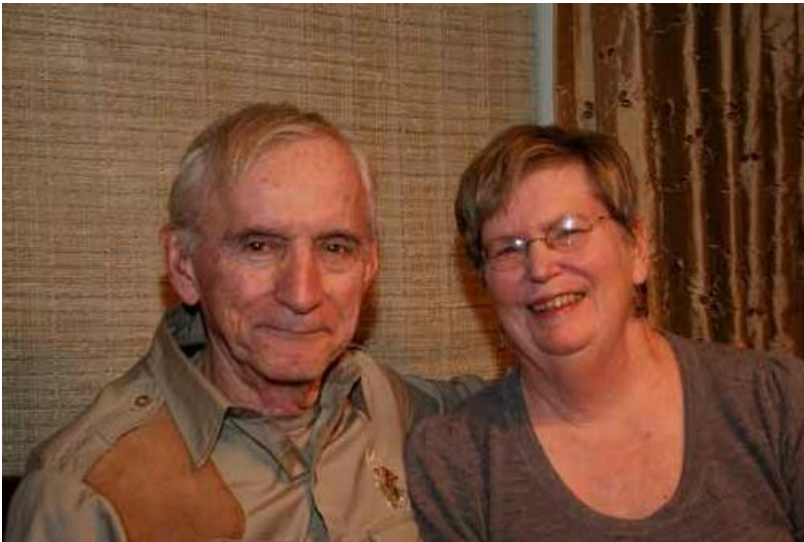


.. TABLE TALK

A publication of the Vermont Bridge Association
Editor: Frank Hacker

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Bill and Pat Nestork
Have been mainstays.
Of Burlington Bridge
For many years
Pat is a silver
Life Master

Bill and Pat Nestork, both excellent players, have been fixtures on the Burlington bridge scene for many years.

Bill and I are both native New Yorkers, I was born and grew up in NYC and Bill in the Albany area. He graduated from RPI and went to work for IBM, retiring in 1991. I graduated from Tufts University, and went to work in Poughkeepsie as a physical therapist. Bill's secretary fell off a horse, needed therapy, and introduced us. We have been married for 46 years, and have two children Paul and Penny, In 1978 we moved to Vermont, I went to work for Garden Way Publishing selling their how to books into non bookstores in 1981. In 1983 I started my own business doing the same thing for many different publishers retiring in 2001. Since then we have done lots of traveling. We have been to 49 states... anyone know of a good reason to go to North Dakota? We have also visited over 20 European countries. I have also been able to teach and play a lot of bridge and some golf. Bill plays lots of golf and some bridge. Years ago we decided if we wanted to stay married we could not play a lot of bridge as partners, so we usually don't. The last time we played duplicate together we won and decided to quit on a high note.

When we moved to Vermont in 1978, our real estate agent was Pat Brown, a duplicate bridge player and she was instrumental in getting me involved in bridge. I first met Ruth Stokes and played bridge at her house. She then asked me to sub in her daytime bridge group and I met Lynn Carew. There were other day games that included other duplicate players such as Gerry Carr and Elaine Cowles. Gradually I learned more about bridge. Although duplicate is my first love, Bill and I play "for fun" in social couples groups, and it is still great to get together for coffee, talk, and bridge, Marti Gazley, June Silverman, Bonnie Clouser and I had been doing this regularly

until the advent of the Friday game. Lynn and I have been playing duplicate together now for thirty years and I have been lucky to have such a good partner. But that doesn't mean that she is my only partner, Ruth Stokes, Jackie Kimel, Bonnie Clouser, Layton Davis, Jon Stokes and Jay Friedenson are some of my regular partners. Bill and Dave Perrin have been duplicate partners for almost all of our years here.

Over the years I have also been involved in ACBL Unit 175 (Vermont). In the 80's I was on the Board and served as President for 4 years, and recently I just finished a term as secretary. Before moving to Vermont I was active in the YWCA of Dutchess County, ultimately President of the Board and the Board of Trustees. The Vermont/New Hampshire Direct Marketing Group is another organization that I have been involved with on their Board and chair of the Conference committee and Treasurer. I am now involved with the Shelburne Charlotte Hinesburg Interfaith Projects, which operates a resale shop in Shelburne. This organization sells donated clothes and other items to raise money to help the people and the communities of the three towns. Thus far we have given away about \$150,000.

Bill and I have made many friends in the bridge community and we look forward to many more years of "serious" and "fun" bridge.

President's Message

by Phil Sharpsteen

The recent fall nationals in Boston was a very well run and enjoyable tournament. Quite a few Vermont players attended and did well. The only unfortunate item is that a national tournament is only held in Boston about every nine years, as Boston is considered to be in the "second tier of locations" for nationals.

This year, every day celebrated either one of the states in the New England district or a club or region. Vermont's state day was the last Saturday of the tournament, November 29th. Our display and the 50 gift bags we raffled off to various events during the day were very well received. I want to thank all of you who helped make this day a success. In particular, Bob Smith and Wayne Hersey for obtaining the donated items (syrup/jelly/coffee) for the 50 gift bags, Frank Hacker for transporting "all the stuff" to Boston and Frank Hacker, Joanna Robinson, Heather Stephenson and Pierce Smith for working at the display table. We also had interesting names for events that day (e.g. one of the KO events was entitled "Battle of Bennington KO")! Thank you all for making this effort on behalf of the Vermont Unit a wonderful success.

High Level Matchpoint Action at the Boston Fall Nationals

by Phil Sharpsteen

This article could be about the high level of competition that you would expect at a National tournament. In fact, it is actually about matchpoint decisions at the 4 level or higher! When you have the correct hand for a preempt, you will do best to bid to the highest level permitted by your partnership agreement. For example, if you agree to play *sound* preempts, you should expect to risk less than the value of your opponents' game (or slam) that you are sacrificing against. To estimate this, count your losers, subtract one for an assumed trick from partner (he better have it this time!), assume you will be doubled and do the math against opponents' expected score.

