

ALERT

Quarterly
Newsletter



Cincinnati
Bridge Association



UNIT 124

VOL XLIV No. 4 OCT 2019

2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45241 (513) 563 2218

From the President's Desk



It is with a very heavy heart that I share condolences and wishes of support on behalf of the Unit Board of Directors to Mike Lipp's family and friends on his passing. He has left a big void to fill in Cincinnati Bridge.

We are grateful for all he did on behalf of bridge here in the CBA. We extend our condolences to his wife Becky, and his sister and frequent partner Pam Campbell, and the rest of Mike's family in this loss we all share.

I approach the end of my first year as President of CBA. It has been a very exciting and rewarding experience for me. Yes, it was fun to work with the board members and so many volunteers to meet your needs and make our unit a better place to play and enjoy the game of bridge.

Please join the CBA Board and attend our annual membership meeting on Tuesday November 12, 2019 at 5:30 pm. Free dinner will be provided and of course a free game at 7:00 pm. It is very important to attend the meeting to learn progress and listen to your comments/feedback to make 2020 even better. Additionally, the meeting will allow members to appreciate and thank all the volunteers who are the real backbone of association.

We have been able to negotiate and sign a 7-year contract for the Regional tournament with Ramada Plaza (becomes Marriott in 2020). The renovated hotel will be one of the best venues to stay and play bridge. I am sure that you will enjoy the facility.

I have met management committee members of Anderson and NKy to invite them to attend our board meetings. They have agreed and have attended last board meeting September 6th. The Unit 124 board is for all...we are one FAMILY. You may know that NKy facility where they play bridge was flooded. The board has offered to help them. Anderson are searching for game site too. We stand to assist where we can. More as soon as we know.

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Regional - Louisville	22	Nov 4-10, 2019

I do want to share a disappointment. We have put a comment box for past few months. Not a single comment has been received. We do need your comments/input to better our place. Please take time out and let us know how to improve our Unit 124. You need not write your name.

On behalf of the board thank you for giving us opportunity to serve you. We urge you to step up and volunteer as much as you can. Play lot of bridge. Check out the upcoming events and make your plans now. See you at the tables.

Nalin Mehta

President, Unit 124 Board of Directors

"In sorrow we must go, but not in despair. Behold! we are not bound for ever to the circles of the world, and beyond them is more than memory."

— J.R.R. Tolkien

"Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak knits up the o-er wrought heart and bids it break."

— William Shakespeare, Macbeth

ONE STEP FORWARD...

We are all very saddened by Mike Lipp's death – there is a memorial for Mike in this issue.

How People Learn Bridge

The ACBL and the Education Foundation have teamed up to create a new separate web site to attract more prospects to playing bridge. The current ACBL website will continue to serve its purposes and the Education Foundation website will do the same for their members. These two independent businesses are collaborating on growth. The ACBL is a membership organization and the Education Foundation is a charity focused on bridge teaching.

The idea is to use affordable marketing opportunities to attract people interested in learning more about bridge and provide them with access near their homes to teachers and teaching clubs. The new website is up and running. However, the rest of the links from prospect to teacher and club require more effort on all our parts.

Unit 124 has a reasonably complete list of bridge teacher and class offerings. The District 11 list is more difficult to create. Some want to keep the separation between teacher, club, unit and district as far apart as possible to retain control over their business. This new approach respects a teacher's or club's control and wants to improve the fulfillment process for new people looking to learn bridge.

There are pilot tests underway in Raleigh NC and Houston TX to show the web site clicks through to the users needs. The ACBL created a Liaison Committee comprised of 3 ACBL Board Members, 3 Ed Foundation Members, 3 ACBL management members, and me as the Chair of the Board of Governor's Teacher and Club Committee. We hope to hear encouraging progress in November in San Francisco. No timeline is available yet, but the time for our prework is now - the better job we do to keep our teacher contact information current and our beginner class offerings current the more prospects we will be able to recruit.

What comes first?

...The ACBL Member or the Bridge Player? Of course, there are many paths to learning and enjoying the game of bridge. There have been many changes over the past 4 decades and more alternative recreation opportunities exist now than ever.

The Education Foundation financed a large public study on the current state of bridge in the USA. They report very interesting findings:

Unit 124 Club Games

Mon	AM Aft PM	CBC 11:00 Inv MIDM 1:00 CBC 7:00 (Ltd) - OXF 7:00
Tue	AM PM	NKY 10:00 11:00 CBC, AND, MIDS -- C&P/SP 2:45PM CBC 7:00 Ltd (Call for 0-20)
Wed	AM Aft PM	CBC - AND 11:00 - SCC 10:00 MIDL 12:00 NKY 6:30 CBC 7:00 PM (Ltd)
Thu	AM Aft PM	INT 9:00 - CBC 11:00 - NKy 11:30 AM WHC 12:00 - EAB 12:30 CBC C&P/SP 2:45PM CBC 6:30 "8 is ENOUGH" Swiss Team 1/3/5
Fri	AM	NKY 10:00 - CBC 11:00 Open & NLM
Sat	AM Aft	CBC 9:30AM-Noon Supervised Play (SP) CBC 1:00

People who know how to play bridge

- About 16M (out of 75M in the 45+ Yr old + some college target group) people said they know how to play bridge (over 20%) -- WOW! This projects to 3-4% of the general population.
- 10M+ have not played in a long time, 3M+ play a few times a year, 2M+ play regularly (monthly/wkly/wkly+)
- Almost 2/3 of the players learned before 1990. But more than 2 million in this age group have learned to play in this decade, a big uptick compared with either of the two prior decades.
- **Social/rubber bridge is the most prominent form of play, followed by robots/apps, online with people, non-sanctioned duplicate, and then ACBL games.**
- The more frequently people play, the more likely they are to play forms other than social. Though ACBL play increases with frequency of play, it never exceeds online with people or playing with robots.

ACBL-related Results

- About 6% of the bridge players have had something to do with ACBL. These fall into three groups:
 - o ACBL members in last 15-20 years (about 2%).
 - o People that played an ACBL event years ago but have not done so in years (about 2.5%).
 - o People that have played in bridge clubs or events but did not join long term (1.5%).
- If we look at "still playing," the ACBL connection goes up to 15% and for those still playing regularly 25%.

People who do not know how to play bridge

- Most know what bridge is but do not know anyone who plays bridge.
- **About 19% of non-players are interested in learning to play bridge (11M). EXCITING!**
- About 27% not sure, 54% not interested.

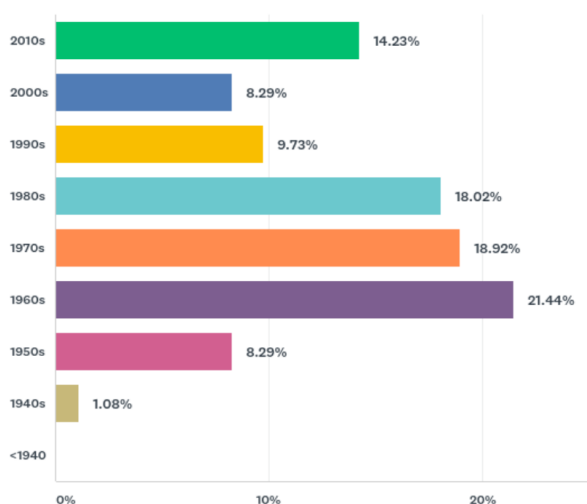
- Interest in learning is about 50% higher among people who know one or more people who play than among people who know about the game but do not know anyone who plays. (This suggests that current players could be great ambassadors for selling the game to people they know.)

- Those Interested in learning are interested in a variety of ways:

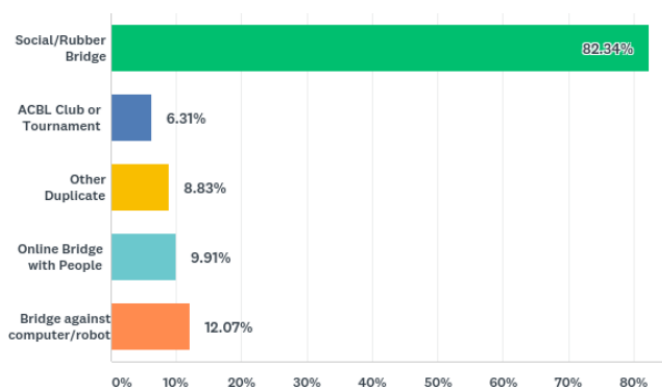
- o Computer/App – 55%,
- Teacher – 36%,
- Ed Video – 28%,
- Books – 15%

- o The more bridge players you know, the more likely you are to want to learn from a teacher.

Q2 Approximately when did you first learn to play bridge?



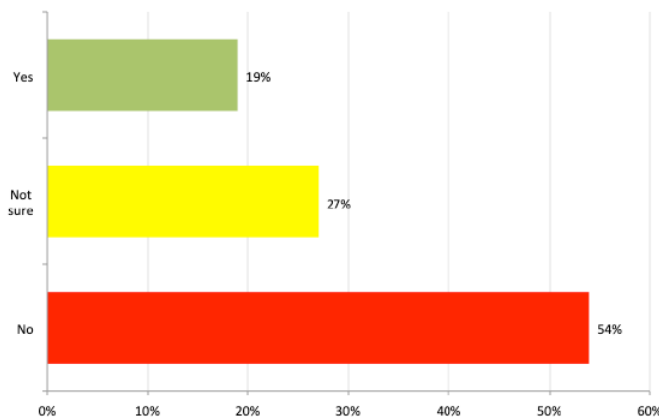
Q4 What type(s) of bridge do you play?



