

PLAY AND LEARN BRIDGE IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

ALERT – September 4, 2023

Click here to access our regular game schedule.

Looking Ahead

- Our new 99er game on Saturday mornings is on hiatus until September 9.
- <u>Labour Day Silver Point Sectional Bridge Tournament</u>, Toronto, Saturday, September 2 Monday, September 4
- No Monday morning bridge lab on September 4 (Labour Day)
- ◆ All our F2F games during the week of Monday, September 4 Saturday, September 9 are club championship games = extra masterpoints, no extra charge.
- 71st Annual St. Thomas Jumbo Tournament, Saturday, September 9 Sunday, September 10
- ▼ Intermediate Bridge Lab, 6:30 pm 9:00 pm, Thursday, September 14
- ▼ Competitive Bidding module begins, Friday, September 15, 9:30 am noon
- ▶ Learn Bridge in a Day, Saturday, September 16, 10:00 am 3:00 pm
- Sunday, September 17, 1:00 pm ?, Club cleanup
- Overcalls/Doubles module begins, Tuesday, September 19, 9:30 am noon
- ▶ Beginners 1 lessons begin, Saturday September 23, 9:30 am 12:30 pm
- All our F2F games from Monday, September 18 Saturday, September 23 are club championship games = extra masterpoints, no extra charge.
- Annual General Meeting, Tuesday, September 26

Newish 99er Game Starting on Saturday, September 9

If you are a 99er and would like to play in this game but lack a partner, you can use the **Pianola Partner Finder** Feature. Here's how it works.

- Log on to Pianola (you would have been sent an email about logging on when you first joined our club)
- Click on Partner Finder in the menu bar
- Click on "create an advert"
- Click on the day for which you need a partner
- Make sure you have the correct game (there's a 499er game on Saturdays as well). There is a drop-down menu below the calendar to find other games.
- An advertisement will then be posted
- Please make sure that once you have found a partner you delete the ad and return any emails or phone calls of people who contacted you - they may be waiting for your response

If you would like a 'mentor" for this game (you won't get any masterpoints but you'll always learn something), please let <u>Joan Slover</u> know.



Congratulations...

to the following local players who earned masterpoints in the recent Goderich regional tournament.

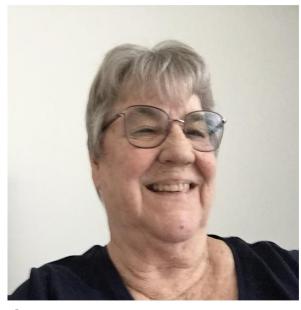
- Mike Peng and David Longstaff, 1st in A, Percy Sheardown Open Pairs
- Stephen Young and David Baker, 3rd in A, Percy Sheardown Open Pairs
- Diane Bourdeau and Edith Ferber, 5th in A, Percy Sheardown Open Pairs
- Tom Ramsay and David Deaves, 6th in A, Percy Sheardown Open Pairs
- Dave Quarrie and Roy Dandyk, 1st in B, Percy Sheardown Open Pairs
- Ted Boyd and Cindy Mahn, 9th in A, Percy Sheardown Open Pairs
- Jake Liu and Tong Chen, 1st in C, Percy Sheardown Open Pairs
- Suzanne Edwards and Barbara Arthur, 2nd in C, Percy Sheardown Open Pairs
- Jennifer Verdam, Adrian Record, David Longstaff, and Mike Peng, 1st in A, Sunday Swiss Teams
- David Baker, Cindy Mahn, Ted Boyd, and Stephen Young, 3rd in A, Sunday Swiss Teams
- Maria Deaves, David Deaves, Tom Ramsay, and Colin Lafferty, 4th in A, Sunday Swiss Teams
- Stephen Carpenter, Neil Jeffrey, Susan Boyd, and Susan Lawton, 1st in B, Sunday Swiss Teams
- Thea Davis, Bruce Roberts, Lun Kuen Wong, and Margot Stockie, 2nd in B, Sunday Swiss Teams
- Rosemarie Schmidt, Mike Clancy, Susan Martin, and Nancy Craig, 2nd in C, Sunday Swiss Teams

It is worth noting that **Dave Longstaff and Mike Peng** cleaned up (first on both days).

