

# TABLE TALK

A publication of the Vermont Bridge Association  
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October, 2011  
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Elizabeth playing BIDdittle with her grandchildren. The game was designed by Pat Harrington to introduce the basic concepts of counting, bidding and trick-taking. Alexandra, 8½ and Carlton 6½ love it. Elizabeth at age 2 is not quite into it yet.

**Editor's Comment:** Elizabeth VonRiesenfelder is our featured personality. What an interesting person she is! She has acceded to my request to provide a narrative of about a page and a half. I would like to read a book on her life. As you will read, she has contributed a great deal to the advancement of bridge in Vermont. I have typed her name many times as a bridge winner. She has far and away the longest name in the Vermont Bridge Association

There is a Chinese curse that says: "May you live in interesting times!" Well, I have! The most turbulent, devastating years of mid 20<sup>th</sup> century destroyed my family and changed the course of my life forever. In the midst of all disasters the only benefit came from learning how to survive – a good guideline for the bridge world too!

In pre-Communist Hungary, bridge was a popular social game; club championships were played in evening attire and tuxedo. Bridge was later shunned during the Stalin-era as a decadent

bourgeois pastime. I was recruited by an uncle of mine to be the much needed fourth and a permanent dummy – 2 ½ tricks to open, 1 ½ tricks to respond – never got any further!

After the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and bloody repression by the Soviet troops, I ended up at the University of Pennsylvania as a pre-med student, safely housed in a girls' dormitory where boys were allowed to enter only for the traditional Sunday afternoon bridge game. Bridge was extremely popular, but good bidding and playing were not the primary concern!

During school vacations my psychiatrist aunt thought it might be mutually beneficial to play bridge with the inmates at her hospital – for me to perfect my English, for them to have occupational therapy. I soon got over the eerie feeling of hearing the door locked behind me and learned to cope with erratic, irrational behavior at the bridge table – most helpful for the future!

After graduation I worked in New York City at Columbia Presbyterian. There weren't scholarships available then for medical schools, especially not for females. I met my husband, Carl, a true "knight on a white horse." This ended my brief career in biochemical research. My only mentionable achievements were collaborating on a research paper on phospholipids and several dead rats.

Bridge definitely took a back seat after the mid-60-s; everybody was involved in "important causes". Anyhow, we were on the international business circuit, living abroad and traveling worldwide; I visited 56 countries, but nothing to compare to Carl's 118. I missed the Middle East, where wives weren't welcome and most of Africa that was not tourist-friendly. I speak four languages, some better than others.

We had New York City as a home base and a country home just across the NY State border on Route 313, past Arlington, VT. Our daughter, Christina, was also a great traveler and a most delightful child, later growing into a very wonderful young lady.

Bridge re-entered my life during the first Gulf War (1990). We were living in Paris at the time and the entire American ex-pat community was in a catatonic state due to repeated threats against all American institutions, schools, churches by the militant Arab organizations. The consulate even advised us all not to speak English on the streets to avoid unpleasant confrontations. Paris looked like a city in a state of siege; armed police on every corner, all subways guarded against terrorist attempts. As president of one of the ladies' clubs, I got the idea of organizing large bridge evenings in rotating homes, and I was hooked on the game forever.

After Carl's retirement in 1992 we moved back to our country home. The lights on the Battenkill River didn't quite match the lights on the Seine, but we traveled often and spent much time in New York. Bridge sneaked more and more into my life to provide some excitement. As a fledgling player, I joined ACBL and ventured to play at the Manchester Duplicate Bridge Club, the only year around game existing at the time. If I weren't a tough Hungarian, who crawled through the Iron Curtain, I would've gone home crying after the first game, never to return to the bridge table again! It became immediately clear to me that there was a dire need for entry level instruction and a gentle, encouraging duplicate game. At various Nationals I got my Teacher Accreditation in 1997, and Director Certification in 2003, concurrently starting a Sanctioned Newcomer Game that became an Open Game in 2005.

Over the years I taught bridge courses at GMALL (Green Mountain Academy for Lifelong Learning) a non-profit educational institution presenting lectures on a variety of topics. Every year I run a Beginner Bridge course in addition to many others at the Intermediate level.

The few tables I started with grew over the years into a steady year-round 10-17 tables game, keeping in mind that for many players bridge means a pleasant afternoon with friends, a place for social gathering, and a little challenge for the gray cells. I have signed up at least 80 new ACBL members, (a respectable percentage of Vermont Bridge Association members) and have the greatest number of senior “Junior” Masters as regulars.

During all the years I was building “bridge”-s, I received invaluable help, advice and guidance from everyone at ACBL, and my greatest compliment came from President Craig Robinson in his e-mail to me: “Keep the new players coming.....YOU are the heart of the ACBL.”

Personally, I’m still working hard on my bridge, starting from Square One. Now I’m trying to get to the Silver Life Master status. I had my tough days, but I love the challenge of the ever changing puzzles bridge provides and I play for fun. Life is still exciting; I’m a passionate classical music and opera fan, love tennis, good theater, and disappear often in New York City to refill my cultural reservoir. My greatest joy is my little family, Christina, Kevin and my three grandchildren.

## **President’s Message**

By Phil Sharpsteen

The annual meeting of the VBA unit was held October 2, 2011 at the Burlington Bridge club. 17 tables were in play ably directed by Frank Hacker. The Burlington Club arranged for fantastic treats throughout the day and a fine turkey dinner between sessions.

At the meeting, Unit officers were elected for 2012.

President:	Phil Sharpsteen
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-President:	John Conova
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-President:	Bonnie Clouser
Secretary:	Karen Kristiansen
Treasurer:	Ron Plante

These are the individuals who, along with club representatives, run the business and bridge of the Unit through meetings at the sectionals. If you are neither, consider volunteering to do some small task at our 4 sectionals and at your club. The game you show up to pay and play in doesn’t just happen by itself!