Note: For this question players could select more than one type of bridge played.

From these data we see that there is an uptick in people playing who learned during 2010. We also see that ACBL sanctioned games appeal to only 6% of the current bridge players.

Q7 Are you interested in learning to play bridge?



This says that among non players, there are about 20% prospects – or about 16% of the 45+ some college crowd and 3-4% of the general population.

This survey was conducted by a web browser service called Survey Monkey in July 2019 and reached Adults 45 years old and older with at least some college education. There were 2550 respondents of whom over 20% knew how to play bridge. This translates to about 15 MM players out of about 75 MM in the total population. Note that any bias introduced by the use of e-mail and web browsers is not stated. Only 70% of our members use their emails for bridge.

You can find the details on their website at: <https://www.acbleducationalfoundation.org/page/bridge-news--blog-5/news/millions-of-americans-play-bridge--and-millions-more-want-to-learn-6.html>

So, we report progress in:

- understanding the challenges for growth, and
- in reaching out to find new bridge prospects, and
- on infrastructure improvements to create a more active pipeline of bridge players and eventually ACBL members.

There is no instant pudding.

The upcoming **Membership Meeting on November 12, 2019 Tuesday Evening at 5:30 PM at the CBC** is your chance to learn more about your Unit and have your voice heard about improvements you want to see. If a quorum (45 members) attends, then any motion voted and approved by Members will be taken up by the Board of Directors. There will be free food and free bridge that evening so be sure to attend.

This is another great ALERT thanks to our trusted contributors. Dean Congbalay continues his delightful thought pieces on the social aspects of our game. We welcome Otto Walter, Mike Ma, Potter Orr Steve Felson

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Tuesday
NOV12

The Annual Unit Membership Meeting will take place Tuesday Evening November 12 at the Cincinnati Bridge Center at 5:30 - 6:15 PM. All members in good standing of Unit 124 are invited to attend. If a quorum (45) of members attend, then members

may make and pass motions that the Full Board of Directors will address in subsequent Board Meetings. No proxy voting allowed. A FREE meal will be provided (expect some wonderful Indian food! as well as favorite delectables). Then play for free in the evening Open and NLM (attendance permitting) sections. While you do not have to attend the meeting to play bridge later, we ask you to come and share your views with the Board. The entire Board of Directors will be in attendance.

Call for Nominees - Jerry Steuernagle Award



Jerry Steuernagle (1940 - 1971) was one of Cincinnati's most liked and respected bridge players, known particularly for his sense of humor and for always being a gentleman at the bridge table.

The Jerry Steurenagle Award is presented annually to the duplicate bridge player best exemplifying the principles of ethics, kindness, and high character in bridge. This award is based on 4 factors:

- 1) Contribution to the promotion of duplicate bridge,
- 2) Action in setting high ethical standards,
- 3) Compassion, sportsmanship and sense of humor,
- 4) Willingness to help less experienced players.

Please send nominations for the Jerry Steuernagle award to Debbie Cummings dcummings@twc.com By December 1, 2019. This award will be bestowed at the Unit Holiday Party in December.

Call for nominees - 2019 Patty Eber Award given to an individual demonstrating extraordinary service to the Unit and to Duplicate Bridge. Please send

your nomination to any Unit Board Member. Please submit your nominations in by December 1, 2019.

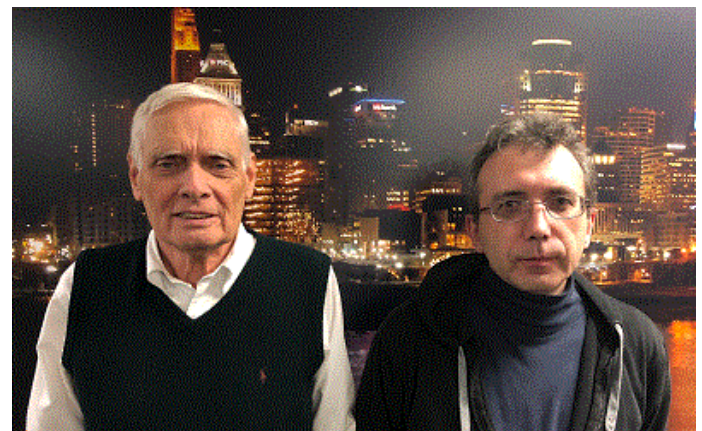
September 28 – Progressive Sectional Finals

	MPs	OA	OB	OC	%		
Sep 28 Morning Final	9.97	1	1		63.6	Bob Fisk, Cincinnati, OH	Stephen Vogel, Cincinnati, OH
	7.48	2	2		63.5	Donald Durack, Cincinnati, OH	Barry Wauligman, Hamilton, OH
	5.61	3	3	1	58.3	James Barrett, Cincinnati, OH	Carol Scovic, Blue Ash, OH
	4.21	4	4		57.2	Dennis Schultz, Harrison, OH	John Williams, Cincinnati, OH
	3.15	5	5		55.4	Sharon Kreitzer, Cincinnati, OH	Joseph Muenks, Cincinnati, OH
	2.37	6			54	Jackie Toth, West Chester, OH	Judy Ruehl, Batavia, OH
	1.77	7			53.6	Amitabh Raturi, Cincinnati, OH	Robert Sulgrove, Centerville, OH
	1.49		6		52.5	Cordell Coy, Lakeside Park, KY	Peggy Ammon, Burlington, KY
	2.45			2	52.1	Peter Outcalt, West Chester, OH	Anne Rinaldi, Cincinnati, OH
	1.84			3	51.1	Pamela Kennedy, Cincinnati, OH	Mike Burns, Cincinnati, OH
1.38			4	49.3	Phyllis Mendoza, Cincinnati, OH	Janet Thurnau, Cincinnati, OH	
Sep 28 Afternoon Final	9.97	1	1		68.9	M Mineard, Cincinnati, OH	M Mulford-Jacobs, Cincinnati, OH
	7.48	2			66.7	Jackie Toth, West Chester, OH	Judy Ruehl, Batavia, OH
	5.61	3			61.7	John Meinking, Maineville, OH	Barbara Boswell, Cincinnati, OH
	4.34	4	2		57.6	Lois Klein, Cincinnati, OH	Judy Barron, Cincinnati, OH
	3.15	5			57.2	Bob Fisk, Cincinnati, OH	Cliff Pleatman, Cincinnati, OH
	2.37	6			56.5	Barbara Levinson, Cincinnati, OH	Peggy Barrett, Cincinnati, OH
	3.27		3	1	52.3	Cecilia Kloecker, Cincinnati, OH	Warren Sublette, Cincinnati, OH
	2.44		4		51.6	Donald Durack, Cincinnati, OH	Daniel Koppenhafer, Mason, OH
	2.45		5	2	51.4	Phyllis Mendoza, Cincinnati, OH	Janet Thurnau, Cincinnati, OH
	1.84			3	49.3	Joann Behr, Cincinnati, OH	James Barrett, Cincinnati, OH
1.38			4	47.9	Peter Outcalt, West Chester, OH	Anne Rinaldi, Cincinnati, OH	

District 11 NAP Finalists

Unit 124 celebrates the 7 finalist pairs (of 11 total) who qualified to represent District 11 in March 2020 at the Columbus NABC North American Pairs Finals.

MPs	Flight	Score		
24 G	A1	492.64	Gregory Potts, Portsmouth, OH	Charles Kopp, Columbus, OH
18 G	A2	488.27	Jerry Clerkin, Bloomington, IN	John Hinton, Greenwood, IN
13.5 G	A3	486.81	Yauheni Siutsau, Loveland, OH	William Higgins, Cincinnati, OH
10.13 G	A4	480.93	Russell Shoup, Dayton, OH	Marc Low, Centerville, OH
8 G	A5	478.98	Bob Lyon, Fishers, IN	Craig Satersmoen, Huber Heights, OH
16 G	B1	550.27	Judy Ruehl, Batavia, OH	Albert Beaupre, Cincinnati, OH
12 G	B2	541.69	V Netherwood, Cincinnati, OH	Stephen Vogel, Cincinnati, OH
9 G	B3	528	Charles Seelbach, Lexington, KY	R Blaine Mullins, Frankfort, KY
6.75 G	B4	525.76	Dennis Schultz, Harrison, OH	Larry Newman, Blue Ash, OH
5.33 G	B5	509.85	Steven Forsythe, Centerville, OH	Sandra Forsythe, Centerville, OH
10 GR	C1	287.63	Karen Clemency, Columbus, OH	Melissa Warheit, Columbus, OH
7.5 GR	C2	280.19	Monica Ibarra, Covington, KY	Kevin Henry, Cincinnati, OH
5.63 GR	C3	274.63	Cecilia Kloecker, Cincinnati, OH	Jay Gala, Cincinnati, OH
4.22 GR	C4	263.75	Tim Oppelt, Cincinnati, OH	Terry Raulin, West Chester, OH
3.33 GR	C5	259.25	Jon Atkinson, Lancaster, OH	Richard Poznanski, Amanda, OH



A3 - Bill Higgins & Yauheni Siutsau



B1 - Al Beaupre & Judy Ruehl



B4 - Denny Schultz & Larry Newman



C4 - Tim Oppelt & Terry Raulin



C3 - Cecilia Kloecker & (Jay Gala)



B2 - Vince Netherwood & Steve Vogel



C2 - Monica Ibarra & Kevin Henry

CLUB CORNER

Send Club News to the Alert Editor: moesefamily@aol.com

70% Games Jul-Oct

Date	Game	Player	Player	%
16-Oct	Wed Eve CBC	Kevin Henry	Monica Ibarra	70.83
17-Jul	Cinti Country Club	Kathy Shepard	Betsy Coith	70.57
8-Jul	Deschappelles	Agnes De Lany	Jackie Toth	70.14

Well done, everyone! See [ALL Unit 70% Games](#)

ANDERSON BRIDGE CLUB - TUESDAY AM GAME - **Reservation required.** The senior center management has limited the space to 20 tables. If you do not reserve a spot, you might not get to play. Contact Jodie Kiefer for your Tuesday Morning reservation.

jodie41071@gmail.com

NKy BC Update: Games are held at Pee Wee's Place at 2325 Anderson Road, Crescent Springs KY every WEDNESDAY and 1st, 3rd, and 5th THURSDAYS and

FRIDAYS (BY RESERVATION ONLY to Cindy Tretter). See [website](#) for updates. Directions: Take Buttermilk Pike exit 186 on I75. From the north, turn right on Buttermilk downhill to Anderson, 3rd light, turn right. Back up the hill through the light, Pee Wees is on your right.