Old Hand Sanitizer

Contributed by Joan Slover, RX

It came to my attention last week that the hand sanitizer we have at the club is past its expiration date. It is still fine to use and should be effective as many of these compounded pharmaceutical formulations have an arbitrary expiry date. (I could give you a long explanation of how I know this, but I won't be pulling out any of my old pharmaceutical text books right now.) In the meantime, new hand sanitizer has been ordered to stock up for the coming flu, cold, RSV, and Covid season. So please out of respect for the efforts made to keep our club as healthy as possible and your fellow players, we ask for a good hand washing and nail cleaning (scrub as if you're going into the operating room!) before coming to the club and use of the sanitizer while there. Those playing cards are nasty little virus vectors!



Contributed by Anita Hanson

Player Profile - Elinor Girouard

If you don't like the cards you are getting in your Wednesday or Friday afternoon F2F games, chances are you can blame Elinor Girouard. Well, okay, that's not entirely true – it's the magic dealing machine that chooses the cards (and except for ACBL tournament games, entirely at random, Elinor would like to stress), but she is often the volunteer who runs the machine that creates the boards for you on those days. Thanks, Elinor!

Elinor began her bridge career in the 80s, playing kitchen bridge with her husband, and they had just become interested in duplicate shortly before he sadly passed away. She credits the game, GRBC, and June Leitch (who first introduced her to GRBC in 2016), with saving her from a very bad place at that time, and she has been playing enthusiastically ever since.

Elinor feels the game has a huge amount to offer — it gets us out and about, is a wonderful social outlet, and makes us use our brains. At 80, and with some physical limitations to deal with as well, Elinor also appreciates having a fun recreation she can do sitting down!

The social aspect is very important to her, as Elinor's two children and three stepchildren are spread across the country, from Vancouver to Ottawa, with none living in the immediate area. This means her only nearby "family" is her cat, who she cheerfully admits is a bit of a jerk.

Elinor also cheerfully speaks of the interesting years that have brought her to the present day. A professional figure skater, Elinor coached skaters all over Canada, as well as for three years in Germany (a lifetime high point, and where she met her husband). As coaching is rarely a full-time job, it offered the opportunity for many other diverse job experiences as well — from office administration to bartending to raising quarterhorses. To dealing duplicate bridge boards.....

As a "seat-of-the-pants" player, Elinor is not sure her favourite bridge tip will be very popular. It is simply this: what with so many different ways to approach the game and so many things to absorb, don't even try to learn it all. Just do what works for YOU.

BBO Helper: Delicious and Nutritious. Part 1

Contributed by Jack Cole

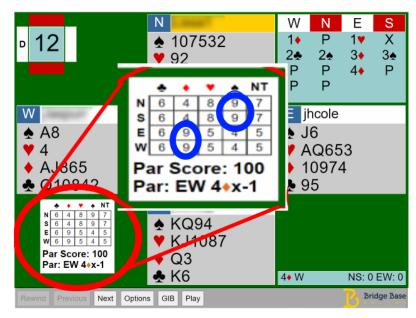
One benefit of playing online is the ability to later analyse the bidding and play of every hand. Perhaps the most useful online tool is **BBO Helper** (**BBOH**), which is a *free* "Plug In" for your Web browser that provides extra functionality at BBO sites. (Plug-ins are just programmed additions to your browser; they are useful and generally safe.) I use Google Chrome, so I can vouch for that platform, but BBOH is also available for Firefox, Microsoft Edge, and Brave.



