

TABLE TALK

A Publication of the Vermont Bridge Association
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Bonnie and Paul Clouser are our featured personalities for this issue

We moved to Vermont in January of 2000 courtesy of our final transfer with IBM. Bonnie is a native of the state of New Jersey. Bonnie's father had always wanted to go into business for himself, so in 1957 he built a small building in the backyard (this was before zoning laws) and Hunterdon Transformer Company was born. At the age of 16 Bonnie had a talent most other teenage girls didn't possess, she could cut steel, wind cores and assemble an electrical transformer. Fifty-five years and three generations later it is still in business-having long since moved to an industrial park. Her involvement now consists of sitting on the board and visiting a few times a year.

Paul is a native of Pennsylvania. We met in college at Drexel Institute in Philadelphia and married in 1960. We immediately took our brand new marriage to graduate school for Paul at Duke University in North Carolina

where in 1964 Paul received a PhD in Physics and Mathematics. For his PhD work he developed a sub-millimeter microwave spectrometer, computerized its data analysis and published the results in the *Physical Review*.

After graduate school we moved back north, where we learned bridge (very rudimentary) from friends and played a lot socially for a few years. We eventually settled in the small town of Vestal in the Binghamton, New York area where Paul went to work for IBM. Over his 32 years with IBM he worked for both the Federal and Commercial areas of the company. He worked in many technical areas and holds eleven patents for subjects ranging from microwave connectors, computer bus architecture and circuitry, computer electrical interference protection, design of high frequency integrated circuits, a handheld merchandise scanner and a unique method of power supply noise and signal integrity analysis. He also created microwave receivers and transmission systems for airborne and shipboard military applications for IBM.

We lived there for 21 years while raising our family of three daughters: Lea Ann, Patricia and Deborah. Except for the occasional social evening, bridge fell by the wayside after we moved to Binghamton while we were busy raising our family and working. We discovered and learned to appreciate opera through our involvement in the Tri-Cities Opera Company in Binghamton. Bonnie started as a volunteer working in costumes and then ran the box office and eventually went on to paid positions ending up as Administrative Director. In this position her job was to oversee the day to day business of the company as well as support the artistic staff with the productions. This included budgeting, fundraising, contracting, etc. It could often be difficult to control budgets as it neared performance time because artistic demands often ran contrary to budget items. You have no idea how important a \$1000 wig can be to a tenor who has decided two nights before opening that he doesn't like the way his hair looks on stage! Despite frustrations, it was very rewarding to watch the process of putting an opera on stage from the first musical rehearsal to the spectacle it becomes on opening night. And let us say the best part of any production by far was attending the cast party on closing night. When his full-time job with IBM would permit, Paul supported by singing in the chorus in *Die Fledermaus*, stage managing for the opera *Il Trovatore* and by being generally available where needed. These were happy and busy years that just seemed to fly by.

After all those years Paul was then transferred to Boca Raton, Florida where Bonnie (looking for a way to fill the hours and having no desire to find paid work) decided to go back to playing bridge and went to Jordan's bridge club to take lessons. We played duplicate Bridge for a while in Florida but after 2 years IBM moved us to Stamford, Connecticut where we joined several social bridge groups, but played very little duplicate. Bonnie did some volunteer work for a local opera company and we enjoyed the perks of living near New York City. After 6 years in Connecticut and thinking our moving days were over, Paul's entire department was transferred to Raleigh, NC where Bonnie again found a Bridge club and started playing duplicate regularly and took more lessons. After only 2 years in Raleigh we found ourselves packing up once more. This time, however, we were given a choice of locations and since our oldest daughter Lea Ann had moved to Westford, VT 6 years earlier and we had been taking regular vacations on the lake we decided that Vermont was the place for us. Our real estate agent put us in touch with Carol Maeder who introduced us to the club here.

Paul retired from IBM in 2003. Since retirement we have split our time eight months in Burlington and four months in Bradenton, FL. In both places we enjoy Bridge and the company of family and friends. We have done some travelling to wonderful places with friends and are members of the Mallets Bay Boat Club where we keep our power boat and Paul does regular race committee duty for the sailboat race events. Paul consults with a small company in New Hampshire, where he is working on an electrical power converter and has the possibility of four more patents. He also enjoys photography with camera, Photoshop and printer, is an avid reader of on-line political commentary, and occasionally plays Bridge.

Since moving here, Bridge has become more of a passion than a pastime for Bonnie, taking more classes, going to tournaments and (hopefully) steadily improving her game. She has been very fortunate to find so many wonderful partners. In the last few years she has become 2nd Vice President of Vermont Unit 175 as well as part of a committee that oversees the day to day activities of the club in Burlington.

We feel that we have found a home here in Vermont and a lot of that is due to the bridge club and the many friends we have made. The game of Bridge has been the instrument that has made the transition in new areas possible for Bonnie. Bridge has provided friends and a sense of belonging. One might say that Bridge has been Bonnie's bridge.

