday (April 16) – closed.

ACBL-wide Charity Game (Thursday April 27 limited and open games): 82% sectional rating; black points.

Club Championships (Mon. May 1 – Sunday May 7); higher masterpoints for overall finishers in all strata; regular entry fee.

Mother's Day (May 14): Closed.

Farmington Hills Regional (Mon. May 15 – Sun. May 21) – closed.

STACs (Sectional Tournament at Clubs) – Monday May 22 – Sunday May 28. **SILVER points.** 100% sectional rated, stratified, open pairs. Friday evening May 26 is a STAC Swiss Team event, open pairs.

World-Wide Bridge Game (Sat. June 3 12:30pm): ½ red/black points at 82% sectional rating; special hand analysis booklet. Open pairs; masterpoints will be awarded for club results but you will compete against thousands of pairs world-wide for additional masterpoints. There will be a side game for those choosing not to play in the WWPairs.

Southfield Sectional (June 22-25) – closed.

Memorial Day (Mon. May 29) – open.

July 4 – open

NOTE: At the time we went to press the dates for our NAP qualifying games have not been finalized. Check on either of our web sites for these. The same for additional membership games.

LIFE MASTER MILESTONES

Please join us in congratulating Cassandra Rodger for attaining the rank of Bronze Life Master (500)

CONNECTION PLAYERS IN THE BARRY CRANE TOP 500

Only four Bridge Connection players earned enough masterpoints in 2016 to make it into the Barry Crane top 500:

Bert Newman	1047
Jonathan Fleischmann	1024
Owen Lien	919
Ed White	638

MINI-MCKENNEY/ACE OF CLUBS

Four Connection regulars placed in the 2016 Mini-McKenney races:

1. Jim McNamara (12th; 0-5mps)
2. Bob Ondo (17th, 100-200)
3. Wilbur Argersinger (15th; 1,000-1,500)
4. Jonathan Fleischmann (1st; 2,500-3,500)
5. Owen Lien (14th; 7,500 – 10,000)

No one placed in the Ace of Clubs races. ♠

Ron Horwitz, editor

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT ON: BOB ONDO

(Ed. Note: After starting at the Bridge Connection as a player in our limited games, Bob has become a regular director since 2015. Here's his story.)



Bob Ondo

I grew up in Lincoln Park, MI and attended Cabrini High School in Allen Park. While in high school, I was a golf caddy at Grosse Ile Golf and Country Club. I was fortunate enough to earn an Evans Scholarship, provided by the Western Golf Association to former caddies to go to college. I graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in Industrial and Operations Engineering.

After college, I worked for seven years at Ford Motor Company as a quality engineer. During the 2009 recession, Ford told me my services (and most of my old department's) were no longer needed.

At that time, I began coaching at Cabrini. I started with 5th/6th grade football, then gradually moved into high school football and track and field. For three seasons, our football team played in the Catholic League championships at Ford Field in Detroit.

I played card games with my friends starting in high school, but never bridge. I was aware of the game because of the daily column in the newspaper, but did not know anybody who played and, thus, never had an incentive to learn the game.

In 2013, I was walking through the library and saw an Audrey Grant book. After reading it, I was immediately hooked. I started playing in Trenton and in the spring of 2014 began playing at the old Bridge Connection.

In the summer of 2015, I accepted Grant's and Mike's invitation to start directing. Last year I was elected to the Michigan Bridge Association's board and currently serve as its Tournament Chair and President-Elect. One of my focuses is to grow the game, especially ways to promote the game to newer players. Regardless which unit you may belong to, I welcome your input!

Through playing and directing, I have met a variety of people from all walks of life. My favorite thing about bridge is that there is always a new challenge, whether at the playing table or the director's desk. I've learned a lot from being mentored by Grant and Mike and look forward to continuing as a member of the Bridge Connection's team!



MONTHLY MASTERPOINT LEADERS

JANUARY:

A. Bob Raf	13.10
Steve Jacob	11.45
B. Bob Mendelson	8.41
C. Jerry Bloom	4.62

FEBRUARY:

A. John Dreifus	10.60
Bert Newman	10.00
B. Richard Menczer	9.12
C. Milt Siegel	4.93

MARCH:

A. Bert Newman	17.91
Jonathan Fleischmann	13.58
B. Sandy Birnholtz	12.93
C. Bill Niemczyk	6.91

A RARITY

The open game on Tuesday February 28 had a rarity that had a lot of veteran players searching their memories. Playing a two board movement, five of the 12 tables who played boards 9/10 passed both of them out and another five passed out just #10.

Many long-time players could not recall ever passing out both boards in a round. ♠

NEW GAME FOR "RAW" NOVICES

We are pleased to announce that beginning Sunday April 2nd, we will run a special non-sanctioned game every Sunday from 2-5pm. The games will be held at The Connection.

The game is designed for beginners looking to learn or brush-up on bridge fundamentals. Players with zero masterpoints or casual players who have never played duplicate are especially welcomed.

Each game will begin with a 30 minute lesson on a simple bridge convention (e.g., Blackwood, Stayman). It will be followed by an 8-10 board duplicate game that will feature hands incorporating the convention discussed in the lecture.

After each game, there will be a 30 minute Q&A on the day's hands. The cost is \$15/player/week. Winners in each direction

will get a 50% discount coupon good for our Saturday morning 9:30am novice game. ♠

THE DREADED SIT-OUTS

Unfortunately, we have no control over the number of pairs that show up for any given game. So, the probability of having a ½ table is pretty much 50%. We try to have players available to call at the last minute to make-up a full table, but are not always successful. This is especially true in the winter months when many of our players are snow-birding.

