



Quarterly Newsletter



Cincinnati
Bridge Association



UNIT 124

VOL XLVIII No. 1 Jan 2023

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

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



We start the new year with a lot of first time CBA board members. Please welcome Jim Barrett, Bill Brewer and Melissa Hellmann (Treasurer) to the board. Many thanks to the service to the Unit for outgoing board members Steve Moese (President), Tom Mess (Secretary), Pam Campbell (Treasurer) and Gary Harrington.

I return to the CBA Board after a 3-year hiatus with the state of bridge very different. I left the board after serving for 6 years and president for 4 of those years. We entered the COVID era of bridge in March of 2020 and are still feeling its effects more than 18 months since in-person bridge resumed. In-person attendance is down across all levels of tournaments (Nationals, Regionals, Sectionals and club games). Local ACBL membership is down, reducing the number of players likely to play in our local club games.

The CBA has three Unit service awards. The Jerry Steuernagle awarded since 1972, the Patty Eber awarded since 2000 and the Nancy Sachs awarded since 2016. Congratulations to the 2022 winners: Pam Campbell (Jerry Steuernagle and Nancy Sachs) and AJ Stephani (Patty Eber).

We lost two of the best players in CBA history last year as Grand Life Masters Tom Hodapp and Norm Coombs both passed away late last year. More on this in other areas of this issue of the Alert.

The biggest impact that active bridge players can have is to get their friends, children, grandchildren, etc. interested in giving bridge a try. Unfortunately, our national organization (ACBL) has done almost nothing to provide modern tools to assist the local Units to expand our community outreach. The ACBL seems unconcerned about membership levels and only concerned with finances. Their recent changes in on-line sanction fees

Features	Pg	Author
From the President's Desk	1	John Meinking
One Step Forward	2	Steve Moese, Ed
Unit 124 News	2	
2023 Board Members	3	
Supervised Play Schedule	4	Mike Purcell
Rank Promotions	5	
Club ♣ Corner	5	
Etiquette Means FUN! ...	7	Bill Brewer
Bidding Quiz - Problems	7	Mike Burns
Remembrances		
Norman Coombs	8	
Thomas Hodapp	11	
Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional	13	Arun Goyal
District 11 News	14	Steve Moese
When Opponents Overcall our 1N	15	Mike Ma
Psych!	17	Steve Moese
Answers to Bidding Quiz	23	Mike Burns
President's Report Membership Mtg	26	Steve Moese
ACBL Vaccination Survey	28	Larry Sealy
Save The Dates	29	
Are F2F clubs at war with the ACBL?	30	Amy Cassanova
Evansville Regional Flyer	32	
D11 GNT Finals	33	
Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional	34	

does nothing to help the local F2F clubs. Continuing to sanction on-line tournaments that grant colored points (Silver in particular) undermines F2F sectionals and STaCs. As a Unit officer I feel helpless to alter what I consider short sighted management of the ACBL. The recent article in the Bulletin about Rob Lail and John Altman Jr. discusses some of this issue.

Despite the challenges, expanding our reach into the community is my top priority for 2023. Our first opportunity is in February when WCPO (channel 9) will broadcast a 50 minute youth bridge documentary "Double Dummy" on Saturday Feb 18 and 19 at 10PM, Feb 20 6PM, Feb 21 3PM and it can be viewed on <https://www.pbs.org/video/double-dummy-wcbxad/>. We have great selling points for a high school student to get heavily involved in bridge. Three great examples

locally where youth became bridge players, then directors, and then made money directing games through high school and beyond. One has even been overseas twice playing in world youth bridge championships. We have two flyers on the CBA website to publicize the youth bridge program 'BridgeWhiz' sponsored by the ACBL education foundation and adult bridge education locally. I'd like these distributed into local schools and community centers prior to mid-February. Feel free to download, print and distribute these in your local community.

Upcoming tournaments in Cincinnati include the Grand National Teams and the Flying Pig Regional. A Non-Life Master sectional for August is in the works. As always check the cincybridge.com website for tournament details.

John Meinking

President, Unit 124 Board of Directors

ONE STEP FORWARD

It's a new year!

In this first issue of Volume 48 (yes, that's 48 years of continual publication for all our Unit Members) we report on the major Unit Awards presented at the December 2022 Holiday party. Introduce you to the new Unit Board of Directors, and share club news from our area

Face to face bridge is now a strategic focus for the ACBL. If you haven't gotten to your favorite bridge game, make a New Year's Resolution to start playing!

There are many exciting games at the Cincinnati Bridge Center, the Northern Kentucky Bridge Club and the Anderson Bridge Club. We also tip our hat to the several bridge games around the unit that are invitational.

If you haven't seen the January ACBL Bulletin magazine, you are in for a treat. You see, John Altman Jr. and Rob Lail have had "against the odds: success building games that are very well attended. We arranged for both to be interviewed by Amy Casanova, Associate Editor of the ACBL Bulletin. The resulting two-page article is a musty read about success in today's bridge environment. We have reproduced those two pages in the appendix for your enjoyment.

As the new Board of Directors gets underway, we all have a way to help. Volunteers are always welcome and can contribute as little or as much as you want.

The Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional will run as always in June. What's new is that we are offering a Sunday to Saturday schedule, with Saturday Swiss Teams played at the Cincinnati Bridge Center instead of the Sharonville Marriott Delta Hotel. Arun Goyal is the new Tournament Chair and we can do two things to help him make this tournament a success:

- 1) Volunteer to help in any way you can, and,
- 2) Play every session you can.

We are very proud to offer the premier Regional Tournament in all of District 11, and we want to make it even better. Arun has taken several steps to make the tournament efficient without reducing the attractiveness of the events. Hospitality returns this year. Arun asks us to play every session and to contribute gifts for the many gift baskets that are so popular with attendees.

Bill Brewer, thespian and club owner, offers insight into how every player can make club play a delightful experience for everyone involved with his article on etiquette. Don't miss that one! Mike Ma offers advice on competitive bidding. If you ever wondered about psychs we provide a full expose.

As always, I thank our contributors for the time they take to entertain and inform us.

Wishing You Good Bridge and Good Luck,

Steve

Steve Moese

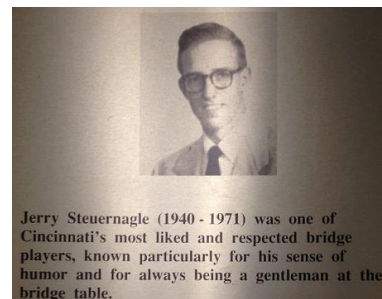
Editor, The ALERT moesefamily@aol.com



UNIT 124 NEWS

2022 Jerry Steuernagle Award Winner – Pam Campbell

The **Jerry Steuernagle Award** is presented annually to the duplicate bridge player best exemplifying the principles of ethics, kindness, and high character in bridge. The 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.

Pam was recognized by her peers (current Jerry Steuernagel Award holders) for her contributions to Bridge and for her dedication to sportsmanship, for creating friendly club games, and for her efforts to engage new players.

2022 Patty Eber Award Winner AJ Stephani

The Patty Eber Award is given to the individual demonstrating extraordinary service to the Unit and to Duplicate Bridge. This award recognized AJ's contributions to the Unit over the past 14 years at all levels in the ACBL. AJ Stephani has served the Unit and the District with distinction. He is a past president of Unit 124, Tournament Chair of the successful Flying Pig Regional for 8 years, Tournament Coordinator for District 11 for more than 10 years, D11 Board Member, ACBL Board Member (6 years) and is a principle in the development of EDGAR, an online bridge cheating detection software, and the Institute for Bridge Arbitration - the court of last resort for all ethics complaints. AJ also promoted Youth Bridge at Walnut Hills High School. AJ was recently appointed to the World Bridge Federation Executive Council representing North America. It is not an understatement that no one has ever done more for bridge from Unit 124 than AJ Stephani.

Pam Campbell - The President's Award

This newly established award by the Board of Directors recognizes outstanding contributions by a unit volunteer. For extraordinary contributions to ACBL Unit 124 and District 11. We thank you for your innumerable contributions as club manager, Treasurer of the Cincinnati Bridge Association, leader in virtual club bridge during the Covid 19 epidemic, leader in championing the return of in-person bridge to the Cincinnati Bridge Center, and Unit 124 representative on the District 11 Board of Directors. You led many Unit celebrations and special events, and coordinated many services that kept the Cincinnati Bridge Center running smoothly. For many you are the voice of bridge in the Cincinnati Bridge Association.

The Annual Unit Holiday Party was well attended. Thanks goes out to all the volunteers who contributed time, money and effort for food and decorations. A total of 21 ½ tables attended. We congratulate **AJ Stephani and Mike Ma**, winners of the Open Game and **Kevin Chang and Melissa Hellmann**, winners of the Under 1500 MP Game.

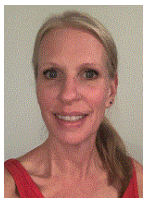


AJ Stephani & Pam Campbell

Here is the list of Masterpoint winners:

Players	Flt	OA	OB	OC	MPs	%	MPs	
OPEN North / South								
D Anne Pientka & Nancy Luetge	A	2			105.8	56	4.5	OA Blk
John Meinking & Anne Frayne	B	4	3		101.3	53.6	2.22	OA Blk
Judy Barron & Esther Zimmerman	C	4	3		101.3	53.6	2.22	OA Blk
Isaac Stephani & Julian Kurtzman	C				99.56	52.7	0.62	SA Blk
OPEN East / West								
Mike Ma & AJ Stephani	B	1	1		118.5	62.7	6	OA Blk
John Williams & Mary Mulford-Jacobs	B	3	2		103.5	54.8	3.38	OA Blk
Anton Habash & Rob Weidenfeld	A				100.5	53.2	0.89	SA Blk
Nalin Mehta & Arun Gupta	C				93	49.2	0.62	SA Blk
U1500 North / South								
Kevin Chang & Melissa Hellmann	C	1	1	1	203.1	65.1	2.59	OA Blk
Amy Gerowitz & Jane Duncan	B	4	3		185.3	59.4	1.28	OB Blk
Cecilia Kloecker & Nancy Baker	B	5	4		180.3	57.8	0.96	OB Blk
Robert Letoumeau & Betty Torello	A	6			175.8	56.3	0.61	OA Blk
Mary Merryman & Bert Luken	C			4	168.7	54.1	0.62	OC Blk
James Barrett & Clare Hoesl	C				151.9	48.7	0.4	SC Blk
U1500 East / West								
Tim & Joanne Oppelt	C	2	2	2	193.1	61.9	1.94	OA Blk
Joann Behr & Robert Lail	A	3			190.3	61	1.46	OA Blk
John Altman (Jr.) & John Altman	B	5			172.8	55.4	0.79	SB Blk
Jim Steinke & Linda Costura	C	6	3		171.6	55	0.95	OC Blk
Neil Wickstrom & Kevin Henry	C			4	168.7	54.1	0.62	OC Blk
Erin Oblinger & Betty Murdock	B				164.2	52.6	0.23	SB Blk
Gary Herrington & Amy Heilbronner	C				158.9	50.9	0.31	SC Blk
Isaac Stephani - Director								

2023 Unit 124 Board of Directors



Michelle Barker
Vice President



Melissa Hellman
Treasurer



John Meinking
President



Bert Luken



John Altman Jr
Secretary



Lewis Temples



John Williams



Bill Brewer



James Barrett



Directors Wanted!

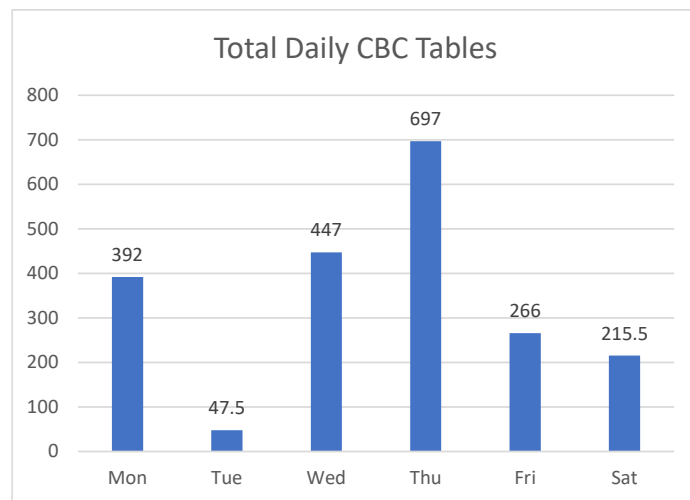
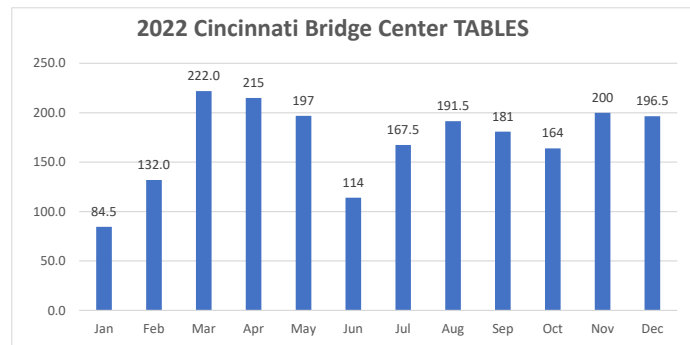
A problem that has been brewing for several years is now affecting operations at the CBC. Lack of people willing to be club sanction managers and/or direct games. Anyone willing? There are plenty of opportunities to help out. Personally, I don't care if the director has passed the director's exam or even taken a director course.

CBC Table Counts

Here is the attendance at the Cincinnati Bridge Center for 2022. Recall that the Unit leases the bridge center Monthly attendance needed for breakeven financial operation – 400 tables. The CBC hosted 2065 tables of sanctioned bridge and 259 table of unsanctioned bridge or a total of 2377 tables. Sanctioned bridge tables contributed \$15 per table and unsanctioned bridge \$12 per table.

You might have noticed that the Sanction Holders at the CBC have decided to raise the table fee to \$10 for daytime games and \$9 for evening games. In addition, the Board of Directors raised the rent paid by each club owner at the CBC to \$19 per table from the \$15 in 2022 (\$16 per table

for unsanctioned games). Asuming no increase in common area costs for our space, the new breakeven table count for 2023 is 316 tables. Your attendance matters!



NAME TAGS

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

Your Name Here Cincinnati Bridge



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

Partnerships!

If you're looking for a partner for a single game, call the director of the game - s/he knows others who are available for that game. Find directors' names on the Bridge Club's websites. You can meet prospective partners at lessons or during supervised play.

Supervised Play

Supervised play is a fun, informal opportunity for I/N players to play with peers and hone skills at the same time. Experienced coaches advise every table and answer your questions as they occur. Hand records reinforce learning. While these games do not award ACBL Masterpoints, they reward I/N players with improved skill, new friends, and a deeper appreciation of the fun that bridge offers. Don't forget the free seminar 1/2 hour before supervised play begins!