Marilyn Hacker Pairs

The Marilyn Hacker Pairs has become an annual August ritual. This year's event was held on August 4 at the Burlington Bridge Academy. The format was the usual 2 sessions of bridge with a lasagna dinner in the middle. This year's winners were Jerry DiVincenzo and Judie Donald. Their spouses, Patty and Fred came in second. There were 16 tables for bridge. Here are the overall standings.

MP	A	B	C		Score
5.53	1			Jerry DiVincenzo – Judie Donald	406.30
4.15	2			Patty DiVincenzo – Fred Donald	378.00
4.27	3	1		John Kimel - Rudy Polli	362.20
3.33	4			June Dorion – Wayne Hersey	359.40
3.33	5	2	1	Gary Feingold – Kotze Toshev	353.10
1.58	6			Tom Smith – Frank Hacker	352.00
2.40		3		Lynn Carew – Pat Nestork	351.30
1.80		4		Bryant Jones – Bob Smith	346.00
2.50		5	2	Layton Davis – Jay Friedenson	342.40
1.87		6	3	John Newton – Sally Newton	339.30
1.40			4	Rhoda Chickering – Sandy Desilets	336.40
1.39			5	Ken Kaleita – Linda Kaleita	334.80
2.23			6	Linda Baker – Judith Ward	323.30

Note: Some of the master point awards may seem illogical. How can 6th in flight C be worth more than 5th? How can 5th in flight C be essentially the same as 4th? In two session events players are competing for session awards as well as over-all awards. Player actually receive the greater of their overall award or the sum of their session awards. This can lead to some apparent anomalies.

Instant Matchpoint Game

On Thursday October 4, three Vermont clubs participated in the ACBL instant matchpoint game. The game was of special significance to those still needing gold points to become life masters. First place in each direction earned 1 gold point as part of their masterpoint award. The winners were

Manchester and the Mountains	NS	Paula Hallam – Jan Gisholt
	EW	Courtney Nelson – Susie Wright
Marble Valley	NS	Reggi Dubin – Kate Stewart
	EW	Andy Avery – Paul Cohen
Burlington Bridge Academy	NS	Dorothy Carpenter – Kathy Farrell
	EW	Jon Stokes – Ron Silverman

Andy and Paul had a score of 1793 or 71.72%. This should put them in the running for a high finish in the national overall standings. Well done, guys!!!

ETHICS IN BIDDING

By Phil Sharpsteen

This article is the promised part two dealing with some of the proper ethics in bridge. Last issue I talked about some of the ethical points in the play. This article will touch on a basic item in the ethics during bidding. Today we use the bidding boxes to conduct the auction so verbal nuance issues are a problem of the past. There is still the problem of proper bidding box management as well as tempo in bidding.

The bidding box contains all the 15 legal words printed on laminated cards. Proper technique is to consider your action, select the appropriate bidding box card and place it in front of you from left to right so all previous bids are also visible.

Things to avoid: placing your hand on bids or pass cards during your thinking, repeated ‘trips’ to the bidding box and withdrawals during your thinking and starting to select one bid and then another sometimes multiple times. To state it more clearly: think and THEN select your bid or pass. If you inadvertently pull the wrong card from the bidding box, you may correct this ‘mechanical’ error before your partner bids. Your left-hand opponent is allowed to change his/her call after your correction.

The next subject deals with an obvious ‘break in tempo’ with your bid or pass. As with card play you should try to make your calls all in about the same timeframe. Suddenly bidding/passing very quickly or very slowly constitutes a break in tempo and conveys unauthorized information to partner. The STOP card helps with this situation and you should always use the STOP card when you skip one or more levels of bidding. STOP card protocol:

Place the STOP card on the table followed by your bid. Left hand opponent should hesitate about 10 seconds before bidding. During this time LHO should be studying his/her hand (not counting to 10 or looking out the window). Some players follow the custom of leaving the STOP card in place for 8 to 10 seconds. Removal of the STOP card is a signal to the opponent that he/she may now bid. The STOP card helps keep the tempo, but you may still have a problem that requires thought. This is bridge and thought is sometimes required in addition to being a good thing! Understand however that a slow pass (definite break in tempo) conveys unauthorized information to partner and any subsequent action by partner must be CLEAR-CUT (a majority of their peers agree that action should be taken even with the break). Comments such as partner always takes time bidding or I was going to double again anyway are somewhat self-serving and cut no ice.

Let me conclude with a hand to try to illustrate. You are in 4th chair, both non-vul at matchpoints and hold:

S x H AKQx D AJxx C Jxxx.

The bidding to you is pass pass 1S. You double and LHO raises to 4S. If your partner passes in tempo and RHO passes, you have the following info on which to base your decision. LHO could have a limit raise type hand with 5 trump with a chance to make or RHO could have extras also with a chance to make. In short you could double again but if partner is truly broke you are probably headed for a poor matchpoint result.