An interesting stat from the October 1997 Table Talk. The Vermont unit had 405 members distributed as follows:

61 rookie, 51 Jr master, 70 club master, 66 sectional master, 61 regional master, 27 NABC master and 69 life master,

As of September 2011 the unit had 465 members distributed as follows:

76 rookie, 59 Jr master, 103 club master, 53 sectional master, 53 regional master, 21 NABC master and 100 life master.

## Vermonters On The Way Up

Congratulations to the following VBA members who have achieved new ranks in the master point hierarchy. Well done!!

### Junior Master:

Lisa Barrett	Lorna Jimmerson	Lillian Kelley
Fredricka Kimball	Millie Kimball	Arlene Okun
Robert Ward		

### Club Master:

Sandra Hoverkamp	Eileen Mann	Margaret Nadeau
Jacqueline Reardon	Don Sharp	Diana Talcott

### Sectional Master:

Amy Labie	Bernard Long
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### Regional Master:

Joseph Morein	Mary Sullivan
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### NABC Master:

Richard Clark	Gordon Johnson	Karen Kristiansen
Robert Springer		

## Vermont On The Tournament Trail

Many Vermonters have done well (10 points or more) recently at the Toronto Nationals and at a number of regionals. There have been many tournaments since the last issue. My apologies for any inadvertent omissions.

Here is a list of recent Vermont successes

<b><u>Toronto:</u></b>	Mary Savko	45.70	Ellie Hanlon	45.70
	Allan Graves	35.81	Sandra Hammer	28.50
	Courtney Nelson	28.50	Andy Avery	26.78

<b><u>Saratoga Springs:</u></b>	Jerry DiVincenzo	75.15	Mary Savko	75.15
	Ellie Hanlon	75.15	John Conova	19.79
	Norma Jakominich	19.79	Penny Lane	10.94
	J. Peter Tripp	10.94		
<b><u>Las Vegas:</u></b>	Lucy Morini	19.65		
<b><u>Reston:</u></b>	Allan Graves	129.51		
<b><u>Greenville:</u></b>	Allan Graves	116.74		
<b><u>Sturbridge:</u></b>	Wayne Hersey	20.68	Penny Lane	20.38
	J. Peter Tripp	20.38	Gordon Johnson	20.26
	Richard Clark	20.26	Rhoda Chickering	18.69
	Sandy Desilets	18.69		
<b><u>Fredericton:</u></b>	Ellie Hanlon	50.89	Mary Savko	50.89
<b><u>Montreal:</u></b>	Mary Savko	32.19	Ellie Hanlon	32.19
<b><u>Hunt Valley:</u></b>	J. Peter Tripp	37.45	Penny Lane	37.45
	Norma Jakominich	12.84	John Conova	12.84
<b><u>Pittsburgh:</u></b>	Allan Graves	97.87		
<b><u>Warwick:</u></b>	Mary Savko	59.89	Phil Sharpsteen	59.89
	Ellie Hanlon	59.89	Frank Hacker	59.89
	Penny Lane	18.13	J. Peter Tripp	18.13
	Alan Wertheimer	15.87		

Also, Table Talk congratulates Courtney Nelson and Sandra Hammer for winning 10.07 points in the New England July 1-7 STAC (Sectional Tournament at Clubs)..

## St. Johnsbury Unit Game

On June 25, a unit game was held at St. Johnsbury House for the benefit of the Good Living Center at the St. Johnsbury House. Arthur Aiken directed. The format was 2 sessions of bridge with a lunch in the middle. The game has 12 tables for the first session, 11.5 for the second session and raised an outstanding \$800 for the Good Living Center. Well done!!!! Here are the bridge results.

MP	A	B	C	Names	Pct.
5.50	1			Jerry DiVincenzo – Mike Farrell	66.34
4.13	2	1	1	Jeff Lewis – Jeanie Clermont	59.93
3.09	3	2		Robert Ashman – Karen Kristiansen	59.50
2.32	4	3		Jim Abbott – Robin Kerr	59.41
1.83	5	4	2	Bob Drew – Mary Drew	58.98
1.57	6			Mary Savko – Ellie Hanlon	58.73
0.90		5		Al Ferraro – Liz Ferraro	58.53

## Tiernan Trophy Race

In the 1950s, Agatha Tiernan and two daughters, Claire and Mary Elizabeth moved to Brandon, Vermont from Pittsburgh. Agatha had been a bridge teacher in Pittsburgh. All three were already life masters among the first one thousand in ACBL history and stars on the national bridge scene. In 1951 they were on a team that finished second in the national women's board-a-match teams. In 1956 Mary Elizabeth won the same event competing on a team with well known star Jan Stone and finishing ahead of a team with Helen Sobel and Margaret Wagar (for whom the national women's KO team event is now named), two of bridge's all-time greats.

In Vermont they owned the Frock Shop, a women's clothing store, and ran bridge games at the Cavendish Club at the Brandon Inn. They were well known for their bridge parties and their aversion to modern conventions. In fact, Mary Elizabeth refused to play Stayman. They donated one of their regional victory trophies to be awarded on an annual basis to the leading master point winner at the four Vermont sectional tournaments. For many years this trophy was known as the Cavendish trophy and some long time Vermonters still call it by that name.

Both Agatha and Claire passed on in the 1970s and the trophy became renamed the Tiernan trophy in their memory. Mary Elizabeth died in the late 1980s. Your Table Talk editor remembers that in the late 1980s, Mary Elizabeth was Vermont's leading player with about 1,900 master points. Clearly times and the meaning of master points have changed.

