

TABLE TALK

A Publication of the Vermont Bridge Association
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July 2013
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Rick Clark of Waterbury, VT is a new bronze life master. He plays quite a bit of bridge, mostly in Burlington and Montpelier. He is an excellent player who has moved up the ranks very quickly.

Rick Clark --- His story and he's sticking with it

I was born in Boston, Mass. in 1944. I lived in Waltham and then Sudbury during my formative years. After graduating from Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High I went on to the University of Massachusetts, married my high school sweetheart (Libby), and earned a BS degree in Agricultural and Food Economics.

While attending UMass I went through the Army ROTC program. After graduation I was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. in the Artillery Air Defense and spent two years on active duty in El Paso, Texas. Upon completing my active duty we returned to Massachusetts (now with two children Patricia and Peter). I started a career in food retailing. After about seven years, we had another daughter (Deborah) and I changed careers.

I found myself employed by the US Department of Agriculture in the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS). I was assigned to Baie Comeau, Quebec, Canada which is about five hundred miles down the St. Lawrence River (it is about 35 miles wide there and ocean water). So off we went for an adventure to spend three years in eastern Quebec. It was a very remote location but had great trout fishing with “lakes” everywhere. As trout fishing is one of my passions, this assignment was like a dream come true. On a couple of occasions we had the opportunity to fly into private fishing camps on remote lakes that had no other access than on a pontoon plane. The fishing was of course very special. I never ate so many trout. I had to since you could only return with a one day limit. There also were wild blueberries (another passion of mine) just about anywhere you went in the “bush.” At times the town was completely cut off from the rest of the world. The road, the airport, and the harbor were all closed due to the severe winter weather.

The mission of FGIS was to assure the orderly movement of quality US grains to different markets throughout the world. During my career I traveled throughout the US and Canada for meetings, training and work. This has given me a real appreciation of this fabulous continent. Then I was reassigned to Montreal, Quebec. What a change this was for the family! Montreal is a very special city with so many opportunities available (sadly I did not find duplicate bridge during this time!). Twenty years went by before I knew.

In 1998 I had an opportunity for early retirement and for several reasons decided to apply. We had always wanted to live in Vermont (my mother and several generations before her were Vermonters). So we moved to Waterbury, Vermont. All of our children have married Canadians. Our two girls now live in Western Canada with their families (Calgary, AB and Victoria, BC—both nice places to visit but very far away). Our son and his family live about two miles from us in Waterbury. We have five grandchildren that are all outstanding. In retirement we have been able to do many of the things we had envisioned doing. We both enjoy gardening (rhubarb anyone?) and maple sugaring. I have been able to find many good places to trout fish and Libby has been able to ply her craft trade. We had thought traveling would be an interesting pastime, but with the “required” trips to visit our girls and their families and all of our local activities, we just don’t have enough time. We do get to Florida for a visit now and then.

I started “playing” bridge when I was 9ish. I spent many evenings watching my parents and sometimes when they needed one more player, I held the cards! I was “lucky” enough to have a roommate my first year at UMass who was also a bridge “player.” We played much too much bridge that year! For the next thirty years I played bridge off and on, but very seldom duplicate, until I found my way to the “Waterbury Bridge Club” and met Gordon Johnson. Gordon asked if I might like to go to Burlington and play some duplicate bridge. So I began my modern day bridge life. Once I had played a few times I could not get enough of the game. After seven years and too many different partners to count (thank you all for the encouragement and helpful hints), I still find the game challenging and entertaining. Gordon and I became regular partners. We both enjoy the game and had the common goal of becoming Life Masters. We

attained this status in the fall of 2011. There is one bit of advice we would give to anyone aspiring to become a LM—get your required GOLD points early! See you at the bridge table.

We present many hands in this Table Talk issue where the emphasis is on drawing inferences from the opponents' bidding and play. These hands can be very instructive, but they frequently require a bit of effort and patience to follow the train of logic. Don't be lazy. Phil Sharpsteen presents a hand that is well worth your effort.

One from Phil

You hold:

S	KJ
H	J10986
D	109742
C	8

Interesting??? Just you wait! You are dealer as West and pass. LHO opens 1D, partner passes and RHO bids 1H. Opponents have bid your suits and you have few points so you sit back, relax and hope for a high level D or H contract which you may defeat! Now LHO rebids 1NT and PARTNER DOUBLES! To this point the auction has been

West	North	East	South
P	1D	P	1H
P	1N	D	P
???			

Just wonderful, you think, after RHO passes. You suddenly have to bid on this apparent misfit hand! I would say that you have to consider all 2 level bids except clubs as well as pass. You need to develop a hypothesis about the opponents' hands. It is time to note what the auction has told you to this point. Of course, there are no guarantees here, but you have to start somewhere.

opener has limited his hand to about 13 points and does not have 4 spades or 5 diamonds

responder has also limited his hand with the pass and probably has 4 hearts

partner didn't bid or double the first time so do not expect 5 spades or 5 clubs and the flaw must have been short hearts to prevent the takeout double on the first round. (you have 5, RHO had 4+ and opener has 2). Partner also didn't overcall 1NT the first time so is probably limited to about 13 HCP.