On the other hand, if partner huddles and then passes over the 4S call, he/she has shown ‘cards’ and a second double by you will probably yield a very good result. Therefore, a huddle by partner has effectively barred your decision to make a 2nd takeout double because the huddle has removed most of the risk. A good rule for a partnership to avoid these types of problems: “It is alright for you to huddle with a tough decision, but if you do you must then bid since a pass would cause a problem.”

Comment from the Editor: *One hears all sorts of justifications from people who bid after partner’s hesitation. Some examples are:*

Hesitation?? What hesitation? (essentially no spikka English)

He always hesitates. I didn’t read anything into it.

I had a reason.

I just bid what I would have if he hadn’t hesitated.

*Forget all this bologna. You must bend over backwards not to take an action that **MIGHT** have been suggested by partner’s hesitation.*

In fact, this rule applies not only after passes, but in other situations as well. For example, in a competitive auction partner hesitates a long time before doubling the opponent’s final 4 spade contract. Partner’s hesitation obviously indicates uncertainty. You should not rely on this unauthorized information and pull back to 5 of your suit.

Editorial note about the use of the STOP card: *You do not have to use the STOP card and many people do not. You do have to be consistent. Use it all the time or not at all. You shouldn’t use it sometimes (for example, when your bid is weak) and not use it at others.*

New Authors

Table Talk is very pleased to welcome two new contributors, Karen Hewitt and Jim Abbott. I invite other readers to contribute to future issues.

Do You Hear What I Hear?

By Karen Hewitt

In the universe of duplicate Bridge, there is little emphasis on conversation and none at all on physicality. We may hear an "alert" spoken as bidding progresses, and we may sigh inwardly when an opponent physically places a stop card on the table, but there is nothing analogous to the shrieks of evolved sports champions; think Sharapova's grunts- and there are no spiked Bridge boards; think Eli Manning (*yep, we Pats fans are still smarting*) when a partnership scores a grand slam (even though Bridge is an officially recognized sport organization by the International Olympic Committee). Talk is kept to a minimum once play starts, and one is more likely to hear the click of bidding cards jostling in plastic housings than remarks on the weather (*crazy this Winter*) or idle inquiries into one's health (*hellish allergies*). The latter prefigures in this reflection and we'll return to that subject. AH-CHOO.

As for the sport of Bridge, if we're not moving about, nor are we talking during the bidding of our hands and the play of the boards, what is it we are doing? I'm not sure about you, but I am in ceaseless contact with my brain, nudging it to retrieve conventions (ploys exotic to me and of yawning familiarity to you) and to solve math problems (sweat-breaking calculus to me and childhood arithmetic to you). Bryant Jones has referred to "sixty point decks" and I think I have recently played with those cards in Burlington.

Some context: my first ever set of Bridge boards was played in Montpelier at the Apollo Club just two years ago. Professor Don Wallace was my early mentor and Bridge chauffeur. When I moved to Vermont from the Boston area, he turned out to be the Director and coordinator for the closest available duplicate game and he also lived near me in Northfield. The Professor gave me some initial advice on the phone (*join the ACBL*), told me he would arrange a partner for me (*Cort Richardson, what happened to you?*), and said he would pick me up at 5:30pm on a Friday, weather permitting (*weather permitting...?*) and we would go together to play duplicate Bridge. I was so excited; if I was locked in mortal combat with winter in Vermont, at least I could look forward to some idle evenings at the Bridge table. Hah.

I'll interject, if I knew two winters ago what I now know, regarding the enjoined topics of duplicate Bridge in Vermont and weather, I would have moved directly to Cape Coral from Boston thus answering simultaneously the questions of where to find a game (*anywhere*), and are the roads drivable so as to guarantee arrival at the duplicate venue (*it's Florida, honey.*)

So on a Friday evening in February 2010, I met Professor Wallace for the first time, and traveled *en Prius* to Montpelier. I dithered about my level of play: raised in a Bridge- playing family, majored in Bridge in college, neglected the game while working at a career, etc., an oft told history. Professor Wallace distracted me from my nervous anticipation with a demonstration of "*straightening out Vermont roads*" as we whizzed along Route 12. Do ask the Professor about this fun Vermont pastime but at your own peril if the following conditions are met: (a) you are a passenger in a vehicle and (b) Professor Wallace is at the wheel.

I digress - fast forward to a recent February game in Burlington. If we sit for, say, four hours, mostly silent, not moving, except to do-si-do partnerships, what is the worst that can happen when an estimable opponent furrows her brow and asks, after my one spade opening, over which my partner bids three clubs, "What does your partner's three club bid mean?"

"I have to assume he has a heck of a heart suit and an opening hand," I say. My head hurts. Three pass cards go down. My opponent presses, "Is his bid alertable?"