BBOH has a lot of capabilities, but you will want it for these two: the **Double Dummy** and **Par Analyses** that BBOH shows with **every** board in your BBO history, including the board you **just finished playing!** You instantly know if your contract was the best one, or if your opponents missed something, or if your sacrifice was worthwhile. If you like to analyse your bidding and play, you will be immediately addicted.

Here's a sample showing the extra BBOH info, circled in red. My side (E/W) had found a diamond fit, while N/S was competing in spades. With favourable vulnerability I bid to 4, expecting to go down a trick or two, or maybe pushing them too high. They let us play it, and we did indeed go down. Was that good?

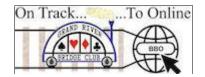
The BBOH Double Dummy (DD) table says that E/W can take nine tricks in diamonds and N/S can take nine tricks in spades. (DD analysis assumes perfect play by both sides; it may be incredibly hard to do, but DD knows a way! More on that in Part 4.)



Their 3♠ contract would have earned N/S 140 points. Putting us down one cost us just 100 (if doubled) so we scored better by sacrificing; and since they *didn't* double, we did even better. They were right to not bid on to 4♠ because down one doubled and vulnerable could have cost them 200 points.

And that's why "4 doubled down one" is shown as the **Par Score**. "Par" is the score that results if **both sides make their best possible bids**, which, as just explained, was 4 by E/W. DD and Par Analysis is so much fun and so educational, that you should get BBO Helper just for that.

What you **do not want** from BBOH is **Auto Alerts**, which lets BBOH make Alerts for you as you bid. Next time, I'll show you how to install BBOH and how to change the settings, including **turning off Auto Alerts**. After that there are a few more features I'd like to tell you about. Stay tuned for more BBO Helper Recipes!





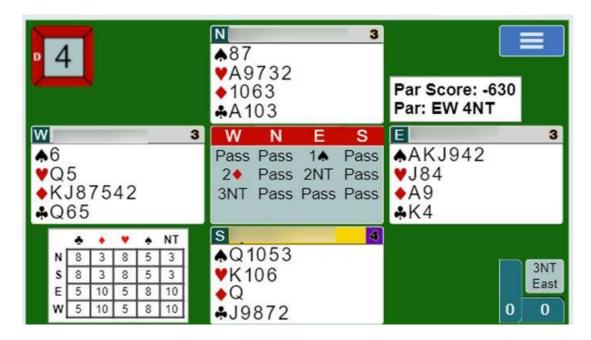
The Answer Lady

Contributed by Susan Lawton

As the "The Answer Lady" I have been responding to questions from "newer" players over the past several weeks. A request has been made to share those players' questions and my responses in the Alert, essentially a column for the beginner player! You can write to me at su-zan2420@yahoo.ca.

Question

My friends and I (very new players) would welcome your feedback on how we should have bid this hand. Additionally, we'd appreciate your input around how the hand might also have been played. We ended up in 3NT, but made 4NT. Should we have played it differently to take more tricks or bid on?



Answer

Good afternoon, bridge players, this is just one of those hands. East/West ended up in a contract they should not be playing in and miraculously they not only made that contract but even made an overtrick. East/West's luck was strong enough to overpower their bidding errors. The opponents sitting in North/South would have shown dismay and grumbled for quite some time after receiving a bottom score on this board. The word "fixed" might even have been mentioned.

Yes, it is true that double dummy (as shown in the box in the bottom left of the hand records) asserts that East/West can make 4, 2 and 4NT. For those unfamiliar with the concept of double dummy, I have taken a description from Bridge Composer. Here's what they say.

For any particular deal, given the declarer and the trump suit or no trump, the double dummy result is the number of tricks the declarer would win when all four players can see all 52 cards, and each player always plays to his or her best advantage.

Of course, in actual reality, the players can't see all 52 cards, so sometimes those Double Dummy results are unrealistic, showing what is possible on a given layout of the cards, both for the declarer and for the defence.