Partnerships!

By Joanne Earls

If you're looking for a partner for a single game, call the director of the game you want to play in - s/he's the first to know about others who are available for that game. You can find directors' names on the cincybridge.com website. Another great way to meet prospective partners is at lessons or during supervised play. Unsure about an appropriate game? Call me!



If you'd like a regular partner, give me a call or send an email telling me about your game and your interests. How many master points do you have? What system/conventions do you play? Are you a ferocious competitor or a more relaxed player? Which games are you available to play in, and when can you start? I'll do my best to find someone who's also looking for a standing game.

Joanne Earls
772-4395 jolman@fuse.net

Name Tags

Contact Joanne Earls – 772-4395; jolman@fuse.net

Your Name Here
Cincinnati Bridge Association

First nametag FREE to new members! Otherwise \$4 each.



ANNOUNCING THE ANNUAL CBA WINTER COAT / SWEATER DRIVE. Starting October 22 and ending Jan 2, 2020 collection baskets for usable winter coats & sweaters are at the Cincinnati Bridge Center. All donations go to charity in the Cincinnati Area. Let's make this winter a bit warmer for those in need. Questions?

Contact Nalin Mehta nhmehta@cinci.rr.com

Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got
Till it's gone
- Joni Mitchell, Yellow Taxi



Celebration of Life

Michael K. Lipp

January 18, 1955 - October 28, 2019

Unit 124 and District 11 extend our condolences to Becky Lipp, Pam Campbell, and the entire Lipp family on Mike's untimely death.

I offer a personal reflection and encourage others to share their stories. Sharing our memories reinforces Mike's legacy.

I knew Mike as a friend, a colleague, and a bridge partner. We shared less time than we wanted, but always left each other smiling – even when working on difficult issues together. Mike was a family-first man. He was dedicated and principled. He and Becky were married for 32 years. He found bridge late in life and learned by playing with his mother Mary. As you might recall, Mary preceded Mike in death on Sept 20, 2019.

As his obituary outlines, Mike was a son, a brother, a husband, a father, uncle, and grandfather. He served our country and was a major contributor to the Cincinnati Bridge Community. Mike became a Life Master on September 6, 2005. He became a certified ACBL Director and succeeded where few had in recent years – growing evening bridge. His care for, and attention to, his players was exemplary. He never let negative behavior invade his game from any source. Within one year he took a game from zero to 13-15 tables on Monday evenings – an unheard of success in today's world where retirees and daytime dominate club bridge.

Mike grew to manage four games at the CBC. He also coordinated the Unit Tournaments and special game sanctions for all of us. This role required a detailed working knowledge of ACBL procedures and how to get things done with Horn Lake. Mike was very effective in

this role. Importantly, he promoted the Cincinnati Bridge Center and became its first Manager about 2-3 years ago. In this role Mike brought the monthly Unit Championship game on Tuesdays. He did the work to take scores from the three games (Anderson, NKy and CBC) and tally the overall results, reporting them monthly to the ACBL. He also oversaw the monthly ACBL reporting for several clubs operating out of the Cincinnati Bridge Center. He counseled the Unit Board on many occasions and for the past several years served as a Unit Trustee on the District 11 Board of Directors. As a voting member he represented the needs of our Unit in exemplary fashion. Mike always had commonsense advice and kept his advocacy for the common player front and center in all our decisions.

Mike became an Assistant Tournament Director a few years ago. He helped run Sectionals and assisted at Regionals when needed in District 11. He had a great working knowledge of the laws and knew how to guide Non Life Masters without turning them off or stressing them out.

Mike would often work games for the Unit without compensation so that members could enjoy a holiday party or an awards night. He mentored players and was always approachable.

Mike was the go to person for the Unit when issues with scheduling directors arose. He never let us down.

Sure – Mike was imposing at times when he thought stern measures were necessary, but he always had good intentions in what he was doing.

Mike and I played 6-8 times over the years. He and I had just established a set date and we were working on a Precision card together. I was always impressed about how Mike had a genuine thirst for improvement and learning. I hope I can carry that spirit forward.

We would often joke about the game and about its foibles. We'd discuss serious themes (how best to handle players who behaved poorly). He would criticize me mercilessly but in a playful fun way. I always felt the humor in his approach and enjoyed his jibes and jokes.

In the Summer of 2018, Mike and Becky had won 4 tickets to a Reds game. I was leaving the CBC after a game Mike directed and he stopped me. He remembered I had a son, Eric, and invited us to join Becky and him at the stadium. What a fun night we had. I remember talking so much with Becky (and with Mike) that I can't remember the score (the Reds did win in dramatic walk-off fashion). Eric had a great time too. I cannot unsee this great evening together.

Mike started learning how to manage the CBA website. He helped me find many typos in what I produced. He wanted to make us all better.

I will miss these moments. I will miss Mike's love of fun, his Harley, his t-shirts, his impatience with entitled behavior, his common sense, his desire to do what's best, and his innate ability to use humor in every situation. We shared good laughs together Mike.

So now that you are at the great tournament in the sky, Mike, save us some seats at your table. You've taught us to take life with humor and humility, to make memories while we can, and to savor the best ones as time goes on.

I will always remember our friendship. Good-bye for now, my friend. Respectfully shared with our entire Bridge family,
Steve Moese

You can view Mike's Obituary at

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/cincinnati/obituary.aspx?n=michael-k-lipp&pid=194305089>



Bob Fisk, Mike Lipp, Tony Habash



Romeo Bodrogi-Podoaba, Mike Lipp

Congratulations to the duly elected Unit 124 trustees for 2020-2022.



Mike Burns



Tom Mess



Steve Moese

FUN at Pee Wees

By Dean Congbalay

dcongbalay@comey.com

On a beautiful, sunny fall day, I got something much more valuable than master points -- a really fun time.



The regular bridge game in Cincinnati was canceled on Friday because of a tournament for beginners, so my buddy Steve asked me if I would play in Northern Kentucky. That club has been in repair from a summertime flash flood, so they have been holding their games at a colorful bar and grill in Crescent Springs called Pee Wee's Place.

There was little traffic crossing the river, and I got to the rambling restaurant a bit early. Before we played our first hand, I decided to walk around and explore.

It's a cool joint, with patriotic and religious artifacts as ubiquitous as the TVs on the wall. I liked it a lot.

As I stood in front of the not-ready-yet buffet, I read the day's menu scrawled on a chalkboard: Fried chicken, pork loin, mashed potatoes, baked beans, lasagna, dinner rolls and chicken noodle soup. The price: 10 bucks!

"Nice!" I remarked to a guy standing near me in a black Pee Wee's shirt.

"Glad you like it!" he said, extending his arm for a hearty handshake. "I'm Pee Wee!"

"Ah, good to meet you!" I said. "I'm here to play bridge in your side room. First time here!"

Pee Wee -- his real name is Tim -- eagerly gave me a tour.

"Come follow me!" he said, leading me out a side door. "We have sand volleyball here. Teams play every night. And you can eat outside, as well as in."

Pee Wee said he opened the restaurant 10 years ago, and it's a true family affair. He works 75 hours a week, and his parents work 40 for three weeks in a row -- and then take a week off. He showed me a picture of them on vacation in Hilton Head.

"I don't call my mom very often anymore," he said. "I see her every day!"

He took me to an array of framed photos hanging near the restrooms. "If somebody comes in on their birthday, we give them a free shirt," he said. "These are pictures of people wearing their Pee Wee's shirt all over the country. And over here are pictures from all over the world."

"Come here!" he said. We made our way to another room. "What size do you wear?"

"Extra large, and I haven't even had lunch yet," I said, taking out my wallet. "How much?"

"For you, nothing!" he said. "I want to give you one! I'm glad you're here!"

I graciously accepted a bright orange one. The wording on the back: We stand 4 the flag. We kneel 4 the cross. We sit 4 the beer:"

"Thank you!" I said. "Let's go and take a picture over there, in front of the American flag on the wall -- because we are good Americans!"

With the selfie safely in my phone, we neared the end of the tour.

"Now, follow me," he said, walking over to a register behind the bar. He grabbed a couple tokens. "These are good for drinks," he said. "Have fun!"

"You're great!" I said. "Thanks again. I'm really happy to be here!"

I was due back at our duplicate game; I donned my new shirt over my Cincinnati Reds polo and headed to the card room. After a few hands, we broke for lunch.

The chicken was great; I think I had three wings. The lasagna was tasty and meaty ("You have to try it," Pee Wee had told me. "It's really good!"). And I could have had seconds on the soup (I really should have...).