Every year the trophy winner has his or her name engraved on the trophy and may take it home for a year. Very few winners have actually done that and the trophy currently resides at the Burlington bridge club, bridge home of the past several winners. Below is a list of trophy winners. These names are taken right off the trophy as they appear on the trophy. As you can see their have been several multiple winners and also several ties. For some old time Vermonters, the list of names will provide a trip down Memory Lane.

1961	Sam Bayne	1986	Clifford Gordon
1962	Edw. B. Reiter	1987	Robert Tamlyn
1963	Bill Mintzer	1988	Philip Sharpsteen

1964	Edw. B. Reiter	1989	David Shaw
1965	Edw. B. Reiter	1990	Robert Tamlyn
1966	Steve Reiter	1991	Clifford Gordon
1967	Ruth C. Reiter	1992	Mike Farrell
1968	Stewart A. Smith	1993	Mike Farrell
1969	Edsel Hughes	1994	Phil Sharpsteen
1970	Edsel Hughes	1995	Jerry DiVincenzo
1971	Pat DiVincenzo	1996	G. DiVincenzo
1972	Kathleen Farrell	1997	G. DiVincenzo, Mike Farrell
1973	Judith Donald	1998	M. Savko
1974	Fred C. Donald, Jr.	1999	G. DiVincenzo
1975	J. Costello	2000	F. Hacker
1976	Mary S. Allen	2001	P. Sharpsteen, F. Hacker
1977	Pauline Callihan	2002	P. DiVincenzo
1978	Clifford Gordon	2003	F. Hacker, P. Sharpsteen
1979	J. Costello	2004	F. Hacker, P. Sharpsteen
1980	Gerry DiVincenzo	2005	F. Hacker, P. Sharpsteen
1981	Clifford Gordon	2006	G. DiVincenzo
1982	Clifford Gordon, Steve Dunham	2007	P. Sharpsteen
1983	Clifford Gordon	2008	G. DiVincenzo
1984	Clifford Gordon	2009	P. Sharpsteen
1985	Clifford Gordon	2010	P. Sharpsteen

## Peter “Scott” Aborn

Scott (“Scotty”) Aborn was born July 11, 1957 in Yonkers, NY. He graduated from Rutland High School in 1974, Middlebury College where he received a BA and MA (in French) in 1978 and 1980 respectively, and Washington and Lee University where he received a JD in 1982.

He was a French teacher at Burr and Burton Academy in Manchester, VT since 1986. Scotty was an avid duplicate player and earned the rank of Life Master, one of his most satisfying achievements. He also served as editor of *Table Talk*, our Unit’s bridge bulletin. His hobbies included tennis, music (he played the oboe), golf and Holocaust studies. He was president of the Burr & Burton Academy Teacher’s Association and was a member of the Vermont NEA. A former student of Scott’s, Keith Williams, won the 2003 Jeopardy Collegiate Championship as a freshman at Middlebury College. Mr. Williams credited his prowess in part to Scott; whenever there was extra time at the end of French class, Scott would play “Jeopardy” with his students.

Scotty was extremely precocious as a child. In fact, he was reading books before the age of two. When his father, Robert Aborn moved the family to Indiana to pursue his PhD, Scott loved coming to the University to hang out. According to Scott’s sister Jennifer, “Everyone in the Indiana University Music Department knew him”.

Scott learned about bridge from his parents, Bob and Natalie. He would love to kibitz his parents when they played with friends, and quickly absorbed enough about the game to sit in at the table when needed. He really honed his bridge game in college and law

school, and became one of the strongest players in our area. I had the pleasure to play bridge with Scotty many times. He was thoughtful, intense and passionate about the game. After being diagnosed with brain cancer and undergoing radical surgery and radiation treatment, Scott could not wait to get back to the bridge table. I remember picking him up just a few days after he was released from the hospital and heading to the Sectional tournament in Stratton. He still had huge bandages wrapped around his head. As tired and sore as he was, he hung tough and played well.

When we lost Scott on April 10, 2002, we lost a lot. He was a great teacher, a great parent, and a great friend. He is survived by his parents, his sister, his wife Melissa and their three children, Madeleine, Mariette and Simon.

Table Talk thanks Paul Cohen for this piece on Scott Aborn. The non life master trophy race is named for Scott. Previous winners are

2005	Alan Wertheimer	2008	John Newton, Sally Newton
2006	John Newton, Sally Newton	2009	Sheila Long
2007	John Newton, Sally Newton	2010	Karen Kristiansen

**Note:** The Aborn trophy is actually a plaque. It is on display at the Burlington Bridge Club.

## **Tiernan Trophy Race**

### **Current Standings**

Every year the Vermont Bridge Association awards the Tiernan trophy to the VBA member who accumulates the most master points in the 4 Vermont sectional tournaments. Here are the standings for 2011 after 3 of the 4 tournaments. Frequent winner Phil Sharpsteen is in the lead. Apologies to anyone I inadvertently omitted.

1.	Phil Sharpsteen	31.11	6.	Patricia DiVincenzo	19.34
2.	Wayne Hersey	27.96	7.	Stanley Rosenthal	19.17
3.	Jerry DiVincenzo	27.90	8.	Frank Hacker	17.32
4.	Mike Farrell	22.40	9.	Bryant Jones	16.31
5.	Jay Friedenson	19.73	10.	John Conova	16.10
			10.	Karen Kristiansen	16.10



## **Scott Aborn Trophy Race**

### **Current Standings**

Every year the Vermont Bridge Association awards the Scott Aborn trophy to the VBA member who starts the year as a non-life master and who accumulates the most master points in the 4 Vermont sectional tournaments. Here are the standings for 2011 after 3 of the 4 tournaments. Last year's winner Karen Kristiansen is in the lead again. Apologies to anyone I inadvertently omitted.