The key take-away: "all four players can see all 52 cards and each player always plays to his or her best advantage". Wouldn't we all want to see every card as we played a hand and play to our best advantage, making no mistakes?

In response to your questions: **No, you should not bid on and you were extremely lucky to make 3NT +1,** winning one heart, seven diamonds and two spades. It was the lay of the cards that allowed success. A much different result would have occurred if North's hand had the •Q, as East has no other entries to the board to set up those diamonds.

The suggested bidding sequence might go like this: East opens 1♠ and South passes. At this point, West with *minimal* values (only eight points and no support for spades) should not bid 2♦ but instead bid 1NT. Using the Standard American bidding system, this tells Partner: "I have six to nine points and no support for your spades". A bid at the two level, for example 2♠, promises additional values - at least 10 points - and gives East faint hope that a game is possible. After the 1NT bid, East can then rebid their spades, promising six of them as opposed to just five with no extra values. West would pass, leaving the contract in 2♠. Even after West's bid of 2♠, East should repeat spades (2♠) rather than bidding 2NT, showing six spades and no extra values, and again West, also with no extra values, should pass.

FACE IT, SVEN, WE'RE OLD - "PILLAGE"
DOESN'T MEAN WHAT IT USED TO MEAN.

TIME YOU LEARNED OUR LESSONS!

In the Cards

- <u>Learn Bridge in a Day</u> will give the uninitiated a taste of bridge and hopefully start them
 down the path towards bridge joy. We already have 13 people signed up for Saturday,
 September 16, so it's going to be a party! Click <u>here</u> to register.
- **Beginners' lessons** will start the following Saturday, September 23. We now have 15 players signed up so far, with more to come and we can accommodate only 24! Click here for more information and to register.
- A three-part module on Competitive Bidding, with Stephen Carpenter, Friday mornings, September 15, 22, & 29, 9:30 – noon, in our teaching room at the club, \$60 members, \$70 non-members.
 Novice/Intermediate.
 Click here for more information and to register.

Although these lessons may seem to be far in the future, they are in fact in only a couple of weeks away. Sadly, the summer is over and now it's time to fall (get it?) back into learning mode.



Overcalls and Doubles

This is a two-week module to explore what to do when the opponents have already opened the bidding ahead of you.

Week 1 will look at the requirements for simple overcalls, jump overcalls, and 1NT overcalls, as well as the responses by your partner after you have made one of these bids.

Week 2 will look at when to make a takeout double and again how you respond as the doubler's partner.

Regular partners may find it beneficial to attend as a pair.

Instructor: Cindy Mahn

Level: Novice

Venue: Our teaching room

Dates: Tuesday mornings, September 19 and 26, 9:30 am – noon

Cost: \$\$40 members/ \$50 non-members

Click here to register.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PLAYERS



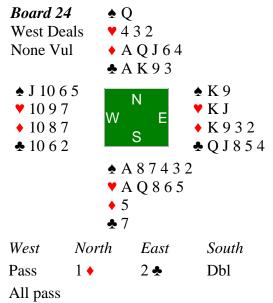
Maggie's Dilemma

Years ago, Maggie and I were playing in a club game. I was South and Maggie North. After West passed, she opened 1♦ and East came in with a very shaky 2♣ overcall. I wasn't sure how this was going to go, but I made a negative double, hoping that I'd have time to show how many major cards I had. West passed, and Maggie was on the spot. Normally, she makes a fast decision and bids right away, but here she seemed frozen in time.

Later, she told me what was going through her mind. She was under strict orders not to rebid a five-card suit. Even if she did, she knew that her hand was too good to simply bid 2♦. She considered 2NT despite her singleton, even toyed with bidding 2♥ despite the fact that this suit was headed by the ♥4. Nothing seemed right, but here everyone was staring at her, waiting. Maggie was about to bid 2NT when a thought occurred to her. What if the best place to play the hand was 2♣ doubled? As far as she was concerned, passing a negative double was against all the rules, but so was bidding diamonds, hearts, spades, or no trump. When Maggie put down the pass card, East shuddered, while I sadly thought of the major suit game that we had surely missed.