As an example, if nobody is vulnerable, you can afford to be down two doubled (-300) vs the opponent's game (+420). Your preempt must therefore be within 3 tricks of making according to the above rules. (You could bid 4 of a major with a hand that has six losers applying the above rules).

One of the pairs sessions had an unusually high number, 3 hands out of the 26, that involved decisions (pass, bid, double) at the 4 level or higher.

HAND 1		S	J53		
		H	KQ10		
		D	10		
		C	Q98732		
S	4			S	K10
H	A952			H	84
D	AKQ9763			D	J842
C	6			C	AKJ105
		S	AQ98762		
		H	J763		
		D	5		
		C	4		

On this hand, East was the dealer and E/W were vulnerable. East opened one club and South had to decide how high to preempt. South had a 6 loser hand in spades (spade K, heart A, K & Q, and diamond and club Aces). If the opponents had a game (+600 or better), South could afford to be defeated 3 tricks doubled (-500). With one trick from partner, South could actually consider a 5 spade bid. It would probably be much better to only bid 4 spades. First, that would be the most common action in the event and second, 4 spades would sometimes make! Partner could always 'up the preempt' at his turn. So, South bid 4 spades and west chimed in with 5 diamonds. North raised the preempt to 5 spades and East bid 6 diamonds. This was set one trick (one heart and one spade) for 10 out of 12 match points for N/S.

HAND 2		S	KQ1097642		
		H	4		
		D	void		
		C	10954		
S	8			S	5
H	KQJ65			H	A3
D	108765			D	KQJ42
C	Q2			C	AKJ86
		S	AJ3		
		H	109872		
		D	A93		
		C	73		

On this hand, South was the dealer with no one vulnerable. South and West passed and again North had to decide how high to preempt. North had a five loser hand in spades (spade Ace, heart Ace and the Ace, K and Q of clubs). With one trick expected from partner, North could have bid 5 spades and have expected to go -300 doubled. Again, for the same reasons as in hand one above, North actually bid 4 spades. East had a fine hand and had to take action. In practice, East bid

4NT as takeout, South passed. West bid 5 diamonds and East raised to 6, doubled by South. This was set one trick for +100 and 8.5 out of 12 match points for N/S.

HAND 3

		S	Void		
		H	AQ72		
		D	KQJ10963		
		C	85		
S	KJ954			S	AQ10763
H	84			H	J96
D	8			D	A42
C	AK1074			C	3
		S	82		
		H	K1053		
		D	75		
		C	QJ962		

For this third and final example, East was the dealer with no one vulnerable. East opened one spade, South passed and West bid 4 spades (this worked out to cause a problem later. West, with a fine hand, should probably bid 2 clubs followed by a 4 spade raise.) Over 4 spades, North, with a 4 loser hand in diamonds, bid 5 diamonds. East now erred by bidding 5 spades even though he still held the same minimum he opened with. South passed and West tried to make up for his previous underbid by bidding 6 spades. With 2 heart losers, this contract had no play, for +50 and 11.5 match points for N/S.

These were certainly interesting hands and they generated many varied results when played 13 times in each pair session held at that time. Bidding to the limit with your hands will improve your match point results!

Stop The Presses

You may remember that our last issue's featured personalities were 4 women from New Jersey who have attended our May sectional for several years running. Congratulations to 2 of them, **Debbie Crisfield and Karen Haines**, for winning the Miles Non-Life Master Pairs at the recent Boston Fall Nationals.

Bill Becker

Bill Becker was a colorful character, who for more than 30 years was a bridge teacher, director and promoter of bridge. He passed away recently in Arizona. Here is a brief tribute from his friend June Dorion.

Our friend and fellow bridge enthusiast, Bill Becker, died on November 30, 2008 in Gold Canyon, Arizona, at the age of 95. He had moved to Arizona about 8 years ago to be with his daughter, Lynn. He hated to leave Vermont and never stopped missing it. Bill had four children, seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. He was a Navy Seabee during World War II and later the owner of several small businesses. He started skiing at age 55 and took up bridge at about the same time.

Bill was very active in Vermont bridge for quite a few years as a teacher and a director, but most of all as a player with a great passion for the game. I used to call him an old curmudgeon (even to his face, when I dared), but I always knew he had a heart of gold with a very soft interior.

Aside from bridge, Bill was passionate about good food. He loved to cook and loved to eat. At tournaments he always knew the best restaurant in town. It was always fun to be in his group for dinner.

God bless you Bill. May you rest in peace. Your friend June Dorion

Shame and Scandal

by Frank Hacker

Marilyn and I honeymooned in Trinidad over Christmas vacation in 1973 (we were both teachers). Very popular at that time was a song called "Shame and Scandal." A man and a woman stood on opposite sides of a stage and took turns singing to imaginary children, the man to a son, the woman to a daughter. They sang brief ditties about the circumstances of the child's birth. The man always ended his with, "So, your mother ain't your mother, but your mother don't know." The woman always ended hers with, "So, your father ain't your father, but your father don't know." Afterward, they jointly took up the refrain, "Woe is me, shame and scandal for the family ..." Unfortunately, I don't remember the whole refrain.

Here is a hand from the Sunday Swiss Teams at the October Castleton Sectional. After bidding both spades and hearts, I landed in 4 spades and received the opening lead of a small trump. How would you play this hand?