I temporize, "No, I don't think so." I then hear "Director please!" which elicits Phil Sharpsteen table-side. "I think we may have been injured in the bidding," my opponent says. "Our suit is hearts, I believe."

I think, '*of course you have the hearts, we have clubs and spades.*' A bidding recap ensues. "I said my partner had a heck of a club suit and opening count," I say to Phil, and my opponent erupts: "You said hearts." I glance at my partner, with my '*Did you hear what I heard?*' look. His eyes are locked in an avoidant downward stare that passes off my right elbow at an approximate sixty degree angle. His look says "*I'm with Stupid*" and he echoes, "You said hearts."

I can't believe what is happening. My gaffe is verified by my partner, so I must accept my lapse. But my brain is supposed to have my back. I know what I heard myself say and in my...well, in my heart...I know I said '*clubs.*' I have been sucker punched by an organ that weighs approximately fourteen ounces in a moment of cerebral disconnect. Is this a conspiracy? I am sometimes inhabited by an alien card player who has played a good king from her hand, onto her own Ace from partner's dummy, as her eyes round the cards plucked and placed by opponents. I'm now thinking, '*ahh, this is a conspiracy of dust mites.*' I spin my pathetic apologia involving an allergy-driven, vise-like headache that has caused my paraphasia. Incredibly, my challenger's partner produces one of his own pills, prescribed for gruesome migraines, and I smile and accept it. AH-CHOO.

As for cognitive dissonance, there's an obscure quote by Robert McCloskey, author of the revered Bridge tome Make Way for Ducklings which sums things up on the matter of brain pratfalls. He says, "I know that you believe you understand what you think I said, but I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant."

If I have a similar experience, I can only hope the challenge comes from as gracious a pair of opponents, and with a partner and director of equal aplomb, in a venue as welcoming and non-judgmental as the Burlington Bridge Academy.

And if asked in the future "Do you hear what I hear"?, I'll sigh, and think '*probably not*' as my brain scans its hemispheres for cerebral banana peels.

If anything similar has happened to you, let me know, won't you?

A Hacker Case for Drury

By Jim Abbott

Sir (or King) Arthur Aiken of Barton and Sir James Abbot of Montgomery, inspired to take on knighted titles because of the on-going London Olympics, were partners at August's Marilyn Hacker Pairs. The knights had a revelatory, if not productive time at the Hacker Pairs in Williston.

"Bid aggressively and play well" was the intended style for the errant knights who regret to say that the first part was performed with greater frequency than the second.

Conflicting opinions on values attached to jump shifts, missed transfers and misuse of Roman Keycard Blackwood led to first round disasters. Oh dear!

"Keep conventions to a minimum" was a second axiom for the partnership. The aforementioned errors bear witness to the wisdom of this axiom. Nevertheless, there was one notable hand which presented a strong case for the Drury convention.

Drury – or, most people's choice, Reverse Drury—is used to keep out of trouble when partner opens light in third or fourth seat. Frequently, partner of the opening bidder will have a near opener and, without the Drury convention, feel compelled to convey the good news by jumping the bidding. This can lead to a difficult or unmakeable contract. With Drury the partner of the opener shows his good hand by bidding an artificial 2 clubs. With a subminimum or minimum hand opener rebids his suit—staying safely at the 2 level. Original Drury used 2 diamonds to show the weak hand, but rebidding the suit (Reverse Drury) is more popular. Here is an illustrative hand.

		<u>North</u>			
		S	10xx		
		H	KJxx		
		D	AQx		
		C	Jxx		
	<u>West</u>			<u>East</u>	
S	Qx			S	AJx
H	1096			H	Qxx
D	1098x			D	xxx
C	Axxx			C	K10x
		<u>South</u>			
		S	K9xxx		
		H	Axx		
		D	Kxx		
		C	Qx		

The bidding was	West	North	East	South
	P	P	P	1S
	P	3S	all pass	

A quick review of the North/South holdings shows how much better it would be to use Drury and end the bidding at 2 spades.

West led the 10 of diamonds won by dummy's ace. Declarer followed this with a low spade to his king. Success!! Declarer continued with a low spade to the opponents' queen and jack. With the ace still out, there appear to be 4 mandatory losers – 2 spades and 2 clubs. With no chance for a discard, declarer took the heart finesse and was down 1.

It would have been nice, thought Sir James, to have used (reverse) Drury. Sir Arthur would have bid 2 clubs and Sir James would have ended the bidding with 2 spades, earning a plus score even with the unfavorable heart position.

Did you spot it? The hand is also a demonstration of the knight's failure to adhere to the "play it well" axiom. Sir James should have made 3 spades. At trick 5, after 2 rounds of spades and 2 rounds of diamonds, Sir James should have cashed his last diamond winner and thrown West in with the ace of spades. West would have the choice of leading away from his queen of hearts or of initiating the club suit, permitting Sir James to use dummy's club jack to discard the 3rd heart in his hand.