Feb 4

9:30 Seminar Speaker: Bob Fisk

Sign In Sheet: Lorna Davis

Regular Volunteers: Jane Duncan, John Williams

Stay current with the schedule for this weekend favorite:

<http://www.cincybridge.com/Saturday-Supervised-Play-Schedule.html>

RANK PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to all our members who achieved new ranks this past quarter. You can check your recorded Masterpoints and rank through MyACBL at www.acbl.org. Once on the website click on MyACBL. (If you haven't registered, it will help you create your password). The ACBL will create a current status report for you!

[Ranks Promotions](#)

[Masterpoints](#)

CONGRATULATIONS

LARRY KLEIN

NEW

DIAMOND

LIFE MASTER

2023	November	December	January
Junior Master		Chloe Altman Ed Sawyer Esther Zimmerman	Nancy Baker Mark Upson Nancy Wolf
Club Master			Michael Wheeler
Sectional Master	Zigang Pan		
Regional Master	Steven Simon		Terry Barrett
Life Master	Jonathan Burns Mercer Reynolds	Erin Oblinger	
Bronze LM	Robert "Salty" Roark		
Silver LM	Marlene Pierce	Nalin Mehta Barry Wauligman	Joanne Earls Robert Frey
Ruby LM		Arun Gupta	
Gold LM	Peggy Barrett Barbara Boswell Patricia Marrs		

CLUB CORNER

NORTHERN KENTUCKY BRIDGE CLUB

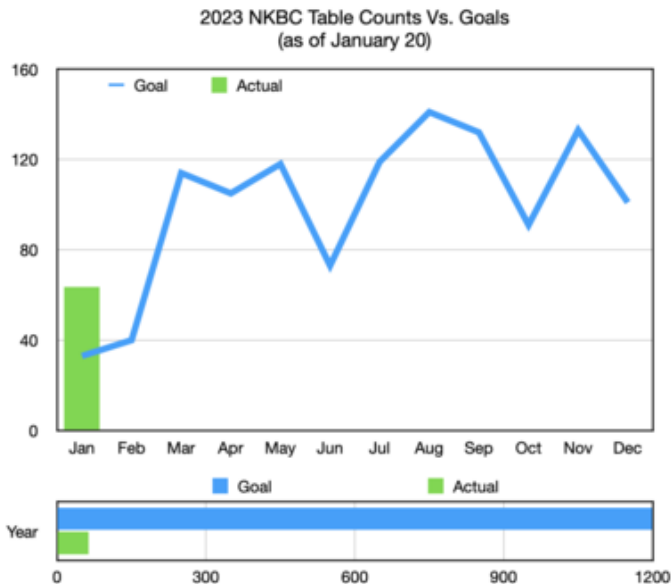


We did it! January's goal of 34 tables was achieved Wednesday evening. A free game was enjoyed by all at the Wednesday game. Thanks for helping us get there, but there's a lot of January left. Let's see if we can break 100!

Our goal for February is only slightly higher than for January. It's just 40 tables, so we should be able to demolish both January and February's goals.

The chart below shows our table count goals for the year. We need you to help us get there. Our goals are an aggressive growth for us, and our progress on will be shown this chart throughout the year. Achieving these goals will get us back to pre-pandemic levels. And putting

the pandemic behind us is something we'd all like to see happen this year!



Each time we achieve a monthly goal, we'll celebrate by making it a free game!

Please be an ambassador for our club, and encourage all you know to come and enjoy a game of duplicate bridge at NKBC.

Website: <https://www.bridgewebs.com/nkbc/>
Currently offers games Tuesday and Friday Mornings, and Wednesday Evening. Check their website for details.

ANDERSON BRIDGE CLUB



Website: <https://www.bridgewebs.com/anderson/>

The new location is the **Mt Washington Rec Center, 1715 Beacon St., Cincinnati, OH 45230** Players will pay a \$10 annual membership to the MWRC. Games then cost \$5 each. The annual membership entitles all players to use of the MWRC facility.

The weekly game is growing nicely and has moved to Mondays.

The Rec Center is closed on Feb 20 – no game.

CINCINNATI BRIDGE CENTER



Website:

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/cincinnati-center/>

All games are subject to change, so please stay current by checking the websites.

John Meinking - CBC Game manager and director (jokingme71@gmail.com)

Saturday's game time has been moved to 12:15PM. This earlier time seems popular and allows the Supervised Play volunteers to stay and play without waiting an hour. Also, the Supervised Play players can stay and kibitz furthering their understanding of the game. The game format has changed a little. Advanced partnerships are required to play a limited convention card playing only the most common conventions played by most duplicate players at the CBC. An IMP PAIR game has been requested. Look for that in February.

Bill Brewer announces the New Monday Invitational Game and New Tuesday 0-99 Play and Learn replaces Open Game-Coming in March 2023.

After four months of experimenting and listening to current and past players, some changes are coming to the schedule. There will no longer be a Tuesday OPEN game. Thanks to those who have played in that game in the past.

Starting in a yet to be determined date in March, there will be a new 0-99 Play and Learn game. from 9:30-11:30 am. If you have 0 MP or haven't played in a while, come and play 12-15 boards. Each pair will play the same boards at the same time and then briefly discuss them. You can ask questions during the play and bidding and STILL get masterpoints. If you don't have a partner, you may still come and we can pair you up with a partner. Contact me for more information and watch your email for a start date and more details. Cost will be \$10 and reservations will be required.

Also, if you love the Thursday game, I think you will like the new Monday Invitational game. It will be set up just like the Thursday game. Same start time 10 AM and comparable food and fun. This game will start sometime after the NABC in New Orleans and reservations will be required, so watch your email for more information. We appreciate your support of all games at the CBA. Tell your friends to join us in this fast, friendly games at the CBA. As always feel free to call/text or email me. Bill Brewer 513-255-7240 brewerwe@miamioh.edu

Etiquette Means FUN!



By Bill Brewer

If you have played at the Cincinnati Bridge Center, you may have noticed some comments on the table cards. These include things such as "Praise your opponents and your partner", or "Save the post mortems to the end of the round". They are all gentle reminders that the game is operating under the ACBL's "Zero Tolerance" (ZT) policy. Originally approved by the ACBL board for National tournaments in 1998, it was quickly adopted by most clubs. The basics of the policy require players to:

- Being a good "host" or "guest" at the table,
- Greeting others in a friendly manner,
- Praising the bidding and/or play of the opponents and
- Having two clearly completed convention cards readily available to the opponents. (This one is a regulation, not just a nicety.)

And here are some examples of behavior that would violate the ZT policy:

- Badgering, rudeness, insinuations, intimidation, profanity, threats or violence,
- Negative comments concerning opponents' or partner's play or bidding,
- Constant and gratuitous lessons and analyses at the table and
- Loud and disruptive arguing with a director's ruling.

If you have encountered any of these behaviors, perhaps a simple pointing to the table card as reminder to the offender might be effective.

There have been a few instances where players have told me that someone has done this or that but the player hates to call the director. The simple advice is that you should call the director and calmly state "this player is interfering with my enjoyment of the game.". As directors, we take the playing environment very seriously but if we don't see or hear it, it's hard for us to assist.

As a matter of fact, the ACBL leaves little room for discretionary judgements by directors, if a violation is found it is an automatic ¼ board penalty per player. Warnings are NOT encouraged. Luckily, 99% of the players in our unit are happy, gracious partners and opponents. However, just one or two players who aren't, can keep new players away from our games. Face-to-face bridge is and should be fun. After the past few years of limited interaction, we want to encourage everyone to socialize

and play in our face-to-face games. Bridge is a social experience as well as a game. We all want to have FUN and be COMPETITIVE. It is possible to do both.

Bidding Quiz - Problems



Bob Jones Quizzes – Unit 124

Every Saturday morning participants get an advanced copy of the Bob Jones quiz. If you'd like to participate, please send an email to Mike at rmikeburnsi@gmail.com. Feel free to send questions to any commenters. There is rarely one correct answer to bidding problems. You can see all past quizzes on the unit 124 website:

<http://www.cincybridge.com/CBA-Weekly-Bidding-Quiz.html>

Goren on Bridge: Weekly bridge quiz

GOREN BRIDGE JANUARY 21, 2023

Q1 – Neither vulnerable

♠ A K T ♥ J 8 6 5 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ A 7 6

EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH

1♦ ?

What call would you make?

Q 2 – North-South vulnerable

♠ K T 9 4 ♥ A K Q 6 4 ♦ Void ♣ J 7 6 4

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1♥ Pass 2NT* Pass

?

*Game-forcing heart raise at least four trumps

What call would you make?

Q 3 – East-West vulnerable

♠ K Q T 7 5 ♥ K J 7 ♦ 3 ♣ A K Q 9

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1♠ 2♥ Pass Pass

?

What call would you make?

Q 4 – Both vulnerable

♠ Q J T 9 7 4 ♥ Void ♦ K J 7 6 5 ♣ K 7

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

?

What call would you make?

Q 5 – North-South vulnerable
♠ 7 ♥ T 7 6 ♦ K Q T 5 ♣ A K 6 5 4

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
?

What call would you make?

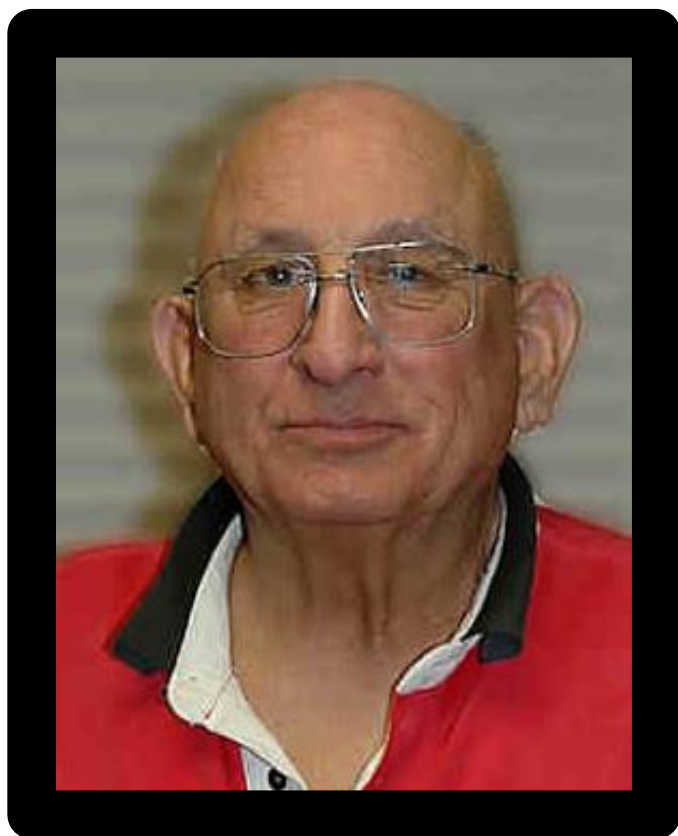
Q 6 – East-West vulnerable
♠ A T 8 5 4 ♥ 8 ♦ A T 6 5 3 ♣ T 8

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass
2♠ Pass ?

What call would you make?

Answers on p. 19

REMEMBRANCES



Norman Coombs

May 22, 1934 – December 2, 2022

Obituary:

<https://www.browndawsonflick.com/obituary/Norman-Coombs>

Stormin' Norman or Norm to all his friends was a giant in Cincinnati Bridge. Norman Coombs died Dec. 2, 2022 following a fall at his residence near Brookville, Ind. He was born May 22, 1934 in Hamilton. He is survived by daughter Kim Coombs and grandson Morgan Coombs, who live on the Coombs farm in Lindale, Clermont County, and by brother Bill Coombs of Hamilton. Norman was a championship golfer at Hamilton High, a graduate of Ohio State, and 2nd Lt. in the U.S. Army. He loved to drive his cars across the country. He attempted many creative endeavors – poetry, a novel, band arrangements. But from a young age he was a successful tournament bridge player, and that occupied much of his later life. He won many regional and one national title, and just last month was #67 on the lifetime achievement roll, with over 27,555.26 masterpoints. He was known by the best to be among the best. His reach far exceeded the limits of Unit 124 and District 11.

Bill Coombs:

The two giants of Cincinnati bridge, Grand Life Masters Tom Hodapp and Norm Coombs, Jr. both passed away near the end of 2022. Together they won the LM Men's Pairs at the Denver Nationals many years ago. Norm, always an aggressive bidder, liked to play ACOL (strong) two-bids at that time, and they may have benefitted on one hand when Tom forgot.

Tom Hodapp died on Oct. 10 at the age of 80. In his day he may have been the finest player in the Midwest. In 1988, he placed 72nd in the lifetime masterpoint roll. Shortly thereafter he was severely injured in an automobile accident, and never played much after that. He is survived by his wife Cheryl, daughter Katie, and two grandchildren.

Norm Coombs died on Dec. 2 at the age of 88, as a result of a fall at his residence. He had suffered from severe macular degeneration for the last year. He won numerous regional team and other events over the years as a semi-professional player. He is survived by his daughter Kim, grandson Morgan Coombs, and bridge playing brother Bill Coombs.

I played infrequently with Norm. While in high school, I watched him cross-ruff clubs on the final two tricks to win the Hamilton duplicate and \$2 prize money. Later we won a large knock-out team event when he made a doubled contract on his famous outside trump end play, where he shortened himself, while making the doubler trump tight.

At bridge and in life we were opposites. For me, I try to approach bridge as a game to enjoy the challenge, while engaging in social interaction that is often difficult for me. For Norm, it became a career, and a source of income. Our bidding styles were opposite as well. I label my card general approach as Sound Initial Action, while Norm's might be labeled Frequent Initial Action.

John Meinking

Norm Coombs was one of my mentors when I began to play duplicate in the mid 70's (yes almost 50 years ago). I'd speculate that Norm has played with more different Cincinnati players than anyone else in CBA history. He made life master in 1962 and won the CBA Master of the Year award for the first time in 1983 and 19 times in total. We won many Regional and Sectional titles together with the Flying Pig 4 session pair in 2018 being our last Regional win. Most of my Platinum points are from playing with Norm in the Silver Ribbon Pairs at the St. Louis Nationals a few years ago.

He played bridge like he drove, almost never hit the brakes. Just like catching Phil Niekro in baseball you needed an oversized mitt to field some of Norm's bids. I have many stories of hands played with Norm. We were NEVER underbid.

Dave Britt:

I met Norm as a new player at the CBA about twenty some years ago. Norm took the time to help me with my game. I did not know him during his younger years, all I know was he was a very gifted bridge player. That was not his only gift though. In his early years, he was a very good golfer and played the trombone at a high level. It must have run in the family, because his sister was a very accomplished clarinetist. His brother Bill is still playing bridge at a high level and does very well on the tennis court. So as with his family, Norm was gifted with many talents. I enjoyed playing bridge and spending time getting to know him away from the table and will always remember him as a friend first and a bridge partner second. Rest in peace Pard!

