

I/N News ... especially for you!

Volume 7, Issue 1
Spring, 2007

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Hand Evaluation by Jim O'Neil

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Hand Evaluation 1

The Point Count System

What is the best way to evaluate the strength of a bridge hand? The purpose of any valuation system is to estimate, as accurately as possible, the total number of tricks which can be won by the partnership. Many methods have been tried over the years. The "4-3-2-1 Point Count" is by far the most popular, and has become almost universally accepted.

Every bridge player becomes familiar with the 4-3-2-1 Point Count system from the beginning; it is important, however, to understand why we assign a certain point value to a particular holding – and when to modify that point value.

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Part I. Taking Tricks

There are three ways in which tricks are won: with high cards, with length cards, and (in a trump contract only) by ruffing. Any good valuation system must take all of these into account.

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1) High Cards.

On most deals, the majority of tricks will be won by high honors. An Ace will almost always win a trick; Kings and Queens are frequently trick winners, either because they are favorably placed, or because they are "promoted" after higher honors are forced out. Jacks and even Tens and Nines can win tricks, or help promote winners. In the early days of Contract Bridge, the "Honor Trick" system was the most common. An Ace was counted as 1 "Honor trick"; and Ace-King was 2, and Ace-Queen 1 ½, a King-Queen 1 ¼, a King ½, etc. This was not entirely accurate, as it did not take into account the "combining" value of honors. Consider the following combinations:

Fearlessness in Bridge 11

♠ – AQx facing ♠ – xxx
♥ – xxx ♥ – Kxx

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We can expect to take 3 tricks ¼ the time (when the Spade King and Heart Ace are favorably placed); 2 tricks ½ the time (when one of the cards is favorably placed); and 1 trick ¼ the time (when both cards are unfavorably placed). Our average expectation is 2 tricks. The "Honor Trick" system is accurate – 1 ½ tricks plus ½ trick = 2 tricks.

Upcoming Tournaments 12

If we reverse the holding in one of the hands:

♠ – AQx facing ♠ – Kxx
♥ – xxx ♥ – xxx

Now we can take 3 tricks. The "Honor Trick" system was not very accurate in this case. 1

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1/2 tricks plus 1/2 trick = 3 tricks! The “Honor Trick” system fails to take into account a very important factor:

Honors are worth more when they combine with honors in partner’s hand.

The “4-3-2-1” Point Count system more accurately reflects the possibility of combining with honors in partner’s hand. To start with, we assign “high-card” points to honors. The Point Count is familiar to all bridge players: An Ace = 4 points, a King = 3 points, a Queen = 2 points, and a Jack = 1 point.

As the auction progresses, we will add a little for honors in partner’s suit(s), Where they are more likely to combine with partner’s honors to produce extra tricks, And subtract a little for honors in the opponents’ suit(s), where combining is less likely.

2) Long Suits

Long suits can be a good source of tricks, if these suits can be established in time. A five-card suit can provide 2 “length tricks” when the remaining cards are split evenly (and when the timing and entries are available). Accordingly, we can add points for long suits. A good 5 card suit (headed by the Ace or King, especially if supported by lower honors) is worth an extra point. A 6 card suit, or two 5 card suits is worth an extra 2-3 points, and a 7 card suit an extra 4-5 points or so. As the distribution gets wilder, the “Point Count” system gets less accurate. It is important to consider the quality of the long suit – poor 5 card suits should not be upgraded – it is often too difficult to establish length tricks before the opponents establish their tricks.

For example:

♠ – AQJxx facing ♠ – Kxx
♥ – Axx ♥ – xxx
♦ – xxx ♦ – Qxxxx
♣ – Kx ♣ – Ax

If diamonds break 3-2, we can establish the 2 long diamonds – but we probably won’t have time. We will have to lose the lead 2-3 times before those length tricks are established. By that time, the opponents will probably have set up and taken their heart tricks. 8 tricks is probably the limit of this hand.

