

TABLE TALK

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Barbara Cross **Manchester's First Lady of Bridge**

If you happen to play bridge in the Southern Vermont region, it won't be long before you meet Barbara Cross, who, in every sense of the words, is the First Lady of Bridge in Manchester.

Barbara, who recently celebrated her eightieth birthday, was one of the founders of the first organized duplicate game in the area. A native of New Jersey, she moved to Vermont in 1958. Although she did not play bridge in college, it became a social outlet for her during the years she and her husband raised their young family in Vermont, first in South Royalton, then Williamstown and eventually in Manchester. She

moved to Manchester on a day she says she will never forget. It was Friday, November 22, 1963, the day John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

It was in 1975 that a good friend, Dave Pendleton, started a duplicate bridge club in Manchester. Asked about the transition from party bridge to duplicate, Barbara didn't miss a beat when she replied, "Intimidating!" There were about sixteen people, or four tables, that regularly met on Tuesday nights. Several of the regulars were from the Rutland region and still play in the current Manchester & The Mountains games — Pierce Smith, who recently moved to Florida, Jim Thomas, June Dorion — to name a few. The Tuesday night game started in a room in the basement of the Avalanche Motel. "You could say we had an underground operation," Barbara quipped, "but eventually, we came above ground to the social room at the Zion Church." It was an interesting time, Barbara recalls. Many of the players were going through the emotional upheavals of divorce, separation or relationship issues, and the local pastor called the bridge players his "Little Therapy Group."

In the thirty-six years that Barbara has been playing duplicate bridge, many facets of the game have changed. The only systems played then were Blackwood and Gerber for aces, and Stayman. There were no bidding boxes. Barbara remembers that when she first heard the term 'bidding boxes' she envisioned players being confined to boxes so they could not see each other. The early boards were wooden, then metal and eventually evolved to lightweight plastic. Many of the players smoked—not only cigarettes, but cigars and pipes—and some people who might otherwise have played, stayed away because of the smoke. Barbara readily admits that the games got a lot better when the ACBL instituted non-smoking laws forbidding smoking of any kind at duplicate games.

Two daytime games were launched, but Barbara worked days as Town Clerk for the Town of Manchester, so her duplicate play was restricted to Tuesday evenings or Rutland on Thursday nights. The Rutland game was played in nursing homes, hotels and the showrooms of car dealerships, where, Barbara remembers, the early evening sun in summer was unbearable.

When she retired in 1996, she took up the game in earnest, taking lessons to learn the new systems and playing as frequently as she could. She decided to play in a tournament up in Montreal, hoping to garner some extra points. The plan was to stay with the sister of her travel partner, Dave, however there was nowhere for her to sleep, so Dave rolled up a mattress and stuffed it in the back seat of his car. Barbara has a vivid recollection of Dave walking down a street in Montreal carrying the mattress over his head to his sister's apartment. During that tournament, she had what she called her "most abrupt partnership." She was paired with a sewer-engineer who asked, after the first round, "Do you play DOPI?" Barbara recalled, "I had no idea that it was a system asking for outstanding aces. I thought he was referring to the caliber of my game. Needless to say, he didn't come back to play with me after that session."

In the early days of duplicate, Barbara muses, the players were less disciplined in their play. She remembered her own bid of 3H, A, K 7 times. Turned out the ace was actually the ace of diamonds. "Fortunately for me," she said, "instead of the error backfiring, it so confused the opponents that we got a top." Another time, she *doubled* before anyone bid!

Part of the education in playing was the personalities that ranged from sweet and tolerant to volatile. In spite of the differences, or maybe because of them, the friendships made were just as diversified and long-lasting. In 2000, Barbara had a stroke, and in 2002, had open heart surgery. Both harrowing events meant months in rehabilitation and nursing homes, and confinement to a wheelchair. Getting back into the game was not an easy task, but family and friends urged and supported her courageous efforts to return to the bridge table, and she rose to the challenge. She also had a bit of prodding and encouragement from her good friend Bob Smith, director and owner of Manchester & the Mountains Duplicate Bridge Club. Come heat, rain, snow or hurricane, Barbara waits at her back porch for Bob to wheel her chariot to his car and be whisked off to the local bridge games—Monday and Friday during fall, winter and spring, and Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in summer. She sets a dramatic example for those who think they “can’t.”

In April of 2011, Craig Robinson, President of ACBL, was honored at Manchester & the Mountains Duplicate Bridge Club. He chose to play with Barbara. They had a “respectable” ranking against a very competitive field, coming in third in that charity event. It was fitting that he was paired with Barbara Cross, an icon of bridge in Manchester, Vermont.

Greetings from Vermont Bridge Association President Phil Sharpsteen

I would like to wish all VBA members a happy, healthy and prosperous new year and a year enriched by the enjoyment of the game we all love.

The winter season is a difficult one for many of the bridge clubs in Vermont. The flight south of many snowbirds has had a serious impact on attendance. Also, cold and darkness has caused many others to hunker down to ride out the winter. Your bridge club needs your support more in the winter months than at any other time. I encourage and ask all of you to please get out and support your club.