I led the ◆5. Maggie won her ace and returned the ♠Q, covered by the king and my ace. I returned a small spade, ruffed by Maggie, who came back now with the ◆Q, covered by declarer's king and ruffed by me. We had won the first four tricks and were still entitled to Maggie's ♣AK and my ♥AQ. In the end, Declarer managed to take only four tricks, for down four doubled and a N/S score of +800, far better than the score that we would make for our game.

The rule about not passing after your partner makes a negative or take-out double is always in effect UNLESS you think that playing the doubled contract is the best place to play the hand. Maggie discovered that no matter what the rules say or what your partner expects, you always have the obligation to get your side to the best contract.



Passing a double when you are expected to bid is rarely the right action, especially when you are very weak, but when you are strong – especially in the suit that is doubled – it can often be the right call.

Here's everything you always wanted know about Bob, in his own words......

My only contributions to the GRBC are the occasional hands that I contribute to the Alert. I am also involved with the Guelph Club where I hold the exalted position of Waste Manager. Of course, that means that I take out the garbage.

I started playing bridge when my nerd friend and I read Charles Goren's book of Standard American bidding. We gave it a try against his parents, playing four-card majors, 16/18 NT's, no negative doubles, all two-level openers strong. Standard bidding for the time, but mostly it got us to the right contract.

Then at university in the common rooms where no doubt students these days play endless video games, we played endless bridge games. Sometimes a table would start up Friday evening and, although the players in the game would drop out and back in again, the game would continue all weekend.

After dropping out of university several times (perhaps from too much time playing bridge?) and trying a variety of menial jobs (bartender, cleaning airplanes, bicycle messenger, dishwasher, porter...), I stumbled into a job as an Air Traffic Controller Trainee. I worked in ATC in various cities in the Maritimes, Winnipeg, and Toronto from 1974 until I retired in 2008.

At one of my first ATC postings, in Charlottetown, PEI, a coworker suggested that we try duplicate bridge. Up until then, I didn't know that was a thing. I played in clubs and tournaments around the Maritimes until I settled down and started having children. After that, for 20 years, there was no time for Bridge.

My kids and grandchildren (now at six & counting) still earn a lot of my time.

My favourite tip is - just like in golf, when you do something ridiculous (as everybody does), learn to shake it off. Some golfers and bridge players let a bad event influence the next thing they do, digging the hole deeper.

My coffee cup reminding me why I shouldn't have a donut with it.



An Interesting Hand

Contributed by Paul Latimer

I picked up this decent hand in third seat.

S: AQT93 H: 96 D: KJ64 C: QJ

My partner dealt and opened 1♣. My RHO passed, and I took it slowly, bidding 1♠. LHO passed and Partner bid 2NT (18-19 balanced, even though he had only 16 HCP). Now I started to get excited. I calculated that we might be a point or two shy of the requirements for slam, but I figured it wouldn't hurt to ask more about partner's hand.

So, I jumped to 4♣ (Gerber). Partner admits to three aces (nice!), so I continue asking, this time about kings, by bidding 5♣. At this point LHO doubled. Partner dutifully responded that he had one king. So, now I I knew that we were missing two kings. Still, partner had told me about only 15 of his 18-19 points. He's got to have some quacks in there somewhere...

But now I started to think about LHO's double. Surely lead-directing. And he likely has something like six clubs to the king. I KNOW that my partner can pick up that king (given my QJ), so even if he loses a trick to the other missing king, slam could actually make. So, I bid 6NT.