Poor play should probably not be a surprise in an event called the "Hacker Pairs." Not everyone hacked, at least not to the extent of our errant knights errant.

There is a strong case for Drury – a point saver if you are hacking.

Drury (reverse) please!! Hack on!

DIRECTOR (please)

By Jim Thomas

Slow play generates more discussion than almost all other playing conditions combined (I am discounting room temperature because that is never right). I don't know whether slow play bothers me more as a player or as a director. Following a "slow" pair in a game ruins my disposition. It causes me to start every round late and puts me under a lot of pressure. As a director, I have learned that no player ever admits to being slow. No matter what the circumstances, it's always someone else's fault. The ACBL Board of Directors has solved the problem that fault is no longer necessary for slow play penalties and penalties may now be given without warnings.

Editorial Comment from outraged editor: *Part of the problem is that directors sometimes do not pay attention to the game. They frequently do not call rounds on time and pay no attention to slow play blockages. The ACBL solution is mind boggling --- punish the innocent along with the guilty. That's justice for you.*

The following article was written by Patty Johnson of Sebring, Florida. She is a national director and runs all the Florida regional tournaments. This article appeared in the daily bulletin at the Philadelphia nationals on multiple days and is reprinted with permission from Patty. (Note: the article was written for the nationals where there are no travelers. Discussion of travelers is an additional way to slow a club game.) She writes.

An old tournament director friend of mine, John “Spider” Harris was famous for saying, “Slow play is the curse of the game.” Nothing is more frustrating for tournament directors than having to herd players along like cattle when slow play isn’t actually the problem.

If you think about it, most of your opponents do not take long to bid or play a deal --- yet before you know it, the round is being called and you are nowhere near finished with the last board.

Here are some suggestions which, if followed, would solve many of our problems.

First, do not post mortem between deals whether you are in a pair game or a Swiss Team event. Finish the round and then discuss hands if there is still time. We, as directors, will not cut your time, but I think you will find yourself under less pressure by following this suggestion. Remember, we provide hand records in pair games, so you don’t have to worry about forgetting a particular holding.

Second, if you are on opening lead, make the lead before recording the contract in your private score. You will have plenty of time after leading to record the information and still see the entire first trick.

Third, unless you have a legitimate reason to leave the table, such as a restroom or smoke break, please remain at the table with your opponents. You might actually find this enjoyable and a new way to make friends or future Swiss team partnerships.

I wish we could make these suggestions into rules enforceable by penalty, but none of us wants a bridge event decided by the pair with the fewest penalties. All I can do as a director is to ask the cooperation and help of all players, because I think that not only you, but everyone else will enjoy their tournaments more.

Remember: those who enjoy tournaments will continue to play. Do your part to make bridge enjoyable for yourself, your partner and your opponents --- you can’t play without them.

Your editor again: *I have friends who would be quite happy to see a smoke break considered a legitimate excuse for being away from the table. Smoke breaks, however, frequently cause rounds to start very late, because smokers generally have to go a long way to find a place where smoking is permitted.*

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. We have held 3 of our 4 tournaments. Here are the leaders at the quarter pole. As usual, I apologize for any errors or inadvertent omissions.

1.	Phil Sharpsteen	33.44	6.	Wayne Hersey	22.44
1.	Frank Hacker	33.44	7.	Karen Kristiansen	22.24
3.	June Dorion	24.29	7.	John Conova	22.24
4.	John Newton	24.12	9.	Mike Farrell	21.90
4.	Sally Newton	24.12	10.	Kathy Farrell	20.67

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. We have held 3 of our 4 tournaments. Here are the leaders at the quarter pole. As usual, I apologize for any errors or inadvertent omissions.

1.	Karen Kristiansen	22.24	6.	Jenny Bell	5.12
2.	Israel Perlman	8.28	7.	Mark Oettinger	4.64
3.	Linda Kaleita	8.13	8.	Pat Williams	3.86
3.	Kenneth Kaleita	8.13	9.	Shirley Perlman	3.49
5.	Mike Bell	5.90	10.	Joseph Morein	3.24

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:

Frances Aronowitz
Frances Griffis

Kathleen Beadle
William Haines

Elizabeth Ehrich
Norma Rosenblatt

Club Master:

Elisabeth Baker
Beverly Morse
Ethan Ward

Margaret Fanning
R.Perry

Eric McCann
Martin Silton

Sectional Master:

Deirdre Ellerson

William Keck

Two Old Chestnuts

By Frank Hacker

Long time bridge players will probably be familiar with the two hands in this article, but newer players probably have not seen them before.