S	J9
H	Q2
D	A74
C	Q108642

S	AKQ1087
H	AK85
D	93
C	7

It doesn't look like that much of a challenge to make 4 spades with 10 top tricks. Hah! Goes to show what you know!!

I got the brilliant idea that I would try for an overtrick. It looked pretty safe on a trump lead. I led a heart to the Q, followed by a heart to my hand. Left hand opponent trumped and returned his last trump. I still had a heart, a diamond and a spade to lose – down 1. Since I took 9 of my 10 tricks, I suppose you could say I had a 90% game.

This hand was a lesson to me. Let it be a lesson to you. Don't get complacent and take unnecessary risks in Swiss team events.

Vermont Bridge Association Top 100

December 2008

List based on 12/12 VBA membership roster

1.	Allan Graves	11,774	51.	Rigmor Shawcross	977
2.	Anne Hoffman	6,470	52.	Bill Schiring	968
3.	Frank Hacker	5,158	53.	Louise Acker	962
4.	James Gordon	5,068	54.	Barbara Philpet	949
5.	Phil Sharpsteen	3,473	55.	Don Campbell	937
6.	Mike Farrell	3,243	56.	Jon Stokes	889
7.	Jerry DiVincenzo	3,165	57.	Gene Kazlow	869
8.	Kathy Farrell	3,075	58.	Paul Cohen	821
9.	Wayne Hersey	3,033	59.	Ed Schirmer	811
10.	Fred Donald	3,001	60.	Jim Daigle	800
11.	Don Sondergeld	2,975	61.	Gary Feingold	788
12.	June Dorion	2,919	62.	Jean-Guy Beliveau	771
13.	Courtney Nelson	2,604	63.	Norma Jakominich	753
14.	J. Peter Tripp	2,574	64.	Mary Granger	743
15.	Michael Engel	2,478	65.	Robert Silverman	742
16.	Patty DiVincenzo	2,473	66.	Stuart Osborn	731
17.	Clifford Gordon	2,424	67.	Irene Vignoe	728
18.	Dave Shaw	2,386	68.	Eileen Fleiter	720
19.	Edsel Hughes	2,162	69.	Mitch Kontoff	714
20.	Rudy Polli	2,147	70.	Elizabeth Clewley	703
21.	Jackie Kimel	2,122	71.	Bonnie Clouser	641
22.	Pierce Smith	2,072	72.	Patricia Earle	599
23.	Bob Smith	2,066	73.	Ed Brass	599
24.	Judie Donald	2,062	74.	Nancy Lolli	589
25.	Lynn Carew	2,037	75.	Alan Wertheimer	581
26.	Thelma Orleck	2,035	76.	Eleanor Thall	561
27.	Nick Ecker Racz	1,668	77.	Theresa Ingram	561
28.	Jack Rihn	1,653	78.	Raymond Johnson	551
29.	Beatrice Spier	1,635	79.	Joyce Stone	537
30.	Pat Nestork	1,619	80.	C. Kirk Osterland	530
31.	Andy Avery	1,568	81.	Ron Silverman	515
32.	Bryant Jones	1,518	82.	Dick Gazley	507
33.	Peter Bouyea	1,510	83.	Connie Beliveau	505
34.	Penny Lane	1,475	84.	Martha Gazley	499
35.	Barbara Fitzgerald	1,435	85.	Bob Chiabrandy	494
36.	Stan Rosenthal	1,429	86.	Sarah Bastick	484
37.	Gerow Carlson	1,395	87.	Kotze Toshev	481
38.	Linda Bouyea	1,281	88.	June Silverman	477
39.	Paul Reardon	1,274	89.	Pearl McGrath	467
40.	Jay Friedenson	1,258	90.	Morse Travers	463
41.	Steve Dunham	1,197	91.	George Malek	454
42.	Ruth Stokes	1,186	92.	Lois Mailloux	442
43.	Chris Acker	1,182	93.	Elizabeth von Riesenfelder	433
44.	Marcia Wilkins	1,164	94.	Marsha Anstey	427
45.	Mary Tierney	1,142	95.	Carlos Galvan	426
46.	Michael Gore	1,139	96.	Sandy Desilets	393
47.	Jesse Stalker	1,060	97.	Grant Pealer	392
48.	William Sibley	1,046	98.	Anne Farrell	388
49.	Mary Azarian	1,013	99.	Ruth Brass	386
50.	Dave Perrin	999	100.	Betty Stanley	373

VERMONT FALL SECTIONAL RESULTS

Castleton, VT
October 24-26, 2008

Friday Afternoon Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C	Names	PCT
4.17	1			Donald Foote – Judy Maravolo-Foote	66.59
3.13	2	1		Bryant Jones – Jim Thomas	63.36
2.35	3	2	1	John Conova – Jan Gisholt	62.43
1.76	4			Fred Donald – Judie Donald	61.37
1.32	5			Wayne Hersey – June Dorion	58.67
1.43	6	3		June Silverman – Ron Silverman	54.56
1.30		4	2	Jennifer Armstrong – James Morrison	52.83
0.97		5	3	Julianna McAllister – Helen Lewis	50.57
0.73			4	Sally Newton – John Newton	50.08

Friday Evening Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C	Names	PCT
3.67	1			Rena Lieberman – Mel Marcus	61.11
2.75	2			Pat Nestork – Lynn Carew.	59.95
2.06	3			Nick Ecker Racz – Norma Shelly	58.80
2.28	4	1	1	John Nelson – Linda Nelson	56.71
1.16	5			Sandra Hammer – Courtyney Nelson	55.56
1.71	6	2	2	Sally Newton – John Newton	55.09
1.28		3	3	Jennifer Armstrong – James Morrison	54.40
0.96		4		Norma Jakominich – Donald Campbell	51.85
0.72		5		Bryant Jones – Jim Thomas	49.77