So, your side probably has about 18HCP to the opponents 22HCP. Since you are out-gunned, pass and 2NT are pretty much losing actions. 2 spades is a 6 card fit and 2H may be as well. You are pretty much left with a 2D bid which on a good day will be an 8 card fit!

So you bid 2D and all pass. The lead is the 4 of hearts.

Your dummy is:	S	10873
	H	KQ
	D	A83
	C	K642

Your expected losers are : 1 or 2 spades, 1 heart, 2 or 3 diamonds and 1 club. To make two diamonds you need to hold spade losers to 1 and diamond losers to 2.

RHO wins the heart Ace and shifts to the 2 of spades. Time to think! LHO didn't lead the trump K so must not have KQJx – give RHO the Q. If RHO has the spade Ace, then the opener has 12HCP and responder 10HCP. RHO might have redoubled with the 2 Aces so you play for the spade Ace to be with LHO and play the Jack. Fortunately this forces the Ace and a heart comes back, putting you in dummy.

Now the only problem left is the play of the trump suit. For two losers, any 3-2 break will do or a singleton honor in RHO's hand. We already have placed the Q with RHO so you play the Ace and fetch the singleton Q from RHO. A low diamond to the 10 and Jack puts LHO back on lead. He returns a spade to your King. The cards left are:

East	S	108
	H	Void
	D	8
	C	K642
West	S	Void
	H	J109
	D	974
	C	8

LHO has the diamond K and 6. Your hearts are good so you play them and LHO has no answer. If he ruffs low, you overruff with the 8 and only lose one club and the diamond king – making 2D! As Eddie Kantar would say, “You play the cards so beautifully!”

The full North/South hands were:

North	S	A95
	H	42
	D	KJ65
	C	AQ109
South	S	Q642
	H	A753
	D	Q
	C	J753

Bryant Jones Memorial Team Game

On Monday, July 1, the Burlington Bridge Club held a unit team game in memory of Bryant Jones who passed away earlier this year. July 1 was Bryant's birthday. Bryant's son, daughter and granddaughter were there and activities started at 4:00 PM. The family shared reminiscences about Bry and many bridge players had Bry Jones stories to share. Did you know that Bry was a high school pole vault champion? Who woulda thunk it!!

The bridge club provided a sandwich spread with tuna salad, egg salad, every cold-cut known to modern man and some of which I'm not so sure. Bry loved cookies, so the dinner included several varieties of those. Too bad Bry wasn't there to enjoy a meal he would have loved..

There were 20 tables for bridge. The large turnout shows how universally beloved and admired Bry was and how many lives he affected.

The bridge winners were the team of Karen Hewitt, Art Keppelman, Judie Donald and Fred Donald.
Second place went to David, Eric, Joyce and Rebecca Stone
Third were Margie Berger, Carol Slesar, Stan Rosenthal and Alan Wertheimer
Fourth were Jody Petterson, John Lampron, Sheila Barton and Tom Osmer
Fifth went to Lynn Carew, Pat Nestork and Linda and Ken Kaleita

Watching Bridge on Vu-Graph at Bridgebase.com

By Alan Wertheimer

I mostly work (if you can call it that) from home and spend virtually all day in front of the computer. I also spend (probably too much) time watching bridge on Vu-Graph, particularly during national or world championships. I also frequently play on line. I may write about that in a future piece, but here are a few observations about kibitzing.

1. One can always kibbitz a game on bridgebase.com One can join for free and then just log on.
2. If a special Vu-Graph game is being played, a yellow Vu-Graph bar will be lit. Click and you can see what's on. It will tell you the event and who the players are. If you want to watch, just click to join. It will also tell you how many people are kibitzing that table.
3. If no special Vu-Graph game is on, click on the left where it says "help me find a game." Then under "watch bridge," click "list interesting tables." Again, the number kibitzing is an indication of the ability of the players. Many are stars who are practicing or just playing for enjoyment. James Cayne (JEC), a world champion player who was also declared "the worst CEO in the country" when he led Bear Stearns into collapse, is frequently playing.
4. Most of the games are team events. Pair events are pretty rare.