Steve and I had a good session at Table 11. We noodled through some challenging hands, cracked a few jokes and laughed a lot. It was awesome greeting people I hadn't seen in a while; my buddy John was the proud recipient of my drink tokens. The coffee was plentiful; so were the chocolate chip cookies.

In the end, we had a nice game -- 57 percent. After we closed our bidding boxes, stacked the chairs and folded the tables, I hopped on 275 for the journey back to Ohio. I had 0.39 master points, a full tummy -- and a smile on my face.

ITALIAN CUE BIDS

By Otto Walter

Italian style cue bids include both first and second round controls up the line when at the four level or lower and first round controls at the five level and higher. (The second cue bid of a previously cue bid suit shows the complementing control – either the ace or king.) This enables identifying suits with two fast losers while keeping Blackwood available to identify number of aces.

Here are a series of examples of how this might work.

Your hand and the partnership bidding (opponents pass so I didn't show their bids):

♠AKQxx

♥x

♦Q10x

♣AKQx

You Partner

1♠ 3♠ (4 cards limit raise)

4♣ 4♥ (no diamond suit stoppers)

4♠

1♠ 3♠

4♣ 4♦ (1st and or 2nd round control in diamonds – ace, king, singleton or void)

4NT 5♣ (no aces)

5♠

1♠ 3♠

4♣ 4♦ (1st and or 2nd round control in diamonds)

4NT 5♦ (one ace)

6♠

Italian cue bids are a nice treatment and you don't need to be Italian to use them. I use them and I'm German.

BRIDGE PROBABILITIES FOR EVERYONE

By Potter Orr

Professional players commit a mass of probabilities to memory and they should. For the rest of us there is a much shorter but important list. I have tried to select things that come up often enough to be worth the work.

Plain old finesses (without information from bidding) are 50%. Half the time you win, half the time you lose. Dropping means leading out your high cards and hoping the missing honor falls. To assess the value, you do need to know the chances of catching a missing honor if you do not finesse.

Cards Out	K % drop	Q % drop	J % drop
2	52	100	100
3	26	78	100
4	12	52	90
5	5	31	73
6	3	19	54

This means that if there are 3 or more cards out playing the ace rather than finessing for the **King** is very unlikely to be right. The **Queen** is slightly more likely to fall (52%) when playing for the drop with only 4 cards out but finesse is better for 5+. The **Jack** is very likely to drop (assumes you have AKQ) unless 7 cards are out.

Takeaway – almost always finesse for the King and Queen.

Special Finesse: If you have A J 10 in a suit in one hand and are missing the K and Q, there is a strong chance (75%) of winning 2 tricks in the suit by taking the finesse **twice**. Lead low toward the A J 10 and play the J (unless K or Q is played first. Go back to the other hand and lead low toward the remaining A 10 and play the 10. 65% of the time either the missing honors are split or onside.

Splits It is important to know how a certain number of cards are most likely to split. In case you can't remember the exact %, remember this – odd numbers are nicer than even. An even number of cards most often splits more "off center" than an odd number. For example, 6 cards are most likely 4 – 2 while 5 cards are most likely 3 – 2. This is why an 8 card trump fit (5 trump missing) is much preferred over a 7 card fit (6 trump missing). It is also why you most often go after your longest combined suit when playing a No-Trump contract.

Cards Out	3	4	5	6	7	8
Split %	2 – 1 78%	2 – 2 41%	3 – 2 68%	3 – 3 35%	4 – 3 62%	4 – 4 33%
Split %	3 – 0 22%	3 – 1 50%	4 – 1 28%	4 – 2 49%	5 – 2 30%	5 – 3 47%
Split %		4 – 0 10%	5 – 0 4%	5 – 1 15%	6 – 1 7%	6 – 2 17%
Split %				6 – 0 2%	7 – 0 .5%	7 – 1 3%

There is an important oddity in these splits. When you and partner have 7 cards with 5 of them in one hand (6 out), there is a good chance for an extra trick (or 2). The 6 cards out split 4-2 49% of the time **AND** 3-3 35% of the time. That means that 84% of the time they split either 3-3 or 4-2. So 84% of the time if you play the suit 4 times, your 5th card will be good! (Note: not the trump suit)

Dummy: ♠ A K 6 4 3 and Your hand: ♣ 7 2

In NT: lose the 1st trick then play A, K and another. The last one left will be good.

In a Suit: play A, K, then trump the 3 in hand, go to dummy and trump the 4 in hand. Now that the suit has been played 4 times, that 6 in dummy will be good. This tactic does require a lot of entries, so **early** planning is essential.

(Mis)Defend This Hand with Me

By Mike Ma

Some of you probably recognize the title of this article as borrowed from Mark Horton's column in ACBL Bulletin.

This hand is taken from a recent CBA open game. As S and dealer, you pick up a nice hand. The bidding below involves Precision by one side and DONT by the other. But don't be concerned if you are unfamiliar with one or the other. I will quickly fill you in with the pertinent facts about the bidding, so you can (mis)defend the hand with me.

♠ A K 8 6
♥ A 4
♦ A Q 10 4 2
♣ 5 3

With your side non-vulnerable and opponent vulnerable, the bidding goes

1♣ - (P) - 1♦ - (2♣);

X - (P) - 2♦ - (P);

P - (2♥) - X - All Pass.

We will discuss the merits of the bidding later. For now, we will focus on the defense against 2♥X, and only talk about the bidding relevant to the defense. Your partnership is playing Precision, with 1♣ artificial and forcing, 16+ points (17+ if balanced). 1♦ is artificial, showing 0 - 7 points. Opponents play so-called DONT, so 2♣ shows ♣ and a higher suit. Your X is take-out, either a hand with the right shape and/or too strong to pass or just make a non-jump rebid, both of which will be non-forcing and limit your hand. Partner's X of 2♥ is a Balance of Points (BOP) double. When you pass 2♦, your side implicitly has a fit. Your partner's double of 2♥ should

show a good 5 to 7 points with some defense, and promising 3+ ♥.

Your partner leads the ♦5 (third and fifth from length), and dummy (E) comes down with

♠ J 10
♥ 8 6 3 2
♦ K 7
♣ A K 8 7 2

Declarer calls for the K, and you take the A, with declarer playing the 3. Obviously, you need to set this contract. Since they are vulnerable, setting them one will get you +200, which should be fine since you were content with a partial when you passed 2♦. Before continuing, let's answer a few pertinent questions.

- 1) How many ♦ does partner have? How many does declarer have?
- 2) What is likely distribution of declarer's hand and by extension of partner's?
- 3) How many defensive tricks do you have in your hand?
- 4) What is your prospect for defense?
- 5) How should you continue after taking the K with your A?

A1) Given your ♦ spots and declarer playing the 3, it is clear partner led his lowest ♦. So, she must have 3 or 5 diamonds. It is unlikely she bid 2♦ with 3, so it must be 5. That means declarer's 3 must be singleton. This illustrates the advantage of leading third and fifth or similar variations against suit contract. If partner has led a 4th best 6, you would not be able to tell if she led from 4 or 5, and in turn if declarer has singleton or doubleton.

A2) Declarer's 2♥ asked his partner to pass if that is her second suit and to bid 2♠ if ♠ is her suit instead. He must have ♥ support. Since your partner promises at least 3 hearts, declarer cannot have more than 4, and it is likely 4. He may or may not have ♠ because he might have intended to return to ♣ if his partner bid 2♠. However, given he has 5 red cards, he will have 8 black ones. If he has only 3 ♠, he will have 5 ♣ and would likely have raised ♣ over your X to further their obstruction of your side's bidding. Furthermore, in that case your partner has a singleton ♣ and would have led it instead of leading a J high suit. So, declarer's hand is likely 5=4=1=3 or 4=4=1=4. Consequently, your partner has 2=3=5=3 or 3=3=5=2.

A3) Since declarer has a singleton ♦, unfortunately you only have 4 defensive tricks on your hand. You will need two tricks from partner to set this contract.

A4) Where are two tricks from partner going to come from? There is only one outstanding K, the ♥K. You can

safely assume she has it, otherwise her X makes little sense with nothing but quacks. If your partner has two natural trump tricks, she will always get them, so you should defend assuming she has one natural trump trick (K) and try to either elevate another trump trick or get a trick in another suit. The problem is dummy's ♣ suit, because even if partner has the Q or even QJ, it (they) will drop and/or can be finessed, so you need to get your tricks before declarer can draw trumps and play ♣.

One possibility is that partner has doubleton ♠, in which case you can play two top ♠ and give her a ruff, assuming she has a trump higher than dummy's besides the K. That would mean declarer has 5 spades, not impossible. So let's say you play the ♠K (in the middle of the hand, lead K from AK no matter what you do on opening lead), and partner plays the 9 (upside down attitude and count). The most likely possibility is partner has 3, or if 2, either Q9 doubleton or she can't ruff higher than dummy other than natural trump trick(s). You probably should revert back to ♦. You decide to cash a second spade anyway (we'll comment on that later), and partner plays small. At this point, you pretty much know partner has 3 spades and declarer 4 with the Q. Now what? You choose to play another ♦, and declarer ruffs with the ♥7. What do you know about partner's ♥ holding now?