Steve Moese:

My condolences go out to his family and friends.

The last two years saw Norm in declining health. His vision deteriorated to the point he could not drive and could not see the cards to play.

I was lucky to be taken under his wing for a short period and learned more from that encounter than any other in my bridge life. I trust his memory will be a blessing for all of us.

About 20 years ago he agreed to play with me in a club game. About halfway through we were defending and he made a clear suit preference signal. I duly led the suit indicated and he erupted "I can't believe I found the only partner who knows how to read my signals." His bass voice had considerable carry and volume to match. The room broke out in twitters of laughter and I had my first "Norm" experience.

Several years ago, Norm gave me a thrill by inviting me to play with him and Bruce Parent in a Toledo Regional as teammates with Chris Compton and a sponsor. The bridge was thrilling, and we did very well. What struck me was the attention Norm paid to rest and diet during the course of the tournament. Good food well prepared and plenty of power naps for the three of us to maintain energy throughout. That was useful guidance.

If you played in a game where Norm was you would have heard:

"If I wanted trumps led, I would have led them myself."

"Why should they go down when we can?"

"Where is the hand you held during the bidding?"

"Doubling for down one is a bit hungry in this game."

"Don't let the opponents change your plan."

As his hearing failed, his at-the-table comments got louder. He liked to crunch ice at the table often unnerving opponents. This habit never seemed intentional. While he often came off as a curmudgeon, he was really a teddy bear among friends. He simply expected the best from his partners and teammates. He mentored many of the best players in our unit. I am sure they offer their condolences.

I will miss Norm.

Scott Stearns:

When you came to Norman's table, you knew 800 was in the air. Might be for you, might be against you.

Fred Pollack:

How are you doing Norm? "Mediocre at best." was his usual answer. He was one of a kind. He was larger than life and simply legendary. I will miss Norm. I learned a lot from him and he was one of my most successful partners and teammates over the years. RIP Norm.

Ed Judy:

Some say Norm never misplayed a hand. Some say his 1Q broke 200.

I say he didn't know what an airplane was. I often ended up in the same flea-bitten motel as he but never shared a room with him (that was Bruce Parent's job).

Norm was quick with the phrase "It isn't clear yet."

That was the response, typically to an attractive lady player, who might ask about a game next week at a nearby regional.

That was a cover for the fact that hadn't yet buttoned done a game with a prospective customer. Getting "work" came first.

James Creech:

Wow! A throwback to my central Indiana days.

My first experience with Norm was at a Bloomington sectional. My partner and I played him and Paula in the last round of a qualification and final open event. It was my first experience with kibitzers, we gave him just enough to tie for the last qualifying spot. Three tie breakers later, and he and Paula had made the field. In the evening, Norm was at his operating best, and they won going away.

RIP Norm.

Rick Roeder:

I loved Norm! He was a big Ohio State fan. I used to tease him during Ohio State's John Cooper era when Michigan would regularly beat OSU, even when the Buckeyes were the more talented team.

If there had been justice, he would still have attended Nationals during OSU's dominance of Michigan. I would have been expecting him to roast me.

He had a wry sense of humor. Once he stopped attending Nationals, it was a real loss for the rest of us.

Jeff David:

Wow. This is sad news. Norm was one of the best players in Indiana. I played against him many times when I was active on the tournament circuit in the Midwest in the 1990s. One hell of a player and a tough competitor. RIP Norm.

Pamela Granovetter:

For decades, I knew Norm just well enough to say hello at the Nationals. After moving to Cincinnati 17 years ago, I got to play against him at the Cincinnati bridge club

regularly. He was always a gentleman and a pleasant opponent. I scored many zeros against him at the club, but he was gracious when he got the bad score. His favorite expression was "why should they go down when we can go down?" - but when he went minus, it was often a good score for him nevertheless because if we slipped on defense or didn't double, our plus score wasn't good enough. RIP Norm.

Matthew Granovetter:

Norm (along with Bruce Parent) visited me at a rehab after I was hit by a car 7 years ago. They were so kind to visit and I'll always remember it. I loved playing at the table against Norm, as he was a top competitor and presented a challenge on every board. A true sportsman.

Terry Lavender:

Directing at some long ago NABC in a team game, I found a yellow card on the floor near Norm's table, so I went over to see if it had come from the stack of played boards.... Norm said..."not here, Madam...the boards we played were blue, gray, green, red and black, and as you can see...we are playing another green...I was impressed!...RIP, Norm

Mark Perlmutter:

Tough as a cactus at the table, and kind hearted away from the table. May his memory be a blessing and condolences to his family.

Jodie Kiefer:

So sorry to hear Norm has passed. We were just talking about him yesterday. He was kind enough to play with my son years ago, when my son was still a teen. When my son made life master, Norm wanted to take him to a strip club to celebrate, but my son was only 17 and couldn't get in, so Norm went to celebrate for him! What a character he was. I remember walking into the convention room in Las Vegas at a regional and the first thing I heard in that huge room was Norm's voice. He'll surely be missed. RIP Norm

Adam Parrish:

Norm was one of my mentors in Cincinnati and taught me so much about the game. He graciously offered to play with me when I was very green and became a regular partner. I learned so much from him. He was such a force in Cincinnati bridge; he will be missed.

One of my favorite Norm stories: I showed up to a regional in Indianapolis where I was set to play on a 4-person team with Norm. Norm greeted me with: "We're gonna have some sit-outs." And he walked away. That

was his way of telling me he had added Meckstroth to our team. Way to go, Norm.

Gary Hahn:

Norm, that old coot (he'd love hearing me say that), a mainstay and tradition in the upper Midwest, seemingly forever. He certainly played in everything, always, and was everywhere, lurking, if not winning or nearly so.

The "local" duplicate in the Above will be suitably leery, and then come to fully accept and enjoy Norm's uniqueness. Maybe he'll find "Tiger" Morris up there, and wow the inhabitants.

Norm acted like a toughie and meanie, but that's all it was, an act. When everything settled down, his drawling voice was calm and kind.

His good buddy and partner, Tom Hodapp, once told me that Norm "kept selling parts of his farm" to fund his bridge forays, which were many. He seemed to show up everywhere.

Truth be told, one always had to wonder whether Norm had a wee bit of "spirits" in his system, he sometimes rolled his head a bit, as if in a daze, prior to taking an action at the table.

Maybe a dozen years ago, probably two dozen, Norm was a fifth on our Detroit Regional Swiss, and it came to pass that he and I played the second session. I quickly wrote out a card, mentioning that a 3NT opener was 25-26 HCP, and we sat against essentially the top pair in the area at the time.

As luck would have it, on Board #1, Norm dealt and opened 3NT, and I raised to 6NT with about 8-9 HCP, all pass. The opening lead was a King, obviously from a KQ and likely Jack, causing me to wonder if Norm forgot our agreement. Norm looked his classical dazed and somewhat quizzical demeanor, rolled his head slightly, and to my eternal relief, said "I think I'll take my 12 top tricks.

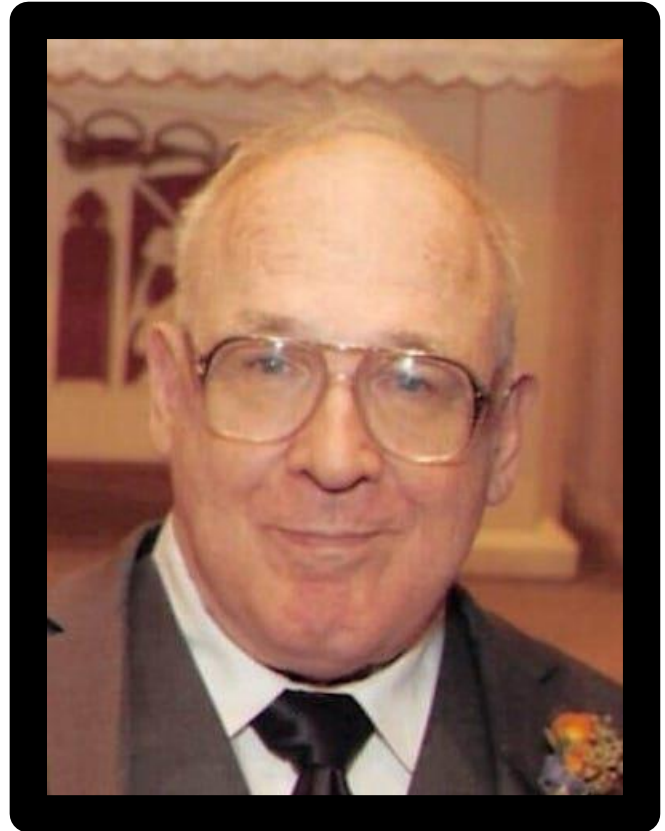
The opponent's "very expert" pair at the other table, took about 8 bids to end in 3NT! Another Norm-style win for simplicity and agreement. RIP guy.

Ron Feldman:

Very sad to learn that Norm died in such a proximity to the passing of Tom Hodapp. Together, they had perfect deportment, ability, and personae. Meeting and befriending people like Norm (and Tom) are the best reason to be ACBL Members.

These tributes are quoted from the post on Bridge Winners at

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/norman-coombs/>



THOMAS HODAPP

January 28, 1942 - October 22, 2022

Obit: <https://www.cincinnati.com/obituaries/cen221667>

Beloved husband of Cheryl Hodapp (nee Traber), loving father of Kate (Jimmie) Hatcher, proud PawPaw of Eleanor Lynn and Isabel Martha Hatcher, brother of Carolyn (the late Harold) West, David (Molly) Hodapp, Martha (Brendan) Korte and Linda Hodapp. Brother-in-law of Gail (the late Bill) Snyder, the late Mary Lynn Wetzel and the late Joyce and Carl Braun. Also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, great and great-great nieces and nephews. Born to Eternal Life on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at age 80.

Bill Coombs:

The two giants of Cincinnati bridge, Grand Life Masters Tom Hodapp and Norm Coombs, Jr. both passed away near the end of 2022. Together they won the LM Men's Pairs at the Denver Nationals many years ago. Norm, always an aggressive bidder, liked to play ACOL (strong)

two-bids at that time, and they may have benefitted on one hand when Tom forgot.

Tom Hodapp died on Oct. 10 at the age of 80. In his day he may have been the finest player in the Midwest. In 1988, he placed 72nd in the lifetime masterpoint roll. Shortly thereafter he was severely injured in an automobile accident, and never played much after that. He is survived by his wife Cheryl, daughter Katie, and two grandchildren.

I only played once with Tom Hodapp. In a Regional Pair game, in the days of very large fields, we had a comfortable lead. On the last hand, Tom opened 1 Club and I left him there. Fourth hand also passed, and he went down three vulnerable, and we lost the event by ½ Matchpoints with that zero. But I watched him manage opponents and adopted his tactic of responding 1S to a 1H opening to deter competition. That's how I occasionally get to inferior 4♠ contracts.

David Caprera:

Nice guy. Won the LM pairs with Norm Coombs. Why do I cringe when I read a heading in BW that is just a name?

I was at my mother-in-law's death bed. She was 84. She said, "The worst part of getting old is that all my friends are dead."

Marshall Lewis:

Long ago when I was first starting out with tournament bridge back in the Midwest, Tom H was one of the stars in our region. Despite this mantle of celebrity, he was always quite down-to-earth and affably unassuming. He was engaging and personable at the table but never (in my experience anyway) went over the line as many extroverts do into over-gregarious disruption. It was invariably both a challenge and a pleasure to play against him.

One anecdote involving Tom in the featured role, which occurred at my second or third tournament sticks out in my memory because it had a profound influence upon my mental attitude during this fledgling phase of my bridge involvement. He and his partner -- maybe Norm Coombs, maybe Tiger Morris, or maybe Susan Graves -- were leading the Open Pairs field at a big regional at the half-way point, so in the evening they were re-seated at Table A-1 in the N-S seats for the evening session (a common practice at the time, at least in our area).

We found ourselves starting against them after the break, as we had exceeded our expectations (and those of the bookmakers) in the earlier session, and we were sitting

there trying very unsuccessfully to look calm. At one point I spilled my coffee all over myself and Tom solicitously asked "You OK?" I replied: "I guess I'm just nervous playing here at Table 1 against you." He said "Don't be silly, with a little bit of different luck a few hours ago, you'd have been in our seats now and we would be spilling the coffee." The first board was really nothing, and on the second one he was in a game he might have made but he went down. Smiling a bit ruefully, he turned back toward me and said something I still tell my junior trainees to this day:

"You see? There's nothing to be nervous about. Not now not ever. Above all else, don't ever forget -- nobody at any table, sitting any direction, in any tournament anywhere, is really any good."

AJ Stephani:

So very sad. I met Tom only once, about 10 years ago (I'll follow with a picture and a story in a few minutes) and in the process I discovered he has lived less than a mile away from me for most of his life. The Hodapp Funeral Home (owned by the family) is right around the corner - I'll be there to extend any of your wishes to his family personally.

When Pam Granovetter made Grand LM in 2013, I was the President of the Cincinnati Bridge Association and committed to doing something special for our GLMs. In Districts like ours (small), those events don't occur very often, and we need to celebrate our best players as well as cultivate our rank and file.

I set out to gather all of the then-8 GLMs in our District for a special game and celebration. Tom Hodapp hadn't played in nearly 20 years, and all the entreaties to attend by Norm Coombs and friends from his bridge life were met with rejections. Stubbornly, I marched over to his house (about a mile away from my house), knocked on his door, introduced myself (they didn't know me from Adam), and told his wife I was going to keep coming back until I got a "yes." It will remain one of my prouder accomplishments in my bridge career that I got him to that game.

All 8 promised me they would attend, but, alas, the Clerkin brothers begged off at the last minute. Anyway, here's a picture from that day. Dennis Hesthaven (Louisville) and Marc Low (also recently passed) rounded out the group of 6 along with Pam and Matt Granovetter, Norm, and Tom.

[2013 GLM Celebration](http://www.cincybridge.com/glm_2013.html)

http://www.cincybridge.com/glm_2013.html

Olin Hubert:

Great guy, though I hadn't seen him in 30-40 years. Norm had the greatest nickname for Tom - "Cro-Mag," which fit his massive forearms and slightly slumped-over posture to a T.

Bobby Levin:

Loved that man, was so kind when I was starting out. Solid guy, solid player. RIP.

Larry Sealy:

So sorry to hear this. I hadn't seen Tom in ~40 years - asked Coombs about him quite often. They were quite a formidable pair when I started playing in the mid-70s.

Mark Perlmutter:

Ugh. I fondly recall playing in a National Men's team w/ Tom and Norm in N.M. We were 6 handed. He talked about having the A team in..... but in reserve when he was ready to play, the A+ team was coming to bat!