1.	Karen Kristiansen	16.10	5	Mark Adair	5.91
2.	Sheila Long	7.84	7.	Catherine Loew	4.27
3.	Rick Clark	6.04	8.	Joseph Morein	4.07
4.	Gordon Johnson	6.04	8.	Claire Genser	4.07
5.	Vivienne Adair	5.91	10.	Israel Perlman	3.57

## **DIRECTOR** (please)

By Jim Thomas

What mother should have taught you.

These items are either common courtesy or law violations. When the law does not specify a remedy, Law 90 allows for a procedural penalty. Procedural penalties are usually  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a board but may be increased for repeated offenses or egregious offenses.

1. Be nice to your partner. If you yell at your partner, he/she will probably mess up the next board, because he/she is thinking about the last board or your last mistake.
2. Be sociable to your opponents. It's only a game. (Besides we have zero tolerance which applies to #1 also.)
3. Once you sit in a direction (N,S,E, W), you must sit in that direction for the match unless the director allows or requires a change. The exception is after breaks in knockout matches where the team that is behind has final seating choice.
4. Count your cards before you look at your hand. Law 7. Nothing good can happen if you have 12 cards and do not recognize it. Law 14 deals with missing cards. If you have 14 cards, you have unauthorized information when the extra card is taken away. Again, nothing good can happen.
5. Keep your hands to yourself. No player shall touch any cards other than his own during or after play except by permission of the director. Law 7. (Declarer may play dummy's cards. Law 45)
6. Opponents should be at the table when hands are removed from the board, unless the director is present, This is true after the play of a hand. Law 7.
7. Do not start a board after the round has been called. Directors do not appreciate this. It is considered a violation of a direct order and Law 90 applies. I have seen boards taken away in a Swiss and procedural penalties as well.

8. As dummy, do not do anything that can be considered aiding declarer. This includes saying that the board is good, reaching for a card before declarer calls for it, pointing out an irregularity or asking an opponent if he has any cards in the suit being played. Laws 42 and 43 deal with dummy's rights.
9. If you are defending and not the opening leader, you **MUST** wait until the opening lead is face down before you ask any questions about the auction. Otherwise you may be guilty of giving unauthorized information to your partner.
10. You may not ask a question for the benefit of your partner. It is unethical to ask a question, because you think partner does not understand the auction or the system.
11. Call the director early rather than late. Most of the time, if you take action over an irregularity (such as a bid out of turn or insufficient bid), you give up your right to rectification. However, the director may still give a procedural penalty.
12. The most common mistake of novice players is the failure to call the director. When there is an irregularity, the director **MUST** be called. The reason is to protect **BOTH** sides and the rest of the field. Players do not have the right to determine (or waive – see Law 81C5) rectifications on their own initiative.

In spite of everything written elsewhere, numbers one and two are still the most important. It is the failure of duplicate players to follow them that keeps non duplicate players away from our favorite game.

## **Marilyn Hacker Memorial Pairs**

The twelfth annual Marilyn Hacker Memorial Pairs took place on Saturday, August 6 at the Burlington Bridge Academy in South Burlington, VT. The format was 2 sessions of bridge with the customary lasagna dinner between sessions. Your Table Talk editor would like to thank the steering committee (Pat Nestork, June Silverman, Marty Gazley, Ruth Stokes, Bonnie Clouser and Phil Sharpsteen) of the Burlington Bridge Academy for the labors of Hercules. There were 13 tables for bridge. Congratulations to Ellie Hanlon and Mary Savko who have won this event for the umpteenth time. The overall winners were

<b>MP</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Score</b>
4.89	1			Ellie Hanlon – Mary Savko	400.50
3.67	2			Kathleen Farrell – Patricia DiVincenzo	394.00
3.72	3	1	1	John Newton – Sally Newton	366.00
2.79	4	2	2	Gilda Katz – Sam Silverman	358.00
2.09	5	3	3	Edward Schirmer – Frank Reed	353.50
2.13	6	4		Lynn Carew – Pat Nestork	342.50
1.24		5		Rudolph Polli – John Kimel	335.00
1.30		6		Bryant Jones– Karen Kristiansen	326.50
1.21			4	Karen Hewitt – Jody Petterson	317.00
0.95			5	Stephen King – Susan King	302.00

## President's Cup

The Vermont Bridge Association annual meeting and President's Cup bridge game took place on October 2 at the Burlington Bridge Club in Williston Vermont. The format was 2 sessions of bridge with the VBA annual meeting and a turkey dinner with all the fixings between sessions.

There were 17 tables for bridge and providing a dinner for about 70 people is no mean feat. The Vermont Bridge Association would like to thank the Burlington Bridge Club for their efforts.

Many VBA members helped with the food, some Burlington Bridge Club members and some from other parts of the state. Here is the list: Ray Lopes, Catherine Loew, Kathy Farrell, Sheila Barton, Michael Morris, Rudy Polli, Ellie Hanlon, Sandy Desilets, Jay Friedenson, Rene Sahyoun, June Dorion, Wayne Hersey, Noreen Snyder, Karen Hewitt, Jackie Kimel, Mary Savko, Sue Ransom, Judith Donald, Bryant Jones, Jeannie Clermont, Patty DiVincenzo, Bonnie Clouser, Ruth Stokes, Phil Sharpsteen, Marty and Dick Gazley and Pat Nestork. Apologies to anyone inadvertently omitted.

Thanks to Lynn Carew, Bonnie Clouser and Ruth Stokes for their administrative help and a special thank you to June Silverman who was unable to attend, but coordinated the shopping effort from her wheel chair. Thanks also to Paul Clouser and Jon Stokes for help with the cleanup and to Frank Hacker for directing.