For the first hand, let's suppose you're on vacation and you meet some fellow bridge players who invite you to be a fourth for their evening bridge game. It's a fun game they say, but they still enjoy the game more if there is a little bit at risk. They persuade you to play for "moderate" stakes which seem very high to you. East deals the first hand and passes. As South, you hold

S	AKQ
H	AKQJ109
D	AKQJ
C	void

What should you do with the best hand you've ever seen? The answer is run, don't walk, for the exit. This is the well-known "Mississippi heart hand" and you are about to be taken to the cleaners. If you bid the normal 7 hearts, West will double and lead a high club. West holds 6 small hearts and 7 solid clubs. You'll have to ruff the club, giving West the upper hand in the trump suit. You will be unable to draw all of West's trump. If you try to cash a spade or a diamond winner, West will trump and lead another high club. When the carnage is over, you will have taken only your 6 obvious trump tricks – down 7 doubled.

Partner's hand consists of 4 small spades, 3 small diamonds and the other 6 clubs.

For the second hand, you are declarer in 7NT with the opening lead of the jack of spades. How do you play?

	North
S	AQ
H	KQJ
D	2
C	J986543
	South
S	K
H	A
D	AKQ76543
C	AKQ

It looks like you have 13 easy tricks. What can go wrong? One of the opponents may have all 4 outstanding diamonds. That will limit you to only 3 diamond tricks. Of course, you also have a lot of tricks in the club suit. The unfortunate spade opening lead has deprived you of the dummy entry you need to cash the long clubs. Diamonds will divide 2-2 or 3-1 about 90% of the time. Still the bad split is something to worry about. What can you do to improve your chances?

You can improve your chances from 90% to about 93% with the following line of play. Win the ace of spades at trick 1. Follow this with the queen of spades on which you throw the ace of hearts. Then cash the KQJ of hearts on which you

throw the AKQ of clubs. Don't you just love throwing away all those high cards! Finally you can cash the jack of clubs. If the 10 of clubs comes down, as it will 26% of the time, you can run 7 club tricks. If the 10 doesn't come down, you will have to rely on diamonds. Small extra chances are frequently the differences between winning and losing.

This hand is from a par contest, a form of competition that enjoyed a little bit of popularity 50-60 years ago. Players showed their skill by making the best play on difficult hands. The hands were constructed so that the best play always won and anything short of the best play always lost. There were international par contests among the world's top players and intercollegiate par contests to determine the qualifiers for the finals of the national intercollegiate championship.

I believe the par contest form of competition lost popularity because of the difficulty in constructing appropriate hands and because the hands were frequently very difficult and proved to be a blow to the egos of players who were not as good as their reputations.

Vermont Autumn Leaf Sectional

Burlington Bridge Academy, Williston VT

September 21-23, 2012

Friday Afternoon Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
4.17	1			Sarko Kassabian – Maryse Hambrick	65.06
3.13	2			Pierre Daigneault – Terri Verret	63.94
2.06	3/4			Fred Donald – Homer St. Francis	61.06
3.06	3/4	1		Pat Nestork – Lynn Carew	61.06
2.30	5	2		Jay Friedenson – Layton Davis	60.10
1.72	6	3		Bonnie Clouser – Rudolph Polli	58.81
1.88		4	1	Gary Feingold – Mark Oettinger	56.73
1.41		5	2	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	54.65
0.73		6		Jon Stokes – Ruth Stokes	52.88
1.06			3	Rhoda Chickering – Sandy Desilets	51.92
0.79			4	Michael Borushok – Richard Clark	46.47

Friday Evening Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
4.00	1			Fred Donald – Richard Milhouse	62.66
3.00	2			Gerald DiVincenzo – Michael Farrell	60.90
2.25	3			Phil Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	60.42
2.00	4			Ellie Hanlon – Mary Savko	58.65
1.40	5			Terri Verret – Pierre Daigneault	57.21
2.56	6/7	1/2		Bonnie Clouser – Mary Tierney	56.41
2.56	6/7	1/2		Paul Reardon – Linda Bouyea	56.41
1.44		3/4		Pat Nestork – Lynn Carew	56.09
1.88		3/4	1	Sandy Desilets – Rhoda Chickering	56.09
0.92		5		Stanley Rosenthal – Alan Wertheimer	53.53

1.41	6/7	2	Ronald Weiss – Mark Oettinger	52.40
0.61	6/7		Bryant Jones – Kotze Toshev	52.40
1.06		3	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	50.64
0.79		4	John Lampron – Dorothy Carpenter	50.32

Saturday Morning Open Pairs

<u>MP</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>		<u>Pct</u>
5.17	1			Phil Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	61.09
3.88	2	1		Stanley Rosenthal – Alan Wertheimer	57.46
2.91	3	2		Lynn Carew – Pat Nestork	57.17
2.18	4			J Peter Tripp – Penny Lane	56.56
1.64	5			Bob Gorsey – Vincent Grande	56.35
1.52	6			Maryse Hambrick – Sarko Kassabian	55.82
1.88		3	1	Ken Kaleita – Linda Kaleita	55.22
1.29		4		Abe Brown – Jean Brown	55.22
1.41		5	2	Michael Borushok – Richard Clark	53.13
0.73		6		Kotze Toshev – Gary Feingold	50.99
1.06			3	Ed Schirmer – Frank Reed	50.64
0.79			4	Rhoda Chickering – Sandy Desilets	49.89