Robb Gordon:

Tom was a big guy (Coombs always called him "Cro-mag"). He also had a big heart, the only things intimidating about him were his size and the great card play instincts he possessed. One of the first Regional open pairs I played in (one session qualifying and one final) he had one of the largest scores I can remember (and the final was a strong field) - almost 6 boards over average, something like 488 on a 25 top. RIP

Steve Moese:

When I first came to Cincinnati back in 1976, Bruce Parent was one of my first tournament partners. He introduced me to Norm, Tom, Tiger Morris, Jan Weyant, and a host of others. Tom played a lot with Cheryl his wife in local tournaments. Tom was always a gentleman at the table. I left bridge two years later and lost track of all. When AJ arranged the November 2013 party for Pam Granovetter, I was happy to see Tom one last time. All of Cincinnati will miss him. My condolences to all his family and friends. RIP.

Ed Judy:

I was a rookie when I first played against Tom in Cincinnati some 40 years ago. He was always most pleasant.

Mike Passell:

I met Tom and Stormin' Norman many moons ago and became fast friends. He was a talented player and great guy. My condolences to his family

David Boxley:

I knew Tom from playing against him in the Midwest tourneys when I first started out (60's). I learned a lot playing against him, mainly from getting my head beat in most times. He was a truly fine player and had over 10,000 points back when they really meant something

I remember playing with Norm with Tom and probably Tiger Morris on a team in Cincinnati in a sectional. At our table Norm opened 2♦ on a hand with 55 in the reds and caught me on about 16 with 4414. I passed and they got to 4♥ making at the other table. We lost the match by about 4 or 5 IMPs. The next day I kibitzed Tom playing with Norm when he picked up an 8 or 9 pt hand with, sure enough, 55 in the reds. He kind of smiled and opened 2♦. I don't remember the result but I said something like "New I understand." Neither Tom nor Norm said a thing.

I played on a team with them and Jim Cunningham several decades later in a VP game and had my only experience ever going into the last match having already won the event.

My condolences to Cheryl and his family. He was a Cincinnati legend.

These tributes are quoted from the post on Bridge Winners at

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/thomas-hodapp/>

Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional

**By Arun Goyal**

As the new chairperson of the Flying Pig Regional tournament, I would like to thank A J Stephani for his dedicated service as chair for the past several years. He did an excellent job and I just hope that I can fill his shoes.

We have stepped up to make this year's Flying Pig Regional bigger than ever! The Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional is now seven days from June 4-10, 2023. Yes, we will have a two session Swiss Team competition on Saturday at the Cincinnati Bridge Center (2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati OH 45241). We have something for everyone each day and every session, including team games, pair games and lots of Under 750 events. Just look at the schedule and you will see how much we have to offer. We are trying to accommodate the working people so that they can play on a 5- or 6-person team and join the tournament.

We are also bringing back trophies for every Under 750 event winners. In order to have at least one U750 section in every session, we need a big enough turnout, so if you like U750 events and can play in them, please join us and tell your friends to join as well. Only you can guarantee a U750 section.

We will also be having hospitality Monday through Thursday between afternoon and evening sessions and a full lunch on Saturday. With rising costs across ACBL and increased entry fees at other regionals, we will still keep our entry fees at only \$17 per person per session.

We need your support and help. I am requesting everyone as an ambassador of Unit 124 to spread the word about our upcoming regional tournament in June. Please join us for all 7 days to take advantage of our great schedule of events and contact any of the tournament committee members to volunteer. We especially need help for the registration desk. We are looking for about 10 people so that no one staffs the desk for more than two sessions before the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Lastly, we will also accept any donations to defray the cost of hospitality (no food items per hotel requirement) or the gift baskets. Please contact Pam Campbell (Campbell.ps.54@gmail.com) for the donations to the hospitality and Ila Mehta (ilakmehta@gmail.com) for the donations for the gift basket.

Arun Goyal, Tournament Chairperson
Jim Barrett, Pam Campbell, Gary Herrington, Monica Ibarra, Mike Ma and Diane Travis

District 11 News

By Steve Moese

This year brings great change. With the resignation of AJ Stephani from the ACBL Board of Directors the ACBL ran a special election as per bylaws to fill the vacant seat. As AJ had been elected as Region 7 Board Representative the election was for our Region. Recall that Region 7 comprises Districts 8, 10 and 11. Mr., **Larry Sealy** has been duly elected to replace AJ Stephani. Larry can be reached at region7director@aol.org. Larry brings years of Board of Director Experience as the representative from District 10. He attended our Regional in Louisville in December and has shown great interest in District 11 and the future of in-person club and tournament bridge. We look forward to supporting Larry in his expanded role.

If you are looking for the Indianapolis Regional that normally runs in late January early February, you will not find it. Due to low attendance, skyrocketing venue costs, and unacceptable financial risk, the Indianapolis unit has decided not to run the regional this year. Not to worry – they are working on a plan to bring it back in 2024, perhaps in a more attractive time frame. More as soon as we know.

In order to fill the gap, Unit 193 Evansville Indiana scheduled a Regional Tournament for the week immediately after the New Orleans NABC. See their flyer later in this issue. The venue is a golf course club house. We are encouraged to book our own lodging. There is no lodging on site.

The Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional is set for June (See Arun Goyal's article on page 7). One wrinkle for this week – the final day will not be at the Delta Hotel but at the Cincinnati Bridge Center – Swiss Teams with lunch included.

Dayton is planning a change in their regional this year. Increasing costs and difficulty scheduling desired dates has led the Dayton Board of Directors to find a new venue. They have found a beauty of a site at nearby Sinclair Community College. Stay tuned for more details.

Louisville Lexington had a profitable regional this past November, but problems with the Casino venue made that site unattractive. Indiana no longer requires all gambling be on a boat moored to the shore. Naturally the casino moved and expanded their gambling space to fill the atrium just outside the playing area. That led to cigarette smoke everywhere and gambling machine noise right outside the ballroom doors. In 2023 the tournament will move to the Louisville Bridge Center. Their plan is to have the 2023 Regional probably shortened to 5 days running Tuesday November 7 through Saturday November 11th. Their contingency plan for 2023 is the Tom Sawyer Community Center in Louisville.

Each of these changes for all 4 of the District 11 Regionals are a response to the rising costs for venues big enough to handle these events. All are doing what's needed to keep these major events healthy and present on our schedule.

Recall that next year, Louisville will host the Spring NABC at the Galt House (newly renovated). As a result, the District and the many Units and Clubs are committed to raise funds to support the host's responsibilities. We did this for Columbus in March 2020 and we are doing this for Louisville in 2024. The difference is that instead of 3 years

of fund raising, the covid-19 pandemic has limited our window to 18 months. There are two major ways that we raise funds for Louisville. One is to collect \$1 er person for every regional tournament entry sold between now and March 2024. The other is to celebrate special Club Fund Raising weeks.

The District 11 Board voted unanimously to approve the following fundraising to support the work of the 2024 Louisville NABC Committee:

1) Beginning October 1, 2022 through March 1, 2024, all Regional and Sectional tournaments (but not Sectional Tournaments at Clubs - STaCs) will be assessed a \$1 per person surcharge. This surcharge will be forwarded to the 2024 Louisville NABC Committee Treasurer (TBA). This includes NLM and progressive tournaments.

2) Clubs wishing to offer special fundraising games may do so during the following weeks:

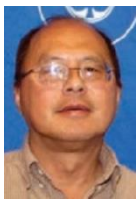
April 23 - April 29, 2023
August 28, September 3, 2023

There is a \$1 per person surcharge for these NABC fundraiser club games, payable to the 2024 Louisville NABC Committee Treasurer (TBA). These special games offer extra masterpoints (black, 81.8% Sectional Rating). Club participation is optional.

We note that the ACBL has continued its policy to require vaccinations for all players at ACBL Tournaments. To help Units reduce costs the ACBL has devised Local Sectionals. These award 80/20 sliver/black, may not run 2-session events, and have smaller games 25 tables or fewer. See the D11 Website for details -

<http://www.district11bridge.com/>

Double When Opponents Overcall our 1N



By Mike Ma

In the good old days, you would open a strong 1N and the opponents would meekly pass throughout and let you have a nice quiet auction. Unfortunately, nowadays opponents simply won't let you alone and are very aggressive in bidding over your 1N opening. Their main purpose often is to disrupt your constructive bidding. Because of this, it is essential that you have the methods to counter their interferences and be able to punish them for their transgressions when the circumstances are right. Many tools have been developed to bid constructively to counter opponents' disruption.

My focus in this article though is to discuss doubling their overcall. In particular, I recommend doubling for penalty. I will further limit to discussing the penalty double and after that the balancing double when responder cannot penalty double.

In his seminal book on Matchpoints, Kit Woolsey presents excellent analysis of what are the best hands to penalty double besides holding a trump stack. His main point is that in MP, you should look for two ways to win instead of putting all your eggs in one basket. So, if you have borderline game, you don't need to know you can set them more than your game score to X for penalty. You have two ways to win,

- a) You set them more than your game, e.g., they are vul and you are not, or
- b) You set them less than game while you go down in game.

If you are pretty sure you make game (say your combined point count is 27+), then a) must hold for your X to be right. If your combined point count is, say, 23/24 to 26 though, you may be down in game. And both a) and b) would work for you. Of course, you need to be sure you can set them. So, if you don't have trump stack, you need to have enough strength to beat them on strength alone. The stronger your hand, the less you need in trumps and vice versa. It may be simpler to think of tricks. The NT opener should be able to give your side 4 defensive tricks on average, so you need 2+ from you to set 2 level contract. To play safe, let's say you need 3.

I will address IMPs later.

The first thing is to decide whether to play negative or penalty double. Mel Colchimiro wrote in the ACBL Bulletin that an informal poll of the top players found that a majority, though not an overwhelming one, prefer the negative double to penalty. I have no doubt that the negative double can work very well for experts due to factors including their ability to handle Moysian fit and good judgment by opener as to when to sit the double with confidence. In my opinion, for club level players like myself, it is simpler and more effective to play the penalty double.

Penalty Double. A major reason for playing penalty double is that the principle is simple and can be generalized easily to whatever the opponents' system is. When they overcall at the 2-level other than 2C (where you likely play and should play "system on"), a double by responder is for penalty. She wants to penalize at least one of over caller's implied suit(s). If these include the bid suit, then that suit must be one of the suits responder can penalize. Some

examples (LHO and RHO below refers to their position relative to the 1N opener, and bids in parenthesis are opponents' bids):

1) 1N – (2♥) - x

2♥ is natural. Here responder wants to double ♥.

2) 1N – (2♦) - x

2♦ shows both majors. The double says responder wants to penalty double one or both majors. Note that responder does not promise ♦. If RHO passes, opener must not pass 2♦ unless he wants to defend that contract.

3) 1N – (2♥) - x

2♥ shows ♥ and ♠. Here responder definitely wants to penalize ♥, she may or may not be able to double ♠.

After the initial double by responder, I recommend these follow-ups:

1) All subsequent doubles are penalty oriented, with as usual doubling in the direct seat sending a stronger message than a balancing double. The first double by either player should promise strength and/or length in their trumps, and progressively promises less in trumps with subsequent doubles. The more they run from your double(s), the less you need in the trump suit to double them and then lead an automatic trump. The Law of Total Tricks is a good guide when deciding whether to defend after they run from your strong doubles.

2) Responder generally promises another bid in the balancing seat. This way, if opener doubles his RHO's bid, it is unambiguously for penalty. For example, if the auction goes 1N-(2♥)(♥and♠)-x-(2♠) P -P-?

Responder definitely wants to double ♥. Opener's pass says he cannot penalize ♠ without help. Responder must bid in the balancing seat and should decide whether to double for penalty or bid something else. Note that it is not necessary to have a trump stack in ♠ for responder to now double. Opener cannot expect her to be stacked in both ♥ and ♠. I consider Qxx to be sufficient to reopen with a double in this situation. If instead the first overcall was 2♦ showing the majors, and the rest of the auction is identical to this point, then responder's double should be a strong one in ♠ because she did not promise ♥ with her initial double.

Balancing by opener after responder passes initially. Playing penalty double, responder's initial pass does not deny values to compete, only less than invitational values

(with invitational values or better, responder should either double, cue-bid, bid some appropriate number of NT, or otherwise some forcing bid). So, opener should consider competing in the balancing seat. Here is the structure Joe Fisher and I play as partners. It is based on Law of Total Tricks in that we try to avoid defending at the 2-level if they have 8 or more trumps. In balancing seat, opener bids

1) Cheapest bid for take-out. For example, after a 2♥ overcall, a balancing 2♠ bid by opener implies a TO bid of ♥. The bid usually implies a doubleton in overcaller's suit, and the ideal holding would be 2 small.

2) Suit bids beyond the cheapest bid is natural and should show at least 5 trumps. 2N if it is not the cheapest bid should be for the lower two suits.

3) Double shows exactly 3 cards in over caller's suit. The ideal opener's holding for this action would be 3 small. Responder should take it out holding 2 or fewer trumps since opponents have a 8 card or better fit. With 3-card holding herself, she makes a decision whether to defend. Playing IMPs, I recommend that opener only doubles with the ideal holding of 3 small.

The same structure can be used by responder to balance after passing their overcall initially. By the way, whether you play penalty or negative doubles over 2 level overcalls, it is recommended that you play negative double showing game forcing values over 3 level bids by opponents after 1NT.

Responder passed 1NT initially. If it goes 1NT – (P) – P – (something), now opener knows responder is limited to about 8 points. If opener X, that cannot be penalty. He has no idea if 1NT can be made, so he is protecting nothing to penalty X. If opponent somehow walks into a trump stack, opener should be really happy to let them play. So, X now should be takeout. e.g.

1NT –(P) – P - (2♥) ; -X = TO of ♥ . Ideally opener has small doubleton in ♥, and (443) in the other 3 suits. By the same token, responder's balancing X here should also be TO.

1NT –(P) – P - (2♥); - P – (P) – X = TO.

In the above example, 2♥ was natural. If RHO's balancing bid is not natural, use the same logic as what we say about penalty X. Remember if the suit bid is not one of their suits, you can pass and let them bid their suit, then X. Or you can cue if you know what the suit is in advance. E.g.

1NT –(P) – P - (2♦) (both M) ; -X = ♦.

P and then X 2M = TO

A bit tricky what bidding 2M over 2♦ is.

For completeness, I include the case of when we overcall 1NT

(1x) – 1NT – (P) - ? We play system on here

(1x) – 1NT – (2x) – X.

No matter how we play X here when we open 1NT, X here must be TO. Reason: How can advancer have a penalty X of x? The 1NT overcall can be anything from Kx to AQJT or whatever.

(1x) – 1NT- (2y) – X.

Here x and y are different suits. Some play negative here. I prefer to play penalty. The 1NT overcall cannot cover every single suit, so overcaller may need help from advancer to penalize them when they run like that. If 2y is not natural, use the same logic as what we do when we open 1NT.

Exception: If it goes 1NT – (2♣) – we play system on.

