



# THE MICHIGAN BRIDGE CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

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Winter, 2017

Dear Fellow Bridge Players:

We would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year!

We are pleased that our club provides the opportunity for players of all levels to play the great game of bridge. While we all aspire to be good players, many people at the club play simply because they enjoy the social interaction as well as the challenges of bridge.

The social aspect of the game is very important. People arrive early at our games to greet one another before the competition begins. Sometimes we forget during the heat of the battle that bridge is, in the last analysis, a social event. Often we get so wrapped in the game that as new players arrive at our table, we are still discussing previous hands and we forget to welcome them and introduce ourselves. A quick “hello” before the first hand is played will make everyone feel comfortable and at ease.

Many players transitioning from the beginner games to the open game often welcome helpful advice on what they could have done better, as opposed to hearing about what they did wrong. So, if your opponents ask about the bidding or play of a hand just completed, long-time players can help the future of the game by sharing their insights. But do not participate in this exercise gratuitously.

Whether you play at our club with an emphasis on the social aspect or the competitiveness of the game, our goal is for everyone to have a pleasant time and leave happy!

Best wishes for a successful year at the bridge table no matter how you personally define “success!”

*Grant Petersen and Mike McDonald*

## MONTHLY MASTERPOINT WINNERS

### OCTOBER:

A. Bert Newman	6.17
Jack Shartsis	5.69
B. Bob Mendelson	5.73
C. Susan Marwil	3.82

### NOVEMBER:

A. Brenda Jaffe	7.08
Bert Newman	6.27
B. Richard Menczer	4.65
C. Susan Marwil	3.78

### DECEMBER:

A. Bert Newman	15.42
Jerry Grossman	12.52
B. Bob Mendelson	10.69
C. Tom Baer	

## LIFE MASTER MILESTONES

Join us in congratulating the following Bridge Connection players for moving up in their ACBL rankings:

### Gold Life Master (2,500)

Allan Becker  
Patty Becker  
Grant Petersen  
Bob Raf

### Ruby Life Master (1,500)

Neal Strand

### Silver Life Master (1,000)

Sue Marwil

### Bronze Life Master (500)

Carole Sole

### New Life Master

Marilyn Collins  
David Dursum  
Jane Gardner  
Anita Green  
Marilee Neff

## BRIDGE CONNECTION SCHEDULE

**ACBL-wide International Fund Game (Sat. Aft. Feb. 4. 12:30):** 82% sectional rated. Stratified; 50% red/black points.

**Super Bowl (Sunday Feb. 5)** – Closed.

**SOMBA Sectional (Bridge Connection):** Feb. 9-12 – CLOSED.

**Club Championships (Mon. Feb. 27 – Sun. March 5):** Higher masterpoint awards to overall finishers in all strata; regular entry fee.

**ACBL-wide Senior (Born prior to 1/1/59) Pairs (Mon. March 27, noon.):** 72% sectional rating, stratified; black points.

**MBA Sectional (Bridge Connection):** March 23-26 - CLOSED

## NEW STARTING TIMES FOR EVENING GAMES

Effective Monday January 2<sup>nd</sup>, our Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening games are beginning at 7pm.

The Sunday evening game will continue to start at 6pm. ♠

## NEW BASIS FOR ASSIGNING STRATA

Effective January 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will be using the *average* masterpoint holding of a pair to assign them to a strata. Previously we used the masterpoint holding of the partner with the higher number of points.

For team games, the *average* holding of the entire team will be used. ♠

## PLAYER SPOTLIGHT ON: ALAN COHN

(Alan has become a regular player at the Connection. However, most players are unaware of his rich history with the game before he resumed playing a few years ago.)



Alan was born in Philadelphia. His parents were classical musicians and never played bridge; Alan plays piano. He began playing bridge late in his undergraduate years at U. Penn where he majored in chemistry. Many of his friends played and he thought it looked like an interesting game.

He attended medical school at the Des Moines Osteopathic Medical School. He came to Michigan to serve his residency in radiology at Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital. In 1973 he relocated to Lansing General Hospital where he served as chairman of the radiology dept. for eight years.

In 1981 he moved to the Detroit area and from 1988-2012 was affiliated with the Henry Ford Health System.

While in Pontiac in the mid to late 60s, he played at the Metro Bridge Club in Oak Park. There he became a frequent partner of Fred Hamilton and other players in the club. He travelled to many regionals to amass masterpoints.