Knockout Teams

6.33	1			Michael Farrell – Kathleen Farrell Patricia DiVincenzo – Gerald DiVincenzo
3.35	2			Mary Tierney – Jay Friedenson Paul Reardon – Ruth Stokes

Saturday Morning Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C	Names	PCT
3.00	1			William Hunter – Walter Fontaine	71.67
2.28	2	1		Gerald Russell – Nancy Russell.	67.08
1.69	3			Donald Foote – Judy Maravolo-Foote	62.92
1.27	4			Rena Lieberman – Mel Marcus	60.83
1.71	5	2		Reid Fleming – Rich Stevens	53.75
1.52		3	1	Robert Derrah – Shirley Derrah	50.83

1.14	4	2	Richard Bottelli – Ann Bottelli	50.00
0.72	5		Stanley Kaplan – Natalie Kaplan	47.08
0.86		3	Evelyn Markowitz – Joan Dobert	46.25

Saturday Afternoon Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C	Names	PCT
5.50	1			William Hunter – Walter Fontaine	63.07
4.13	2			Bruce Downing – Geoffrey Phipps.	60.90
3.09	3	1		Bryant Jones – Tom Osmer	58.16
2.32	4	2		Reid Fleming – Judy Muggia	58.07
1.74	5			Mark Teich – Gretchen Teich	57.80
1.58	6	3		Rich Stevens – Albert Muggia	57.54
1.19		4		Jean-Guy Beliveau – Connie Beliveau	53.47
1.84		5	1	John Newton – Sally Newton	52.18
1.38		6	2	John Conova – Kenneth Cestone	51.82
1.04			3	Jacqueline Walker – Carl Payne, Jr.	51.39
0.78			4	Barbara Unger – Richard Unger	49.52
0.58			5	Barbara Parks – Kay Showalter	48.96

Saturday Afternoon 299er Pairs

MP	A	B	C	Names	PCT
1.41	1	1	1	Ross Lieb-Lappen – Lee Corbett	61.81
1.06	2	2	2	Barbara Romanoff – Kay Fay	52.78
0.79	3	3		Lynn Beebe – Barbara Varney	51.39

Saturday Evening Flight B/C/D Pairs

MP	B	C	D	Names	PCT
2.41	1			Bryant Jones – Tom Osmer	63.19
1.88	2	1	1	Robert Derrah – Shirley Derrah	59.38
1.36	3			Jean-Guy Beliveau – Connie Beliveau	55.56
1.41	4	2	2	John Newton – Sally Newton	54.51
1.06	5	3		Lorraine Streeter – Thomas Cronin	52.78
0.79		4		Jacqueline Walker – Carl Payne, Jr.	50.00
0.79			3	John Conova – Kenneth Cestone	48.61

Saturday Evening Flight A Pairs

MP	Names	PCT
3.35	1/2 Wayne Hersey – June Dorion	56.48
3.35	1/2 Norma Shelly – Nick Ecker Racz	56.48
2.15	3 Geoffrey Phipps – Bruce Downing	56.02
1.42	4/5 Phil Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	53.70
1.42	4/5 Pierce Smith – Stewart Mackeigan	53.70

Sunday Open Swiss Teams

MP	A	B	C	Names	SCORE
6.25	1	1		Jay Friedenson – Paul Reardon Mary Tierney – Ruth Stokes.	99
4.69	2			Pierce Smith. – Stewart Mackeigan Judie Donald – Connie Beliveau	89
3.52	3			Walter Fontaine – Rena Lieberman Mel Marcus – Bill Hunter	83
2.64	4			Michael Farrell – Kathy Farrell Patty DiVincenzo – Jerry DiVincenzo	82
2.71	5	2	1	Mark Adair – Vivienne Adair John Newton – Sally Newton	77
2.03		3		Claire Gardner – Elaine Day Peter Valiante – Robert Springer	75

Safety Play

by Frank Hacker

Recently, a friend asked about the best way to play the following combination of cards in a single suit to assure winning 3 tricks in the suit.

Declarer	Dummy
A973	KJ62

Most of us play match points nearly all the time and are consequently accustomed to trying for the maximum number of tricks. A safety play typically sacrifices the best chance for the maximum number of tricks in exchange for the best chance to win the number of tricks actually needed. There is normally very little merit to or opportunity for safety plays in duplicate play. Even experienced duplicate players may be completely unfamiliar with the concept. but Imagine, if you will, that you are in a slam contract that is cold if you can win 3 tricks in the suit shown above. Let's assume that you have sufficient entries in other suits so that you can have the lead in whatever hand you desire.

Let's consider some of the possibilities

1. Normal match point play of the ace followed by leading toward the KJ6 in dummy. This may produce 4 tricks, but it loses to Q10xx off side
2. First round finesse of the jack. If this loses to the queen and the suit breaks 4-1, you may have a second loser.
3. Low to the king, followed by the lead of the jack from dummy. This fails if the hand over the jack shows out.

OK! Is there something better than any of the above? What is the best way to win 3 tricks?

Answer: Lead the 3 to the king. Then, come back to your hand in a side suit and lead low toward the jack. If 2nd hand wins the queen, you will have 3 tricks, If 2nd hand plays low, simply play the jack. Whether it wins or loses, you will have 3 tricks. Finally, if 2nd hand shows out, play the jack. Fourth hand will win the trick. Later you can go back to dummy and lead small to your remaining A9 and finesses against the 10 fourth hand is known to hold. It turns out that 3 tricks are guaranteed by this sequence of plays.