In general, we play system on when we overcall 1NT, so if 2y = 2♣, it is ambiguous if X = penalty or Stayman (system on). To make life simple, we just say system on has priority. If that let them get away with a bad 2♣ bid, so be it.

PSYCH!

By Steve Moese



There is no topic more polarizing in bridge than psychs. *(Some spell this psyche, but that creates confusion with other meanings for that spelling. Some refer to it as a psychic bid, an archaic form from mid-20th Century).*

People love to use them but hate having them used against them. Some clubs try to go so far as to bar them from play. Most follow ACBL Guidelines and the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. The Law of Duplicate Bridge allows psychs, but regulating authorities are allowed to limit them with an eye toward maintaining the integrity of the game.

Psychs have been a part of the game in all its forms since bridge began. Bluffing is an accepted part of bridge as long as it is done ethically. I can recall ACBL convention cards from the 1970's where there was a question regarding the frequency of psychs: Never, Rare, Occasional, Frequent. Indeed, psychs were a part of Roth

Executive Summary

- A psych is legal if partner and both opponents are equally misled. Legal psychs are ethical.
- A psych is a gross distortion of length or strength -- if the call varies by at least 4 points in strength or 2 cards in length from your agreement.
- If a psych becomes an implied agreement through repetition, it must be disclosed and might be illegal. Regulations govern agreements.
- Psyching more than twice a session is considered excessive and may be penalized.
- Psychic controls are illegal. A control allows the psycher's partner to identify if a psych happened.
- Certain psychs are illegal. Frequent abuse can result in expulsion from the game.

Stone and Kaplan Sheinwold (KS) bidding systems (1950's). KS used openers same suit rebid or rebid of 2N after a strong Jump Shift as a check that showed opener's bid was a psych. Such a psychic control is now illegal worldwide. In the NY Times Bridge column by Alfred Moorhead Sunday May 19, 1959 the author credits Dorothy P Simms with naming the tactic, citing an opening bid of 1♠ on a weak hand with only a doubleton ♠. Mr. Moorhead offers the example from the Culbertson's matches in 1930-31 where Culbertson opened 1♠ on ♠97632 ♥764 ♦Q6 ♣863. He goes on to write:

"Experts seldom make psychic bids because they have learned that their opponents will too often double them, and their partners will too seldom be able to detect the psychic in time to avoid reaching an overambitious contract. Using the same percentage figure in another application, at least 90 per cent of all bridge players will never make a psychic bid, regardless of circumstances, simply because the whole idea of bidding on a weak hand is distasteful to them. But the fact remains that psychic bids are made; and even though their use today is occasional rather than frequent, the experienced partnership likes to have a device for dealing with them. Hence the present popularity of psychic controls."

(This link might be behind the NY Times paywall:

<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1959/05/10/282568042.pdf>)

Needless to say, the attitude and regulations have changed tremendously since 1959.

Let's look at psychs in the light of day with a dispassionate eye. It's always good to know more about what's allowed, what's not allowed and what's expected.

Let's review:

- what Bridge Law says about psychs,
- what the ACBL guidelines are for the use of psychs,
- some common examples of well-known psychs
- psychic controls (they are strongly prohibited/illegal),
- how one other regulating authority manages psychs.

Duplicate Bridge Law

<http://web2.acbl.org/documentlibrary/play/Laws-of-Duplicate-Bridge.pdf>

LAW 40 PARTNERSHIP UNDERSTANDINGS

B. Special Partnership Understandings

1. (a) An agreement between partners, whether explicit or implicit, is a partnership understanding.
(b) In its discretion, the Regulating Authority may designate certain partnership understandings as 'special partnership understandings'. A special partnership understanding is one whose meaning, in the opinion of the Regulating Authority, may not be readily understood and anticipated by a significant number of players in the tournament.
(c) Unless the Regulating Authority decides otherwise, any call that has an artificial meaning constitutes a special partnership understanding.
2. (a) The Regulating Authority:
 - (i.) is empowered without restriction to allow, disallow, or allow conditionally, any special partnership understanding.
 - (ii.) may prescribe a System Card, with or without supplementary sheets, for the prior listing of a partnership's understandings, and regulate its use.
 - (iii.) may prescribe alerting procedures and/or other methods of disclosure of a partnership's methods.
 - (iv.) may disallow prior agreement by a partnership to vary its understandings during the auction or play following an irregularity committed by the opponents.
 - (v.) may restrict the use of psychic artificial calls.

C. Deviation from System and Psychic Action

1. A player may deviate from his side's announced understandings, provided that his partner has no

more reason than the opponents to be aware of the deviation [but see B2(a)(v) above]. Repeated deviations lead to implicit understandings which then form part of the partnership's methods and must be disclosed in accordance with the regulations governing disclosure of system. If the Director judges there is undisclosed knowledge that has damaged the opponents, he shall adjust the score and may assess a procedural penalty.

2. Other than in C1 above, no player is obliged to disclose to the opponents that he has deviated from his announced methods.

LAW 73 COMMUNICATION, TEMPO AND DECEPTION

E. Deception

1. A player may appropriately attempt to deceive an opponent through a call or play (so long as the deception is not emphasized by unwonted haste or hesitancy, nor protected by concealed partnership understanding or experience).

ACBL CONVENTION CHARTS

<https://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/about/Convention-Charts.pdf>

The ACBL convention charts are the bidding regulations defined by the ACBL as authorized under the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. ACBL regulations apply to all ACBL tournaments. They do NOT govern play at clubs running ACBL games. These clubs can make their own choices in many cases what to allow and what to disallow. However, the ACBL expects clubs to follow all Laws of Duplicate Bridge and to follow regulations explicitly provided for club play.

Definitions:

4. *** **"Purely Destructive Initial Action"**: An opening bid or an overcall that satisfies none of the following:

- a. 4+ cards in a known suit.
- b. 5+ cards in one of two possible suits.
- c. 5+-4+ distribution in any two suits.
- d. An either/or combination of any two of a, b, or c (which may be the same option twice).
- e. A Three-suited hand.
- f. At least Average strength.
- g. Any Natural or Quasi-Natural opening bid.

3. **"Purely Destructive Initial Action"**: The intent here is to eliminate bids which have little or no redeeming constructive merit. Note that just

because a call is not Purely Destructive does not mean that it is allowed; many calls are restricted that do not meet the definition of Purely Destructive. An overcall showing hearts or both spades and diamonds is not a Purely Destructive Initial Action, regardless of High Card Points, because it meets condition “d”, using condition “a” twice. (It contains 4+ hearts or it contains 4+ spades.) Similarly, an overcall showing both red suits or both black suits is not a Purely Destructive Initial Action because it meets condition “d”. A “Cappelletti/Hamilton” 2C overcall showing a 1 suited hand is not a PDIA, as it meets condition “d” by choosing option “b” twice. An example of a PDIA overcall would be a 1S “fert” overcall, showing any 13 cards and Pass=spades. An example of a PDIA opening bid would be 1♣ showing 0-7 HCP any shape.

23. *** **“Psych”**: A call that intentionally and grossly misstates the strength and/or suit length of one’s hand.

5. **“Psych”**: Generally, 2 cards fewer or an Ace weaker than the minimum expected for a bid would meet the definition of a Psych, as would an Ace stronger than the maximum expected.

24. **“Psychic Control”**: Any Bid that conveys that a prior Bid was a Psych.

ACBL Convention Chart Regulations (focusing only on psychs):

Basic & Basic + Charts

“Bidding Agreements are disallowed unless they are specifically allowed. If an Agreement would be disallowed unless it satisfies a specific High Card Point or shape requirement, a player may not use judgment to include hands with fewer High Card Points or a different shape. Note that almost all Agreements are allowed beginning with Responder’s initial action.”

The following are always disallowed:

1. Purely Destructive Initial Actions
2. Psyching an Artificial Opening Bid or an Artificial Overcall
3. Psyching an Artificial Response below 2NT to an Opening or Overcall

Open & Open + Charts

“Bidding Agreements are allowed unless they are specifically disallowed. If an Agreement would be disallowed unless it satisfies a specific High Card

Point or shape requirement, a player may not use judgment to include hands with fewer High Card Points or a different shape. If an agreement is disallowed, then adding an unlikely hand type to it does not make it allowed. Note that almost all Agreements are allowed beginning with Responder’s initial action.”

Opening Bids

Disallowed Opening Bids

12. A Purely Destructive opening bid.
13. Psyching an Artificial opening bid.

Overcalls

3. A Purely Destructive overcall.
4. Psyching an Artificial overcall.

Responses and Rebids

1. Psyching an Artificial response below 2NT to an opening bid or an overcall.
2. Psychic Controls.

ACBL Club Directors Handbook – FAQ’s

<http://web2.acbl.org/documentlibrary/clubs/cdHandbook.pdf#page=57>

Can I ban (or allow) certain conventions in my club? Can I bar psychs?

ACBL regulations permit the governing body of the club great latitude to determine what is best for its own clientele. The club has the right to permit or forbid any convention in a regular club game.

The ACBL recommends all of the conventions on the ACBL Limited Convention Chart be permitted, but even that is not required. Sectional and regional tournaments and most clubs permit the use of any convention on the ACBL General Convention Chart.

In regard to psychic bids, the Laws of Duplicate Bridge state specifically that psychic bids are legal (Law 40). At the same time, nothing in this law says that psychic bids may be used indiscriminately. Partner must be as unprepared as the opponents in terms of expecting the action. There are a number of free ACBL publications available from the tournament department and online at www.acbl.org that provide information on conventions and the Alert procedure. Note that not only does a club have the authority to permit or bar any conventions, it may even choose not to use the Alert procedure at all.

What is a psych?

The Laws of Duplicate Bridge define a psychic call as “deliberate and gross misstatement of honor strength or suit length.” The key word is “gross.” If you forget the meaning of a call, that is not a psych. If you make a call with 12 points when your partnership agreement calls for a maximum of 11, that is not a psych — it is not a gross misstatement. If you are playing five-card majors and open the bidding with 1♠ on a 4-card holding, that is not a psych. In general, your call is a gross misstatement, and therefore is considered a psych, if the call varies by at least 4 points in strength or 2 cards in length from your agreement.

Are psychs allowed?

Clearly Law 40 permits psychs. Psychic bidding is a part of the game. Excessive psyching leads to implied and concealed partnership understandings, and such understandings are serious offenses — they erode the very basics on which the game of bridge is built. Pairs that regularly use psychs soon learn the type of psychic calls their partner makes and are prepared for them. The opponents do not have this same information, although the rules of the game call for complete disclosure of bidding methods.

When does psyching become excessive?

It becomes excessive when your partner can accurately work out what you’re doing because of past experience. A series of tactical bids that are also psychs that occur over a period of time might not be excessive because partner is as unaware of what you are doing as are the opponents.

Are there other psychic bids that aren’t allowed?

Frivolous psyches are especially bothersome and should never occur. These psyches are usually inspired by malicious mischief or a lack of interest in a game that is going poorly. They can disrupt a game by causing an abnormal result.

Unsportsmanlike psychs are equally bad. It is totally against the spirit of the game to throw a psychic call at a contending pair toward the end of the game because you want to create some action or because you’re having a game so bad that one more poor result won’t make any difference. It may make no difference to you, but it could change the winner of the event. Check the ACBL General Convention Chart for psychs disallowed.

When should you make a psychic bid?

Even when your psych meets the requirement that your partner doesn’t know what’s going on, there should be a good tactical reason for your action. It should never be because you want to get back at so-and-so, or because you’re bored and want to create a little action, or because

you’re having a bad game and what difference does one more bottom make?

Is psyching a good practice?

Psyching, in general, is not a good idea. A psych is a good tactic occasionally, but more often it’s a source of irritation, a violation of the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, an unsportsmanlike tactic, or a combination of all three.

Why do players become upset when their opponents psych against them?

Although there are many humorous stories about psychs, more often than not, psychs lead to bad scores for the psycher. In addition, players who are the victims of a successful psych often are upset by what they sometimes view as an unfair tactic. It doesn’t help the situation any when the psycher chooses this time to gloat.

What can I do to help my players feel better about this ruling?

Explain to them that you are keeping a log of psychs and also a log of unusual incidents. (And do it.) This is really easy to do on your computer but can be done with pen or pencil and a spiral notebook as well. That way you know how often a partnership actually does psych or have a breakdown in their agreements. A player who psychs once every six months is a “big psycher” among folks who never psych. And that player is certainly within the law and the spirit of the game.

What can be done to keep psyching under control?

1. **Education.** Players need to be informed early in their bridge careers about the legal and social dangers of psyching. These warnings should be repeated from time to time. The best vehicles for this are the Bridge Bulletin, unit and district publications, tournament directors, club managers and club directors.
2. **Legal adjustments.** Sometimes it is clear that the partner of the psycher has bid in such a way as to allow for the possibility that partner has psyched — no other interpretation of the call seems to make much sense. Bidding to cover the possibility that your partner psyched indicates at least an implied understanding which is clearly in violation of the Laws. The director should make an adjustment to repair the damage, possibly give a procedural penalty and deliver a stern warning to the offenders.
3. **Possible expulsion.** If a player is found to be psyching excessively, frivolously or in an unsportsmanlike manner, the director should inform this player that if

such tactics continue to be used, the player faces suspension from the game.

Prohibited or Illegal Psychs

Excessive Psychic Bidding — When three or more psychic initial actions by members of a partnership have been reported in any one session and are called to the attention of the Director, the Director should investigate the possibility that excessive psyching is taking place.

Frivolous Psychic Bidding — Any psychic action inspired by a spirit of malicious mischief or lack of will to win may be interpreted as frivolous.

Unsportsmanlike Psychic Bidding — Action apparently designed to give the opponents an abnormal opportunity to get a good score, psychs against pairs or teams in contention, psychs against inexperienced players and psychs used merely to create action at the table are examples of unsportsmanlike psychic bidding.

Destructive Opening Bids — as defined above these are not permitted and are subject to procedural penalties and score adjustments.

Risk-Free Psyches

Psychic controls are not permitted. If a pair is using methods that enable them to make risk-free psyches, they are in essence playing psychic controls. For example, in playing a 10-12 NT, many pairs have the understanding or the agreement that the NT opener may not bid again (except in forcing or invitational situations). If the pair were to psyche a non-forcing or invitational response, the agreement would be a psychic control.

Opening a bid weaker or shorter(longer) than a **rigidly defined shape or strength** limit is not allowed. For example, the ACBL prohibits opening 1N with less than 10 HCP. While a 6 HCP hand is a psych (an Ace less than the minimum strength), it is illegal to open that psych because of the red line 10 HCP minimum. A 1N opening below 9 HCP is considered artificial and therefore the ACBL may regulate it. The same is true for shape in 1N. Axx K KQxxx Kxx is a fine 1N opening (singleton A/K/Q is allowed) but AKx x KQxxx Kxx is illegal (small singleton not allowed except under the Open + chart in extended play competition).