As many of you know the Vermont Bridge Association sponsors 4 sectional tournaments every year. Traditionally these tournaments have been held at the Burlington Bridge Academy in early April and at the Rutland Holiday Inn at the end of May, mid-July and at the end of October.

2012’s tournaments will be held 3 times at the Rutland Holiday Inn -- June 1-3, July 6-8, and October 26-28. The fourth will be held at the Burlington Bridge Academy on September 21-23.

Some of the dates at Rutland are a bit different from those of past years. The Burlington tournament has been moved from early April to late September to accommodate snowbirds, with the hope that the early fall date will lead to improved attendance.

Editorial Comment: Don Sharp is a relatively new player, but he is learning rapidly. I love talking to him about bridge, because he is very bright and thoughtful about the game. He really wants to improve and is doing so quickly. I hope you enjoy his article.

Life in the Fast Lane

By Don Sharp

Forty years ago, check that (wishful thinking), 50 years ago when I was in high school a few of us decided to learn how to play bridge. We grabbed my father's Goren Bridge Complete and studied it like a textbook. We were off, armed with 4 card majors, strong two bids, 16-18 No Trump hands and standard Blackwood. Off to college we went carrying our Goren guidelines and we quickly began playing there. My most memorable Bridge event at that time was in my sophomore year. My partner spotted this "tournament" at MIT that was only an hour away. We of course thought we were pretty good. Well, I don't recall what this "tournament" was by name. All I know is that there were 400 pairs competing for three days. My guess is that it was some sort of N.E. Regional championship. Anyway, I will never forget the last hand. We were very tired after three days and it was the last board. We were playing two "gentlemen" that both spoke in heavy accents. They were bidding every suit in the book while we quietly passed. They finally reached 7NT and my partner (on lead) doubled. He then promptly led the Spade ace. Well, both opponents jumped up and started screaming at each other in their native tongue that was not understandable, but it probably meant something like, "how could you possibly bid like that!" In the end, we came in dead last, 399th...despite a top on the very last board! What a start for my bridge playing life!

Ratchet ahead to today, kids all grown and through college, I'm retired with plenty of time to get back to playing bridge...but, one quickly learns that Goren is as old as a Model T Ford in a Hybrid world. So I decided I'd better take a brush up course...First, I must say that the instructor was extremely patient as this Bridge know-it-all shows up in his class. I slowly gave up some old concepts and habits and started liking the new systems. It was tough to bid NT with only 15 points and a doubleton without a bona fide stopper. But it WORKS!

I then hooked up with a partner and bravely entered the world of duplicate play and found it exasperating but also exhilarating. I first learned that odd stuff happens in duplicate play. You can think you are doing awful and suddenly you find yourself coming in "the points." On the other side, you can think you are having a bang up game only to find yourself dead last! I quickly found myself analyzing the score to see who beat who and why. One first notices some strange score and you say to yourself, "how could they possibly make that bid?" Or, "how could they even arrive at that contract?" Strangely enough I have answered some of those questions myself as I have pulled the wrong bidding card or have made a boneheaded defensive discard. I am still not sure what makes me do these things. I think that one is thinking soooooo hard about all the situations that often one forgets the basics.

Now I am hooked and yearning to expand into more complex conventions. I think we are lucky here in Burlington. I believe we have an inordinate number of Life Masters playing here and every one of them is more than willing to play with the likes of us newcomers who really make very bad bids and plays from time to time. I am lucky to have partnered with a number of these experts who continue to patiently and

gently teach me in the refinements of bidding and play. I have been lucky to find partners that let me try the more complex conventions knowing that I will screw them up somewhere along the way. I must admit I am a bit nervous playing with these storied folks and it does affect my thinking. I am slowly learning to relax and my play has been improving. Some times when I hook up with one of the “life masters” it’s like “drinking from the firehose.” I am so focused on not missing an alertable bid or a Capelletti overcall that I completely forget that we are playing RKC Blackwood! It’s an amazing game with so many variations. In 30 boards there will always be at least 10 “instructional” situations.

I now have brought my wife on and we are starting to play together. We entered our first tournament recently and yes, came in dead last! We are undaunted! We will refine our conventions and we look forward to traveling to various tournaments and making them mini-vacations. Although my wife is a bit behind me on the learning curve, I know she has turned the corner because now she can spot my bad play or bid and is not shy about calling me on it! She also has managed to get a silver point already....and without me!

I know there are more folks out there that have taken a similar Bridge life path. I urge you to get back to it and have some fun....you can compete and you can easily pick up on the latest conventions. So don’t be shy, the clubs have great folks willing to mentor and instruct.

Soooooo, we will keep playing and keep learning, while making many new friends. We invite you to come and join the fun!

Director (Please)

Taking advantage of director calls

To win at duplicate bridge, you must make fewer mistakes than your opponents and you must capitalize on their mistakes. We all realize that we need “gifts” to win. When your opponent has made a mistake that includes a director call, you must take advantage if you can. Some novices believe that it is unethical to take advantage of a director call. This is NOT true. It is a law violation to waive a penalty. Only the director can waive a penalty.