Saturday 299er Pairs

<u>MP</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>		<u>Pct</u>
1.51	1	1		Jack Linn – Thomas McAuliff	62.25
1.13	2	2	1	Linda Brenner – Colleen Fitzgerald	56.63
0.85	3	3	2	Lorna Jimerson – Lisa Barrett	55.75
0.64	4			Luisa Chernyshov – Frances Wager	52.63
0.60		4		Carol Slesar – Margie Berger	52.25

Saturday Afternoon Open Pairs

<u>MP</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>		<u>Pct</u>
4.67	1			Gerald DiVincenzo – Mike Farrell	67.56
3.50	2			J Peter Tripp – Penny Lane	65.31
2.63	3			Phil Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	64.29
1.97	4			Judith Donald – Fred Donald	59.52
3.35	5	1		Kotze Toshev – Gary Feingold	59.01
2.51	6	2		Paul Reardon – Linda Bouyea	57.44
1.88		3		Abe Brown – Jean Brown	56.25
1.41		4		Jay Friedenson – Layton Davis	54.34
1.17		5		Bryant Jones – Barbara Fitz-Gerald	53.55
2.12		6	1	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	52.68
1.59			2	Dorothy Carpenter – John Lampron	51.92

1.19		3	Jenny Bell – Mike Bell	50.17
0.89		4	Mark Adair – Vivienne Adair	48.72
0.82		5	Sandy Desilets – Rhoda Chickering	46.13

Sunday Swiss Teams

MP	A	B	C		Score
6.75	1			Mary Savko – Ellie Hanlon Vincent Grand – Bob Gorsey	99
5.06	2			Sarko Kassabian – Maryse Hambrick Terri Verret – Pierre Daigneault	89
3.80	3			J Peter Tripp – Penny Lane June Dorion – Wayne Hersey	88
4.81	4	1		Stanley Rosenthal – Alan Wertheimer Gary Feingold – Kotze Toshev	87
3.61	5	2	1	Peter Allen – Thomas Cronin Helen Lewis – Lorraine Streeter	77
2.71		3	2	Stephen King – Susan King Barbara Varney – Lynne Beebe	73
1.82		4/5	3	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen John Newton – Sally Newton	70
1.82		4/5		Paul Reardon – Linda Bouyea Peter Bouyea – Bryant Jones	70

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Phil Sharpsteen

The annual meeting of the Vermont Unit 175 was held on October 7th at the Burlington Bridge club in Williston, Vermont. It was a fun day with 14.5 tables attending. The host club, led by June Silverman and Bonnie Clouser, provided wonderful food treats throughout the day including a fine chicken dinner following the short meeting and preceding the 2nd session of bridge. Many attendees brought home-baked treats to contribute to the food offerings. The two session game was ably run by Frank Hacker.

At the annual meeting, election of officers for 2013 was held with the same officers volunteering to serve the Unit again. These were:

President Phil Sharpsteen
1st Vice-president John Conova
2nd Vice-president Bonnie Clouser
Secretary Karen Kristiansen
Treasurer Ron Plante

These officers plus club representatives attend a Saturday Board meeting at each of our four sectional tournaments to insure that bridge in Vermont runs smoothly and that the Board follows its responsibility of promoting the game of bridge in Vermont. If any of you have concerns or suggestions that you would like brought up at one of these sectional meetings, just mention it to your club representative or to one of the Unit officers.

The ACBL ranks their members by a system of masterpoints that can be won at the club, sectional, regional or national level tournaments. Different pigmented points are available at each type of tournament and certain numbers of these pigmented points are required to attain each ranking level. For the sectional tournaments, all masterpoint awards are silver points. A list of Vermont members ranked by silver points won is printed elsewhere in this issue. If you haven't played in a Vermont sectional for some time, you should try one and improve your standing on this list! Our next sectional is October 26th to 28th at the Holiday Inn in Rutland, VT. The schedule of events is available on the VBA website.

Comment from the Editor: *Many readers may be surprised to see how few silver points Vermonters (even those at the top of the list) actually have. Vermonters usually limit themselves to Vermont sectionals and seldom venture out into sectionals run by other units. If you make a bit of an effort, you will be able to move up the list*

President's Pairs

The Vermont Bridge Association annual meeting took place on October 7 at the Burlington Bridge Academy in Williston, VT. The format was the usual 2 sessions of bridge with dinner and the VBA business meeting in the middle. This year's bridge winners were Pat Nestork and Lynn Carew. There were 14.5 tables for bridge. Here are the overall standings.