What you know is that partner's holding is K9x or better, because ruffing with the 7 means declarer cannot have QJT9. If her holding is KTx or better, she has two trump tricks. The crucial case is partner holding K9x and you have to make partner's 9 a trick. Your side has no other source of tricks. Your partner should have the ♣Q for her double, but you know it will drop on dummy's high ♣'s even if declarer does not or cannot finesse. Declarer now continue with ♥10, your partner plays small, and you take the A. This is the critical moment for boom or bust, top or bottom. What do you play now? Decide before you read on. The hand is pretty much double dummy now. Anything other than another ♦ and 2♥ is making. If you play another ♠, declarer takes the Q, plays another ♥, and partner is sunk whatever she does. If you play another trump, partner can take her K, but then what? And a ♣ is even worse. With the ♦, you are giving declarer a ruff and sluff (R&S), but so what? Declarer has no more losers and can always ruff a spade with dummy if necessary. Giving opponents R&S is often a cardinal sin, but the situation here is an exception, and not that uncommon. When declarer has no losers, and there are still trumps out, ruff and sluff is often the most effective defense.

You play another ♦, giving declarer a ruff and sluff, what does that achieve? If declarer ruffs on his hand, he is down to the bare ♥J or Q in his hand. Your partner's K9 will both

be good. If he ruffs in dummy (maintaining QJ in his hand), and plays another trump, partner takes the K and gives declarer another ruff and sluff!

Here is the trump situation:

	N	
	♥9	
W		E
♥Q		♥8
	S	
	♥--	

Declarer, having only one trump in each hand is helpless. If he ruffs in his hand with his high trumps, that sets up your partner's 9. If he ruffs in dummy, he can't get to his hand to draw the last trump (remember your partner has the ♣Q, so declarer can't get to his hand with a ♣) without letting partner score her ♥9 by ruffing.

So, it takes not one but two ruffs and sluffs to set the contract! At the table, S plays a second trump meekly. N takes the K, and is helpless. She plays a ♦, but it is too late.

Here is the full hand:

South Deals	♠ 9 3 2		
E-W Vul	♥ K 9 5		
	♦ J 9 8 6 5		
	♣ Q 9		
♠ Q 7 5 4		♠ J 10	
♥ Q J 10 7		♥ 8 6 3 2	
♦ 3		♦ K 7	
♣ J 10 6 4		♣ A K 8 7 2	
		♠ A K 8 6	
		♥ A 4	
		♦ A Q 10 4 2	
		♣ 5 3	

Let's go back to the moment when you chose to cash two spades. It seemed that was a mistake setting up declarer's Q. But given you have to play ruff and sluff after taking the ♥A, and dummy has doubleton ♠, you need to cash your ♠ winners first before playing a third ♦. Otherwise declarer can ruff in his hand and sluffs a ♠ loser in dummy. Remember ruff and sluff works when declarer has no useful loser to sluff. It matters not whether you play ♠AK when you did or after taking the ♥A, but you must do it before the first ruff and sluff.

By now you may have realized there is an easier way to set this hand. If after you take the ♦A, you play 3 rounds of spades, then after taking the ♥A, you can play a 4th round, and partner can score her 9 by ruffing. You did not know before declarer ruffed the second ♦ that partner has the 9 or better. But it is a good bet, plus you need it to have any chance of setting the contract, so you should go for it, which would have spared your side the anguish of having to give not one but two ruff and sluffs later. Your partner was partly at fault too. When you played the ♠K,

she knew she could score her ♥9 by ruffing ♠. She should have encouraged you to continue with A and another. However, she did not know at that point if you had 3 or 4 spades, so it was not clear that she should ask for continuation.

♠ KQ106
♥ KQ2
♦ 105
♣ 10864

♠ A8
♥ A98
♦ AQ83
♣ AKQJ

Now a few words on the bidding. Because EW play DONT, in her haste to disrupt NS's artificial 1♣ auction, she chose to come in with two very unequal suits, one of which should not even be considered a suit. (1N was available to bid Clubs only). In my opinion, this was not wise with unfavorable vulnerability. With 4 clubs and 4 in both majors, W has a choice of

raising ♣ or do what he did. I think with a known 9 card fit (following the master suit principle, E might have only 4 hearts, but she would never have only 4 clubs), it might have been wise to bid 3♣, especially when the double came back to him. Notice 3♣ makes. As for NS, Precision 1♣ auction can be tricky when neither partner has shown their suit(s) with interference. South had an awkward hand over 2♣. If partner had responded 2♥ to the X, that would have been embarrassing. But having survived that and hearing partner bid 2♦, S should have taken the easy route and pulled the double of 2♥ to 3♦, knowing their side had at least 9 diamonds and EW likely had 8 hearts. Law of Total Tricks says that 2♥ and 3♦ can potentially both make. Indeed, 3♦ would have made 4 in this hand trivially (NS had 10 trumps, so Law of Total Tricks increased by one), while if E even had the ♥9, 2♥ would also have made. It is understandable to try to go for 200 in MP even if risking their side making, but one should be more judicious, for example, if NS only has 8 diamonds, or N had a stronger hand so that NS could likely set 2♥ by pure strength.

IT'S GETTING COLD OUTSIDE BUT THIS WAS COLD INSIDE

By Rob Weidenfeld



It is easy for many of us kindred competitors to remember a glorious moment we had at the bridge table. Finding a game or slam that no one else did. Finding the unexpected killing lead. The one time you defended like you could see all the cards, the first time you played North and entered the scores correctly. Our glorious moments don't all have to be the same. For some of us, me included, the ones that tend to stick with me are the hands that I should have figured out but did not. Fortunately for all but unfortunately for many, the clues are usually there but we don't take advantage. Here was

one from the club recently. My very competent partner was kind enough to wait until lunch and point out my mistake.

First, I will give you the North-South hands and ask you to play it. You are dealt a monster hand and wind up in 6NT. You get the lead of the *spade 4* from West.

You count your tricks and see 3 spades, 3 hearts, 1 diamond and 4 clubs. Encouraging because you have 11 ironclad tricks and only need to find one more. It appears that it can only come from dropping the spade jack or finessing the diamond, though surprisingly that is not always the case. As you think about the lead, you realize if it is from a holding of 3 or 4 cards your chances improve. If left-hand opponent led from the 9, playing small from dummy will force the jack and give you your twelfth trick. Similarly, if LHO led from jack third, your 10 will set up for the twelfth trick. Likewise, if LHO led from 4 small, the J will fall after three rounds of spades. Unfortunately, RHO puts in the 9 forcing your ace. You still have chances. Say you play off your rounded suit winners. First your clubs (RHO has 2 and LHO has 3). Then your hearts and everyone follows. Now you play two rounds of spades and LHO shows out on the third spade. Now you have no choice. You take the diamond finesse, and on this hand you go down.

But one of the opponents made some noise at our table. When I bid 3 diamonds in a Puppet Stayman sequence, my LHO said double warning me that there was diamond length on my left and that the honors were certainly offside. But I played the hand pretty much the same way. It was as if I was completely deaf (well I am hard of hearing, but I did see the double card on the table and my vision is fine!). Despite whatever physical handicaps I may have been experiencing, what sounded the final nail in my bridge coffin was my inability to envision the end position now made possible by the doubler's poor choice in announcing his holding in my key suit. He certainly had length in diamonds which made my contract a sure thing. Suddenly my contract had become cold. Can you see how to do it?

After I played off first clubs (watching for a heart discard), then hearts, and then two rounds of spades ending in dummy, the position would then look like this:

♠ 10
♦ 105
♣ -
♦ AQ8

If the ♠J has not dropped (it doesn't-LHO had 2 ♠s giving him 9 cards in the red suits, you must take 2 tricks in diamonds; by the way, he also pitched a heart and then followed to 3 rounds of hearts). You now know he has only diamonds left. Guarantee your contract by leading the ten and ducking it! When LHO wins with the J he is

endplayed and has to lead away from the K giving you the contract. Should RHO cover with the J, cover with the Q. LHO wins the K but is endplayed. He must lead into your A8. Frankly, it doesn't matter where the honors are in the above position. Your contract is guaranteed so long as you play the 10!

Isn't bridge an amazing game. Here was the entire hand:

	♠ KQ106 ♥ KQ2 ♦ 105 ♣ 10864	
♠ 42 ♥ J1063 ♦ KJ942 ♣ 96		♠ J9753 ♥ 754 ♦ 76 ♣ 732
	♠ A8 ♥ A98 ♦ AQ83 ♣ AKQJ	

Eighteen pairs played this hand.

Results:
 6NT + 7 1 pair
 6NT + 6 1 pair
 6C + 6 1 pair
 3NT + 6 2 pair
 3NT + 5 3 pairs
 6NT - 1 9 pairs
 7NT - 2 1 pair

a pair of big-planet honchos who write books and stuff. What can they be doing here? Points? Somebody said they came for the waters but they must have been misinformed – this place is covered in briar patches and pools of methane gas.

Whatever the reason, they are certainly unprepared for Bob's boning knife technique for filleting big fish even though it rarely works against the small fry.



EPISODE 27: BIG FISH IN SMALL PONDS



By Steve Felson

*I'm an ordinary man
 Who desires nothing more than just an ordinary chance
 To live exactly as he likes and do precisely*

what he wants

An average man am I, of no eccentric whim

Who likes to live his life free of strife

Doing whatever he thinks is best for him

Well, just an ordinary man

My Fair Lady (Broadway Production 1956, book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, music by Frederick Loewe)

The bigger they are, the harder they fall.—Old proverb partially appropriated for the title of a 1956 boxing film noir; Humphrey Bogart's last movie

I guess it's not a secret that my steady partner Bob Brown and I often try to beef up our Universal Space Points totals by seeking weak competition in faraway tournaments. We pacify the locals with flattery and small talk, then do our best to crush them into primordial ectoplasm. However, you never know who will show up at some of these beginner venues.