Congratulations to Judie Donald and Jackie Kimel for winning the bridge game. Here are the final overall standings

<b>MP</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Score</b>
5.74	1	1		Judith Donald – Jackie Kimel	401.00
4.31	2			Mary Savko – Ellie Hanlon	396.00
3.35	3	2	1	Gary Feingold – Kotze Toshev	391.50
2.68	4			Rudolph Polli – Philip Sharpsteen	379.00
2.51	5	3		Patricia Nestork – Lynn Carew	369.00
1.64	6			Kathleen Farrell – Patricia DiVincenzo	361.00
1.88		4		Bonnie Clouser - Bryant Jones	357.00
2.50		5	2	John Conova – Elizabeth VonRiesenfelder	354.00
1.53		6		Jay Friedenson – Stanley Rosenthal	346.50
1.87			3	Jim Abbott – Eric McCann	344.00
1.40			4	Richard Clark – Sandy Desilets	332.00
1.12			5	John Nelson – Linda Nelson	326.00
0.95			6	Mark Adair – Vivienne Adair	317.00

## Taking Care of Business

By Frank Hacker

We have all heard, “Hindsight is 20-20,” a statement usually made as part of a post mortem by somebody whose play showed lack of foresight. Here are two hands. In both you are declarer in 6NT.

**North**

S Void  
H Q10754  
D A8753  
C AQJ

**South**

S AK853  
H AJ  
D K10  
C K1098

The opening lead is the 10 of spades. You discard a diamond from dummy and win the ace in hand. Now what?

If you've actually read this far, you may think I've lost my mind. What is the point of this hand? You have 8 tricks outside of hearts. Discounting squeeze possibilities, the hand depends on the heart suit. If somebody has 5 or 6 hearts to the king, that's too bad. Either the heart suit comes home for 4 tricks or it doesn't.

The question is the heart finesse. Do you take it or not? What can it gain? What might it lose? If East has a doubleton king, you can finesse the jack, then play the ace to drop the king and take all 13 tricks. This will happen just about 8% of the time, not a lot, but you might as well take the finesse. It's on the house ---- or is it? Is there some downside to taking the finesse? Well, suppose West has a singleton king. Now East's 5 hearts to the 9 will hold you to just 3 heart tricks. This unfortunate lie of the cards occurs about 1.2% of the time. The contract is 6NT. The stakes are very high. I would give up on the finesse and simply play off the ace of hearts. The 8 percent chance for an overtrick is not adequate compensation for the 1.2% chance of going down in a cold slam.

Still awake!?! Here for your amusement is another nitpicky hand.

**North**

S 765  
H KJ42  
D KJ5  
C AQ2

**South**

S AK3  
H A53  
D AQ72  
C K76

Once again you are in 6NT. The opening lead is the queen of spades. You have 9 tricks outside of hearts. What are you going to do about the heart suit?

You can do the obvious --- play off the ace and then take the heart finesse. This will make the contract when the queen is on side or if the queen is off side singleton or whenever hearts split 3-3 whether or not the queen is on side, all in all about a 69% probability of success. Not quite 18% of the time, you'll make an overtrick when there are 3 to the queen on side. You'll lose whenever the queen is off side doubleton, fourth, fifth or sixth. Queen doubleton off side is a loser, because west's four to the 10 will stop the suit.

Actually there is a better play to make the contract. Start with the king and ace of hearts before leading a heart to the jack. This will produce the three needed heart tricks except when the queen is off side fourth, fifth or sixth. Because this line wins for a doubleton queen off side, the over all chance for success improves to 77%. You do, however, lose your chance for an overtrick. If west has queen third of hearts on side, he will be quite pleasantly surprised to get a trick.

In both hands, you make a **SAFETY PLAY**. You improve your chances to make the contract, by giving up on your chance to make the maximum number of tricks.

I actually played a hand very similar to the second at the Cape Cod regional about 10 years ago. The queen third of hearts was on side and I was the only one who didn't make the overtrick, finding a brilliant way to get a zero. This highlights another very important consideration: form of scoring. At IMPS (Swiss or KO teams), safety plays make sense. At matchpoints (pair game), the 18% chance to make an extra trick is probably more important than the 8% better chance to make the contract. I found this out the hard way.

## Three From Phil

By Phil Sharpsteen

Sometimes, the form of scoring affects how you should plan to play a hand. At IMPS, there is a premium on playing to make; at matchpoints, overtricks are important even if the contract is at be risk. I have 3 interesting hands from recent games that illustrate these concepts.

Hand 1 (IMPS):

		<u>North</u>					
		S	109x				
		H	Q9x				
		D	987x				
		C	Qxx				
					<u>East</u>		
	<u>West</u>				S	Void	
	S	AJxxx				H	Axxx
	H	x				D	QJ10xx
	D	AKxx				C	Jxxx
	C	xxx					
					<u>South</u>		
		S	KQxxx				
		H	KJ108X				
		D	Void				
		C	AKx				

You are in 4<sup>th</sup> seat. The bidding proceeds 1S P 1N to you. With a 4 loser hand you should definitely come in now with a 2H call. This buys the contract and you are pleased to see that dummy's two "people" (that is to say, queens) are useful!