Note: Score adjustments by the director should be made only when the result was affected because the partner, due to previous experience, may have allowed for the psychic call. Procedural penalties and disciplinary action

might apply depending on the severity of the action(s) taken.

Allowed Psychs

A **tactical bid** is a psych that is made to paint a picture in an opponent's mind and partner's mind that will cause them to play you for a holding that you do not have, enabling you to succeed at the contract to which you were inevitably headed.

A **waiting bid** is generally a forcing bid made by responder to allow him time to learn more about partner's opening hand. This type of call is only rarely a psych, since in most cases the suit length is not grossly misstated.

A **deviation** is a bid where the strength of the hand is within a queen of the agreed or announced strength, and the bid is of a suit of ample length or of notrump, or a bid of a suit in which the length of the suit varies by no more than one card from the agreed or announced length and the hand contains ample high-card values for the agreement being played. A deviation is NOT a PSYCH. A deviation is no longer an official term in the ACBL Convention Chart.

Commonly Known Psychs

- Opening a weak hand in a long suit.
- Responding 1♠ to 1♥ opening bid without spades
- 1♥ - 1♠ opener was not allowed to jump to 4♠, lest the response be a psych, and was required to rebid 3NT instead. If responder then corrected to 4♥, that was the final contract.
- After 1♣ - (X) - 1 Suit - with shortness in responder's suit.
- Opening 1N (15-17) in 3rd seat on a yarborough, especially when opponents have no penalty double.
- Making a splinter bid on a small doubleton.
- Opening a 3-level preempt in a 4-card suit.
- Responding 2♠ to a weak 2♥ opening bid holding no spade suit.
- Bidding 3N after partner opens a 3-level preempt, expecting to retreat to the next level in opener's suit if doubled.
- Bidding 2N in response to a weak 2 on a very weak hand, intending to jump to game next. (If the agreement is that 2N shows no values but just asks, then there is no psych - ASK!)
- Bidding 3♣ as 5-card Major Stayman, intending to pass opener's rebid. (Picture ♠976 ♥764 ♦Q109876 ♣3 - if partner rebids a Major, we are happy, if they deny a Major by rebidding 3♦ we are happy. This is a

psych if you play 5-card Major Stayman as game forcing.)

- Bidding 4N (Blackwood or RKB) on a weak hand to discourage opponents from competing further.
- Overcalling 1N on a hand with a long running minor suit to discourage competitive bidding.
- Responding to partner's takeout double in a weak short suit intending to correct later to the long suit.
- The Stripe Tailed Ape Double – hoping to entice opponents to pass below slam and willing to run if redoubled.
- Opening 1 of a major on 0 to 9 HCP knowing partner will use Drury before jumping to the three level.
- And more – players are creative – there's always more.

Where There is Discussion

Responding 1N to 1 of a Major playing 2/1 game forcing on zero HCP. If the pair agrees to do this it's legal, if they don't it's a psych and subject to potential penalty as an implied agreement.

Overcalling 1N with a small singleton – while not meeting the criteria for a natural 1N opening bid based on shape, as an overcall in the agreed strength range it is an offer to play in that strain so it is allowed!

An Alternative View

The English Bridge Union has one of the more severe regulations limiting psychs in bridge. In the EBU a fielded (red) psych is one where the psycher's partner has taken action that appears to allow for his partner having psyched.

"If a player believes, from partnership experience, that partner may have deviated from the system this must be disclosed to the opponents. If a player properly discloses this possibility, the player will not be penalized for fielding it, although there may be a penalty for playing an illegal method." - EBU white book.

In the example given, South should alert and state that partner has been known to psych in this position. South's double of 1NT is perfectly legitimate (a pass would be fielding)

EBU treats a fielded psych as indicative of a concealed partnership agreement and hence a breach of Law 20F in failing to alert.

The EBU have 3 classifications.

"green" - no evidence of fielding: no adjustment. Two 'green' psychs on the same hand will result in one being raised to 'amber'

"amber" - possible evidence of fielding: no adjustment for the first occasion. A second 'amber' psych results in all 'amber' psychs being reclassified as 'red'.

"red" - evidence of fielding: standard penalty is 25% of a top and a maximum of 40% on the hand. (So, you can get IMPs as a result). The standard additional penalties are also 1vp or 6imps (so the hand would be scored as +3/-9)

With regard to fielding: There is nothing per se in the white book about subsequent actions by the psycher. However, the book says

"If a player describes partner's bid as showing a particular hand type, and then acts as if partner had a different hand type, that player is usually attempting to field a misbid (or a psyche). Of course, it is possible that a player knows from the legal auction and from their own hand that partner has misbid – for example, partner shows three aces in response to Gerber but the player has three aces. It is also possible that a player has a hand that makes it very likely but not certain that partner A Bridge Winners Poll done in April 8, 2016 has misbid – for example, partner opens a Texas 4♣ (showing a good pre-empt in hearts) and the player holds ♥K10xxx and no clubs. It is not possible to provide guidance as to the strength of evidence required before a player may legitimately act on the basis that partner has misbid. Individual cases are rare and can be judged on their merits."

In my opinion this interpretation of fielding as evidence of an existing agreement is an overstep of the permission given by the Law. The Law does nothing to regulate the judgment of the partner of the psyche. It does not regulate "fielding". However, if the partner has an implied agreement from experience with the psyche, then the rectification under the Law requiring full disclosure of explicit and implicit agreements is available. The EBU considers a psych fielded if responder takes an unusual action that leads to a positive result. Judge for yourself.

The Online Trap

Playing online bridge, the same laws and regulations apply, adjusted only for the technology itself in the bridge application. While no one can psych an artificial opening bid, one must describe all artificial bids and give ranges for NT openings. These self-alerts and self-announcements might present a quandary for players when they might want to psych. In all cases the regulations are clear – you

are required to reveal your AGREEMENTS and not what you actual hold in your hand.

Perspective A Bridge Winners Poll done in April 8, 2016 asked respondents their attitudes toward psychs. You might be surprised by the results!

N	%	Answer
7	1	Psyches should be illegal, I'm in US
75	10	You should only psyche against players of your own standard or better
272	37	Psyching is a part of the game and has been since forever. Live with it. I'm in US
24	3	Who cares. Psyches have a less than 50% success record and the losses are ENORMOUS, I'm in US
9	1	Psyches should be illegal, I'm not in US
316	43	Psyching is a part of the game and has been since forever. Live with it. I'm not in US
32	4	Who cares. Psyches have a less than 50% success record and the losses are ENORMOUS, I'm not in US
83		Abstain

818 respondents from around the world weighed in. This poll tends toward the expert player. 80% want to retain psychs as legal in bridge.

Here's a common area where Novice players find uncomfortable feelings. When someone makes a bid that does not conform with the Novices understanding or what they were taught.

Say for example, the auction goes 1♥-(Pass)-2♥ and the responder held x xxxxx xxx xxxx (0 HCP and 1=5=3=4 shape). While it would never occur to the novice to bid like that, they might feel unfairly misled since the hand did not hold 6 HCP – the minimum count they themselves use for the simple raise. After all that's what Teacher Steve told them was necessary for the bid. While we can argue the merits of the 2♥ bid, it is certainly allowable as a psych. If the pair has an agreement that such an auction always shows 0-9 HCP, they should disclose that – an agreement that is unexpected should be disclosed to the opponents or a rectification in the score can be made if damage results.

Don't confuse Bridge Law and Bridge Regulation with bidding agreements. Bidding agreements are largely under the pairs control as long as they are consistent with local regulations. Bidding agreements ARE NOT LAW NOR REGULATION. When in doubt ask. Protect yourself.

Final Word

Some of us feel uncomfortable about the ethics of bluffing or lying about our hands. I have shown that the Laws of Duplicate Bridge permit such actions within the

constraints provided by the regulating authorities. I offer the following for your consideration.

LAW 72 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

A. Observance of Laws

Duplicate bridge tournaments should be played in strict accordance with the Laws. The chief object is to obtain a higher score than other contestants whilst complying with the lawful procedures and ethical standards set out in these laws.

You see, the Laws of Duplicate Bridge define what is ethical and what is not! Since the Laws also define what the Regulating Authority can and cannot regulate, regulations are part of the Law. `Our personal sense of ethics can guide us well in life, but when playing bridge, the Laws are our guide.

This is a practical requirement. Since bridge strives to be a global competitive event (the Olympic Movement recognizes Bridge a Mind Sport) we need a common set of values within which to compete. Cultural ethics vary. Bridge Ethics (The Laws) do not. We must avoid imposing our personal code of ethics on someone else. That serves to create unnecessary anger and hostility – emotions that have no place in our game.

So, what do you think about psychs now?

Bidding Quiz - Answers

Q1 – Neither vulnerable

♠ A K T ♥ J 8 6 5 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ A 7 6

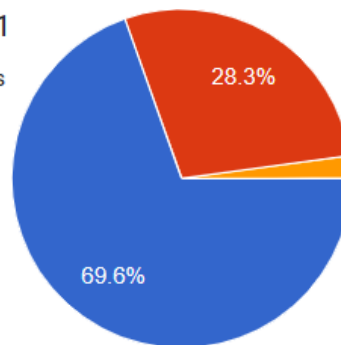
EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH

1♦ ?

Question 1

46 responses

- 1NT
- Double
- 1H



Bob Jones **X** We think this is slightly too strong for 1NT. Double, planning to bid NT next unless partner bids hearts.

Steve Vogel 1NT A one no-trump overcall can go up to 18HCP. This seems the perfect bid for this hand.

Joe Muenks 1NT With 4-3-3-3 I'll treat this as 15-17 and overcall 1NT. The alternative to double and then bid NT will feel uncomfortable if partner's best suit is clubs since 8 tricks opposite a broke hand might be rough.

Bob Fisk 1NT 1NT (15 to 18 HCP). 100%?

Steve Moese 1NT 15-18 HCP and 1.5 stoppers in diamonds, what's not to like?

Q 2 – North-South vulnerable

♠ K T 9 4 ♥ A K Q 6 4 ♦ - ♣ J 7 6 4

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

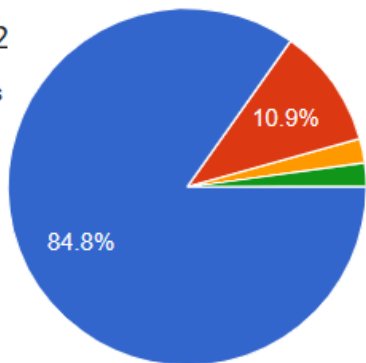
1♥ Pass 2NT Pass

?

Question 2

46 responses

- 3D
- 4H
- 3C
- 4C



Bob Jones 3♦ Slam is possible, but partner must have a club control. Bid 3♦. Give partner a chance to make a control bid in clubs.

Steve Vogel 3♦ (showing shortness) The typical responses to a Jacoby 2NT are to show whether you have shortness by bidding the short suit at the 3-level, or to show a second suit by bidding it at the 4-level. Rebidding your major suit at the 3-level shows more than 5 with no shortness, rebidding 3NT shows a balanced hand with at least some slam interest, and rebidding 4 of the major shows a balanced minimum opener.

Joe Muenks 3♦ Since you told me what system I have to use, I'll tell you I know the system by bidding the book response, shortness. In advanced partnerships I bid 3♣ because despite the void I'm not enamored by the black suits and will announce a minimum over the wide-ranging 2NT (I'll raise 3♥ to 4♥ still but not treat this good enough to bid 3♦ over 2NT).

Bob Fisk 3♦ 3♦ shows a singleton or void in Diamonds. I'll cuebid 4♦ with my next bid to show a void. Picture partner with Ax xxxx xxxxx AKQx, making 7♥. Heh.

Steve Moese 3♦ Show my shortness. (Yes, there are other schemes to reply to a Jacoby 2NT GF Major raise. Some can distinguish between a singleton or void. The one I like allows us to find a secondary 4-4 fit in the other Major. Good hunting.)

Q 3 – East-West vulnerable

♠ K Q T 7 5 ♥ K J 7 ♦ 3 ♣ A K Q 9

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

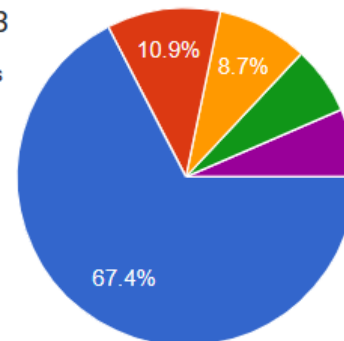
1♠ 2♥ Pass Pass

?

Question 3

46 responses

- 3C
- Double
- 2NT
- Pass
- 2S



Bob Jones 3♣ Don't double. Your heart strength means partner is unlikely to have trap passed and you can't stand a diamond bid from him. Bid 3♣.

Steve Vogel 3♣ I have a fine second suit, and in a close call, I prefer bidding that to bidding notrump with an unbalanced hand. Either a 2NT or 3♣ rebid shows extras.

Joe Muenks X I'll double this round since I'm too strong for any other action. When I bid again it will promise 17+ pts as I can reopen double with even 11 pts but I have to pass partner's bid. Note I would bid 3♣ with KQxxx, Kx, x KJxxx, so that doesn't show values, rather distribution.

Bob Fisk 3♣ You were planning on making a game-forcing jump shift to 3♣ anyway, so why not bid it now? Don't answer that—it's rhetorical. Picture partner with Jx Qx xxxxx xxxx, making 4♠.

Steve Moese 2NT 2NT - and I don't like it one bit. Double is out - while we have the strength we are poorly placed if partner responds 3♦. Our hearts suggest partner does not have a penalty pass of 2♥. 2♠ misstates strength and suit length (and 3♠ should show 6 cards) and 3♣ should show 5 cards. Give partner something like xx xx KQxxxx xxx and you know why 2NT has some merit. Pass is deep and might miss a better score our way. 2NT > 3♣ with no other making the cut.

Q 4 – Both vulnerable

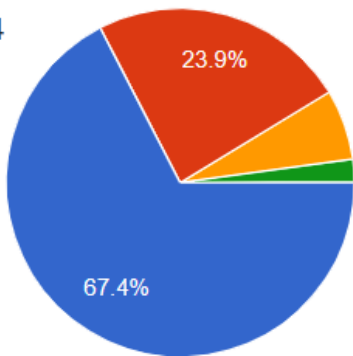
♠ QJT974 ♥ - ♦KJ765 ♣K7

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
?

Question 4

46 responses

- 1S
- 2S
- Pass
- 2H



Bob Jones 1♠ Way too strong for 2♠. Open 1♠.

Steve Vogel 1♠ I am not overly tempted to preempt with this offensively oriented 2-suited hand, and I have the master suit (spades).

Joe Muenks 2♠ This is a hand that CAN preempt and bid again, normally a cardinal sin. We know the left-right folks will be at some number of hearts when we bid next and we'll toss out diamonds at the cheapest level. Partner will know we're 6-5, 6-6 or 7-5 at that point.