For example, the annual Sectional on Tularemia (every 711 earth days) should have produced a pretty docile field and yet, an hour in (46 earth minutes) we come up against

With both vulnerable, East deals this beauty:

NORTH [one big fish]: ♠ AKQT74 ♥ JT9 ♦ 84 ♣ Q6		
WEST [your humble author]: ♠ 982 ♥ 2 ♦ QJT7 ♣ K9853		EAST [Bob the filleter]: ♠ J3 ♥ 6543 ♦ 52 ♣ AJT74
	SOUTH [the other big fish]: ♠ 65 ♥ AKQ87 ♦ AK963 ♣ 2	

After a heart opener by South and one spade by North, Bob can no longer restrain himself and jumps to three clubs. South shows his diamonds and I have to decide whether to trust my partner a little or a lot.

South (Fish)	West (Me)	North (Fish)	East (Bob)
			P
1♥	P	1♠	3♣
3♦	5♣	5♥	P
6♥	All P		

I choose a lot and try five clubs. Even that fails to prevent North-South from reaching a reasonable six-heart contract. The full bidding:

Now here is how good these experts are. South ruffs the second club, starts on trump, and finds four of them to his right. He thinks briefly, surely noting that any rookie could pull trump and hope the spades are 3-2, delivering 12 tricks.

Instead, he finishes off the trump, leads a spade to dummy, and comes back to the ace and king of diamonds, completing his full count of the hand: East has shown four hearts, two diamonds, one spade. Add six clubs for the vulnerable jump overcall and the result is inevitable -- the jack of spades has to be on declarer's left and can be safely finessed. Wonderful bridge logic against the average novice, but Robert Brown is far from average in anything. Our fishy friends are neatly deboned for down four!



To their credit, these master-point sharks did not say a word, even when Bob was unable to contain his glee:



Yes, it was a great day for small-pond fishermen – the only thing missing was the baked potato.

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www.bridgewinners.com The Theory of Total Tricks: Part II – Counting Losers



By Steve Bloom

March 21, 2013

(Reprinted with the author's permission)

Introduction

“(T)wo factors ... will not change the Total Trick count:

1) Location of high cards. Finesses that are onside for one pair will be offside for the other. **The Total Trick count is constant.**

2) Distribution of the suits. Bad breaks for one side translate into good breaks for the other. **The Total Trick count is constant.**”(Cohen, *To Bid or Not to Bid*, 1992)

Bidding is usually a matter of odds, of expected values. You bid a game because it will often make, not because it will *always* make. When trumps go 4-1 or 5-0, as they will fairly often, you go set, but shrug it off. *The game was still worth bidding.*

Larry Cohen argued, above, that estimating total tricks rises above the luck of the deal. It is a scientific concept, a *Law*, not an expected value estimate.

Dou you buy that?

Pure Hands

It is time to start developing a full theory of total tricks. My breakthrough, if you can call it that, came by looking at hands that Mel Colchamiro and I called *completely pure* (Some of these ideas appeared in our *Bridge World*

article, (Bloom & Colchamiro, December, 2011)). A bridge hand is completely pure if we hold all the honors in our longest two suits, and no honors in our other two suits.

Here is a completely pure hand:

North ♠KJ32 ♥KJ5 ♦1087 ♣954
South ♠AQ654 ♥AQ87 ♦932 ♣6

Notice, if our hands are completely pure, then our opponents also hold completely pure hands. On this hand, we will obviously take nine winners in a spade contract, or ten, if the defense messes up. How will we fare defending a club contract? That depends, of course, on the adverse distribution. We don't know that, but it is pretty easy to use probability tables to calculate

the *expected number of winners we could cash*.

This is a crucial concept in my approach.

- **Total tricks are estimated based on the expected number of winners that can be cashed.**

I don't buy Mr. Cohen's science of total tricks – I consider all such estimates as averages based on probabilities. In my example hand, a 3-1 or 4-0 spade split won't stop us from taking nine tricks, *but will certainly impact our defensive chances against a club contract*. I am not aiming at the total number of tricks available on a given hand, rather, I want to calculate the *expected number of total tricks available over a large group of similar hands*.

To estimate the winners we can cash, let me introduce a table of expected winners, based on the length of our solid suit-fit.

Table 1: Expected Number of Winners Cashing on Defense

Length of our Solid Suit-Fit	Expected Number of Winner to Cash
11	.52
10	.78
9	1.31
8	1.64
7	2.18
6	2.54

Applying this to our example hand, we held nine spades and seven hearts, and so can expect to cash $1.31 + 2.18 = 3.49$ winners^[1]. Couple that with our four losers,

and we conclude:

- **There are 18.51 total tricks available on this hand.**

Good! The next step is to extend this analysis to other completely pure hands. A warning, though: Converting losers to winners is not so completely trivial. Go back to our example hand.

One and a half percent of the time, hearts will split 6-0. That split was considered in the 2.18 trick calculation, but such a dire split would mean the defenders can score several ruffs against our spade contract. Our four losers won't yield nine winners – we will end up with six or seven winners. This is rare enough that we can safely ignore the impact, but, try this example:

There are only three losers. Does that mean ten winners? Suppose the defense leads a heart. If hearts are 4-1 and we try to trump clubs in hand, we will run into many ruffs. Ouch! Even if hearts and spades are three-two, we give up a club, win the heart in dummy, trump a club, trump to dummy, club ruff, and are stuck in hand, and will often lose a heart ruff. On a heart lead, we will most likely just draw trumps and take eight or nine winners, depending on the trump split.

North ♠KJ32 ♥KJ5 ♦1087 ♣954
South ♠AQ654 ♥AQ87 ♦932 ♣6

North ♠KJ3 ♥KJ5 ♦108 ♣95432

Okay, try this variant:

Again, there are only three losers, but even eight winners will be a real struggle in a spade contract.

South ♠AQ65 ♥AQ87 ♦9632 ♣6
--

Looking at losers, rather than winners, seems correct when trying to understand total tricks, but the number of winners may be less than 13-minus-losers. This will often be the case if our trump suit is inadequate. In practice, loser-conversion

will tend to be pretty accurate if we have nine or more trumps, but over-estimate winners when we have only an eight or seven card trump fit. *That ninth trump is incredibly important*. When we have fewer than nine trumps, we will have to adjust our total trick estimate downward. My experience, and some simulations, suggests subtracting half a winner from the count with only eight trumps, and a full winner for a seven card fit.

^[1] *I am cheating a bit when I add these probabilities. A specific spade split affects the probability of various heart splits, and that should really be considered, but adding these gives a result that is close enough for government work, and keeps the results simple enough for practical uses. A large simulation found that we could cash, on average, 3.468 winners, so 3.47 might be a bit more accurate.*

Mel Colchamiro espoused a notion he called *effective trumps*. Going from eight to nine trumps is very important and useful. Going from a ten card fit to an eleven card fit? Not so useful. If we hold a six card spade suit, it is hard to imagine how the play will vary much if dummy has five card support instead of four card support, yet that extra trump adds a full trick to the Law estimate of total tricks. How much impact will that extra trump really have? First off, it makes it slightly more likely that partner will be shorter in our side suit, and cover a loser. That would gain a trick. Also, from Table 1, we are .26 of a trick better off on defense if we have only a ten card fit. That extra trump will impact the total trick expectation, but by substantially less than one full trick.

North ♠KJ32 ♥KJ53 ♦108 ♣954
South ♠AQ65 ♥AQ87 ♦9632 ♣6

It is time now to count the expected losers for a wide range of completely pure hands. We will have to do some adjustments to convert these to winners, but the loser count is easy using Table 1. The results, organized by suit lengths, appear in the table below:

Table 2: Expected Defensive Winners for Completely Pure Hands

Length of Longest (Solid) Suit	Length of Next Longest (Solid) Suit	Defensive Winners
7	7	4.36
8	6	4.18
8	7	3.82
9	6	3.85
8	8	3.28
9	7	3.49
10	6	3.32
9	8	2.95
10	7	2.96
11	6	3.06
9	9	2.62
10	8	2.62
11	7	2.70
10	9	2.09
11	8	2.16

The first things that struck me, looking at this table, are the tight clusters of nearly identical numbers, particularly near the bottom of the table. For example, three rows produce winners of essentially three – the 9,8 row, the 10,7 row, and the 11,6 row. What in the world do these have in common? The answer is pretty obvious. In all

three cases, the total number of cards in our long suits is 17. 17 cards in our two suits mean three winners to cash on defense.

If we hold 17 cards in our two long suits, then we have 9 cards in our short suits, and so the opponents also hold 17 cards in their two long suits. Now they can look at this table as well, and predict cashing three winners on defense. They get three defensive tricks, as do we. So there rate to be 20 total tricks.

This is a profoundly important observation:

- ***For completely pure hands with 17 cards in the two long suits, there will be, on average, 20 total tricks.***

Yet, on these hands, the total number of trumps will vary from 18 to 22! Seeing this, I realized, absolutely, that the Total Trick theory of Mr. Vernes was bogus. Trumps have nothing to do with total tricks. Instead, we should focus on the lengths of our side’s two longest suits.

This seems like a good stopping place. In the next installment, I will look a little more closely at the connection between total tricks and the longest suit lengths, and try to explain why the famous Law is so attractive, and yet so wrong.