DIRECTOR (please) by Jim Thomas

The new laws took effect on September 8 of this year. There is a subtle change that is addressed in the preface. “The laws are designed to define correct procedure and to provide an adequate remedy when there is a departure from correct procedure. They are primarily designed not as punishment for irregularities but rather for the rectification of situations where the non-offenders may otherwise be damaged.” That quote is from the preface.

There are major changes in two laws that you are most likely to encounter. These are the insufficient bid and revoke laws.

Insufficient bids are now handled differently from before. This law has generated much discussion at the director level, because there is more director interpretation of intent.

Take the auction 2NT—P—2H. The new law allows the bid to be corrected to 3H without penalty if the meaning is the same or more precise. (The old law would have barred partner for the remainder of the auction.) If 2H would have been a transfer to spades over 1NT and 3H is a transfer over 2NT, the auction continues normally.

There is another change in the law. If the insufficient bid is corrected before the director is called, the opponent is still offered the chance to accept the insufficient bid. However, if the bid is not accepted, the changed (substituted) call stands and any penalty is applied as if the offender had been notified of the ramifications of the change (Possible barring of partner from the bidding and/or lead penalties if the insufficient suit is not subsequently bid in the auction.). Therefore it is important to call the director immediately when there is an insufficient bid. This protects all parties.

The revoke law is changed if you do not take the revoke trick in the hand that revoked. Note that the law states the hand and not the side that took the trick. In the old law there were conditions that allowed a two trick penalty even if you did not take the revoke trick. These have been repealed. The penalty is now only one trick, if you do not take the revoke trick. The director is still authorized to adjust the score if the one trick penalty does not restore equity.

There are other changes in the laws. These can be found at <http://www.ecatsbridge.com/documents/2007laws.asp>. This site has a side by side comparison of the old and new laws. A copy of the laws may also be found at the ACBL web site. The law book may be purchased from Baron Barclay. If you have a question or a request for me to address a specific law, I can be reached at mftjet@aol.com.

Double Dummy Problem

Can't guess a queen to save your life!! No need to worry here. This is a double dummy problem. You get to see all 52 cards. The contract is 6 spades on an opening club lead. What now, genius?

		S	86		
		H	AQ10753		
		D	Q7		
		C	A32		
S	107			S	J93
H	K82			H	J94
D	KJ96432			D	108
C	4			C	KJ985
		S	AKQJ42		
		H	6		
		D	A5		
		C	Q1076		

Hint: Don't make this hand overly complicated. Long running suits make one think of squeezes. Not needed here. Also, you must assume the opponents will defend correctly.

The solution will appear on page 15 of this issue.

Ten Card Suit

The following hand comes to us from Don Wallace, president of Montpelier's Apollo Bridge Club. Don held a 10 card suit during the Friday night club game. Here is the entire hand.

		S	Q1043		
		H	AQ9		
		D	5		
		C	Q8652		
S	KJ97			S	86
H	J107			H	4
D	42			D	AKQJ1098763
C	J1093			C	void
		S	A52		
		H	K86532		
		D	void		
		C	AK74		

Ten card suits are very rare. Your editor has never had one. At Don's table, the auction was

South	West	North	East
1H	P	1S	5D
5S	P	P	6D
D	all pass		

Don went down 1 doubled for an average result. Another pair was down 2 doubled. A third pair made 5 diamonds doubled.

Homework Assignment

Have you ever heard the name Mark Itabashi? He is currently number 8 on the ACBL master point list with 34,729 points.

Your assignment is to go to the ACBL web site, go to the Boston Nationals results section and click on daily bulletin number 10. On page 7 of that bulletin is an article by Mark Itabashi, entitled "Lesson in suit preference."

You will learn something. The article is definitely well worth the little bit of effort needed to find it.

Incroyable

The following hand comes to Table Talk from Jim Thomas who lost a Swiss team match at the Nashua Regional because of it. North was the dealer. N/S were vulnerable

		S	AK10xxx
		H	void
		D	AJx
		C	K108x
S	QJxx	S	xxx
H	98xxx	H	Qx
D	xx	D	K109xxx
C	xx	C	xx
		S	void
		H	AKJ10xx
		D	Qx
		C	AQJ9x

When Jim and partner had the N/S hands, the bidding was

North	East	South	West
1S	3D	3H	P
3N	P	4C	P
5C	All Pass		

At the other table, the bidding was

North	East	South	West
1S	P	2H	P
3N	P	6N	all pass

As you can see 7C is a good contract and so is 6NT which makes when the queen of hearts is singleton, doubleton or whenever hearts divide 4-3. How would you and your favorite partner have fared?

Jim consulted several A players and concluded that North should have bid 4D over 4C instead of 5C.

Editorial Comment: I agree with the 4 diamond bid. North should realize that there might well be a slam in the hand. The road to slam has to begin with a 4D cue bid unless by some coincidence South has his own diamond control. I am amazed by the rush at both tables to bid 3NT with a heart void. Jim and his partner get some of my sympathy. The 3NT bid at the other table is beyond my comprehension. Oh well! It worked. Who am I to criticize?

Tiernan Trophy Race

Every year the Vermont Bridge Association awards the Tiernan trophy to the VBA member who accumulates the most master points in the 4 Vermont sectional tournaments. Congratulations to Jerry DiVincenzo who pulled away at the Castleton sectional. Second place went to Phil Sharpsteen, last year's winner. An attaboy to Mike Farrell who is 3rd on the list despite having participated in only 3 of the 4 tournaments. After the top 3, the race was very tight with 1. 23 separating 4th from 10th. Here are the top 10. Apologies to anyone I inadvertently omitted.