During his stay in Lansing, he began playing duplicate in local clubs. He met Allan Falk and they became good friends with a mutual love of bridge. He and Allan bought the failing Lansing Bridge Center and turned it around.

Around 1996 he left the game for 17 years because of the smoky conditions. He also found too many of the people were rude and the directors were ill-prepared. When he retired from medicine in 2012, he began kbitzing games at the Bridge Connection where he found the games considerably friendlier. He quickly latched on to some new partners and has been playing here steadily ever since.

In his spare time Alan loves movies and reading – primarily fiction. He’s a long-time season ticket holder of the Detroit Red Wings. He has two sons and three grandchildren – none of whom play bridge. Alan remarried in the late 80s after losing his first wife to a long illness. Neither his first or second wife played bridge.

His advice: Be a good partner. Don’t yell, don’t criticize and be tolerant. His acid test for a partner is whether at the conclusion of a session, win or lose, he can honestly say, “It was a pleasure playing with you today.” ♠

## BIDDING FORUM

We are often asked bidding questions to which there is no specific correct answer since the answer depends upon what you have agreed to play with your partner.

However, the fascination of bridge is that there are so many possible bidding situations it is almost impossible to cover them all.

Here’s one from an afternoon game for you to discuss: You pass in 2<sup>nd</sup> seat holding: 10x AKxxx Kxx xxx and third seat LHO opens 1 spade. Partner overcalls one no-trump (natural 15-17), RHO bids two spades. YOUR CALL? ♠

## IN MEMORIAM

Betty Ott  
Woody Ott

Ron Horwitz, editor

## DUMMY'S RIGHTS

One of the most confusing parts of the Laws deals with Dummy's Rights. This column will discuss the rights (and wrongs!) of dummy. Thanks to Bob Gruber for compiling most of these.

First of all, when does dummy become dummy? Generally, after a faced-down opening lead is turned over and the next player tables any of his cards. Note that if the opening lead is from the wrong hand, the tabling of even one card by the intended declarer means that he is now the dummy. Prevent this from happening by immediately calling the director if an opening lead from the incorrect hand is faced.

Also, there is a mistaken idea that all four players are "responsible" for dummy. This is incorrect – only the declaring side is responsible for dummy.

Let's now look at what dummy *cannot* do:

1. Initiate a director call unless one of the other players has already drawn attention to the irregularity.
2. Call attention to an irregularity during the play, including pointing out a revoke.
3. Play a card from the dummy before declarer calls for one.

If dummy does any of these, the director may impose a procedural penalty, usually  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total available matchpoints on the board.

In addition, dummy has the following limitations. Once you become dummy you should not:

1. Ask for a review of the auction.
2. Request an explanation of a specific bid.
3. Request an explanation of the defenders' carding agreements.
4. Ask a defender about a possible revoke *during* play.

In addition, there are some ethical considerations that limit dummy's actions.

Here's a common occurrence: Declarer leads a low trump from his hand, LHO plays a high trump and dummy has a higher one, but declarer calls for a *low* trump from the dummy. Dummy must play the called card smoothly and without hesitation or comment.

Now, what *can* dummy do?

1. Draw attention to a trick pointed incorrectly, but only before the lead to the next trick is made.
2. Ask declarer, and only declarer, about a possible revoke. This is always a good practice unless partner specifically requests not to be asked.
3. Attempt to prevent an irregularity such as declarer leading from the wrong hand, by reminding declarer where the lead is. Excessive reminders may be deemed an abuse of dummy's rights and the director should be called.
4. Give information, *in the presence of the director*, as to what happened at the table.
5. Draw attention to any irregularity *after* the play of the hand, including calling the director at that time. This includes objecting to a claim or concession.

Lastly, keep in mind that should the declarer have given an incorrect explanation of a bid, then *after the final pass*, and before the opening lead is faced, dummy should volunteer a correction of the mis-explanation. At the completion of the hand, if the defenders feel they were damaged by the mis-explanation, the director should be called for possible rectification. ♠

## BREAKING NEWS!! CONNECTION AWARDS WINNERS

Congratulations to the first winners of the following annual Bridge Connection Awards:

1. The Bolton/Crafton/Melander Award (donated by Bob Cappelli) for the most masterpoints won at the Connection during the year: Bert Newman (177).
2. The Ed Bloom Award (donated by Esta Bloom) for the most masterpoints won at the Connection by a player fewer than 25 at the beginning of the year: Sandy Wolfe (21). ♠

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5.66

Ron Horwitz, editor

### **NEWS FROM THE NATIONALS**

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The recent NABC in Orlando was not overwhelmingly kind to local players. However, Dennis Kasle and Bert Newman were 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Super Senior Pairs. Bert has an amazing record in this event: he was second for the past three years and now a third. Maybe next year a first?