Part III of The Theory of Total Tricks Next Issue

From Steve Bloom’s Bridgewinner’s Profile:
About Me: Retired mathematician and general curmudgeon.
Favorite Bridge Memory: I once got nailed by a real-life rueful rabbit.
Regular Bridge Partners: Betty, my one and only.
Favorite Conventions: Transfers, of many, many breeds.
BBO Username sbloom
ACBL Ranking Grand Life Master

Atlanta Roulette

By Steve Moese
 The Atlanta Regional falls every Labor Day Weekend. The 2019 version was the first in two years. In 2018 District 7 hosted the Atlanta NABC in August so the Regional was not run. Many of Cincinnati’s better players attend. This was my first time ever. I met up with Larry Lowell from Knoxville Tennessee and we played with two partners from Florida. After 3 day of failing to reach the third round of the Bracket II KOs, frustration was setting in. The approaching hurricane urged our Florida partners to depart ahead of schedule. We finished Swiss teams with willing teammates but no results to offer. Larry returned to Knoxville and I had two days of bridge to play and no partner.

Now because travelling to tournaments is a costly venture few want to take on risks from playing with an unknown partner. This leads to avoiding the partnership desk early and often. By and large, partnership desks do their best to match partners of similar skill. However, the variance is great. Here, I felt there was little to lose. The hotel was great, good food within walking distance and two days more bridge, what could go wrong?

I went to the partnership desk the night before and filled out my form. Generally good to play 2/1 with a brand new partner – better to put the effort into thinking about the hands than remembering pet conventions.

The folks at the desk hadn't found me a partner when I returned the next morning. It was about 20 minutes to game time and my chances seem dim and dimmer. The kind volunteer asked "What does BRQ mean? What does 72 BRQ's say? I calmly mention that Blue Ribbon qualifications are awarded for Regional wins for events above 1500 Master Points™. She motioned to Michael Shrilevsky.

I said my hello and Michael took me to meet his teammates Jim Stogner and Harold Task. We went to the playing area to fill out a 2/1 card. Strong NT, (4 suit transfer, Smolen, lebensohl, and so on). Michael liked to play strong jump shifts so we did. They never come up. UDCA and we were ready.

We circled back to find our partners. The team games were on the other side of the hotel. Our teammates had disappeared.

We agreed to play pairs so as not to waste the day, and hurried off to the A/X pairs game cash in hand. The game had already started.

The directors are not inclined to turn down players and the easiest way to accommodate a late pair is to make them a bump pair. And so, we sat out the first round and bumped our way through the field. We managed a respectable 56.5% in the first round. Here is a cute slam we played against Jack and Claudia Feagin. North deals and EW are Vulnerable. I sat South.

N	E	S	W
1N	P	2♥	P
2♠	P	3♣	P
3N	P	5♣	P
6♣	AP		

♠ Q 9 8 5 2
♥ Q
♦ 10
♣ A K 9 8 7 5

We are not a set partnership but partner didn't miss one thing in bidding or play. So I decided to represent a 5=6 hand with slam interest. 2♥ was a transfer to spades. 5♣ was slammish and showing a likely 5=6. Partner bid 6♣ and there we played. The lead was the ♣4. Two rounds of trump ending in hand, unblocking the ♥Q and leading toward the ♠K let 12 tricks come in. Surprisingly, only three pairs bid this slam.

♠ K 4
♥ A K 9 7
♦ A J 5 4
♣ Q 10 3

25

♠ Q 9 8 5 2
♥ Q
♦ 10
♣ A K 9 8 7 5

Partner told me the only conclusion he could reach was that I held 5=6 in the black suits and he saw perfect cards in his hands given what I had promised. He was of course right. Here's the whole hand:

Optimum:
NS 6C; +920
LoTT: 15-17 = -2

♠ K 4
♥ A K 9 7
♦ A J 5 4
♣ Q 10 3

♠ A J 10 3
♥ J 8 5 2
♦ 8 7 6
♣ 6 4

♠ 7 6
♥ 10 6 4 3
♦ K Q 9 3 2
♣ J 2

6 17 6
11

♠ Q 9 8 5 2
♥ Q
♦ 10
♣ A K 9 8 7 5

Bridge Solver Online:
John Goacher
Double Dummy Solver Module:
Bo Haglund

	♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	6	2	3	4	5
S	6	2	2	4	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Yet another hand, yet another Club Slam:
East Deals, Both Vulnerable.

E	S	W	N
P	1♥	2♠	P
3♠	4♣	P	4♦
P	4♥	P	4♠
P	5♣	P	6♣

♠ K Q 9 6 5
♥ K Q J
♦ Q J
♣ K J 9 8 7 3

The opening lead was the SA, ruffed in hand. Trumps behaved and 12 tricks were inconsequential. Again, only 3 pairs bid this contract. Here's the full hand.

Optimum:
NS 6C; +1370
LoTT: 17-18 = -1

♠ K Q 10 5
♥ A 7
♦ K 10 5 2
♣ A 6 4

♠ A J 8 6 3 2
♥ 8
♦ A 8 6 3
♣ 5 2

♠ 9 7 4
♥ J 10 4 3 2
♦ 9 7 4
♣ Q 10

9 16 3
12

♠ K Q 9 6 5
♥ K Q J
♦ Q J
♣ K J 9 8 7 3

Bridge Solver Online:
John Goacher
Double Dummy Solver Module:
Bo Haglund

	♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	6	5	4	2	5
S	6	5	4	2	5
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

Then there was this defensive opportunity. South deals, NS Vulnerable.

S	W	N	E
1♥	P	2♣	2♠
P*	P	3♣	3♠
X	AP		
*Forcing Pass			

♠ Q 5 2
♥ A 8 5 4 3
♦ K J 6 3
♣ Q

Once we are in a game force, all passes of their bids are forcing – we are either going to play the hand ourselves or defend them in a doubled contract. 3♠ was a misstep.

I led the ♣Q won by declarer. ♠AK drew two rounds of trump. Declarer then tried a ♥ to the ♥Q. I ducked in tempo and partner won his ♥K and returned the ♥9. This had to be a doubleton since we settled in a doubled partial instead of a ♥ Game. A third ♥ allowed partner to ruff with a high trump. By separating our high trumps, we were able to limit declarer to 6 tricks. Notice that NS had 25 HCP and no 8-card fit. NS only had partials available given the lie of the cards. Indeed this was a 14 trick hand – they could make 6 tricks in ♠ and we could make 8 in hearts. 6 NS pairs bid 3N and were down 2. Here's the whole hand:

Optimum: NS 2H; +110
LoTT: 14-14 = 0

♠ J 10 6
♥ K 9
♦ A Q
♣ K 7 5 4 3 2

♠ 9
♥ Q J 2
♦ 10 9 7 5 2
♣ 10 9 8 6

♠ A K 8 7 4 3
♥ 10 7 6
♦ 8 4
♣ A J

♠ Q 5 2
♥ A 8 5 4 3
♦ K J 6 3
♣ Q

3 13 12
12 5 12

Bridge Solver Online: John Goacher
Double Dummy Solver Module: Bo Haglund

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	2	1	2	-
S	2	1	2	1
E	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-

In the afternoon sessions we started out on fire and never let up. Here's an early hand where East Deals and NS are vulnerable. You pick up and see a 1♦ opening is fairly routine. You prepare for a 2♥ reverse when the bidding comes back to you. However, the opponents had other plans. So we have a 4-4 H fit and I have oodles of extras. There is some danger that the 5 level is too high if partner is on an aggressive minimum negative double. However, doubling 2♠ requires a good hand with minimum opening values. I chose 5♥ and partner continued on to 6♥, making 7. The ♥ slam got us 60%. Without the opponent's interference we would have bid to 7. Two Pairs did. Here's the hand:

E	S	W	N
1♦	2♠	X	3♠
5♥	P	6♥	AP

♠ A 6
♥ K Q 4 2
♦ A Q 8 5 4 3
♣ A

Optimum: EW 7N; -1520
LoTT: 19-18 = 1

♠ K 9 5 4
♥ 8 6 3
♦ 6
♣ 10 8 7 4 2

♠ 8 3
♥ A J 10 9
♦ K 10 7
♣ K Q 9 3

♠ A 6
♥ K Q 4 2
♦ A Q 8 5 4 3
♣ A

13 3 19
5

♠ Q J 10 7 2
♥ 7 5
♦ J 9 2
♣ J 6 5

Bridge Solver Online: John Goacher
Double Dummy Solver Module: Bo Haglund

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-
E	3	7	7	1
W	3	7	7	1

Against Chuck Said and David Macrae we bid to a small Heart slam. East Deals no one vulnerable. 5♦ was a slam try - I hoped partner had values in trumps and Clubs. He did and bid the slam.

E	S	W	N
1♥	P	3♠*	4♠
5♦	P	6♥	AP
*Splinter			

Optimum: NS 6Sx; -800
LoTT: 20-20 = 0

♠ A K Q J 9 8 5
♥ 7 3
♦ 9 8
♣ J 5

♠ 2
♥ K Q 6 2
♦ J 4
♣ A Q 10 7 6 3

♠ 4 3
♥ A J 10 9 8 4
♦ A K 3 2
♣ 8

12 11 12
5

♠ 10 7 6
♥ 5
♦ Q 10 7 6 5
♣ K 9 4 2

Bridge Solver Online: John Goacher
Double Dummy Solver Module: Bo Haglund

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	-	-	-	2
S	-	-	-	2
E	4	2	6	-
W	4	1	6	-

Then we bid to a 3♥ partial and South was having none of it. East Deals, NS Vulnerable. North led the ♣K then switched to the ♥7. South ducked to West who won the ♥Q and ruffed the Club loser. They couldn't stop partner from scoring up 9 tricks.