Bob Fisk 1♠ You make game opposite as little as Kx xxxx Qxx Qxxx as long as you avoid the impending Diamond ruff. If partner has that hand, the opponents are cold for 4♥.

Steve Moese 1♠ Ever hear "6-5 come alive"? Well now you have Some might consider a 3 or even 4-level preempt here. That shuts out the round suits. Since we own spades and have a second possible strain we can start low.

Q 5 – North-South vulnerable

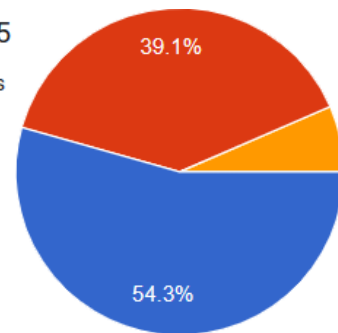
♠ 7 ♥T76 ♦KQT5 ♣AK654

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
?

Question 5

46 responses

- 1D
- 1C
- Pass



Bob Jones 1♦ 1♣ will leave you with an awkward rebid should partner respond 1♠ or 1NT. Open 1♦.

Steve Vogel 1♦ I usually open 1♣ with a 4-5 holding in the minors, but my diamond suit is strong, and in these circumstances, I prefer having 2 chances to find a minor suit fit as opposed to banking only on clubs. This one is another close call.

Joe Muenks 1♦ In most partnerships I'll gladly open 1♦ and rebid 2♥ over 1♥ or 2♣ over 1♠ or 1NT. With some purist partners I'll open 1♣ and rebid 2♣ which shows 6 clubs UNLESS you have a higher ranking 4 card suit and a singleton.

Bob Fisk **1♣** Once again, I'm not the type that will open hands such as this one 1♦ intending to rebid 2♣. Nope. If partner bids 1♦ (unlikely), I'll raise to two. If partner bids 1♥, I'll raise to 2♥. If partner bids 1♠, I'll rebid 2♣. Bridge is easy!

Steve Moese **1♣** If partner responds 1♦ we raise. If they respond 1♥ we raise. If they respond 1♠ we rebid 2♣ (not 1NT with a singleton and no Heart card). If partner responds 2♣ we pass if partner is 6-10 HCH but bid 2♦ if partner is 10+(inverted minor raise). Some will choose to open this 1♦. Since we have no real rebid problem, there's no need to distort our hand.

Q 6 – East-West vulnerable

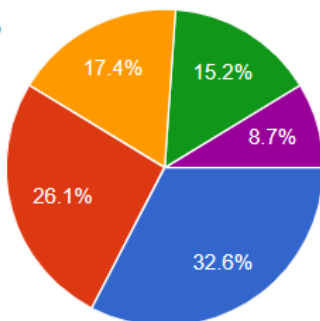
♠A T 8 5 4 ♥8 ♦A T 6 5 3 ♣T 8

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	?	

Question 6

46 responses

- 2NT
- 4S
- 3D
- 3S
- Pass



Bob Jones **3♦** This decent hand just got better. If you're not willing to bid 4♠, at least make a game try of 3♦. We prefer 3♦, barely.

Steve Vogel **2NT** (Spiral) I can construct many hands for partner where we will have a better than even chance of making game if partner has 4 spades (even with a minimum opener). I will bid 2NT to check on whether partner has 3 or 4 spades. Only if partner has 3 spades and a minimum hand will I settle for 3♠. Otherwise, I plan to bid 4♠.

Joe Muenks **2NT** You had 8 pts for the first 4 bids, but now that you've identified an 8-card major (possibly 9 cards), you (Goren) add 2 for a singleton heart and 1 for a doubleton club and have 11. Offer game by using the well traveled, multi-named 2NT asking bid (or 3♠ in standard). Some bridge book writers are adding just 1 pt for each 5-card suit so they only have 10, still enough to ask, but na na na na naaaaa na, I have more pts on the same hand. Woot.

Bob Fisk **4♠** There are too many hands partner can hold where 4♠ is cold. If I go slowly and check to see whether partner is minimum or maximum and whether or not partner holds four Spades, the opponents are going to be emboldened into taking a bid (or doubling partner's artificial 3♥ call), and they'll find their Heart fit. Oops.

Steve Moese **3♦** With this 7-loser hand, we want to be in game when partner has diamond help and no real wastage in Hearts. If partner makes a counter try in 3♥ we can suspect wasted values and put on the brakes. If partner rebids 3♠ we will respect their decision. However if partner can raise on 3-cards only with an outside singleton (a good agreement) then we bid 4♠, confident our singletons are complementary - our Heart opposite partner's Diamond. Think cross ruff.

President's Report to the Membership Meeting 17NOV22



Good evening, everyone. Welcome to the Annual Membership Meeting for Unit 124 aka the Cincinnati Bridge Association. For those of you who might not know me, I am Steve Moese, your Unit President. It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you, our members, to this meeting.

The Board of Directors wants to hear what you say.

We have 747 members in Unit 124 (down from 985 in 2013). We do not have a quorum tonight. Of course, we are all interested in understanding what you want and what improvements we can make. I can assure you that we will listen to you tonight. So please don't be shy. Our goal is simple – we all want bridge to thrive in Cincinnati.

I'll wager that there is a lot we all take for granted. We are very lucky in Cincinnati. We have a wonderful Bridge Center that would be the envy of most locations in North America. Look around you. This facility is dedicated to bridge, and offers nice amenities for our players, and many conveniences and tools for our sanction holders who run games here. The facility comes with dealing machines, computers, websites, and email communications so that clubs can thrive. The Cincinnati Bridge Center has many clubs under one roof. We believe that our Bridge Center is a major asset for bridge in the Cincinnati area – a great space, a great convenience, and a reachable and safe location. We hope you feel as we do.

Our lease on this facility runs through August 2027. We can meet this obligation with your help.

I am now going to share the current financial state of the Unit. As you know you can review the financial details for the Unit on our Unit Website.

We are among the luckier Units in District 11. With Covid-19, the closure of the CBC for 14 months, and the slow return of our players to in-person bridge, we continue to lose money every month. Because we run the Flying Big Regional, we have built up a substantial cash reserve. The Unit decided 4-5 years ago to invest a substantial part of our cash to create additional income. That income stream looms important today.

Our balance sheet shows cash and investment holdings of about \$216,200 as of October 31, 2022. This is what we have on hand to cover near and long-term obligations.

You also know that the Unit leases this building – the Cincinnati Bridge Center – and rents the space to game owners. In the past prior to covid-19, the attendance was sufficient for the Unit to run this center at about breakeven. In some years we had a small gain, in others we had a small loss. Our lease extends until August 2027. I want to assure you that we can cover our obligations for these 4 years and 10 months.

Since covid -19 struck in March 2020, the CBC has lost money every month. Our losses are entirely tied to the rent for the CBC and the absence of regional and sectional tournaments.

2020 Loss -\$23,305
2021 Loss -\$27,388
2022 Loss - \$14,600 Oct 2022 (or 21,000 for 2022 est)

As we see tournaments ACBL wide slowly recovering we have some optimize that the Flying Pig will continue to grow from the almost 500 tables toward 700 or 800 tables over the next few years. This is very important to our bottom line. Every 100 tables above 500 adds more than \$6000 to our earnings.

The Board has done what it can to mitigate the losses. We have suspended all free plays and compensations since March 2020. The Board has also suspended compensation for 2023 in the hope that we can return to near breakeven sooner. We negotiated a rent reduction for 5 months in 2021, raised funds in 2021, and have leased space for a thriving non-sanctioned game on Fridays. District 11 has chosen Cincinnati Unit 124 to host all District Finals for the NAP and GNT going forward. We depend on help from volunteers more now than ever.

We pay about \$6000 per month for our lease and associated facility costs. Since we currently charge club owners \$15 per table, that means we need 400 table per month to break even on the cost of this facility. We have averaged only 167 tables per month through the end of September. That leaves us 233 tables short each month. That translates to a -\$3500 loss per month on the facility.

For this reason, we have acted to raise the rent to club owners at the Cincinnati Bridge Center starting January 1, 2023. The new rent \$19 per table might or might not cause table fees to increase. The table fee is the decision of the club owners and not the Unit. The Unit does NOT set entry fees for club games. Club owners last raised entry fees in 2018 from \$7 to \$8 – there was no rent increase associated with that price change. Our current table fees are well behind similar clubs in similar cities (\$10-15 per person per game).

At \$19 per table and 167 Tables per month, we reduce rent losses to -\$2,800 or -\$33,800 per year for the CBC. If we can increase table counts (new games, more people per game at existing games) we can narrow this loss to a manageable level. Were we to price rent to these games to cover 100% of that loss, we would be charging \$36 rent per table or +\$9 per person (that's \$17 per person for a club game if the game owners pass along the cost). That kind of pricing will destroy in-person bridge. So, we proposed this less disruptive approach.

We have four other sources of income – our tournaments, our investments, Unit income and other games run at the CBC. For 2022, tournaments contributed about \$6000, Investments about \$10,000, Unit Income about \$7,000 and a non-sanctioned game rent about \$3000. This

\$26,000 from other sources give us optimism that we can reduce our breakeven target to 244 tables per month in the short term. That means if everything continuing as now, we need only increase attendance 77 tables a month or 19 tables per week. Of course, greater income from the Regional and the sectional tournaments will allow us to cover more of the loss.

We can do this. You can do this. Every pair that plays 2 more games a week adds 1 table to our income. Ideally, we would prefer to operate the CBC free from financial support from our tournaments. Because of Covid-19, we have no choice. We can expect higher yields from our tournaments in time as attendees return to in-person bridge. We believe an upsurge in attendance is possible in spring 2023 when we are past the winter covid and flu surge months, and people have taken full advantage of the new bivalent booster.

So having lived through this dark period of the past 30 months we can finally see a reason for optimism, supported by your increased participation, and a path to continue the wonderful advantage we have in our beloved Cincinnati Bridge Center. We seek your understanding and we ask your increased participation in all club games here.

Our education effort continues with a strong beginner effort in collaboration with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and the University of Cincinnati. We can always welcome more new members. We also reach out to lapsed members and those wishing to return to play. Our Mentor program saw the lowest participation in years. We hope that things will improve next year as more of our members return to play. Please encourage our NLMs to play more often.

The Flying Pig Regional has a new Tournament Chair – Mr. Arun Goyal replaces Mr. AJ Stephani. We congratulate and thank AJ for his many years leading this jewel of District 11, and pledge our support to Arun for the years to come. Please give Arun your support and volunteer to help. We have the Best Regional in District 11. Let's keep it that way.

Our new Board of Directors welcomes new members for the 2023 Board: Bill Brewer, John Meinking, and Jim Barrett. Please congratulate them on their election, and give us feedback so we all know what you want going forward.

Now, let me open the floor to any questions you might have about my report on the health of the Unit. After that

we will ask anyone who wants to comment about any aspect of bridge in our unit to address this meeting. Now I will turn the floor over to you so that you can present questions for Board Members or proposals for approval by members here today. Please limit your time to two minutes. I want to thank everyone for coming tonight. Your input is very helpful.

Presented by Stephen Moese, President, Unit 124.
17 November 2022



2023 Covid Vaccination Survey Results

Overall (average)

1. Vaccinated – 97%
2. In-person events attended in last 6 months
 - a. Club game – 75%
 - b. Sectional/regional tournament – 43%
 - c. Dining – 84%
 - d. None – 4%
3. Tournaments attended in 2022
 - a. NABC – 13%
 - b. Regional – 32%
 - c. Sectional – 37%
 - d. None – 46%
4. Has ACBL's policy affected your decision to attend a tournament in last 6 months?
 - a. Yes – 36%
 - b. No – 64%
5. How would eliminating the vaccination requirement affect your tournament attendance?
 - a. Attend more – 9%
 - b. Attend fewer – 10%
 - c. Will not attend – 38%
 - d. No difference – 43%

Takeaways:

- Nearly all respondents are vaccinated (97%)
- 3/4 have played at the bridge club
- Nearly 85% have dined out
- 54% have played in a tournament (fairly equal between regionals and sectionals)
- About 2/3 (64%) of members' decision to play in last 6 months was NOT affected by policy
- 9% will attend more tournaments if requirement removed

- 48% will attend fewer or no tournaments if requirement removed
- 43% no difference if requirement removed
- For many (about 20% of members), the policy hasn't recently affected their tournament attendance, but eliminating the policy would affect future attendance
- Meaning for about 1/5 of members, the decision appears to be based on principle

A small number of members wrote in, and their comments broke down into these topics:

- Masks should be required over vaccines
- The CDC science is invalid
- They don't attend tournaments because they are too expensive

See the full summary at:

<http://www.district11bridge.com/2023%20Covid%20Vacination%20Survey%20Results.pdf>

Save the Dates:



D11 GNT Finals
APRIL 15-16, 2024
CINCINNATI BRIDGE CENTER



Dog Days of August
NLM Sectional
August 18-19-20

On the Front Lines

Are F2F clubs at war with the ACBL?

By Amy Casanova

Rob Lail of Beckett Ridge OH directs one game per week, on Thursdays. It's a big game, 18–20 tables on average. He starts to prepare several days beforehand.

"I start on Sunday individually texting, emailing and calling over 100 people to get them to my game on Thursday. I'm trying to keep people relevant, with something to do that makes them happy and brings them together. We serve huge amounts of food. It takes a lot of work.

"To be honest, the ACBL is the enemy of the clubs. One-third of my calls say, 'Your game is \$8, we can play online for \$2.25.' That's no support from the ACBL. It's too bad because, when you get old, you really want to stay personally relevant."

John Altman of Cincinnati OH runs a night game. He grew up at the bridge center in Cincinnati, learning with his dad when he was 11 at the behest of his grandmother. He directed all through high school and college and still runs a weekly game. "I do one of the one-and-a-half night games we have. I run a 'four is enough' game every week, and we have one other night game every other week." They average 7–10 tables.

"I don't want to say I'm the opposite of Rob, but I spend significantly less time on my game simply because I don't have the time. Half the reason I direct the game is because it's the only game I can play in. Normally I wouldn't do that as a director if I was making a sitout or something, but this is the deal if we are going to have a night pairs game, because otherwise I wouldn't get to play any bridge."



Rob Lail

Everything about the in-person experience is harder and takes longer, for everyone involved. Yet these are the people dedicated to providing the opportunity. Both Altman and Lail believe masterpoints and winning are secondary. "It's not the reason they're coming out," said Lail. "They just want some interaction. They want a break from being old, or from having spouses that have problems, or whatever." Lail often plays in Altman's game. "I love John because John is a young person acknowledging older people. He makes my evening fun."

As local bridge continues to shrink, clubs and units might be more inclined to operate together. An interesting feature of the Cincinnati Bridge Center is its arrangement with local Unit 124. All games are individually run and sanctioned; directors "lease" the space from the unit, paying \$16 per table for their club games. They can use the duplicating machine, boards, print hand records and use the facility. The unit also hosts sectional tournaments at the facility.