Rhonda Monro and Frank Treiber were 8<sup>th</sup> in the 0-10K Fast Pairs. ♠

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## THE INSIDE POOP ON MASTERPOINT AWARDS

We receive lots of questions from players about how the masterpoint awards for our club games are determined. Here's probably more than you wanted to know about their calculation.

For a regular club game, the field usually has three strata: A with no masterpoint limit, B with generally a 2,000 – 2,500 limit, and C with a cap of 750 – 1,000. The exact number may vary from game to game as the director sets the stratum limits to try to maximize the number of pairs eligible for awards. At our club, your stratum assignment is based on the masterpoint holding of the partner with the higher amount (at our sectionals, the assignment is based on the average of the pair).

You are eligible to win masterpoints in your stratum or any higher one (so a "C" pair can earn masterpoints awarded to A or B if their game is good enough).

Masterpoints depend on the rating of the event and the number of tables in play. So, a regional event will pay more than a sectional that in turn pays more than a club game. And, a club championship will award overall masterpoints that are higher than a regular club game. Occasionally, clubs will run special games that are sectional rated – that means the masterpoint awards, everything else being equal, will be considerably higher.

Section masterpoints are awarded to 40% of the field in a given stratum and all of those below. So, if there are 12 tables in play, 5 places will be awarded in A (12 x 40%, rounded up). If there are 8 tables in B and C, B awards go to 3 pairs (8 x 40%), etc. If you look at the summary of the game posted on the Internet, it will tell you how many pairs are in each stratum. If you tie for an award, the number of masterpoints is equal to the sum of the two awards divided by 2 (or 3 if there's a three-way tie).

For a regular club game, stratum A masterpoint awards = .10 per table. So for a 12 table first place, you would earn 1.20 masterpoints. Strata B and C awards are 80% of A. So, placing first in stratum B with 8 tables earns 0.64 masterpoints (8 x .10/table x 80%). 2<sup>nd</sup> place earns 70% of first; third earns 50%, 4<sup>th</sup> earns 35% and all other places earn their placement's reciprocal of the first place award (i.e., 5 place earns 20%, 6<sup>th</sup> 16.7% etc.).

So, assume you have an open game with 12 tables, and 4 pairs in stratum B and 3 in C.

The masterpoint awards would be:

	A*	B**	C***
First	1.20	.56	.24
Second	.84	.39	N/A
Third	.60	.28	
Fourth	.42	N/A	
Fifth	.24		

\*Based on 12 tables

\*\*Based on 7 tables (4+3)

\*\*\*Based on 3 tables

If a club game has more than 15 tables, section awards are limited to 1.50 and overall awards in all strata will be available with a 2.50 maximum. By looking at the game's recap, you can tell which award you received: an "O" means you got an overall award, an "S" is a section award. Next to the O or S will be the stratum in which you won the masterpoints.

You do *not* get to "double dip" – if you win masterpoints for more than one reason (e.g., you win your section and also place overall or place 3<sup>rd</sup> in A and 1<sup>st</sup> in B), you always get the *highest* of the awards.

If you play in any of our limited games, the masterpoint awards are reduced, depending on the upper masterpoint limit of the game.

♠

## IMPORTANT CHANGE COMING ON STRATA CLASSIFICATIONS

Beginning on January 1<sup>st</sup> for *all* games we will assign strata classifications based on the *average* masterpoint holdings of both players for pair events and for all four players for team events.

This will bring us in line with what is done at all of our sectionals and regionals in District 12. Previously strat classifications were based on the masterpoint holding of the player with the largest number. ♠

## TRAVEL ALERT

As If we don't have enough road issues, we have just received word that Maple Road between Drake/Haggerty and Orchard Lake/Farmington will be closed sometime during 2017. It's not too early to begin thinking of alternative routes!

## IN MEMORIAM

Shirley Gluklick  
Fay Solomon

Ron Horwitz, editor