E	S	W	N
P	P	2♥	3♣
3♥	X	AP	

Optimum: EW 4Hx; +100
LoTT: 19-19 = 0

♠ K Q 3
♥ 7
♦ J 9 3
♣ K Q J 7 6 5

♠ A 6
♥ Q 9 6 4 3 2
♦ Q 10 6
♣ 8 3

♠ 9 5 4 2
♥ K 8 5
♦ A K 8 7 4
♣ 10

8 12 10
10

♠ J 10 8 7
♥ A J 10
♦ 5 2
♣ A 9 4 2

Bridge Solver Online: John Goacher
Double Dummy Solver Module: Bo Haglund

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	4	-	-	2
S	4	-	-	2
E	-	2	3	-
W	-	2	3	-

Our second session had only 5 of 26 board below 50% and only one lower than 40%. Our afternoon 64.2% was

E	S	W	N
1D	2♠	X	3♠!
???			

enough to give us the win by 49 Matchpoints or more than two whole boards. Jim Stogner and Harold Task missed the overalls.

There were to be our partners in the KO.

Serendipity? Or, just a good case of right place right time?

Michael asked me to return the next day to play the A/X Swiss with Jim and Harold. We found out that they thought we had given up on them. Rather than risk looking for us, they too played in the pairs game!

We managed to finish 6th no thanks to a defensive trick one error by yours truly on the very last hand we played. I ducked my DA with Q10987 in the dummy on partner's opening spot card lead. Declarer scored their stiff K and was able to pitch a C loser on a good D later in the hand. The partial contributed to a small loss in the last round. We dropped from 3rd to 6th.

40+ Gold points for 2 days bridge on the roll of the dice at the partnership desk – who would have believed it!

Michael is a retired statistics professor who emigrated from Russia more than 20 years ago. He is well known in the Atlanta area. I learned he was Russian National Bridge Champion twice.

Bridge decades ago was not so available in Russia, so players looking for tournaments travelled to Poland and the Baltic countries.

He told me this story that I can't stop chuckling about.

Having travelled to Lithuania for a major bridge tournament he found himself playing at a table against two elderly farmers from the countryside. Their hands were heavily calloused and they wore working clothes. This farmer and his wife were unknown to Michael and his partner.

As they sat down to play, Michael overheard the Farmer tell his wife to watch out – the Sharks from Moscow were coming to their table.

The first hand, the Farmer opens 1♠ and his Wife jumps to 3♠. Forcing, says the Farmer. The Farmer passes. During the play it becomes obvious that the declarer has more than enough to bid on, but the lie of the cards allowed only 9 tricks. Unfortunately, they were the only pair staying out of an unmakeable game, giving Michael a bottom.

The very next hand, the Farmer again opens 1♠ and their spouse responds 2♠ this time. With not a glimmer of doubt, the farmer raises to game. Four finesses later they mark up 4♠ making 4. You guessed it – the only pair in the room to bid and make game. Another bottom for Michael.

“You know my dear,” said the farmer, “these sharks from Moscow aren't so good after all.”

Well, my new friend Michael is a great partner and I look forward to playing with him again when the fates allow.

Thanks Michael, for a great end to a fine tournament.

TOOLS FOR THE IMPROVING PLAYER

How Suits Split

Knowing how to best play a suit combination can save many tricks. Here are some tools to help.

Suit Play is a free software that is easy to use:

<http://home.planet.nl/~narcis45/suitplay/>

Don't want software? Try these web options:

Richard Pavlicek has many stat tools on his site:

<http://www.rpbridge.net/>

The good: You will see how all the cards work and can vary your strategies to maximize tricks. The downside is this takes a lot of work and there is no protection against errors in thinking.

A web browser tool requiring no download:

<http://bridge.esmarkappel.dk/>

(my personal favorite – easy to use and very easy to understand. No risk of error in understanding the results).

<https://elckhrt.github.io/free-finesse/suit-combos/a.html?>

Analyzing hands shown on the web

Ever play a hand and want to go over it with partner? Now there is a tool you can use on any web page to extract a hand, analyze it doubt dummy, and play the cards in different sequences to improve your game.

Check out the Chrome Browser Bridge Solver Extension at

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/bridge-solver/kokhaneonlmnbgbnlohmbkgeahbjanbi?hl=en>

SAVE THE DATES



Be sure to attend the final Regional of the year in Louisville! Gold and Red Points galore!!

**Regional Tournament
Nov 4-10, 2019**

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11999 Casino Center Drive
Elizabeth IN 47117

Come to the **Annual Unit Membership Meeting Tuesday Evening 5:30 PM at the CBC**

Free food. Free Game at 6:30 PM. Open and NLM Sections.



Fall NABC in San Francisco CA
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Come to the City by the Bay for a week of terrific Bridge, amazing sight-seeing, and fabulous food. Make your plans early.

Planning is underway for a memorial game with proceeds to benefit Mike Lipp's family. Please mark your calendars for **Thursday Evening December 12, 2019**. Details to follow on the website. All proceeds and donations will go to Mike's family.



**Unit Holiday Party
Saturday December 14, 2019 Noon**

Game 1:00 PM
One price for Game and hors d'oeuvres. Details to follow on the unit 124 website

**District 11
Winter STaC
Dec 26 - Jan 1**

[Click for ACBL results](#)

Check the club near you for game times and NLM sessions.

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Tuesday
NOV12**

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Pair games every session
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Questions?

Louisville: Hannah Davis 502-767-5589 or

Lexington: Sondra Holt 859-312-7785

Partnerships?

Louisville: Verna Goldberg 502-459-3848 or

Lexington: Terrell Holt 859-351-2023

FEATURING

Mini-Soloway KOs

- All KO Brackets Run as 2-Session Swiss or Round-Robin for Rounds 1 – 2
- Top 4 Teams in Each Bracket Qualify for Semi-finals (No Carryover)
- Top Qualifier in Each Bracket Chooses from 3rd and 4th Place Team as Semi-final Opponent

Why You Will Love This Format

- ♣ KO Teams Guaranteed Two Sessions of Play Every Day
- ♣ Increased MP Awards for Small Brackets
- ♣ No Unlucky First Round Draws
- ♣ More Balanced Brackets

Eight is Enough!

Thur–Fri Evening – WIN GOLD

- ♥ Players are assigned a point value based on MP
- ♥ A team may not have more than 8 points of players
 - 1 point: < 400 Masterpoints
 - 2 Points: = 400 – 1500 Masterpoints
 - 3 Points: > 1500 Masterpoints
- ♥ 5 or 6 player teams are permitted, but no team may field a team with more than 8 points in any round

Stratifications

- ♥ **Open Pairs & Side Games** (w/o Gold Rush) 0-750/750-2000/2000+
- ♦ **Gold Rush Pairs & Swiss** 0-100/100-300/300-750

- ♠ **Open Pairs & Swiss** (with Gold Rush) 0-1500/1500-3000/3000+

All players in events with upper MP limit must be under limit

All events stratified by average MPs

KO events may be handicapped

NLM games stratified



GAME SCHEDULE

2019 Louisville – Lexington

Horseshoe Regional

BOLD – Multiple Session Event

SWISS Teams in RED

NLM Events in Blue

KO's in Green

	10:00 AM	2:30 PM	7:30 PM
Monday NOV 4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alysheba Stratified Swiss Teams (2 Sessions) • Sir Barton Open Pairs (2 Sessions) 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Pairs "Side Series A" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Fast Pairs "Side Series B"
Tuesday NOV 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple Crown Gold Rush Pairs (2 Sessions) • Triple Crown Open Pairs (2 Sessions) • American Pharoah KO (Rounds 1 and 2) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real Quiet Evening KO (Round 1) • Open Fast Pairs "Side Series B" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLM Pairs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Pairs "Side Series A" • 199'er Pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Pairs "Side Series A" 	
Wednesday NOV 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War Admiral Gold Rush Pairs (2 Sessions) • War Admiral Open Pairs (2 Sessions) • Barbaro KO (Rounds 1 and 2) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real Quiet Evening KO (Round 2) • Open Fast Pairs "Side Series B" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLM Pairs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Pharoah KO (Rd 3) • Open Pairs "Side Series C" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Pharoah KO (Rd 4) • Open Pairs "Side Series C" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 199'er Pairs 	
Thursday NOV 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeneland Gold Rush Swiss Teams (2 Sessions) • Keeneland Open Swiss Teams (2 Sessions) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Eight is Enough" WIN GOLD Horizontal Swiss (Round 1) • Real Quiet Evening KO (Round 3) • Open Fast Pairs "Side Series D"
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbaro KO (Round 3) • Open Pairs "Side Series C" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLM Pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbaro KO (Round 4) • Open Pairs "Side Series C" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLM Pairs 	
Friday NOV 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat Gold Rush Pairs (2 Sessions) • Secretariat Open Pairs (2 Sessions) • Citation KO (Rounds 1 and 2) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Eight is Enough" WIN GOLD Horizontal Swiss (Round 2) • Real Quiet Evening KO (Round 4) • Open Fast Pairs "Side Series D"
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Pairs "Side Series E" • 199'er Pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Pairs "Side Series E" 	
Saturday NOV 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seattle Slew Gold Rush Pairs (2 Sessions) • Seattle Slew Open Pairs (2 Sessions) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side Swiss Teams • Open Fast Pairs "Side Series D"
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smarty Jones Compact KO (Round 1) • Citation KO (Round 3) • Open Pairs "Side Series E" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLM Pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smarty Jones Compact KO (Round 2) • Citation KO (Round 4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side Swiss Teams • Open Pairs "Side Series E" 	
Sunday NOV 10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churchill Downs Gold Rush Swiss: 0-100/100-300/300-750 (2 Session Playthrough) • Churchill Downs Open Swiss: 0-1,500/1,500-5,000/5,000+ (2 Session Playthrough) 	