Lead out of turn:

Things to consider with a lead out of turn at trick one:

Is your partner a better declarer? If so, consider accepting the lead and exercising your option to make partner declarer.

Is your partner’s hand the stronger hand? And would it be better as declarer?

Are there tenaces in your hand that you want lead to and not thru?

Are you in the wrong contract or did your bidding system have the wrong hand as declarer? The classic example is a pair that is not playing transfers when most players are transferring. Is the lead of the suit better from the other side?

The Goldwater “Rule” -- If the opponent did not know whose lead it was, he probably did not know the correct lead.

If the lead is out of turn later in the play, remember that everyone has more information and is less likely to lead incorrectly.

Major Penalty cards

A major penalty card must be played at its first legal opportunity. If the partner of the player with a penalty card has the lead, you have the option of demanding/denying the lead of that suit. If you demand the lead and he cannot comply, then he may lead anything. If the player with the penalty card is on lead, there are no options. That card must be led. There are many ways to take advantage of a penalty card.

The easiest way to take advantage is to finesse into the hand with the penalty card as the penalty card must be played.

Depending on the size of the penalty card, you can use it to put that player in such as in an endplay.

On the other hand, if you want the penalty suit led, plan the play so that the lead is where you want it. You will have to give up the lead in a second suit.

In no-trump contracts, tempo could be a consideration. You may be able to control the suit led, which can be critical in a no-trump contract as the defense may not be able to lead the suit of their choice.

It is always possible that there is no way to take advantage of the penalty card.

Withdrawn calls and Authorized/unauthorized information

You may never use unauthorized information to influence your calls. If you do, the results may be adjusted. If you are unsure of what is authorized, ask the director at the time he is at the table. There are too many possibilities to list examples.

In general, there is still a lot of misinformation concerning director calls. Some novices feel that it is inappropriate to call the director. The most common mistake of novices is the failure to call the director when it was indicated. The director's job is to restore equity. If you can take advantage of the ruling, then do it.

Tiernan Trophy Race

Every year the Vermont Bridge Association awards the Tiernan Trophy to the Vermont player who wins the most master points in the 4 Vermont Sectional Tournaments. VBA president, Phil Sharpsteen, a frequent winner, has done it again. As Phil himself has pointed out, the VBA has so many players wintering in Florida that he is one of the few contenders who actually plays in all 4 tournaments. For 2012 the April tournament has been moved to September, so we should see some higher totals in next year's race. Here are the top 10. As usual, I apologize for any errors or inadvertent omissions.

1.	Phil Sharpsteen	41.76	6.	Frank Hacker	27.97
2.	Jerry DiVincenzo	36.43	7.	Kathy Farrell	22.70
3.	Mike Farrell	30.93	8.	John Newton	22.16
4.	Wayne Hersey	30.03	8.	Sally Newton	22.16
5.	Patty DiVincenzo	28.20	10.	Ruth Stokes	20.77

Aborn Trophy Race

Every Year the Vermont Bridge Association awards the Aborn Trophy to the Vermont player who starts the year as a non-life master and wins the most master points in the 4 Vermont Sectional Tournaments. Last year's winner, Karen Kristiansen, has won again and by a wide margin over former winner Sheila Long. Here are the top 10. As usual, I apologize for any errors or inadvertent omissions.

1.	Karen Kristiansen	20.73	6.	Vivienne Adair	5.91
2.	Sheila Long	7.84	6.	Mark Adair	5.91
3.	Richard Clark	6.72	8.	Jan Gisholt	5.47
3.	Gordon Johnson	6.72	9.	Judith Ward	4.78
5.	Catherine Loew	6.10	10.	Claire Genser	4.07
			10.	Joseph Morein	4.07