Partner's hand was:

S: KJ72

H: A5

D: A975

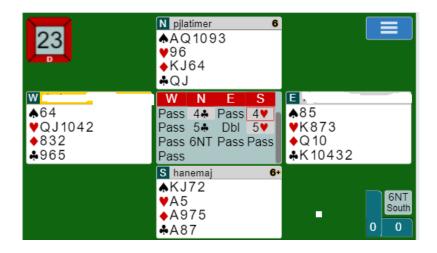
C: A87

As expected, RHO led a club. LHO covered, and Partner won. Partner then picked up the diamond suit for four tricks (LHO had QT doubleton). He then cashed the ♣Q and ran the spades for five more tricks. By this point, the opponents have each come down to honour-x in hearts, so Partner led up to his (bare) ♥A, and cashed the ♣8 for the 13th trick. Even if an opponent had kept a club guard, we still would have made 6NT!

My point in all of this was that without LHO's double of my 5♣ bid, I would likely have been very reluctant to bid the slam, and probably would have settled for 5NT to play.

This was a top board for us. Most other tables played 4♣, making either five or six. One other pair bid 6♠, going down one.

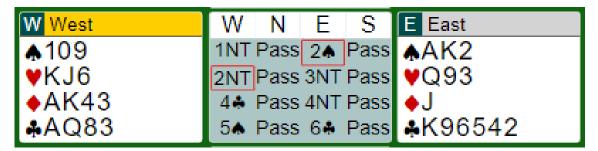
Here was the whole deal.





Dear David

A Super-Duper Accept



This hand occurred near the end of an online pairs game. The auction went 1NT-3NT - a perfectly reasonable auction with at least 28 HCP between the two hands. A little trepidation about the singleton diamond, but nothing is perfect. On the actual hand above, you can see that 12 tricks are available (six clubs and two each in the other three suits), but how do you reach slam when East knows that there are (at most) only 30 HCP between the two hands?

First-of-all, long suits often produce "tricks", which are infinitely more valuable than HCP. Assuming West has some strength and/or length in East's long suit, the fifth club is silver and the sixth club is gold. If you stick to the rule that you need 33 HCP to make slam in NT, you are overlooking the value of the club suit.

The Bidding

1NT -- balanced 15-17. I have seen many opponents refuse to open 1NT because they held a small doubleton. I will suggest to you that a great many hands that you pick up will have imperfections. For example, you hold: ♠65432 ♥AQ7 ◆A103 ♣A2. More than enough to open, but the spade suit is bad. Despite your misgivings, 1♠ is the bid that best describes your hand. Another: ♠A4 ♥K10 ◆AQ5 ♣K98432. It is not traditional, but opening 1NT is the bid that most closely describe your hand

- 2♠ Transferring to clubs in order to glean more information
- 2NT A super-accept promising at least one of the top three club honours
- 3NT East is concerned about his singleton diamond, but 3NT rates to be the best chance (if it makes!)
- 4♣ West would not run from 3NT, so 4♣ suggests a maximum in HCP and a try for slam in clubs
- 4NT RKCB (This should be a sign-off, but in the event West interpreted it as keycard-asking.)
- 5♠ Two keycards with the ♣Q. (If West had only one keycard, he would bid 5♣ and East could either pass or bid a new suit either 5♥ or 5♠ -- which asks partner to bid 5NT)
- 6♣ Safer than 6NT from East's point of view

Random thoughts about the bidding:

After you have signed off in 3NT and partner has made a 4♣ slam try, a return to 4NT should be saying "No thanks – I am not interested in the club slam. If you were interested, you would cuebid at the four-level (4♠ in this case). This would allow West to bid 4NT (RKCB) and settle in slam.

Finally – since West has no useful ruffing values, perhaps he should bid 6NT/6♣ in order to get a better matchpoint score. If you change East's hand to ♠K92 ♥AQ3 ♦J ♣K96542, he will need the ♣A to be in the North hand whether he is in 6♣ or 6NT.



Top Master Point Earners at our Club

Contributed by Allen Pengelly

This table lists the individuals who have earned the most master points at our club in each of three master point bands since the beginning of July.