Altman serves on the unit board. "The unit is losing money every month. This space might go away. We've been in this facility for 25 years; it's a great space and we don't want to lose it. We have a bit of a cushion; we can be here for another year or two, but we have to figure something out. Otherwise, we have to relocate and that's only going to cause

more players to leave."

Sharks in the pool

When the pandemic shut down in-person bridge, the virtual clubs program was created almost instantly by a team that included former Board of Directors member Jay Whipple and Greg Coles, until recently director of operations of the ACBL (Bridge Bulletin, March 2021). "We had Support Your Club games up and running in about 36 hours," said Coles. "The first games were limited to 400 pairs, and they sold out, so we added new ones. It was huge that first month. We thought it would tide us over until we got the virtual clubs going. It still brings in revenue, so it still exists." Almost immediately, the virtual clubs (VACB) began to outpace the SYC games. The online games are generating less revenue this year than the two years prior. Still, to date, almost \$45 million of revenue has been generated and disbursed directly to clubs via online games.

It didn't take long for online clubs to merge, creating "pools" or mega-clubs that run multiple games per day with multiple sections. By far the biggest virtual club in North America is the Southeast Bridge Club Consortium, also known as Gryphon II DBC, which is operated by Kevin Wilson and Jim Ricker, both of Knoxville TN. Wilson is a national champion



Almost a full house at the Cincinnati Bridge Center on a Thursday

and ABTA-certified master teacher. Ricker was the ABTA's 2019 Teacher of the Year. Their club's YTD table count as of the end of November was a staggering 63,174 tables, more than double that of the Duncan Bridge Center, which operates out of Palm Desert CA.

"There are two types of players now," said Wilson, who noted they are serving the people who cannot leave their homes. "I get people thanking me for welcoming them into our club. They might have Stage 4 cancer and can't leave the house, and this is the only opportunity for them to play."

Joe Jones, until recently ACBL's executive director, looks at it from a business angle. "If someone's willing to work really hard and take care of their customers, they deserve to be successful. Are they serving our members? Is this serving our members' needs? I would have to say yes. Is it in the best interest of the long-term health of the bridge community in North America? I don't know."

The BBO "club" – which has been sanctioned since 2003 – got into the action, too, expanding their hourly games that award unpigmented ACBL masterpoints which count toward a player's ranking. Their table count through October was over 2 million tables.

acbl	ACBL 299el Daylong - 2022-11-28	Individual	Running	301	1.33 BBS
acbl	ACBL Daylong (MP) 2 - 2022-11-28	Individual	Running	167	1.43 BBS
acbl	ACEL Daylong 16 Boards (MP) 1 - 2022-11-28	Individual	Running	130	2.09 BBS
acbl	ACBL C-20 Daylong (MP) - 2022-11-28	Individual	Running	54	1.35 BBS
acbl	ACBL Daylong (MP) 1 - 2022-11-28	Individual	Running	537	1.45 BBS
acbl	ACBL Daylong (MP) 2 - 2022-11-28	Individual	Running	308	1.45 BBS
ACBL.SYC	ACBL.SYC Back Post Daylong (MP) - 2022-11-28	Individual	Running	51	6.095

Labeling these games in "ACBL World" and as hosted by the ACBL only adds to the confusion and misconception. The host of these games is BBO.

Why is the perception that the ACBL is killing F2F clubs? Perhaps there are misconceptions about where the money goes. The ACBL does not keep any table fees. For every club game, the sanction fee to the ACBL remains 25 cents per

player, or \$1 per table. In fact, for the games that are only 12 boards (by far the majority), the sanction fee is 14.5 cents. That is the entirety of the money that goes to the ACBL. Besides the sanction fee, the funds from the hourly "ACBL" games run by BBO go to BBO, even though they are confusingly "hosted" by ACBL. The league can't tell a club – online or in person – when it can and cannot operate. "There's a lot of frustration around clubs. We are careful to not be controlling," said Jones.

The top 10 clubs – whether online, F2F or hybrid – are certainly posting big numbers, but it doesn't take long for the clubs' table counts to drop off significantly and moderate. "The vast majority of our clubs are very small," said Coles. "If they were struggling pre-pandemic to stay alive with five to seven tables and having to pay rent and directors and our fees, I know coming out of the pandemic if that has dropped to three to five, they just can't afford it anymore. If those clubs say, 'We are just going to operate online,' what do we want? Do we want them to go away? Because that's the only other option."

Some believe any kind of bridge is good for bridge. Perhaps the online community is just that – another type of community that creates bridge

players who might transition from the computer into a F2F player. "I started playing bridge around the same time

online sanctioned bridge started, in 2004," said Coles. "I won my first masterpoints online." Online bridge didn't prevent Coles from getting involved. "I don't think there are many who have worn more hats than me. I've been a club manager, a teacher, a

unit and district board officer.

"I used to be heavily engaged in BBO forums; I heard the same things back then when it was a buck a game, people thought club bridge would die. That didn't happen. It's not going to happen this time either. The people that want to go back, they are going back."

Altman doesn't think they're coming back. "We need to focus on building a new player base, because even if we can get everyone to come back, it's still gonna die out.

"For my generation, I would like to see the ACBL do some actual marketing to people. We have a big, nationwide organization, but if I mention bridge to anyone my age, nobody has any clue that there is a competitive side to bridge. No one has any idea that it's a competitive mindsport."

So far, there has been no consensus between the board and management in terms of strategy going forward. There have been discussions regarding pricing structures, annual sanction fees and differentiating between online play and F2F play.

"The in-person game is special; it should be elevated in terms of achievement," said Jones. "There is a real sense of community; it's an outlet for sociability, and we don't want that to die.

"But people don't want to be told what to do. We would like everyone to get together and play in person, but we can't make them."

F2F club owners and directors are desperate for some form of action from the league. In the meantime, they will continue to work twice as hard and long.

"For me, it's about personalizing everyone at the club," said Lail. "I send texts out to people who did well, to say, 'Congratulations, I hope you had a good time.' I get responses like, 'What do you need me to bring to eat next week?'"

"They say, 'You made my day, you made my week, I look forward to every Thursday.'" 🍷

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA REGIONAL

March 20–25, 2023



Location: Cambridge Golf Club

1034 Beacon Hill
Evansville, IN 47725

Directions:

- South on HWY 41 from Interstate 64
- North on HWY 41 from Interstate 69
- Turn East on Volkman Road when you see Red Feather Flags on HWY 41
- Turn Left on Cambridge Village Drive Marked by a Red Feather Flag
- Park in Lot East of Clubhouse: map red dot



Tournament Chair:

Billie K. Brown (812) 457-7268 (raymondbjaco78@astound.net)

Tournament Co-Chair:

Stephen Brouillette (940) 230-5606 (sjb.2305606@gmail.com)

Fees: \$16 per person/per session. Saturday Bracketed Swiss: \$188 for 4-person team. Tutorials M-F 2:00 pm. We will follow ACBL protocols for Covid current March 2023. Single Session entries are accepted at Pair Events.

TIME CST	10:00 AM	2:30 PM
Monday March 20	Gold Rush Pairs (1 of 2) Open Pairs (1 of 2)	Gold Rush Pairs (2 of 2) Open Pairs (2 of 2)
Tuesday March 21	Strati-flighted Swiss (1 of 2)	Strati-flighted Swiss (2 of 2)
Wednesday March 22	Gold Rush Pairs (1 of 2) Open Pairs (1 of 2)	Gold Rush Pairs (2 of 2) Open Pairs (2 of 2)
Thursday March 23	Bracketed Swiss (1 of 2)	Bracketed Swiss (2 of 2)
Friday March 24	Gold Rush Pairs (1 of 2) Open Pairs (1 of 2)	Gold Rush Pairs (2 of 2) Open Pairs (2 of 2)
Saturday March 25	9:00 AM	1:30 PM
	Bracketed Swiss (1 of 2)	Buffet Bracketed Swiss (2 of 2)
Strats:	Open Pairs	0-1500/-2500/-unlimited
	Gold Rush Pairs	0-100/-300/-750
	Non-Life Masters	0-100/-200/-500
	Strati-Flighted Swiss Teams	B/C/D-0-300/-750/-1500, A/X 0-2000/-3500/unlimited
Partnerships	Jane Staton (812) 480-5289 (mymomJane@aol.com) Stephen Brouillette (940) 230-5606 (sjb.2305606@gmail.com)	
Host Hotel	Holiday Inn Express & Suites North: 324 Rusher Creek Road, Evansville IN 47725, 3.5 miles from Cambridge. Deadline is March 5th for Bridge Regional Rate: \$110 plus tax. Call: 1-812-867-2200. Free Breakfast & Parking.	



District 11 Final

Saturday, Apr. 15 (10:30AM and TBA)

(2-Session Qualifying Swiss)

Sunday, Apr. 16 (10:30AM and TBA)

Cincinnati Bridge Center

2860 Cooper Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45241

(513) 563-2218

District 11 NAP/GNT
Coordinator:
Ryan Schultz
schultzrr@gmail.com



Championship Flight (Open)

Flight A (<6000 MPs)

Flight B (<2500 MPs)

Flight C (NLM, <500)

**(As of ACBL's September
2022 MP cycle)**

HOTEL INFORMATION

**Delta Hotels by Marriott / 1320 Chester Road
513-771-2080**



CINCINNATI
HOME OF
THE FLYING PIG!

June 4-10, 2023



MORE INFO: CINCYBRIDGE.COM

Delta Hotels by Marriott
11320 Chester Road
Cincinnati OH 45246
513-771-2080
[Online Reservation Link](#)

EVERYDAY FEATURES
TEAM EVENTS
U750 EVENTS
PAIRS EVENTS

2023 Cincinnati Regional Jun 4-10

Delta Hotels by Marriott 11320 Chester Rd, Cincinnati OH 45246 513-771-2080

Room Rates \$99/night

U750: Limited Game all players with less than 750 mps
Bracketed and Soloway Events will have U750 section

Schedule subject to change
Events may be combined based on attendance

	10:00 AM	2:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sunday	Note: Sunday's Sessions are at 12:00 PM and 4:00 PM		
	Under 750 Gold Rush Pairs 2 sessions		
	Open Pairs 2 sessions		
	Bracketed Swiss 2 sessions		
	Side Series Pairs A	Side Series Pairs A	
Monday	Under 750 Gold Rush Pairs 2 sessions		Under 750 Gold Rush Pairs 1 of 2
	Open Pairs 2 sessions		
	Soloway Bracketed K/O 1 and 2 of 4		Bracketed Horizontal Swiss 1 of 2
	Side Series Pairs A	Side Series Pairs A	
Tuesday	Under 750 Gold Rush Pairs 2 sessions		Under 750 Gold Rush Pairs 2 of 2
	Open Pairs 2 sessions		
	Soloway Bracketed K/O 3 and 4 of 4		Bracketed Horizontal Swiss 2 of 2
	Bracketed Swiss 2 sessions		
	Side Series Pairs A	Side Series Pairs A	
Wednesday	Under 750 Gold Rush Pairs 2 sessions		Open Pairs 1 of 2
	A/X & B/C/D Swiss		
	Side Series Pairs B	Side Series Pairs B	8 is Enough Horizontal Swiss 1 of 2
Thursday	Under 750 Gold Rush Pairs 2 sessions		Open Pairs 2 of 2
	Open Pairs 2 sessions		
	Soloway Bracketed K/O 1 and 2 of 4		8 is Enough Horizontal Swiss 2 of 2
	Side Series Pairs B	Side Series Pairs B	
Friday	Under 750 Gold Rush Pairs 2 sessions		Legend
	Open Pairs 2 sessions		
	Soloway Bracketed K/O 3 and 4 of 4		Gold Rush in Red
	Bracketed Swiss 2 sessions		Pairs in Black
	Side Series Pairs B	Side Series Pairs B	K/O in Brown
Saturday	A/X & B/C/D Swiss		Swiss in Blue
	Will be held at: 2860 Cooper Rd, Cincinnati OH 45241		8 is Enough in Green
	Transportation from the Hotel will be provided at 9:30 AM		

2023 FLYING PIG REGIONAL Spotlight on Events

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 Semifinals
- Top Qualifier in Each Bracket Chooses from 3rd and 4th Place Team as Semifinal Opponent

Why You'll LOVE This Format

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



Eight is Enough!

Wed-Thurs Evening Swiss

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 Point: 400-1500 Masterpoints

3 Point: > 1500 Masterpoints

5 or 6 player teams are permitted, but no team may field a team with more than 8 points of players in any round

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

Pairs Games
U750 Games
Team Games

Every Session
Every Session
Every Session



Completely Remodeled!



New Restaurant and Bar with Starbucks



Totally Renovated Sleeping Rooms

Stratifications

Open Pairs & Side Games (w/o Gold Rush)
2500+/750-2500/0-750

Gold Rush Pairs & Swiss
400-750/150-400/0-150

Open Pairs & Swiss (with Gold Rush)
4000+/1500-4000/0-1500

All players in events with upper MP limit must be under limit
All events stratified by average MPs
KO events may be handicapped

MORE INFO: CINCYBRIDGE.COM

2023 FLYING PIG REGIONAL



Newly
Crowned Life
Masters at
the Flying Pig
Are Engraved
on Pigasus!

Trophies
For all U750 Event
Winners

Hospitality
After 2nd Session Mon-Thu
Lunch Sat

Lectures Mon-Fri
After 1st Session

Spacious
Playing
Rooms!



Event FAQ

Q: What are the COVID vaccination requirements?

A: Proof of vaccination is required. Please bring your vaccination card - you will not be allowed to play without one.

Q: Are masks required?

A: Current ACBL policies follow CDC guidance, which do not require masks for players. In the unlikely event that the CDC recommendations or local regulations change, we will comply. We welcome you to wear masks, especially out of respect for opponents who are wearing them at your table.

Q: What games pay Gold?

A: All 2-session events pay gold for event overalls and section tops.

Q: What are "Bracketed Round Robins?"

A: The entire field is divided into small brackets and each team plays every other team in their own bracket in a kind of mini-Swiss. These events have proven to be quite popular across the ACBL.



♠ **Tournament Chair** ♠
Arun Goyal
513-226-3001
FlyingPig.Chair@cincybridge.com

♦ **Partnerships** ♦
Jim Barrett
513-504-1094
Gary Herrington
513-615-1599
FlyingPig.Partnerships@cincybridge.com

♣ **NLM Program** ♣
Monica Ibarra
513-240-2767
FlyingPig.NLM@cincybridge.com

♥ **Hotel Information** ♥
Delta Hotels by Marriott
11320 Chester Road
513-771-2080

6/4-6/9 \$99/Night
Double or King
ask for "Flying Pig Regional" Rate
Must reserve by May 14, 2023

Online Reservation Link



MORE INFO: CINCYBRIDGE.COM