1.	Jerry DiVincenzo	42.52	5.	Sally Newton	28.12
2.	Phil Sharpsteen	36.99	7.	Pierce Smith	27.88
3.	Mike Farrell	34.84	8.	Frank Hacker	27.53
4.	June Dorion	28.52	9.	Paul Reardon	27.46
5.	John Newton	28.12	10.	Wayne Hersey	27.29

Scott Aborn Trophy Race

Every year the Vermont Bridge Association awards the Scott Aborn trophy to the VBA member who starts the year as a non-life master and who accumulates the most master points in the 4 Vermont sectional tournaments. The runaway winners for the 3rd year in a row are Sally and John Newton. We can all hope they will be life masters soon. Here are the top 10. Apologies to anyone I inadvertently omitted.

1.	Sally Newton	28.12	5.	Mark Adair	7.27
1.	John Newton	28.12	7.	John Conova	6.21
3.	Tom Osmer	8.69	8.	Linda Baker	6.11
4.	Rhoda Chickering	7.55	8.	Judith Ward	6.11
5.	Vivienne Adair	7.27	10.	Arthur Aiken	4.98

The Story of My Life

by Frank Hacker

When my ship comes in, you can count on me to be at the airport. One of my friends used to say, "It seems like I'm always a day late or a dollar short." As West, with both sides vulnerable, I held the following star-crossed hand in one of the Swiss team events at the Boston Nationals.

S 753
H AKJ92
D void
C Q10975

South opened 1 spade and the auction proceeded

S	W	N	E
1S	2S	P	3H
3S	P	6S	all pass

My 2 spade bid was a Michaels cue bid showing hearts and a minor. I was on opening lead. I expected to see an interesting dummy. The North hand passed and then jumped to 6S. What would you lead from my hand??

I decided that the best chance to set this hand was to have partner win trick 1 and return a diamond to give me a ruff. Accordingly, I led a low heart. Here was the complete deal.

	S	Q108		
	H	10753		
	D	AK642		
	C	A		
S	753		S	4
H	AKJ92		H	864
D	void		D	1085
C	Q10975		C	KJ8432
	S	AKJ962		
	H	Q		
	D	QJ973		
	C	6		

As you can see declarer had the singleton Q of hearts. This seems to be the **story of my life**. The good news is that the under lead only cost an overtrick, not the contract.. Unfortunately, our teammates didn't find this slam at the other table. No doubt this was our fault for helping North by showing our heart fit.

Note: I actually led the heart 2. I thought that partner would have no trouble realizing that I wanted a diamond ruff. With his hand, partner might easily conclude that I was void in clubs. That would require declarer to have a hidden 6 card club suit, instead of his actual hidden 5 card diamond suit. I probably should have led the heart 9. The 2 might be construed as asking partner to return a club.

President's Pairs

The 2008 President's Pairs was held on October 5 in conjunction with the VBA annual meeting and the usual lavish dinner between bridge sessions. There were 15 tables for bridge. The winners were

MP	A	B	C	Names	
5.74	1			Edsel Hughes – Jackie Kimel	535.00
4.31	2	1		Stanley Rosenthal – Kotze Toshev	505.00
3.23	3	2		Lynn Carew – Bonnie Clouser	496.00
2.70	4			Rudolph Polli – William Schiring	490.00
2.22	5	3	1	Rhoda Chickering – Sandy Desilets	471.50
3.32	6	4	2	John Newton – Sally Newton	467.50
1.46		5		Paul Reardon – Mary Tierney	459.50
1.23		6	3	Karen Kristiansen – Sheila Long	452.20
1.34			4	Lee Corbett – Ross Lieb-Lappen	430.00
0.73			5	Richard Clark – Gordon Johnson	390.50

Dave and Lynn Perrin Appreciation Pairs

The traditional annual Perrin Pairs was held on November 6 at the Burlington Bridge Academy. There were 2 sessions of bridge with non-stop food and a wonderful turkey dinner between sessions. There were 12 tables for bridge. Last year's winners, Phil Sharpsteen and Frank Hacker successfully defended their title. The winners were

MP	A	B	C	Names	
4.68	1			Phil Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	365.41
3.51	2			June Dorion – Wayne Hersey	359.55
2.63	3			Penny Lane – Peter Tripp	335.13
3.53	4	1		Mary Tierney – Nick Ecker Racz	333.09
1.55	5			Judie Donald – Fred Donald	315.79
2.65	6	2		Pat Nestork – Lynn Carew	314.04
1.99		3		Tom Osmer – Bryant Jones	294.98
2.22		4	1	Lorraine Streeter – Tom Cronin	292.92
1.18		5		Kotze Toshev – Stan Rosenthal	283.56
1.67			2	Martin Wennar – Robert Zelazo	281.21
1.31			3	Sally Newton – John Newton	276.57

Double Dummy Problem Solution

Win the ace of clubs and draw four rounds of trump, pitching 2 low clubs from dummy. Lead a heart to the queen. Play the ace of hearts, pitching the **ace of diamonds**. Trump a heart to your hand, setting up dummy's hearts. Now lead a diamond toward dummy. Left hand opponent has only diamonds. He can win the king (the only trick for the defense), but must lead a diamond to put you in dummy for your good hearts. In all, you

get 6 spade tricks, 4 heart tricks, 1 club trick and 1 diamond trick. (Note: since you still have a trump in hand at the end, the trump, not the long heart will take the last trick.)

Vermont On The Tournament Trail

Many Vermonters have done well (10 points or more) recently at the Boston Nationals and at a number of regionals.