Vermont Bridge Association Top 100

Paid up Members as of December 15

1.	Allan Graves	15,171	51.	Louise Acker	985
2.	Frank Hacker	6,272	52.	Edward Schirmer	938
3.	Philip Sharpsteen	4,103	53.	Gary Feingold	911
4.	Wayne Hersey	3,920	54.	Bonnie Clouser	904
5.	Peter Tripp	3,601	55.	Gene Kazlow	888
6.	Michael Farrell	3,583	56.	C Kirk Osterland	861
7.	Gerald DiVincenzo	3,564	57.	Paul Cohen	835
8.	Kathleen Farrell	3,494	58.	Nancy Lolli	829
9.	Donald Sondergeld	3,477	59.	Irene Vignoe	793
10.	Fred Donald	3,379	60.	Faith Reddy	766
11.	June Dorion	3,364	61.	Robert Silverman	757
12.	Courtney Nelson	3,160	62.	Mitchell Kontoff	746
13.	Sandra Hammer	3,006	63.	Alan Wertheimer	735
14.	Patricia DiVincenzo	2,744	64.	Eileen Fleiter	720
15.	Rudolph Polli	2,628	65.	Elizabeth VonRiesenfelder	704
16.	David Shaw	2,610	66.	Carlos Galvan	669
17.	Clifford Gordon	2,503	67.	John Conova	666
18.	Michael Engel	2,478	68.	Patricia Earle	633
19.	Penny Lane	2,401	69.	Edward Brass	599
20.	Judith Donald	2,346	70.	Raymond Johnson	592
21.	Lynn Carew	2,345	71.	John Nelson	582
22.	Jackie Kimel	2,289	72.	Kotze Toshev	579
23.	Robert Smith	2,273	73.	Ronald Silverman	572
24.	Bryant Jones	1,918	74.	Joyce Stone	559
25.	Patricia Nestork	1,902	75.	Richard Gazley	553
26.	Peter Bouyea	1,868	76.	Robert Chiabrandy	550
27.	Nicholas Ecker Racz	1,757	77.	Joy Lewis	542
28.	Andy Avery	1,731	78.	Martha Gazley	541
29.	Stanley Rosenthal	1,663	79.	Lucy Morini	538
30.	Jack Rihn	1,659	80.	June Silverman	538
31.	Jesse Stalker	1,616	81.	Constance Beliveau	525
32.	Barbara Fitz-Gerald	1,585	82.	George Malek	487
33.	Jay Friedenson	1,582	83.	Josephine Machera	471
34.	Marcia Wilkins	1,534	84.	Marsha Anstey	462
35.	Gerow Carlson	1,485	85.	Virginia Christy	459
36.	Linda Bouyea	1,464	86.	Layton Davis	458
37.	Ruth Stokes	1,438	87.	Grant Pealer	452
38.	Paul Reardon	1,388	88.	Lois Mailloux	449
39.	Edward Midgley	1,311	89.	Rhoda Chickering	417
40.	Mary Tierney	1,199	90.	Betty Stanley	406
41.	Steven Dunham	1,197	91.	John A. Newton	403
42.	Chris Acker	1,182	92.	Richard Clark	400
43.	Rigmor Shawcross	1,173	93.	Byron Quinn	390
44.	Norma Jakominich	1,164	94.	James Chase	389
45.	Donald Campbell	1,148	95.	John D. Newton	383
46.	James Daigle	1,105	96.	Barbara MacDonald	379
47.	William Schiring	1,094	97.	Sally Newton	378
48.	William Sibley	1,070	98.	Robert Springer	375
49.	David Perrin	1,066	99.	Jeannie Clermont	369
50.	Jon Stokes	1,057	100.	Rolland Taylor	356

Perrin Pairs

The Perrin Pairs has become an annual December ritual. For many years Dave Perrin and his wife Lyn had the event at their church in Charlotte. For the past few years the event has been held at the Burlington Bridge Academy. This year's game took place on December 3 at the Burlington Bridge Academy. The format was the usual 2 sessions of bridge with a fabulous dinner in the middle. This year's winners were John Kimel and Phil Sharpsteen. Here are the overall standings.

MP	A	B	C		Score
4.25	1			John Kimel – Phil Sharpsteen	276
3.35	2/3	1		Stan Rosenthal – Jackie Kimel	268
2.79	2/3			Mike Farrell – Jerry DiVincenzo	268
2.51	4	2		Mary Tierney – Paul Reardon	255.50
2.38	5	3	1	Dave Perrin – Bill Nestork	249
2.13	6	4		Gary Feingold – Kotze Toshev	246
1.12		5		Bill Schiring – Nick Ecker Racz	242
1.79			2	John Newton – Sally Newton	236
1.34			3	Charles Van Royen – Art Keppelman	223
1.06			4	June Silverman – Ron Silverman	222

Vermont Fall Sectional

Holiday Inn, Rutland VT

October 28-30, 2011

Friday Afternoon Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
3.83	1			Phil Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	65.16
2.87	2			Penny Lane – J Peter Tripp	64.72
2.15	3			June Dorion – Don Campbell	60.22
1.92	4			Fred Donald Jr. – Judie Donald	59.52
2.77	5	1		Neal Gore – Peter Matthews	57.30
2.08	6	2		Jim Thomas – Norma Jakominich	56.91
1.56		3		Jon Stokes – Ruth Stokes	53.62
1.88		4	1	John Newton – Sally Newton	53.24
1.41		5	2	Raymond Lopes – Susan Ransom	52.91
1.06			3	Michael McDonald – Tom Floyd	52.67
0.79			4	Judith Ward – Linda Baker	51.70

Friday Evening Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
3.67	1	1		Pat Nestork – Lynn Carew	64.35
2.75	2	2	1	John Newton – Sally Newton	58.80
2.06	3	3		Jim Thomas – Norma Jakominich	57.87
1.83	4	4	2	Catherine Loew – Jan Gisholt	56.02
1.28	5	5	3	Peter Allen – Robert Dickson	53.24
0.87	6			Mel Marcus – Barbara Murphy	52.78
0.75			4	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	50.93