5. Play in the big events is often painfully slow in bidding, play, and defense. I suspect one reason is that the players have more thoughts than I can imagine having and are trying to draw inferences from what has been bid and played (and NOT bid and played) that many of us simply could not do in real time. It's fun to try to figure out what they are thinking about. Players will sometimes go into the tank for 4 minutes, make a play, and then there is an instant claim.
- 6.. Bear in mind that for major championships (like the Spingold or Vanderbilt or Bermuda Bowl), the players are behind screens at their actual tables. North and East are separated from South and West. Two bids are placed on a tray and slid under the screen. The screen is lifted partially for the play of the hand. That slows things down even more.
7. One learns that the experts do NOT always know where all the cards lie. They do not always make the best opening lead or get to the best contract. And they make mistakes. I once saw a declarer make a small slam missing A, K, x in trump. Declarer led a small trump from dummy towards the Q in hand. RHO held Ax. RHO was concerned that if he played low, declarer wouldn't have to draw his A. He went up with A, crashing his partner's K. He could not imagine that the opponents would bid a slam off the A and K.
8. There is always written and sometimes audio commentary on the championship games by the likes of Larry Cohen and Kit Woolsey. Very informative.
9. Some pairs play complicated systems with lots of artificial bids. The alerted bids are highlighted, but not always explained.
10. The Vu-Graph operator sits by the table and enters the play in real time. They make mistakes. You will sometimes see "undo accepted." No player has asked for an undo (one CAN do that when playing in casual games if one misclicks). This is the operator correcting his or her own mistake. If the Vu-Graph operator hears a player make a remark, it will appear in the "chat" line.
11. When watching a team event, one can leave a table and join the opposing table to see what's happening there. Although the tables start at the same time, some tables are much quicker than others (surprise!), so they're not always in synch. If there's a way to keep two tables on my screen simultaneously, I haven't figured it out. I need a geek.
12. Finally, and most importantly, if you're going to watch a championship event, have something else to do. Read a paper or magazine or book. Check the market or the news or facebook (whatever that is). Listen to music. Why? See point 5.

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:

Eva Breckenridge
Warren Fuller
Gerald Ratzler

Claudia Elliman
Jean Godnick
Mary Ellen Scutro

Nancy Fuller
Barbara Pierce
John Webber

Club Master:

Vicki Bruce
Michele Glazer
Michael Morris
Susan Stuermer
Eileen Wolff

Elizabeth Ehrich
Ann Kainan
Barbara Powers
Richard Tracy

Colleen Fitzgerald
Adele Martin
Sheila Sharp
Cornelia Tuttle

Sectional Master:

Margaret Fanning
Kim Likakis

Karen Hewitt
Martin Silton

Art Keppelman

Regional Master:

Robin Cocking
Linda Kaleita

Patricia Eastman
Raymond Lopes

Kenneth Kaleita
Martin Silton

NABC Master:

Mark Oettinger

Frank Reed

Bronze Life Master:

Rhoda Chickering

Richard Clark

Silver Life Master:

Bonnie Clouser

Gold Life Master:

Judith Donald

Director (Please)

Unauthorized Information (UI) is one of the toughest rulings a director has to make. Law 16 defines many types of UI such as “a remark, a question, a reply to a question, an unexpected alert or failure to alert, or by unmistakable hesitation, unwonted speed, special emphasis, tone, gesture, movement or mannerism.” After a player makes UI available to his partner, the partner may not choose from among logical alternatives one that could demonstrably have been suggested over another by the extraneous information. A logical alternative action is one that, among the class of players in question and using the methods of the partnership, would be given **serious consideration** by a significant proportion of such players, of whom it is judged some might select it.”

The following hand deals with UI in a recent tournament.
No one vulnerable, E deals

	<u>North</u>		
	S	AK9	
	H	AK1094	
	D	Q	
	C	AK75	
			<u>East</u>
			S
			8432
			H

			D
			1097643
			C
			632
			<u>South</u>
			S
			J65
			H
			J82
			D
			KJ8
			C
			QJ109

The Auction:	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>
	P	P	1H	X
	2D	P	2H	X
	3D	X	all pass	

2D was alerted as a heart raise (playing transfers over doubles)

The table result was down 2 doubled. Average for NS was 4H making 6.

The director was called before play and recalled after play of the hand. The problem is UI. The 2D bid alert is UI for the East hand. North, who called the director, contended that East should not be allowed to bid 3D based on the UI.

The facts are that East misbid his hand. The correct bid by partnership agreement was 2C indicating a weak transfer to Diamonds. The explanation of their partnership agreement by West was correct and both convention cards were properly marked.

Think of this auction taking place in a high level competition behind screens. In this auction, then East would not know if West alerted the bid or not.

The problem for me as a director was what would East do if the hand were bid correctly. (The auction P P 1H X 2C P 2H X ? using their system). If an overwhelming majority of East's peers would have made the same call (3D) without the hesitation, then he has no logical alternative to the action he took even if a small minority of his peers might have actually passed. If a substantial minority of his peers would choose to pass, there is a logical alternative even though more than half of his peers might choose to take the action he did. The question is not whether it is logical for East to bid 3D, but whether it would also have been logical for him to do something else. In asking other players, after a weak 2D bid, and partner then rebids 2H, most players indicated that they would pass. Therefore the 3D bid was not allowed.

East, in the discussion, said he would always bid 3D in this position. Directors and committees do not pay attention to testimony such as, "I always bid in auctions like this" or "my mind was already made up to bid 3D." It is not that these statements are self-serving and unverifiable--the real point is that they are IRRELEVANT. The issue is not whether the UI suggested the 3D bid to this player, but, whether, to players in general, the UI could make the 3D bid more attractive than a logical alternative. In this case, East knows that West's bid was based on the East heart raise and probably not a long strong suit. Therefore, pulling to 3D is more attractive.

After disallowing the bid, the directors had to construct a possible bidding sequence. The actual ruling allowed N/S to bid 3N making 6.