If we do have a ½ table, a sit-out will be necessary. We try to alternate the sit-outs between N/S and E/W, but if we are not successful, the sit-out will be assigned to N/S since they are the ones with specific requests for seating.

We know that no one likes a sit-out, but sometimes they are necessary to have the proper movement.

How much do you know about sit-outs? Test your knowledge with this simple multiple-choice question:

Sit-outs are:

- a. Fun
- b. Boring
- c. Unfair
- d. Fattening
- e. Relaxing
- f. A good time to let partner know what he did wrong.

The correct answer is (b-f), with (d) being the overwhelming first choice. ♠

MAKING A CLAIM OR CONCESSION

(Continuing our series about application of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, there is not a potentially more contentious part of the bridge Laws than that dealing with claims and concessions.)

No one enjoys playing out a hand to the 13th trick when it is obvious that declarer has the remainder of the tricks. Of course, the way to avoid this is for declarer to make a claim or concession.

In fact, the Laws state that a player should refrain from prolonging play unnecessarily (for purposes of disconcerting an opponent). However, if a claim is made, declarer needs to be very careful when claiming to state exactly the line of play he'll take.

Under the Laws, as soon as a claim is made, all play ceases. It is not proper to simply ask how declarer would play the

hand. Once a claim has been made, that option no longer exists.

If there is an objection to the claim, the director must be called to the table. The director will immediately ask the claimer to re-state what was said at the time of the claim and then ask all players to table their cards.

Given declarer's statement (or non-statement) the director will then assess whether any line of play, even if "careless," can result in a trick(s) to the non-claiming side. The Laws instruct the director to adjudicate any doubtful play in favor of the *non-claiming* side.

This can be particularly troublesome when there is a trump outstanding. Generally, the director will go out of his way to award a trick to that trump(s) if a line of play can give that result and declarer made no statement about pulling the remaining trump.

Here's a good case in point from a recent game. In a club contract, declarer is down to six trumps: KQJ10-4-3. LHO holds the only remaining trump – a singleton 7, is void in hearts and RHO is on lead. If RHO leads a heart, an alert declarer will, of course, ruff high and play trumps from the top taking the rest of the tricks. However, assuming declarer claimed and gave no line of play (e.g., I'll ruff anything you lead high and pull the remaining trump) the Laws do not permit declarer to make that play and a trick would be awarded to LHO, as unfair as that may seem.

So, the moral is: if you are going to make a claim, protect yourself by very clearly stating your line of play.

In the case of a concession, even though declarer has conceded a trick, if that trick could not be lost by any legal play of the remaining cards, the trick will be awarded to declarer, assuming declarer realizes the mistake in time. A good example of this is when declarer loses count of a suit and has the 13th (say) club in her card. Declarer erroneously believes there is a higher club outstanding and concedes the club trick. Dummy realizes the club is high and disputes the concession (permitted). The director should be called and will award a trick to the 13th club. ♠

IN MEMORIUM

Betty Widman

LEAVING OUR AREA

Lynne Schaeffer will be moving permanently to the west coast.

Jim Hill is taking a one-year "sabbatical" and is residing in Lansing. ♠

TO DREAM THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

♠ 8 7 4 2
♥ 10 7 2
♦ 9
♣ A J 9 7 3

♠ K J 9
♥ A 9 8 5 3
♦ K Q 2
♣ K 5

♠ Q 10 5
♥ K Q 6 4
♦ A J 10 7 4
♣ 10

♠ A 6 3
♥ J
♦ 8 6 5 3
♣ Q 8 6 4 2

Here's a hand from one of our afternoon games that illustrates why it is important to give partner count and why you need to think about why declarer is playing the hand the way he is. Through an auction best forgotten, E/W end up in six hearts, yes, off two aces. North leads the club ace and despite the singleton in dummy and partner's suit preference play of the club 8, switches to a trump.

Now west knows that south has the spade ace, otherwise north clearly would have played it. Since only two spade pitches are available on the diamonds, what is the only possible way to sneak away with 12 tricks?

Here's what West did: after pulling trump, the diamonds were run and west pitched the spade KING and JACK. Now a spade was played from the dummy. South gave this a lot of thought and was afraid to play the ace for fear of setting up dummy's queen for a club pitch. So, south played low and declarer's nine won the trick and the small slam rolled home, although over a bumpy road.

Should this have happened? No way! First, if declarer had only two spades, then he must have three clubs. If so, why didn't he ruff any of them? Further, on the run of the diamonds, north should have played high/low in spades, giving count. That way, south would know that declarer must have started with three spades.

CONFESSION: While that was indeed the way the hand was played, it was in fact, a pyrrhic victory. In truth, west started with four spades (and four hearts), so he always had a spade loser no matter what. ♠

ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT STaCs

Twice a year, Sectional Tournaments at Clubs (STaCs) are run in districts throughout the ACBL. These are 100% sectional rated games (i.e., all masterpoints are nearly triple those of regular club games) and **all points are SILVER**. This gives you the *only* opportunity during the year to earn silver points at your local club. These games are one-session stratified open pairs (we run a Swiss Team STaC on Friday evening).

The game in each club is treated as a section in the overall district games (all are played at the same time with the same hands). Masterpoints earned in the club are the minimum you will receive. All clubs report their results to the district coordinator who combines all of the games held at the same time and ranks the results by % game for overall masterpoints awards which frequently can be as high as 12-14 masterpoints. STaC results are posted on both the district and ACBL web sites. Limited games also receive higher masterpoints but are not eligible for district-wide awards.

The next STaCs will be held Monday May 22 through Sunday May 28.