Saturday Morning Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
4.33	1			June Dorion – Don Campbell	63.82
3.25	2			Jerry DiVincenzo – Mike Farrell	59.46
2.44	3			Penny Lane – J Peter Tripp	58.92
2.92	4	1		Jesse Stalker – Norma Jakominich	57.93
1.37	5			Barbara Murphy – Mel Marcus	57.38
2.19	6	2		Jon Stokes – Ruth Stokes	55.64
1.88		3	1	Judith Ward – Suzanna Thurber	53.47
1.23		4		Neal Gore – Peter Matthews	53.42
0.92		5		Lynn Carew – Pat Nestork	52.03
1.41		6	2	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	50.65
1.06			3	Robert Dickson – Peter Mitchell	50.33
0.79			4	Susan Ransom – Raymond Lopes	49.98

Saturday Morning Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
3.83	1			Kathy Farrell – Patty DiVincenzo	67.42
2.87	2			Frank Hacker – Phil Sharpsteen	61.93
2.15	3			Judy Dubay – Bill Dubay	60.80
2.77	4	1		S Michael Sharp – Nancy Sharp	58.71
1.34	5			Jerry DiVincenzo – Mike Farrell	55.87
2.08	6	2		Barbara Fitz-Gerald – Bryant Jones	55.68
1.56		3		Neal Gore – Peter Matthews	52.46
1.17		4		Bonnie Clouser – Mary Tierney	51.70
0.97		5		Jesse Stalker – Norma Jakominich	50.95
1.77			1	Peter Mitchell – Robert Dickson	50.57
1.17			2/3	John Newton – Sally Newton	50.38
1.17			2/3	Gilbert Nadeau – Margaret Nadeau	50.38
0.75			4	Sheila Barton – Nancy Madden	47.73

Sunday Swiss Teams

MP	A	B	C		Score
5.25	1			Judy Dubay – Bill Dubay Bob Donald – Diane Burger	88
3.94	2			Patty DiVincenzo – Kathy Farrell Jerry DiVincenzo – Mike Farrell	79
2.95	3			Rudolph Polli – Fred Donald Jr Phil Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	76
3.72	4	1		Jackie Kimel – Dave Shaw Mary Tierney – Bonnie Clouser	70
2.79		2		Joseph Phillips – Lois Phillips Nancy Sharp – S Michael Sharp	61
2.47		3	1	John Conova – Sally Newton John Newton – Karen Kristiansen	58

Vermonters On The Way Up

Many Vermonters have recently achieved new ranks in the ACBL masterpoint hierarchy. Well done!
Here is a list. My apologies to anyone I inadvertently omitted.

Junior Master:

Margaret Fanning
Eric McCann

Millie Henning
R. Perry

Susan Kellett

Club Master:

Patricia Forbes
Kenneth Kaleita
Maureen Labenski

Deanne Gilman
Linda Kaleita
Christina Long

Karen Hewitt
Merle Kent
Muriel Scher

Sectional Master:

Arlene Fleming
Nancy Madden

Matthew Fleming

Claire Genser

Life Master:

Richard Clark

Gold Life Master:

Clifford Gordon

Simple Squeezes Made Simple

By Frank Hacker

We have all had the experience. We're on defense. We have several potential tricks. Declarer is sure to go down. Declarer runs a long suit and we have to make discards. Toward the end we have to throw away some critical cards and declarer makes a contract he has no business making. We have been squeezed.

It may be a bit odd to say, but I'm composing this column on squeezes for newer players. It's important for new students of the game to understand what has happened and to see how they can incorporate pressure play into their own declarer play arsenal.

Most players, even those with a lot of experience, consider squeezes to be advanced, esoteric and beyond comprehension by mere mortals. While there are advanced squeezes, simple squeezes are, well, fairly simple. Many times they just happen without the declarer giving them much thought. The important thing is to cash your winners in the right order and await the occasional miracle.

I should state at this point that I would like to separate squeezes into 2 categories, real and fake. In the real squeeze, a defender is actually forced to throw away a critical card. In a fake (sometimes called pseudo) squeeze, a defender is not forced to throw away a critical card. He/she just makes a mistake and saves the wrong card. An old friend used to call these pseudos Honduras squeezes. That's where they send you if you fall for the fake.

Let's look at a simple example. As South, you are declarer in 7NT with the lead of the king of hearts.

		<u>North</u>			
		S	AKQ2		
		H	J43		
		D	1065		
		C	K104		
	<u>West</u>			<u>East</u>	
	S	J1063		S	985
	H	KQ109		H	876
	D	92		D	J8743
	C	653		C	97
		<u>South</u>			
		S	74		
		H	A52		
		D	AKQ		
		C	AQJ82		

Here you have 12 easy tricks, 8 in the minor suits and 4 in the major suits. You should ask yourself where the 13th trick will come from. Clearly the answer must be either the 2 of spades or the jack of hearts. These cards are your threats.

Please note the most important feature of this hand. West has to guard both hearts and spades. The same player has to protect against both threats. This is essential for a squeeze to work. A single defender must be under multiple attacks. This hand simply requires cashing your winners in the right order. The order of the clubs and diamonds makes no difference. The important thing is to leave spades alone until the end. It does no good to force West to discard a critical card if you wind up with no entry to your hard earned extra winner.