This was a Mistaken Bid with Correct Explanation. A player makes a bid that is not the partnership agreement but the opponents are informed of the agreement. The partnership agreement is as explained — 2D is a heart raise; the mistake was in East's bid. Here there is no infraction of law, since N/S did receive an accurate description of the E/W agreement. If the bidding had ended at 2HX, they would have no claim to an accurate description of the E/W hands. Regardless of the outcome, the director would have allowed the result to stand.

Here the situation is clear. In most situations, the director, however, would presume a mistaken explanation rather than a mistaken bid in the absence of clear evidence to the contrary. East must not correct West's explanation (or notify the Director) immediately, and he has no responsibility to do so later. This is important if East would have ended up as declarer; in this example East would have been dummy and all would have known immediately. East, having heard West's explanation, knows that his own 2D bid has been misinterpreted. This knowledge is UI. Consequently, East must be careful not to base further actions on this information, but if he does, the law requires the director to award an adjusted score.

As always, any questions or suggestions for discussions can be sent to mftjet@aol.com.

- 2H shows 6 hearts or 5 with an unbalanced hand (10 - 12 HCP)
- 2S shows 4 spades (10 – 12 HCP)
- 3C shows a second suit (10 – 12 HCP)
- 3D shows 4 or more diamonds (10 – 12 HCP)

The one exception: While the 2C bid in principle shows invitational values, it is possible that partner plans to pass the 2D response. After the partnership auction 1C-1H-1S-2C, you would bid 2H, not 2D with a 3 card delayed raise of hearts, for example,

S A10xx H Kxx D x C AQxxx

Partner needs to be aware of this possibility and with S xx H xxxx D K10xxxx C K, should make the more practical bid of 1D over the 1C opening bid

Other Bids and Examples

All jumps after the Z bid (1S in the example above) are natural and game forcing with the exception of 3C. That is weak and asks partner to pass. A typical hand would be

S x H Qxxx D xx C K10xxxx

Any other jump rebid would be game forcing. For example, the 3D in the partnership auction 1D-1H-1S-3D would show a hand like

S Ax H KQxx D AQxxx C xx

Keep in mind that in the auction 1D-1H-1S-2D, 2D is artificial, alertable and game forcing

In the auction 1D-1H-1S-2S, the 2S bid is not invitational, because you would use the XYZ 2C bid as the start of an invitational sequence. The invitational sequence would be 1D-1H-1S-2C-2D-2S

Summary

XYZ replaces 4th suit forcing and New Minor forcing at the 1 level

XYZ applies anytime a partnership has made 3 bids at the 1 level. XYZ still applies if the opponent sticks in an overcall. For example, if the auction proceeds 1C-1D-1S-P-1N-P-, where the opponent overcalls 1D and your side has bid clubs, spades and NT, both 2C and 2D are still XYZ.

2C = invitational (10-12 HCP) and with one exception requires partner to bid 2D

2D= game forcing values

Jumps to the 3 level are natural and game forcing except for 3C which is intended to play.

I know this probably all seems like too much trouble, but once you get into it, you're going to love it. I had to study it for hours (lol) -- Mary Savko

Potpourri

During the past 6 months your editor has encountered a number of interesting hands. Like it or not, here they are.

1. This hand was presented as a problem. The contract is 6C on the opening lead of the Ace of spades. You are told that clubs are 4-0, with the 4 on your left and that diamonds are 4-0, with Qxxx on your right. How are you going to overcome these bad breaks?

North

S	Q5
H	AK62
D	AKJ10
C	763

South

S	-----
H	75
D	98765
C	AKQJ82

The problem is that, if you ruff the opening lead and draw 4 rounds of trump, you will be left with only 1 trump. If you follow this with AKJ of diamonds, East will win and force you to trump a spade before you can unblock the 10 of diamonds. On the other hand, if you lead diamonds before drawing trump, West will trump and you will still have a diamond loser.

It's tempting to think you have solved the problem by pitching one of your high diamonds on the 4th club. After East wins your jack of diamonds, you will have the rest. **BUT** East will duck the jack of diamonds, forcing you to get back to your hand just to knock out his queen.

What to do? Look **elsewhere** in this issue (page 19) for the solution.

2. Part time Vermonter Ellie Hanlon has over 15,000 master points. As of June 6, she was ranked 198th among the ACBL's over 167,000 members. Her brilliant play on the hand below shows how she got there.

	<u>North</u>	
	S J53	
	H 9	
	D AJ963	
	C KJ75	
		<u>East</u>
<u>West</u>		S 108762
S Q94		H Q743
H K10862		D K10
D 54		C 108
C 962		
	<u>South</u>	
	S AK	
	H AJ5	
	D Q872	
	C AQ43	

Like most declarers, Ellie wound up in the unfortunate contract of 3NT. A 6D contract is cold even with the losing diamond finesse. How ignominious to go down in 3NT with a cold slam elsewhere!

The opening lead was a low heart (what else?). Many declarers won the first trick with the ace and took the diamond finesse at trick 2. The rest was silence.