The lead is the diamond Ace which you ruff. You only have 3 losers on top (2S and one heart) but it is easy to lose control on this hand, especially if hearts break badly. You know spades are 5-0 so a bad trump break is more likely. Remember, however, that your 2H contract only needs 8 tricks to make. I would plan on one spade, 4 hearts and 3 clubs. The only issue is to avoid more than 5 losers in the process. So you test the hearts and east wins the 2<sup>nd</sup> heart and forces again with a diamond. If you trump this, you will lose control as you will have fewer trumps than east and the defense can manage 6 tricks to defeat you (2 spades, 2 hearts and 2 diamonds). The only chance is to discard spades on the diamond forces. If the defense manages to have west in a position to win the 4<sup>th</sup> diamond, the defense will prevail. This was difficult to see and at the table east was the winner of the 4<sup>th</sup> diamond trick and the defense was unable to play the 5<sup>th</sup> diamond to advantage since dummy can ruff. So a trump was returned and declarer made two hearts with the 8 tricks mentioned above.

Hand 2 (IMPS):

		<b><u>North</u></b>	
		S	Jxx
		H	98xx
		D	xxx
		C	Jxx
	<b><u>West</u></b>		<b><u>East</u></b>
S	KQ9xx	S	xxx
H	xxx	H	K10
D	xxx	D	Qxx
C	xx	C	KQxxx
		<b><u>South</u></b>	
		S	Ax
		H	AQJx
		D	AKJx
		C	A109

Again you are south in 4<sup>th</sup> seat. The bidding to you is 2S P P. You again hope partner has some help opposite your 5 loser hand and you double. Lefty passes and partner starts a non-forcing sequence with a Lebensohl 2NT. Righty doubles this and you redouble with your modest holding! Partner who was napping until you started bidding is forced to bid 3 hearts which is passed around to lefty who doubles! The opening lead is the club King. This doesn't look too bad as you may lose only a trick in each suit for a make of +470 (A nice pickup in a team game). Partner wins the ace and start trumps with the ace and queen. East wins and persists with clubs cashing the Queen and giving partner a ruff. West exits with the spade king to dummy's ace. Partner cashes dummy's diamond ace and comes to hand with the trump nine for the diamond finesse. This wins so the contract makes make with the loss of only 1 spade trick, 2 heart tricks and 1 club trick. At the other table, the contract was 4H down one. The best contract is probably 3NT by south but the only sensible way to get there is for south's first call to be 3NT! With the Axx of spades instead of Ax, this would be a better proposition as a spade holdup to trick 3 may be required. (see hand 3!)

Hand 3 (matchpoints)

		<u>North</u>		
		S	x	
		H	Qxxxx	
		D	Jxx	
		C	KQ109	
	<u>West</u>			<u>East</u>
S	Jxxx			S
H	J			H
D	K10xxxx			D
C	A2			C
		<u>South</u>		
		S	AK10	
		H	AKx	
		D	Ax	
		C	Jxxxx	

As south in 4<sup>th</sup> seat, you see the bidding: 2D P P. This is a similar theme: really weak 2 bid to your fine hand in 4<sup>th</sup> seat. Missing 21 HCP points you might hope to have 7 located with partner, and try 3NT. But again Axx in diamonds would be better. You could also double which I would expect to lead to a 4H contract after a similar Lebensohl sequence as in hand 1 above. (X, P, 2NT alert, P, 3C alert, P, 3H, P, 4H) Anyway, this south bid 3NT and west led his 4th best diamond. You called low from dummy and the spotlight moved to east. South would have had to be insane not to have the Ace or King of diamonds so the correct matchpoint play is the nine to force south's honor and prevent an easy 2<sup>nd</sup> diamond trick for declarer even though the play of the 9 blocks the suit. This would hold declarer to 10 tricks. In actual practice, east played the queen, losing to the Ace. South now knocked out the ace of clubs and made 5NT with ease.

## VERMONT SUMMER SECTIONAL RESULTS

Rutland, VT  
July 8-10, 2011

### Friday Afternoon Open Pairs

MP	A	B	C	Names	PCT
5.17	1			Ellie Hanlon – Mary Savko	65.78
3.88	2			Ruth Stokes – Wayne Hersey	64.23
2.91	3			J Peter Tripp – Penny Lane	62.41
2.18	4			Melvin Marcus – Vincent Grande Jr	58.89
1.64	5			Shome Mukherjee – William Hunter	57.53
3.64	6	1		Donald Campbell – Jan Gisholt	57.15
2.73		2		Bonnie Clouser – Bryant Jones	56.26
2.47		3	1	John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	55.22
1.85		4	2	Catherine Loew – Gerrie Willis	54.70
1.15		5		Patricia Williams – Irene Vignoe	54.61
0.86		6		Lynn Carew – Patricia Nestork	53.69
1.39			3	Ann Botelli – Richard Botelli	53.39
1.04			4	Sandy Desilets – Rhoda Chickering	52.37
0.78			5/6	Sally Newton -.John Newton	51.90
0.65			5/6	Patrick Parks – Judith Parks	51.90

### Friday Evening Open Pairs

<b>MP</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>PCT</b>
4.00	1	1	1	Michael McDonald – Tom Floyd	65.36
3.00	2			Shome Mukherjee – William Hunter.	59.36
2.25	3			Patricia DiVincenzo – Kathleen Farrell	59.25
2.08	4	2		Patricia Nestork – Lynn Carew	57.97
1.27	5			Ellie Hanlon – Mary Savko	57.19
1.40	6			David Shaw – Peter Bouyea	57.11
1.56		3		Peter Matthews – Neal Gore	54.13
1.41		4	2	Sheila Long – Claire Beckler	53.49
0.88		5		Abraham Brown – Jean Brown	52.62
1.06			3	Patrick Parks – Judith Parks	48.22
0.79			4	Sandy Desilets – Rhoda Chickering	48.17