Here is a list of recent Vermont successes

<u>Boston Nationals:</u>	Ellie Hanlon	84.88	June Dorion	18.65
	Mary Savko	84.88	Sheila Long	18.00
	Phil Sharpsteen	26.41	Karen Kristiansen	18.00
	Frank Hacker	26.41	Norma Jakominich	17.43
	Penny Lane	19.32	Sally Newton	15.86
	Peter Tripp	19.32	John Newton	15.86
	Neil Raphel	19.06	Andy Avery	14.87
	James Gordon	18.91	Courtney Nelson	14.49
	Don Sondergeld	18.68	Sandra Hammer	14.49
	Wayne Hersey	18.65		

<u>Lancaster:</u>	Penny Lane	35.87	Peter Tripp	35.87
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<u>Daytona:</u>	Ellie Hanlon	41.10	Mary Savko	41.10
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<u>Naples:</u>	Ellie Hanlon	82.43	Peter Bouyea	48.64
	Mary Savko	82.43	Dave Shaw	48.64

Vermonters On The Way Up

Congratulations to the following VBA members who have achieved new ranks in the master point hierarchy. Well done!!

Junior Master:

Jenny Bell	Cynthia Holler	Mary Ann Kaplinsky
Diane Liccardi	Connie Phypers	Duncan Robb
Kate Spencer	Dorothy Williams	Herbert Yalof

Club Master:

Margie Berger	Linda Brenner	Kathy Demers
Mary Falk	Barbara Reilly	

Sectional Master:

Kay Fay

Ross Lieb-Lappen

Regional Master:

Kenneth Cestone

Jan Gisholt

Sheila Long

Bronze Life Master:

Connie Beliveau

Richard Gazley

My Favorite Card Combination

by Frank Hacker

My favorite card combination is the Q10, because the play and defense possibilities are so varied and because the correct play in any given situation is frequently counterintuitive.

Here is a quiz for you. The answer to all four questions is the same. The real challenge in some situations is to figure out why. Assume for convenience that the key suit is always spades.

1. You arrive in 3NT after right hand opponent overcalls 1 spade. Left hand opponent leads the 8 of spades. You have an ace you must knock out before you can get to 9 tricks. What do you play from dummy at trick 1?

Dummy	Q105
You	K63

2. The opponents arrive at 3NT. Declarer wins your opening lead in hand and leads the 6 of spades toward dummy. Which spade do you play?

Dummy	AJ953
You	Q107

3. The opponents arrive in 3NT. Declarer wins your opening lead in hand and leads a spade toward dummy, finessing the jack. Declarer calls for the K of spades from dummy. Both partner and declarer follow with a small spot card. What do you play?

Dummy	KJ2
You	Q105

4. The opponents' transfer auction has gone 1NT – 2H – 2S – 4S. Declarer wins partner's opening lead in hand. He leads the K of spades. Partner and dummy both play low. What do you play?

Dummy	AJ9842
You	Q10

The correct answer to all problems is the Q, but why?

In hand 1, RHO probably has AJ9xx for his overcall. The queen forces him to win the ace and to switch suits. This works no matter who has the missing outside ace.

In hand 2, the queen thwarts declarer's plan to put in the 9 to force out partner's king. Declarer would later finesse the jack to pick up your queen. Declarer can still get this suit right (assuming enough entries), but the queen makes it a lot harder.

In hand 3, the queen is the card you're known to have. You may win a trick with the 10 if declarer takes the queen at face value and decides to finesse partner for the 10.

In hand 4, the queen is not quite so clear cut.

If declarer has 4 spades to the king, you'll never get a trump trick.

If declarer has 3 to the king, he'll probably play for the drop. Still, the play of the 10 may induce him to finesse. That's why the queen is not completely clear. It may surprise you to know that playing for the drop will win 52% of the time. The finesse will be right only 48% of the time. This runs contrary to intuition in 2 ways. First, we know that a 3-1 split is more likely than a 2-2. Second, we have become used to restricted choice and generally finesse for the missing queen or jack after the fall of the other honor. Restricted choice does not apply here, unless one wishes to argue that from the Q10 doubleton, the defender will choose his card randomly and is just as likely to select the Q as the 10.

If declarer has a doubleton king, the play of the queen is your best chance to get a trick. If you play the 10, declarer may still finesse, thereby giving you credit for the ability to false card with a doubleton 10. Declarer may well take your 10 to be an honest card and play for the drop of your queen. His reasoning would be that either you have doubleton queen 10 or a singleton 10. If the latter, the finesse for the queen would be a futile gesture. Partner's 4 to the queen would win a trick even if the finesse won. If you play the queen, declarer should think your partner has 4 to the 10. You would win a trick when declarer decides to finesse partner for the 10. The key to this hand is that declarer can't pick up 4 to the queen in partner's hand, but he can pick up four to the 10. The play of the queen should improve your chances. Still, we have to look to the dictum, that, it's foolish to waste "a \$5 play against 10 cent opponents."

Coming Attractions

Jan 7 -11 Individual Regional, Boston Marriott Newton, Newton, MA

Jan 24-25 District 25 Grand National Teams, Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, MA