So, win the heart ace and cash 3 diamond winners followed by 4 club winners, discarding a low heart on the 4th club winner. At this point 8 tricks have gone by and the layout should now be

		<u>North</u>			
		S	AKQ2		
		H	J		
		D			
		C			
	<u>West</u>			<u>East</u>	
S	J1063			S	98
H	K			H	8
D				D	J8
C				C	
		<u>South</u>			
		S	74		
		H	52		
		D			
		C	2		

Note that West has simply discarded as he was forced to do. At trick 9, you lead your last club. What is West to do? If he throws a spade, you discard the jack of hearts from dummy and take 4 spade tricks. If he discards the king of hearts, you jettison dummy's 2 of spades and dummy is good.

Two points: This hand just played itself. Either the squeeze worked or it didn't. There is nothing esoteric or advanced here. Just cash your winners. Also, this squeeze depends on position. West has to pitch before dummy. If East and West exchange hands, the squeeze doesn't work, because East pitches after dummy.

What do we know? For a squeeze to work, one defender must guard against multiple threats. We must cash our winners in the right order, so that we preserve an entry to our threat cards. At least some squeezes depend on position.

There is one other very important point. For a squeeze to work, we must remove idle cards (those that can be comfortably discarded) from the defender's hand. To do this, we must "rectify the count." When we

run a squeeze, we are generally trying to get one more trick above and beyond our actual winners. Squeezes only work if we start by losing our obvious losers first. This removes idle cards. If we have 10 obvious winners, we are looking for a squeeze to give us an 11th trick. We rectify the count by losing the two tricks we have to lose early in the play.

Let's try one more hand. As South, we have opened a vulnerable 1NT. West has bid a non vulnerable 2 hearts. North ends the bidding with 3 NT. West leads the jack of spades.

	<u>North</u>	
	S Q32	
	H A43	
	D J65	
	C KQ64	
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>
S J109		S 8765
H KJ10987		H 6
D		D KQ1098
C J853		C 1092
	<u>South</u>	
	S AK4	
	H Q52	
	D A7432	
	C A7	

We have 29 high card points between the 2 hands, but are unlucky to have only 8 sure tricks. The spade lead doesn't help, but we do have good prospects for other tricks. We win the king of spades in hand and go foraging for diamond tricks. We lead a low diamond from hand and West shows out, pitching a heart. It looks like we'll have to look elsewhere for our 9th trick. Maybe West has to guard both hearts and clubs. Let's try the heart/club squeeze. Problem: with only 8 winners, we have to rectify the count by losing 4 tricks.

We play the jack of diamonds on our diamond lead. East wins the queen and shows his approval of diamonds by continuing with the king. We duck and West pitches another heart. East continues with the 10 of diamonds, we duck again and see another heart from West. So far we have lost 3 tricks. East continues with a 4th diamond. We duck again and West ditches a 4th heart. We discard a low heart from dummy. Having won 4 tricks in diamonds, East finally leads his partner's suit. We play a low heart from hand and win the ace of hearts in dummy. We have arrived at the following position.

		<u>North</u>			
		S	Q3		
		H	4		
		D			
		C	KQ64		
	<u>West</u>			<u>East</u>	
S	109			S	876
H	K			H	
D				D	8
C	J853			C	1092
		<u>South</u>			
		S	A4		
		H	Q5		
		D	A		
		C	A7		

We now lead the queen of spades from dummy, followed by a spade to the ace. This removes two spades from everybody's hand. We now lead the ace of diamonds. What is West to do? The king of hearts won't work. A low club won't work. West has to surrender our 9th trick.

What a fun hand! We rectified the count by surrendering 4 tricks in the same suit. I hope you can see why we needed to take 4 idle cards out of West's hand. I hope you also have learned something and now believe that squeeze plays are not that difficult, awe inspiring or mystifying.

Vermont On The Tournament Trail

Many Vermonters have had success (10 or more points) at the Seattle Nationals or at regional tournaments. Here is a list. Sorry for any inadvertent omissions

Seattle Nationals: Mary Savko 29.52 Ellie Hanlon 22.73

Naples Regional:

Mary Savko	53.73	Ellie Hanlon	53.73	Allan Graves	45.01
Peter Bouyea	34.98	David Shaw	34.98	Paul Reardon	28.11
Linda Bouyea	28.11	Don Sondergeld	19.42		

Daytona Regional:

Allan Graves	137.18	Ellie Hanlon	60.49	Mary Savko	60.49
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Lancaster Regional: Wayne Hersey 17.70

Wichita: Polly Schoning 12.58

Mansfield: Phil Sharpsteen 31.70 Frank Hacker 31.70

Technology and Bridge

By Frank Hacker

I joined the ACBL in 1966. Mainframe computers with limited crunching power took up large air conditioned rooms. There were no personal computers, no time sharing terminals, not even hand held calculators. Bridge scoring and recap sheets were done by hand. It took quite a while after the end of an event to determine who won. Tournament directing staffs were larger, since scoring was done by humans.