MP	A	B	C		Score
5.31	1	1		Pat Nestork – Lynn Carew	401.30
3.98	2	2		Judie Donald – Jackie Kimel	390.16
2.99	3	3		Kathy Farrell – Mary Tierney	388.02
2.24	4			Jerry DiVincenzo – Mike Farrell	374.98
3.33	5	4	1	Mark Adair – Vivienne Adair	369.38
2.76	6			Fred Donald – John Kimel	361.31
2.50		5	2	Gary Feingold – Kotze Toshev	357.80
1.89		6	3	Ed Schirmer – Rick Clark	345.39
1.44			4	John Newton – Sally Newton	343.50
1.11			5	Rhoda Chickering – Sandy Desilets	317.88
0.95			6	Jackie Reardon – Paul Reardon	316.72

Coming Attractions

Oct. 26 - 28	Vermont Halloween Sectional, Holiday Inn, Rutland VT
Oct. 22 - 28	District 3 Autumn Leaf Regional, Crown Plaza Danbury, Danbury CT
Nov. 7 – 11	New England Masters Regional, Holiday Inn, Mansfield MA
Nov. 22 – Dec. 2	Fall Nationals, Marriott Marquis, San Francisco CA
Dec. TBA	Perrin Pairs, Burlington Bridge Academy (Dec. 1 is possible date)
Jan. 4 – 6	68 th Annual Keohane Individual Regional, Boston Marriott Newton, Newton MA

Trivia Question: How many Vermont players on the September 1 roster have over 1,000 gold points. Who has the most?

Answer: 7. The leader is Don Sondergeld of Hubbardton with 1,788. Second goes to J Peter Tripp of Williston with 1,691.

Vermont Bridge Association Silver Point Top 100

Paid up Members on roster as of September 1

1. Philip Sharpsteen	1,046	51. Ed Midgley	140
2. Frank Hacker	999	52. Alan Wertheimer	140
3. Gerald DiVincenzo	983	53. Bonnie Clouser	130
4. Michael Farrell	976	54. Kotze Toshev	128
5. Kathleen Farrell	785	55. Layton Davis	128
6. Patricia DiVincenzo	772	56. Gene Kazlow	122
7. June Dorion	756	57. Judy Frank	121
8. Wayne Hersey	729	58. John Nelson	120
9. J Peter Tripp	629	59. Karen Kristiansen	119
10. David Shaw	594	60. Rigmor Shawcross	118
11. Fred Donald	498	61. David Perrin	112
12. Courtney Nelson	486	62. Raymond Johnson	107
13. Rudolph Polli	449	63. Jim Daigle	105
14. Jackie Kimel	444	64. Constance Beliveau	100
15. Lynn Carew	420	65. Marcia Wilkins	96
16. Patricia Nestork	380	66. Elizabeth VonRiesenfelder	93
17. Judith Donald	380	67. George Malek	92
18. Clifford Gordon	340	68. Edward Brass	87
19. Nicholas Ecker Racz	328	69. June Silverman	84
20. Penny Lane	296	70. Martha Gazley	83
21. Louise Acker	293	71. Rhoda Chickering	83
22. Gerow Carlson	289	72. Richard Gazley	82
23. Paul Reardon	273	73. Sheila Long	81
24. Bryant Jones	261	74. Ronald Silverman	81
25. Peter Bouyea	260	75. Carlos Galvan	76
26. Mary Tierney	259	76. C Kirk Osterland	74
27. Jay Friedenson	248	77. Rolland Taylor	72
28. Donald Campbell	236	78. Lois Mailloux	71
29. Linda Bouyea	224	79. Linda Nelson	69
30. Ruth Stokes	212	80. Lucy Morini	66
31. John Newton	196	81. Linda Baker	65
31. Sally Newton	196	82. Judith Ward	65
33. Andy Avery	196	83. Jan Gisholt	65
34. Barbara Fitz-Gerald	194	84. Joyce Stone	61
35. Stanley Rosenthal	193	85. Richard Clark	59
36. Abraham Brown	191	86. William Schiring	58
37. Jean Brown	188	87. Grant Pealer	57
38. Paul Cohen	177	88. Jeannie Clermont	56
39. Mary Ann Beck	176	89. David Jarmy	56
40. Gary Feingold	168	90. William Nestork	55
41. Donald Sondergeld	163	91. Arlene Arellano	54
42. John Conova	162	92. Betty Stanley	53
43. Jesse Stalker	159	93. Barbara Macdonald	53
44. Robert Smith	156	94. Gordon Johnson	53
45. Mitchell Kontoff	155	95. Michael Bell	53
46. Jon Stokes	155	96. Mark Adair	48
47. Irene Vignoe	149	96. Vivienne Adair	48
48. Sandy Desilets	145	98. Thomas Davis	47
49. David Miller	142	99. Thomas Osmer	46
50. Norma Jakominich	141	100. Robert Chiabrandy	45