Ellie found a much better line of play. She won the Ace of hearts and cashed 4 club tricks ending up in her hand. East discarded 2 spades and West a small diamond. Ellie reasoned that West would not discard a small diamond from a holding including the King. She also concluded that West was protecting the Queen of spades.

Ellie solved the problem by cashing the AK of spades and leading a diamond to the ace. She now exited with the Jack of spades. West had to win and, having nothing but hearts, had to concede a trick to Ellie's Jack of hearts. This resulted in a near top score. Nice going, Ellie!!

3. What distinguishes players of different abilities is their ability to draw inferences from the bidding and play. You saw Ellie Hanlon at work in hand 2 above. Drawing inferences is particularly important on defense, since the defenders usually have less information at their disposal than declarer. Here is a hand from the recent sectional in Rutland

	<u>North</u>	
	S QJ1093	
	H 32	
	D AK962	
	C 8	
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>
S A765		S K
H A104		H QJ986
D 5		D J1074
C Q9743		C KJ10
	<u>South</u>	
	S 842	
	H K75	
	D Q83	
	C A652	

The auction was

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1S	2H	2S	3H
All pass			

As South, you lead the 8 of spades. This elicits the 5 from dummy, the 3 from partner and the King from declarer. Declarer leads the King of clubs. You win the Ace and see the 8 from partner. What's going on here?

Partner's 8 looks like the top of a doubleton, but wait. All lower spot cards are in plain view. Can partner have J108? I don't think so. That would give declarer two black singletons, not likely in an auction that stopped at 3H. Moreover, partner's 3 of spades at trick 1 may be trying to call your attention to clubs, although, he can hardly know that you have the Ace and that declarer will lead a club at trick 2.

What does partner have for his opening bid --- 3 points in spades, probably none in hearts, clearly none in clubs. He must have the AK of diamonds. You lead the 2 of clubs to give partner a ruff. Partner underleads his AK of diamonds to your Queen. You give him his second ruff. He leads a high diamond to force a ruff in dummy and assure your trump trick with the king of hearts. We collected 100 points for down 2. After the hand partner said that he knew I knew he had the AK of diamond, so he was comfortable that my 2 of clubs was based on the queen. This hand goes to show that on rare occasion bridge can actually be fun.

Declarer, for his part, led the club at trick 2, because he thought the trump finesse was going to lose and he wanted to establish some winners before taking the losing finesse. One final point: +100 was worth 5.5 matchpoints out of 8. Two pairs in our direction were allowed to make 140 in spades. The computer program, Deep Finesse, thought that 7 tricks should be the limit of the hand in spades. Sigh! Who said life was fair?!

4. Many of you are aware that your bridge editor spends about 5 months of the year in Florida. He has made some new bridge friends. At least, he thinks they are friends. Look at what one of these new friends did to him on the following board.

		<u>North</u>			
		S	J97		
		H	10532		
		D	AQ853		
		C	K		
	<u>West</u>			<u>East</u>	
S	K84			S	AQ3
H	KJ7			H	A86
D	J10			D	K64
C	J9874			C	Q1063
		<u>South</u>			
		S	10652		
		H	Q945		
		D	972		
		C	A52		

I was East in 3NT. The opening lead was the 2 of spades. I won in hand with the Ace and, having nothing better to do, I led a low club to the 9 and North's King. I was worried about diamonds, but as you see, North had both the Ace and Queen. North was Brian Nelson who found the master play. He led the Q of diamonds. Hoping for the best, I ducked, but Brian continued with a low diamond and I had to go down 1 for almost a 0. With friends like that, one hardly has need of enemies.

St. Johnsbury Unit Game

On June 16, 2013 a 2 session bridge game was held to benefit the Good Living Senior Center of the St. Johnsbury House. The festivities included a very plentiful breakfast and enough snacks to do for lunch, and, of course the bridge. The event raised \$650 for the Good Living Senior Center. The food was served by volunteers, board members and the director of the senior center. Game directors were Jeannie Clermont and Arthur Aiken, assisted by Robert Drew and Linda Aiken. The bridge winners were

Morning Session

<u>North/South</u>				<u>East/West</u>			
A	B	C		A	B	C	
1	1	1	Sandra Corrigan-Colleen Lord	1	1	1	Jerry and Linda Himmelstein
2	2		Eric McCann-James Abbott	2			Lynn Carew-Pat Nestork
3			Peter Tripp-Penny Lane				

Afternoon Session

<u>North/South</u>				<u>East/West</u>			
A	B	C		A	B	C	
1			Abe and Jean Brown	1			Peter Tripp-Penny Lane
2			Lynn Carew-Pat Nestork	2	1		EricMcCann-James Abbott
3			Fred and Constance Brown	3			Scott Perry-Robin Kerr
4	2	2	Jerry and Linda Himmelstein	4			Anne and Roger Cooley
	3		Bill and Kate Beadle		2		Patricia Spencer-Richard Tracey
					1		Robert and Mary Drew

2013 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, Here are the top 10 after the first tournament. As usual, I apologize for any errors or inadvertent omissions.