There was no such thing as automatic recording of master points won in club games. Club game directors awarded slips or certificates for points won at their club. Players had to save them and send them to ACBL headquarters for recording, with the minimum acceptable shipment 1 full master point. In the late 1980s or early 1990s the ACBL switched to the monthly reporting of master points by club managers. Even then, matchpointing and reporting was done by hand. The computer revolution didn't really hit until the mid 1990s and didn't gain instant acceptance. The players were ready for it, but not the club managers or directors. Not everyone had a computer in those days and who wanted to lug it and a printer to the bridge site every week?

Clearly we've come a long way in the last 15 years. There are 2 recent advances, electronic score pads and automatic dealing machines, that many Vermonters may not know about. They are in use in tournaments (especially the dealing machines) and in larger clubs. Most Vermont clubs will probably not have them any time soon, because of their substantial cost.

The electronic score pads permit the north player to enter the score for each board electronically and allow the east west side to verify and OK the scores. The scores enter directly into a computer data base. This saves money on caddies and directors do not have to enter the scores into the computer. Also results are available a little bit sooner after the end of the game. Our ACBL district (District 25 – New England) is looking into the possibility of electronic scoring for their regional tournaments.

Automatic dealing machines are currently in use at most regional tournaments and make it fairly easy to produce multiple copies of the same board for high level team competition or for pair games. My Florida club which has over 100 tables per week during the snow bird season also uses them. Not only do dealing machines produce multiple copies of randomly dealt boards, but they also permit the production of hand records to distribute to the players at the end of the game. This is a great good thing for players who like to discuss the deals at dinner.

Early dealing machines required cards with bar codes, but current machines use normal cards. One does have to keep the cards in fairly good condition and the machines work best with specially designed boards with hinges on the side. The board opens up so the cards can go into pockets during the automated dealing process. Boards snap shut after the dealing is done.

Dealing machines can also show the result of a computer analysis telling how many tricks each side can take in each possible suit or at no trump. This information is shown right below the hand in the hand record. The computer analysis can be quite annoying, since the computer always plays with complete knowledge of the positions of all the cards. The computer never takes a losing finesse. Just for chuckles, see how well you would do on the following hand.

		<u>North</u>			
		S	KQ9653		
		H	753		
		D	10		
		C	K104		
<u>West</u>				<u>East</u>	
S	J10			S	A8
H	QJ			H	A108
D	A62			D	KQJ9874
C	AQ9653			C	7
		<u>South</u>			
		S	742		
		H	K9642		
		D	53		
		C	J82		

Let's say that you are East in a contract of 6 diamonds after a weak 2S bid by North. South leads a low spade and North's queen knocks out your ace. The computer analysis says that you can make 7 diamonds. Do you see how? Hint: clubs are 3-3. Make sure you preserve the 4 of diamonds in your hand so that you can lead it to dummy's 6.

Question: Would you actually play the hand to ruff out clubs? I'm thinking that I would win the spade ace and cash one high diamond. Then I would lead a club to the ace and ruff a club high just to see whether someone has a doubleton king. Then I would probably lead a diamond to dummy's ace and take the heart finesse. Of course, one could always lead a high dummy to dummy's ace and ruff one more club. If clubs don't split, you could then use your 6 of diamonds entry to take the heart finesse. Problem: Even if the heart finesse wins and you get to pitch dummy's spade loser, you don't have a trump left in dummy to ruff your losing spade. There are other possibilities as well. How would you do?

Frank Speaking: Table Talk is privileged to have an article from Fred C. Donald of Montpelier. Fred has been one of Vermont's top players for many years. Fred presents us with a quiz followed by his answers. If you think some of his answers can't be serious, I'm here to inform you that Fred C. Donald "don't say nothing he don't mean." Humphrey Bogart fans may remember that Bogart played the character of Fred C. Dobbs in the 1948 movie Treasure of the Sierra Madre. I'm just taking the words from the mouth of Fred C. Dobbs.

QUIZ TIME

by Fred C. Donald

1. As South you hold S KQxx H AQ10x D void C AK10xx
 With no one vulnerable, the auction has gone

<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East .</u>
1C	1D	1S	2D
3D	P	3S	4D
4S	5D	X	P
?			

What is your call?

2. As South you hold S 6 H KQJ9765 D 98 C Q109
 With East-West vulnerable, you're the dealer, you open 3H and the complete auction is

<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East .</u>
3H	P	P	X
All Pass			

The opening lead is the queen of spades and you look at the following unsuitable collection.

	<u>North</u>
S	J87543
H	Void
D	QJ763
C	K6

	<u>South</u>
S	6
H	KQJ9765
D	98
C	Q109

You follow low from dummy, East produces the 9 and you contribute your 6. West continues with the spade 2, low from dummy, 10 from East. You trump with the 5 and now must face up to the trump suit. Which heart do you lead from your hand at trick 3?

3. As South you hold **S** AQJxx **H** A10xxx **D** Void **C** AKx

With no one vulnerable, East opens 2D. West alerts and tells you that 2D is Flannery showing 5 hearts, 4 spades and 11-15 points. You pass, West bids 2S, North passes and East bids 3D. Oops by West. What is your call?