Open Players				499er Players				99er Players			
	Name	MP			Name	MP			Name	MP	
1	David Baker	38,70		1	Denis Williams	10.42		1	Mark Sherwood	7.57	
2	Cindy Mahn	21.63		1	Regina Williams	10.42		2	Doug Fickling	7.57	
3	Mike Peng	20.30		3	Lori Cole	9.49		2	Debbie Miethig	5.95	
4	Edith Ferber	19.20		4	Bev Hitchman	9.05		4	JP Fraresso	5.42	
5	Kathy Russell	17.58		5	Jack Cole	8.35		5	Don Slowinski	4.42	
6	Neil Jeffrey	16.64		6	Suzanne Edwards	7.67		6	Peter Gaasenbeek	4.32	
7	Stephen Young	16.25		7	Lissa Lowes	7.40		7	Russel Kerr	3.45	
8	Moira Hollingsworth	14.38		8	Jim Dalgliesh	7.16		7	Audrey Cook	3.45	
9	Margot Stockie	13.16		9	Anita Hanson	6.38		9	Rick Arthur	3.03	
9	Roy Dandyk	13.16		10	Joe Blake	6.78		10	Denise Dolff	2.88	
11	Steve Carpenter	12.13		11	Janice Pengelly	6.77		11	Joan Stroud	2.88	
12	Neil Coburn	11.96		12	Sue Moses	6.73		12	John Aldridge	2.84	
13	Dave Longstaff	10.35		12	Brenda Semple	6.73		13	Brian Gaber	2.68	
14	Scott Hills	9.98		14	Lynda Burnett	6.54		14	Valirie Binkle	2.35	
15	Dave Embury	9.31		15	Elinor Girouard	6.22		15	Ben Cornell	2.23	
16	Dianne Aves	8.34		15	Nancy Cattanach	6.22		16	Randall DeKraker	2.17	
17	Bonnie Kains	7.61		17	John Kip	5.93		17	Pat Gascho	2.06	
18	Thea Davis	7.56		18	Barbara Arthur	5.85		18	Jane Wilson	2.02	
19	Diane Bourdeau	7.43		19	Nanci Phelan	5.68		19	Jim Fox	1.70	
20	Ed Hills	7.37		20	Michael Pengelly	5.61		20	Pat Pietrek	1.65	
21	Wayne Schroeder	7.22		21	Sue Peterson	5.23		21	Mary Jameson	1.55	
22	Adriaan Kempe	6.96		22	Cheryl Kip	5.20		21	Maureen Logel	1.55	
23	Robert Griffiths	6.86		23	Andy Wilson	5.13		23	Shirley Clairmont	1.48	
24	Adrian Record	6.79		24	Renate Boucher	5.05		24	Jeannie Leforge	1.46	
25	Diane Jamieson	6.48		25	Peggi Rieger	4.81		25	Elizabeth Bogo	1.28	
				25	Donald Rieger	4.81					

| | ∠⊃ | ∪onaid Kieger | 4.81 | | |

If you would like to play in a particular game but lack a partner that day, you can either:

- For both online and f2f games, log on to Pianola, click on Partner Finder, and create a Partner Finder advert. This needs to be done at least a few hours in advance of the game. When you use Partner Finder, it will allow folks to see your contact information. If you have posted a Partner Finder ad, kindly remember to check your phone and email and, when you've found a partner, delete your ad. Someone who replied to your ad may be waiting for a response.
- For online games only, log in to the game in question and register yourself on the Partnership Desk tab (or look to see if someone else has already registered there).

If you are looking for a regular partner, contact <u>Joan Slover</u>, our membership lead. Please let her know what sort of game/partner you are interested in – your playing level, your available time slots, F2F and/or online, and any other pertinent information.

We have fun in **spades**.
We play with all our **hearts**.
We treat our members like **diamonds**.
We use double dummy all the time at our **club**.