1.	Mike Farrell	12.95	5.	June Dorion	9.56
1.	Jerry DiVincenzo	12.95	7.	Fred Donald	8.82
3.	Karen Kristiansen	9.59	8.	Patty DiVincenzo	7.63
3.	John Conova	9.59	8.	Kathy Farrell	7.63
5.	Wayne Hersey	9.56	10.	Judie Donald	7.46

Florida residents and part time Vermonters Mary Savko and Ellie Hanlon scored 10.88.

2013 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. Here are the top 10 after 1 tournament. Karen Kristiansen is leading again. For heaven's sakes, Karen,

would you hurry up and become a life master already. As usual, I apologize for any errors or inadvertent omissions.

1.	Karen Kristiansen	9.59	6.	Linda Nelson	1.99
2.	Jim Abbott	3.58	7.	Judith Ward	1.95
2.	Eric McCann	3.58	8.	Patricia Williams	1.80
4.	Linda Kaleita	2.77	9.	Kim Likakis	1.60
4.	Ken Kaleita	2.77	9.	Kate Stewart	1.60

Vermont On The Tournament Trail

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

St. Louis Nationals:

Allan Graves	167.98	Penny Lane	27.07	Peter Tripp	27.07
Ellie Hanlon	12.65	Andy Avery	11.94	Mary Savko	11.27

Palmetto:

Allan Graves	99.90	Mary Savko	26.94	Ellie Hanlon	26.94
Sandy Desilets	25.93	Rhoda Chickering	25.93	Frank Hacker	24.30

North Charleston:

Peter Tripp	24.95	Penny Lane	24.95
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Richmond:

Peter Tripp	18.31	Penny Lane	18.31
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Orlando:

Allan Graves	40.19	Mary Savko	20.55	Ellie Hanlon	20.55
Alan Wertheimer	15.21				

<u>Bermuda:</u>	Allan Graves	37.44
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Fort Lauderdale:

Allan Graves	83.18	Mary Savko	42.96	Ellie Hanlon	42.96
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Palm Beach Gardens: Allan Graves 97.75

Gatlinburg:

Wayne Hersey	42.75	Penny Lane	39.51	Peter Tripp	39.51
Patty DiVincenzo	33.03	Jerry DiVincenzo	33.03	Jackie Kimel	33.03
John Kimel	32.63	Don Sondergeld	20.44		

Saratoga:

Mary Savko	71.55	Ellie Hanlon	71.55	Frank Hacker	69.48
Phil Sharpsteen	69.48	Courtney Nelson	22.91	Alan Wertheimer	19.34
Rhoda Chickering	17.01	Sandy Desilets	17.01	Lynn Carew	16.21
Stan Rosenthal	16.21	Pat Nestork	16.21	Ruth Stokes	14.53
Jay Friedenson	14.53	Bob Smith	10.87		

Sturbridge:

Phil Sharpsteen	11.66	Frank Hacker	11.66
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Fredericton:

Mary Savko	61.63	Ellie Hanlon	61.63
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Editorial Comment: Vermont is part of the New England District 25. Our district runs the Sturbridge tournament. District 3 runs the Saratoga tournament. It's interesting to note that we had 40 Vermonters win points in Saratoga and only 6 in Sturbridge. Also those who went to Saratoga seemed to stay longer and play more than those who went to Sturbridge. Despite this apparent lack of interest, I'm happy to say that Vermont did have all 3 of its delegates at the District 25 Board of delegates meeting.

Congratulations also to 3 Vermonters who did very well in the District 25 January STAC

Martin Silton	12.44	Israel Perlman	9.99	Shirley Perlman	9.41
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And also the June STAC

Frank Hacker	13.89	Rudy Polli	12.83	June Dorion	11.57
Wayne Hersey	11.46				

Well done all.

Elsewhere: Solution to problem on page 12 -- On the 4th club, discard dummy's last spade. Now drive out the queen of diamonds. When East returns a spade, you can trump and pitch the blocking diamond. It's pretty simple once somebody tells you the answer.

The ACBL has a monthly column *Bridge with the Abbot*. We have bridge with Jim Abbott. Jim has contributed before. Last year he provided a column on Drury. Jim has an interesting perspective on the game. The Eric referred to below is Eric McCann, Jim's frequent partner. They have been doing well lately and you can find their names in the Aborn trophy standings as well as in the list of winners of Arthur Aiken's St. Johnsbury Unit Charity Game. The Arthur below is Arthur Aiken. Jim's article lends credence to the statement, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing."

Perspiration or Inspiration

By Jim Abbott

Percentage card play technique...or inspiration? Probability theory...or "table feel." Though acknowledging the occasional reward for the latter, the Abbott was of firm opinion that good bridge came essentially from disciplined bidding and traditional time-and-probability-tested card play technique. "8 ever, 9 never"—whether to go for the drop—or to finesse for the missing Queen—was a classic example. But how many techniques are as easily remembered...or how complex should a bidding system become before memory lapses outweigh any refinements in the bidding?

These were the questions a mildly distraught Abbott was asking himself towards the end of Arthur's Monday afternoon duplicate. During the drive to the game, the Abbott and his partner, the younger friar, Eric the Earnest had discussed 2 points of bidding strategy.