4. Here is a super play problem from board 27 of this year's President's Pairs.

	<u>North</u>	
	S xx	
	H KQ10xxx	
	D x	
	C AKxx	
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>
S QJ10x		S xxx
H Axx		H Jxxx
D Kxxx		D AJ10xx
C Jx		C x
	<u>South</u>	
	S AKxx	
	H Void	
	D Q9x	
	C Qxxxxx	

You arrive at 6 clubs on the auction shown to the right.

North	East	South	West.
1H	P	2C	P
3C	P	3N	P
4H	P	5C	P
6C	All Pass		

The opening lead is the queen of spades. You win the king in hand. You lead a small club to the ace, with all following. You lead the king of hearts from the dummy. East follows low and you ruff. What now?

Fred C. Donald Answers

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Pass and collect 800 | 10 points |
| 5S – plus 480 | 5 points |
| 6S – plus 980 | 8 points |

Two pairs out of 13 bid the slam, but bidding it over 5D violates discipline.

2. Lead the 6 of hearts. Hearts are probably 5-1 on this hand. The singleton might be the ace, as it was on the actual hand. Of course, the singleton might also be the 8. If the lead of the 6 works out poorly, you can dial Fred or Frank at 1-800-WAAAH. By the way, Steve Becker has a hand with a similar theme in his December 22, 2011 bridge column.

3. Call for the director. The director awards you average plus worth 8.5 out of 12 (slightly over 70%) 10 points

Bid 6H 12 points for daring alone

Bid 4D – Partner bids 4H (Now what) 5 points

4. Continue with a club to the king and ruff a heart back to your hand. Cash the ace of spades and ruff a spade to get to dummy. Now trump a heart in hand. This drops the ace. Now ruff your last spade, cash the heart queen and claim. 10 points

All other lines 0 points

Trivia Corner

1. The ACBL is comprised of 25 districts. Ours is the New England District. What is our District number?
2. Our Vermont Unit is one of how many units that make up the New England District?
3. By what number does the ACBL identify our Vermont unit?
4. How many members did our Vermont unit have as of January 1, 2012 and how do we rank?
5. How many members did the ACBL have as of January 6, 2012?

Answers

1. The New England District is District 25. We used to be combined with part of Eastern Canada as District 1. The ACBL reorganized some years back and Eastern Canada became district 1.
2. There are 8 units: ME, NH, VT, CT, RI, Eastern MA, Central MA and Western MA
3. 175
4. 414, we have more at other times of the year; some snowbirds transfer their membership when they go south. We are sixth, ahead of Central MA and Western MA
5. 165,629

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Feb. 14-20	NE KO Regional, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cromwell, CT
Mar. 15-25	Spring Nationals, Memphis Cook Convention Center, Memphis, TN
Apr. 16-22	Smoky Mountain MABC Regional, Convention Center, Gatlinburg, TN
Apr. 25-29	NE Senior Regional/Cape Cod Open Sectional, Resort and Conference Center at Hyannis, Hyannis, MA
Jun. 1-3	Vermont Spring Sectional, Holiday Inn, Rutland, VT
Jun. 11-17	Saratoga Springs Regional, Saratoga Springs, NY
Jun. 18-24	NE Summer Regional, Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, MA

VERMONT SPRING SECTIONAL

Holiday Inn, 476 US Route 7 South, Rutland, Vermont 05701

June 1 -3, 2012

Sanction # S1206068

Schedule of Events

Friday, June 1

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

Saturday, June 2

10:00 AM Stratified Open Pairs
10:00 AM Stratified Newcomer Pairs
3:00 PM Stratified Open Pairs

Sunday, June 3

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

Open Stratifications: A: 2500 + B: 750 - 2500 C: 0 - 750
Swiss Team Stratifications: as above, but will use average master points for the team
Newcomer Stratifications: A 100 - 300 B: 50 - 100 C: 0 - 50
(Stratifications may be adjusted by the director based on attendance)

Price per session: \$9 --- \$1 additional for non-ACBL members
Vermont State Law - No smoking in public buildings and/or the playing area
Director (& MC): Dave Marshall

Tournament Chairman: Phil Sharpsteen (802) 899-2080

Partnerships: Phil Sharpsteen (802) 899-2080

**Holiday Inn Discounted Group Rate --- Please Call 1-800-462-4810 for reservations
By May 18, 2012**

1 Night Stay:	<u>1 person</u>	<u>2 people</u>	Includes hot breakfast buffet and one \$10 food voucher per person at Paynter's Restaurant
Double Bed	\$99	\$115	
King Bed	\$105	\$125	
2 Night Stay:	<u>1 person</u>	<u>2 people</u>	Includes hot breakfast buffet and one \$10 food voucher per person per day at Paynter's Restaurant
Double Bed	\$179	\$209	
King Bed	\$199	\$229	

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The Vermont Bridge Association, Unit 175 of the American Contract Bridge League publishes Table Talk electronically three times per year. If you are an ACBL member and Unit 175 (Vermont) member and have not received Table talk, please notify the editor. Contributors' articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the VBA.