Feb 11-16 NE KO Team Regional, Crown Plaza Hotel, Cromwell, CT

Mar 12-22 Spring Nationals, Hilton Americas Hotel, Houston, TX

Apr 3-5 VT Sugar Time Sectional, Burlington Bridge Academy, S. Burlington

Apr 29-May 3 Ethel Keohane Senior Regional, Sea Crest Resort, N Falmouth, MA

May 22-24 VT Spring Sectional, Holiday Inn, Rutland, VT

TABLE TALK PATRONS for 2009

Adair, Mark & Vivienne
Aiken, Arthur
Baker, Linda
Barton, Sheila
Beliveau, Jean-Guy & Connie
Bouyea, Linda
Bouyea, Peter
Brass, Ruth & Ed
Brenner, Linda
Brown, Abe & Jean
Buttolph, Ed
Callnan, Bill
Campbell, Don
Carew, Lynn
Carpenter, Dot
Chernyshov, Luisa
Chiabrandy, Bob
Chickering, Rhoda
Christy, Virginia
Clark, Richard
Clements, Cindy
Clermont, Jeannie
Clouser, Bonnie
Clouser, Paul
Desilets, Sandy
DiVincenzo, Gerry & Patty
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Donald, Judie
Dorion, June
Eldridge, Casey & Del
Fitz-Gerald, Barbara
Friedenson, Jay
Furlong, Michael & Nancy
Gazley, Dick & Marti
Graves, Allan
Hanley, Jim
Hersey, Wayne
Holt, Sally
Hughes, Edsel
Jarmy, Dave
Johnson, Gordon
Jones, Bry
Kazlow, Gene
Kimel, Jackie
Kontoff, Mitch
Kristiansen, Karen
Lane, Penny

Linn, Jack
Little, Carolyn
Long, Sheila
Madden, Nancy
McGrath, Pearl
Merrill, Pat
Morein, Joseph
Nelson, Courtney
Nestork, Bill & Pat
Newton, Sallie
Pecor, Lorraine
Perrin, Dave
Polli, Rudy
Reardon, Paul & Jackie
Sahyoun, Renee
Sharpsteen, Phil
Shaw, Dave
Shawcross, Ernie & Rigmor
Silverman, June
Silverman, Ron
Singer, Gloria
Snow, Allan
Sondergeld, Don
Sondergeld, Mary
Squire, Mary
Stone, Joyce
Sullivan, Dan
Tierney, Mary
Toshev, Kotze
Tripp, Peter
Wager, Fran
Wallace, Don
Ward, Judi
Zierler, Neal & Jackie

OUT OF UNIT

Caissey, Marilyn Coleman
Cleveland, Peter & Judy
Durkee, Leslie (in memory of
Carmans)
Grover, Eunice
Hammer, Sandy
Jakominich, Gene & Norma
Robinson, Jonna
Rogers, Michael & Babette
Spongberg, Gary & Lucy

Vermont Sugar-time Sectional

Burlington Bridge Academy

7 Green Tree Drive

South Burlington, VT 05403

April 3 - 5, 2009

Sanction # S0904062

Schedule of events:

Friday April 3th:

1:30 PM Open Pairs, Stratified
Under 100 Pairs (an opportunity to win silver points)
7:30 PM Open Pairs, Stratified
Under 100 Pairs

Saturday April 4th:

10:00 AM Open Pairs, Stratified
Under 100 Pairs

NOTE NEW

SATURDAY

3:00 PM Open Pairs, Stratified
Under 100 Pairs

START TIMES

Sunday April 5th:

10:30 AM 1st Session Open Swiss Teams, Stratified
Under 200 Swiss Teams, Stratified
TBA 2nd Session Open Swiss Teams, Stratified

Open Stratifications: A: unlimited B: <1500, LMs & >500 C: NLM <500

Newcomer Stratifications: A: <100 B<50 C<20

Suggested Accommodations:

Double Tree Inn, 1117 Williston Rd. (800) 222-8733

Hawthorn Suites, 401 Dorset St. (802) 860-1212

University Inn, I-89, Exit 14E, (800) 808-4656

Windjammer Best Western 1076 Williston Rd. (800) 371-1125

Chairperson: Jackie Kimel (802) 864-4321

Partnerships: Jackie Kimel (802) 864-4321

VERMONT SPRING SECTIONAL
 Holiday Inn
 476 US Route 7 South, Rutland, Vermont, 05701

May 22 - 24, 2009

Sanction # S0905070

Schedule of events:

Friday May 22th

1:30 PM Stratified Open Pairs
 7:30 PM Stratified Newcomer Pairs
 7:30 PM Stratified Open Pairs

Saturday May 23th

10:00 AM Stratified Open Pairs **NOTE NEW SATURDAY**
 10:00 AM Stratified Newcomer Paris **START TIMES**
 3:00 PM Stratiflighted Open Pairs A (separate event) = 0 to unlimited
 B = 500 to 1500, C = 300 to 500, D = 0 to 300

Sunday May 24th

10:30 AM 1st session Stratified Open Swiss Teams
 10:30 AM 0 to 300 Swiss Teams (1 session only)
 TBA 2nd Session Stratified Open Swiss Teams

Open Stratifications: A above 1500, B 500 to 1500, C 0 to 500
 Newcomer Stratifications: A 100 to 300, B 50 to 100, C 0 to 50 (Strats may be adjusted)

Price per session: \$8 - \$1 additional for Non-ACBL members
 Vermont State Law - No smoking in public buildings and or the playing area
 Director (&MC): Dave Marshall

Partnerships: Judi Ward (802) 287-5756
 Tournament Committee: Judi Ward (802) 287-5756 & Linda Baker (802) 773-9412

**Holiday Inn Discounted Group Rate --- Please Call 1-800-462-4810 for Reservations
 by May 8, 2009**

1 Night Stay

	<u>1 person</u>	<u>2 people</u>	
Double Bed	\$99	\$115	Includes hot breakfast buffet and \$10 food voucher per person at Paynter's Restaurant
King Bed	\$105	\$125	

2 Night Stay

	<u>1 person</u>	<u>2 people</u>	
Double Bed	\$179	\$209	Includes 2 hot breakfast buffets and one \$10 food voucher per person at Paynter's Restaurant
King Bed	\$199	\$229	

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The Vermont Bridge Association, Unit 175 of the American Contract Bridge League publishes Table Talk quarterly. If you are an ACBL and Unit 175 (Vermont) member And have not received a copy of Table Talk, please notify the editor. Contributors' articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the VBA.