The first, support doubles, new to the partnership, should--for clarity's sake--be done only by the original opener. The other, a refinement of 1430 Roman Keycard Blackwood was the change to 3014 when clubs are trump. It seemed counter-productive to show no keycards with a bid that goes beyond 5C which might be the last makeable contract.

The bridge game that followed produced two instances of possible information overload. Eric opened 1 Heart. The next hand overcalled 1S and the Abbott made a negative double. Eric alerted this double as a support double showing 3 card support for hearts. Eric competed to 3 Hearts, was doubled and played well with dummy's single Heart (not 3!) to get out for down 2. Still a likely bottom mused the Abbott.

The penultimate hand of the afternoon offered a further test. This was the bidding:

West	Abbott	East	Eric
P	P	P	1C
P	1S	P	2N
P	3C	P	4C
P	???		

“Those Contemptible Clubs” thought the Abbott as he pondered his next call. Technically, his 3 club call in response to 2NT was a Stayman inquiry asking for a 4 card major. Eric may not have remembered this. Eric did open 1 club and the Abbott did have good club support -- A109x. So what now? RKCB for clubs? Would Eric remember 3014 — or was there a curse on today’s pregame convention conversation? “Enough” thought the Abbott. He bid 6C and hoped for the best..

These were the hands.

Eric
 S AQx
 H AKx
 D Ax
 C Qxxxx

Abbott
 S Kxxx
 H x
 D Kxxx
 C A109x

Perfectly fine. Just don’t lose 2 club tricks and the slam is a laydown. What’s proper play procedure for this goal? A standard 75% probability missing 2 honors is to take 2 finesses, one for the King and one for the Jack. Alternatively, one might cash the Ace and then lead towards the Queen in hand. The probabilities are similar to those of the double finesse, since defeat requires both the King and Jack to be over the queen. The one constant: always lead towards the Ace.

Perhaps it was Eric’s recent community education course in water witching and other forms of divination that led to his subsequent play. “I intensely felt that West had all the clubs”...so he led to dummy’s King of diamonds and continued with a small club towards his Queen.

Disaster! East produced her singleton King and West still had a winner with the Jack. Several pairs made 6 clubs (one 7!) but no one else bid it.

The Abbott’s new mantra: keep divination mostly removed from the bridge table. Please please. Amen

Vermont Spring Sectional

Holiday Inn, Rutland VT

May 31 – June 2, 2013

Friday Afternoon Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
3.83	1	1		Robert Chiabrandy – David Perrin	60.36
2.87	2	2		Lynn Carew – Pat Nestork	60.28
2.15	3			Wayne Hersey – June Dorion	60.23
2.00	4	3	1	John Newton – Sally Newton	59.74
1.50	5	4	2	Layton Davis – William Wade	59.44
1.34	6			Michael Farrell – Gerald DiVincenzo	58.07
1.13		5	3	Wendy Baurmeister – Josephine Machera	54.57
0.69		6		Jay Friedenson – Ruth Stokes	53.58
0.84			4	Israel Perlman – Elizabeth VonRiesenfelder	50.19
0.63			5	Irene Vignoe – Patricia Williams	49.78

Friday Evening Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
3.67	1			Wayne Hersey – June Dorion	58.44
2.75	2			Gerald DiVincenzo – Michael Farrell	58.05
2.77	3	1	1	Kenneth Kaleita – Linda Kaleita	57.31
2.08	4	2		Sandy Desilets – James Thomas	57.19
1.56	5	3	2	Jim Abbott – Eric McCann	56.20
0.87	6			Patricia DiVincenzo – Kathleen Farrell	55.83
1.17		4	3	Irene Vignoe – Patricia Williams	54.83
0.88		5	4	Judith Ward – Linda Baker	52.92

Saturday Morning Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
4.83	1			Fred Donald – Judith Donald	62.85
3.62	2			Gerald DiVincenzo – Michael Farrell	60.74
2.72	3			Wayne Hersey – June Dorion	59.78
3.64	4	1	1	Peter Mitchell – Robert Dickson	59.29
2.73	5	2		Anne Mahoney – Leo Mahoney	58.86
2.05	6	3	2	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	56.25
1.54		4	3	John Newton – Sally Newton	56.09
1.15		5		Bonnie Clouser – Mary Tierney	55.90
1.00		6	4	Mary- Eliz Fitzgerald – Terry Bentley	55.73
0.75			5	Arthur Aiken – Linda Aiken	55.61
0.56			6	June Silverman – Ronald Silverman	54.51

Saturday Afternoon Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C		Pct
4.67	1	1	1	John Conova – Karen Kristansen	61.16
3.50	2			Mary Savko – Ellie Hanlon	59.27
2.63	3			Fred Donald – Judith Donald	56.72
2.63	4	2	2	Marjorie Cameron – B Tysor	56.50
1.97	5	3		Jay Friedenson – Alan Wertheimer	56.14
1.11	6			Gerald DiVincenzo – Michael Farrell	56.12
1.82		4	3	Peter Mitchell – Robert Dickson	54.58
1.11		5	4	Jim Abbott – Eric McCann	54.44
1.27		6		Michael Rogers – George Onni	54.03
0.78			5	Nora Miller – Richard Tracy	52.83