### Saturday Morning Open Pairs

<b>MP</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>PCT</b>
5.33	1			Philip Sharpsteen – Frank Hacker	64.42
4.00	2			Gerald DiVincenzo – Michael Farrell	61.22
3.21	3	1		Lynn Carew – Patricia Nestork	60.74
2.25	4			David Shaw – Peter Bouyea	59.62
1.48	5/6			Melvin Marcus – Vincent Grande Jr.	59.46
1.48	5/6			Patricia DiVincenzo – Kathleen Farrell	59.46
2.41		2	1	Sheila Long – Claire Beckler	54.01
1.81		3	2	Sandy Desilets – Rhoda Chickering	53.37
1.35		4	3	Susan Crane – Jonathan Crane	52.08
1.02		5		Neal Gore – Peter Matthews	51.44
0.76		6		Carl Beresin – Elizabeth VonRiesenfelder	50.48
1.12			4	John Newton – Sally Newton	49.20
0.55			5/6	Ann Bottelli – Richard Bottelli	47.12
0.55			5/6	Susan Benson – Amy Labie	47.12

### Saturday Morning 299er Pairs

<b>MP</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>PCT</b>
1.51	1	1	Patrick Parks – Judith Parks	64.00
1.13	2	2	Claire Genser – Joseph Morein	62.50
0.85	3	3	Catherine Loew – Eugene Sawyer	56.50
0.64	4		Mimi Burke – Joe Burke	50.00

### Saturday Afternoon Open Pairs

<b>MP</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>PCT</b>
4.83	1			Wayne Hersey – Bryant Jones	71.00
3.62	2	1		Pat Nestork – Lynn Carew	64.83
2.72	3			Mary Savko – Ellie Hanlon	63.88
2.19	4	2		Paul Reardon – Linda Bouyea	61.08



1.53	5		Patricia DiVincenzo – Kathleen Farrell	60.61
1.15	6		Melvin Marcus – Vincent Grande Jr.	59.75
1.64	3		Peter Matthews – Neal Gore	52.71
2.00	4	1	Sheila Long – Claire Beckler	50.83
1.02	5		Abraham Brown – Jean Brown	48.15
1.50	6	2	Burton Honig – Naomi Honig	47.78
1.13		3	Sandy Desilets – Rhoda Chickering	47.41
0.84		4	Michael McDonald – Tom Floyd	47.29
0.63		5	Robin Kerr – Robert Ashman	46.17

### Saturday Afternoon 299er Pairs

MP	Names			PCT
1.31	1		Catherine Loew – Eugene Sawyer	59.00
0.98	2		George Solomon – Staci Solomon	52.00

### Sunday Open Swiss Teams

MP	A	B	C	Names	SCORE
7.25	1			Patricia DiVincenzo – Gerald DiVincenzo Kathleen Farrell – Michael Farrell	121
5.44	2			Judy Dubay – William Dubay Mary Savko – Ellie Hanlon	112
5.03	3	1		Bruce Downing – Mark Conner Elaine Day – Claire Gardner	108
3.06	4			Melvin Marcus – Vincent Grande, Jr. Shome Mukherjee – William Hunter	93
3.77	5	2		Jesse Stalker – Arthur Giovannangeli Roger Crean – Hanan Lushkov	92
3.18	6/7	3		Donald Campbell – C Kirk Osterland Elizabeth VonRiesenfelder – Israel Perlman	91
1.94	6/7			Sonja Smith – David Rock Bob Gorsey – Joyce Pearson	91
2.39		4/5	2	Mark Adair – Vivienne Adair Gerow Carlson – Mary Azarian	78
1.90		4/5		Wayne Hersey – Judith Donald Bonnie Clouser – Ruth Stokes	78
1.79			3	John Newton – Sally Newton John Conova – Karen Kristiansen	75

## ACBL-wide Instant Matchpoint Game

On Wednesday, September 14, the ACBL-wide Instant Matchpoint Game took place at the Burlington Bridge Academy. The winners in each direction receive 1 gold point as part of their master point award.

There were only 6 tables, a huge drop-off from last year. The field consisted almost entirely of partnerships consisting of 1 life master and 1 player still needing gold points. In addition to the section top awards, there were overall awards for the best score in each direction. Top on a board

was 100 (based on predetermined awards provided by the board travelers) with average for the entire session at 1,200. The results are listed below with the gold point winners all in capitals.

### NORTH-SOUTH

MP	A	B	Names	.
2.17	1		RONALD PLANTE – FRANK HACKER	1,465
1.63	2	1	Don Sharp – Bryant Jones	1,335
0.65		2	Harold Leitenberg – Alan Wertheimer	1,203

### EAST-WEST

MP	A	B	Names	.
2.17	1		SHEILA BARTON – RUDOLPH POLLI	1,315
1.63	2		Richard Clark – Wayne Hersey	1,312
0.80		2	Margie Berger – Lynn Carew	1,309

With top on a board equal to 100, it's hard to see how the East West results could be any closer.

## The Iron Kezubie

By Frank Hacker

I don't often write articles about bidding. I don't consider myself to be an expert and there are also many different opinions and possibilities. With some trepidation then, I am writing about Phil Sharpsteen's and my methods after a 2C opening bid. I had a bridge friend many years ago who called an exceptionally powerful hand the "Iron Kezubie." Hence the title for this article. Actually I'm not sure how he spelled "Kezubie," since I have never before seen the word in print.

We need to put first things first. Here are the requirements for a 2C opening bid:

For a balanced hand, 22+ high card points

For an unbalanced hand great playing strength and at least 2 aces and 2 kings  
 Much greater strength for a minor suit rebid than for a major suit rebid

Let's look at some examples. Some qualify for a 2C opening. Others do not.

1. S AKxx H KQJx D Ax C AQx
2. S AKxx H KQ10x D Ax C Axx
3. S AKQxx H AKQxx D xx C x
4. S AKQxx H xx D AKQxx C x
5. S void H AKxxxxxx D AKxx C x
6. S AKxxx H AQJx D Ax C Kx
7. S Ax H Kx D AQJx C AKxxx
8. S AKxx H x D AQxx C AKJx
9. S K H AQx D AQJxx C AJxx

Hand 1 has 23 points. Open 2C and rebid 2NT over the expected 2D response

Hand 2 is a nice hand but only has 20 points. Open 2NT

Hand 3 can make game opposite a zero count. It just needs a fit in one of the majors. Open 2C

Hand 4 looks like hand 3, but one of your suits is a minor. The prospects for game are not as good. Open 1S

Hand 5 actually came up 43 years ago in the national intercollegiate championship. The hand has great playing strength. Open 2C. This hand is very interesting, because one of the opponents actually had a strong 2 bid in the black suits.

Hand 6 has 21 points and two major suits. Open 2C and plan to bid both majors. I'm not in love with this type of sequence, because the hand is relatively flat and the bidding will treat it like a more distributional hand than it actually is. **In general, flat hands should make flat hand bids.** Life is not perfect.

Hand 7 is like hand 6, but your suits are both minors. Just open 2NT. You need a very strong hand to open 2C and rebid in a minor. This hand is not close.

Hand 8 is a real problem. Hands with 4-4-4-1 distribution sometimes have trouble finding a place to play. Open 1 of a minor. I prefer 1C to make it easier for partner to respond.

Anything could be right on hand 9. The hand does not come close to the strength needed for 2C. The choices are 1D and 2NT. I prefer 2NT.

-----  
There are a great many bidding systems over 2C. Some simply use 2D as a negative and wing it from there. Others use 2H as a double negative and 2D as waiting. I'm not a big fan of either of these methods as 2D is a lateral bid and the first descriptive bid comes from the strong hand. This tends to transfer a lot of the decision making power to the weak hand. Sometimes the weak hand even takes control. This may make sense on hands with NT rebids, but not for distributional hands.

I believe the first response should provide useful information to opener. Some methods use steps to show high card points. I advocate using steps to show controls. Aces count as 2 controls, kings count as 1.

#### Control Showing Step Responses

- 2D no aces, no kings, fewer than 4 high card points – double negative (incidentally, if you can survive with a system that requires two bids to describe a hand with nothing, then you are a lot smarter than I am)
- 2H no aces, at most 1 king. 4 or more high card points unless hand has just 1 king and nothing else
- 2S 2 controls (an ace or 2 kings)

2N 3 controls (ace and king or 3 kings)

3C,D or H 4, 5 or 6 controls

Clearly the knowledge acquired from these bids makes it easier for the strong hand to take control. There is a lot more to say here and I'll return to this subject in future articles. I'll end the current article with an anecdote from the recent tournament in Warwick RI. Phil and I play modified puppet Stayman after a 2NT response. We had the following hand against Rich DeMartino and Mel Colchamiro (You may recognize this name, because Mel writes a monthly column for the ACBL magazine.)

**North**

S xx  
H AKxxxx  
D J10  
C Jxx

**South**

S AQJx  
H QJxx  
D AQx  
C AK

Our auction was	<b><u>South</u></b>	<b><u>North</u></b>
	2C	2NT
	3C	3NT
	6H	Pass

We alerted 2NT as showing 3 controls, 3C as Puppet Stayman and 3NT as showing 5 hearts. The contract was the same at the other table, but we had a lot more fun. The result was making 7, as I took the winning spade finesse twice to pitch dummy's losing diamond. The diamond finesse would have lost.

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

Oct. 17-23	District 3 Autumn Leaf Regional, Danbury Plaza Hotel and Conference center, Danbury, CT
Oct. 28-30	Vermont Fall Sectional, Holiday Inn, Rutland, VT (see flyer this issue)
Nov. 16-20	NE Masters Regional, Holiday Inn, Mansfield, MA
Nov. 24 – Dec. 4	Fall Nationals, Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, WA



# VERMONT

# HALLOWEEN

## SECTIONAL

Sanction: S1110093

OCTOBER 28 – 30, 2011

HOLIDAY INN, 476 ROUTE 7 SOUTH, RUTLAND

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28th

- 1:30 pm Open Pairs, Stratified
- 1:30 pm Newcomer Pairs, Stratified
- 7:30 pm Open Pairs, Stratified
- 7:30 pm Newcomer Pairs, Stratified
- 7:30 pm 1st Session K-O Teams

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29th

- 10:00 am Open Pairs, Stratified
- 10:00 am Newcomer Pairs, Stratified
- 10:00 am K-O Teams, Semifinals
- 3:00 pm Open Pairs, Stratified
- 3:00 pm Newcomer Pairs, Stratified
- 3:00 pm K-O Teams, Finals

### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30th

- 10:30 am 1st session Open Swiss Teams, Stratified
- 10:30 am 0 to 300 Swiss Teams (one session)
- ~3:00 pm 2nd session Open Swiss Teams, Stratified

Open Stratifications: A: 2500+ B: 750 to 2500 C: 0 to 750

Swiss Team Stratifications: as above but will use the average master points for the team

Newcomer Stratifications: A 100 to 300, B 50 to 100, C 0 to 50

(Stratifications may be adjusted by Director based on attendance)

Price per session: \$9; \$1 additional for Unpaid or Non-ACBL members

**Director:** Dave Marshall

**Partnerships and Information:** Phil Sharpsteen, (802) 899-2080

**Hospitality:** The VBA is please to offer free refreshments after the Friday evening session and at 10:00 am, Sunday morning before the Swiss Teams.

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A publication of the Vermont Bridge Association  
Frank A. Hacker, Editor  
310 Tremont St.  
Barre, VT 05641

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