Sunday Swiss Teams

MP	A	B	C		Score
5.50	1			Judy Dubay – William Dubay	89
				Mary Savko – Ellie Hanlon	
4.13	2			Gerald DiVincenzo – Patricia DiVincenzo	73
				Kathleen Farrell – Michael Farrell	
2.87	3/5	1/3		Jay Friedenson – Alan Wertheimer	71
				Jon Stokes – Ruth Stokes	
2.87	3/5	1/3	1	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	71
				John Newton – Sally Newton	
2.87	3/5	1/3		Anne Mahoney – Leo Mahoney	71
				James Thomas – Courtney Nelson	
1.99			2	Ann Bottelli – Richard Bottelli	49
				John Nelson – Linda Nelson	

My Badness!!!

What is the worst bridge hand you have ever held? What is the worst bridge hand you have ever seen? The East hand on board 22 of the June 7th session of the recent 27th World Wide Bridge contest is likely worse. What a beauty!!

S 654 H 874 D 6542 C 732

The sum of the spot cards is only 63. Charles Anderson Worsley (1809-1897), the second Earl of Yarborough used to bet 1000 to 1 against a player's receiving a whist hand with no card higher than a 9. Whist or bridge hands with no card higher than a 9 are called Yarboroughs. The mathematical odds against a Yarborough are 1827 to 1, so the Earl had a little bit in reserve.

Here we have a hand with no card higher than an 8. The odds against that are 16,959 to 1.

Editorial Comment: My July ACBL Bulletin arrived shortly after I wrote this piece. On page 7, in a letter to the editor, Las Vegas expert Drew Casen presents the following hand from the Jacoby Open Swiss Teams

S 6543 H 64 D 432 C 6432

The opponents declared 6NT and Drew actually took a trick with this hand. You need to read his letter.

27th Annual Worldwide Bridge Contest

On Friday June 7 and on Saturday June 8, Vermonters took part in this year's Worldwide Bridge Contest. There were 8 tables Friday night in Montpelier and 10 tables Saturday afternoon in Burlington. The winners are shown below, based on their rankings and percentages achieved locally. We also show the final international rank for each pair listed. It's amazing how much the local results can differ from the international results. It seemed to make a big difference whether you sat NS or EW. On Friday there were 4,613 pairs in the international competition and top on a board was approximately 4,200. On Saturday, there were 5,060 pairs competing and top on a board was approximately 4,500.

Friday Night – Montpelier

Local Rank	Names	Pct.	Int'l rank
1	Fred Donald – Judith Donald	69.44	61
2	Penny Lane – Peter Tripp	60.71	490
3	Rick Clark – Pat Nestork	58.73	995
4	Rhoda Chickering – Sandy Desilets	55.56	2,161
5/6	Carol Slesar – Stanley Rosenthal	54.76	2,386
5/6	Rudolph Polli – Frank Hacker	54.76	728

Saturday Afternoon – Burlington

Local Rank	Names	Pct.	Int'l rank
1	Phil Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	69.68	295
2	Mark Oettinger – Michael Bell	65.10	21
3	Rudolph Polli – Jackie Kimel	64.06	108
4	Art Keppelman – Jenny Bell	57.18	2,458
5	Wayne Hersey – Rick Clark	56.51	469
6	Alan Wertheimer – Jay Friedenson	54.63	2,690
7	Lynn Carew – Pat Nestork	53.39	337
8	Karen Hewitt – Jody Petterson	52.08	3,425

COMING ATTRACTIONS

July 12 – 14	VT Summer Sectional, Holiday Inn, Rutland, VT
Aug. 3	Marilyn Hacker Memorial Pairs, Burlington Bridge Academy, Williston, VT – 10:30 AM, breakfast goodies at 10
Aug. 1 -10	ACBL Summer Nationals, Hyatt Regency, Atlanta, GA
Aug. 12 - 18	CAN-AM Regional, Sheraton Airport Hotel, Montreal, QC
Aug. 27 – Sep. 1	New England Fiesta Regional, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Warwick, RI
Sep. 20 - 22	Vermont Foliage Sectional, Burlington Bridge Academy, Williston, VT
Sep. 28 -29	New Hampshire Fall Foliage Sectional, Lebanon College, Lebanon, NH
Oct. 7 - 13	District 3 Autumn Leaf Regional, Crowne Plaza Danbury, Danbury, CT
Oct. 6	Vermont Bridge Association Annual Meeting and President’s Pairs, Burlington Bridge Academy, Willison, VT -- 10:30 AM – entry fee \$14 for VBA members - \$14 is subsidized price for paid – up VBA members only – entry fee \$28 for non-members
Oct. 25 – 27	Vermont Fall Sectional, Holiday Inn, Rutland, VT
Nov. 6 – 10	New England Master’s Regional, Holiday Inn, Mansfield, MA
Nov. 28 – Dec. 8	ACBL Fall Nationals, Sheraton Phoenix & Hyatt Regency, Phoenix, AZ