However, if our suit was better:

♠ – AQJxx facing ♠ – Kxx
♥ – Axx ♥ – xxx
♦ – Kxx ♦ – AQxxx

♣ – xx

♣ – xx

Now we can take 11 tricks if the diamonds break evenly. These hands have the same distribution and same high cards – yet there is a three trick difference.

Long suits are worth tricks only if they can be established in time.

3) Trump Tricks

In a suit contract, extra tricks can be won with trumps. When we are short in a side suit, we will likely be able to trump any losers partner may have in that suit. We are more likely to gain tricks by trumping in the short-trump hand than by trumping in the long-trump hand.

Let’s say our trump suit is: ♠ – Kxx facing ♠ – AQxxx

We have 5 probable tricks in the trump suit. If we trump a side suit twice in the long-trump hand, we will be left with:

♠ – Kxx facing ♠ – AQx

We can now take 3 more tricks, plus our 2 earlier trump tricks, for a total of 5 tricks – the same number we started with.

If, however we trump twice in the short-trump hand, we will be left with: ♠ – K facing ♠ – AQxxx

Now when we play trumps, we will probably take 5 more tricks, plus our 2 earlier tricks, for a total of 7 tricks, 2 more tricks than we started with.

Shortness in the short-trump hand is worth more than shortness in the long-trump hand.

We count more for side suit shortness when raising partner’s suit – this hand is usually the short-trump hand. Shortness in the long-trump hand is not totally worthless – it can negate the opponent’s high-card strength, help set up a long suit in partner’s hand, or sometimes just give us the timing and control to establish our own winners. But it is shortness in the short-trump hand that is more likely to produce extra tricks.

So, after a trump suit is established, we can add points for shortness in a side suit.

When raising partner’s suit:

A doubleton in a side suit = 1 point

A singleton in a side suit = 3 points

A void in a side suit = 5 points

But we should subtract a point if we have minimum trump length – so we count no points for a doubleton, 2

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A 3 2 **Q J 5 4**

Play the **A** and then lead toward the **Q J** twice. **Never** lead **Q** or **J** (unless only 2 tricks are needed).
for a singleton, or 4 for a void.

When we bid a suit, and partner raises, we add fewer points:

A doubleton in a side suit = 1 point

A singleton in a side suit = 2 points

A void in a side suit = 3 points

Again, we should subtract a point if we have minimum trump length – we count no points for a doubleton, 1 for a singleton, or 2 for a void.

A summary of the Point Count valuation system:

High Card Points

Ace = 4 points

King = 3 points

Queen = 2 points

Jack = 1 point

Length Points

Good 5-card suit = 1 point

6-card suit = 2-3 points

2 5-card suits = 2-3 points

7-card suit = 4-5 points

Shortness Points

When raising partner's suit:

Doubleton = 1 point

Singleton = 3 points

Void = 5 points

When partner raises our suit:

Doubleton = 1 point

Singleton = 2 points

Void = 3 points

But, subtract a point for minimum trump length.

We should have a minimum of 13 points for an opening bid.

We will need about 25-26 points in the combined hands for game in NT or a major.

We will need about 28-29 points in the combined hands for game in a minor.

We will need about 32-33 points in the combined hands for a small slam.

We will need about 36-37 points in the combined hands for a grand slam.

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Dear Ms. Information...

My partner and I were playing in the recent Winter Regional in Lake Geneva. There were not enough people in either the I/N game or in the side game so they combined the two. Someone (most likely from the side game) sat down at our table and said, "Skip Bid." What does that mean? (The bidder said he did not have a "Stop" card in his box?)

Thank you.

Confused in Wisconsin

Dear Confused,

The "Skip Bid" warning is used before jump bids. It is meant to protect your side from bidding too fast and giving away something about your hand ... both to your opponents and to your partner.

The "Stop" card does the same thing, but sometimes you are just dealt a box that is missing a card, and you do not discover it until you need said card.

When an opponent jumps the bidding – either to preempt, show a fit, make a strong jump shift, or for any other reason – passing quickly generally shows a lack of values in your hand. In essence, you have no need to think because you have no problem and nothing to say.

Conveying this information to the table helps your opponents declare the hand, and also, it places a burden on your partner who may have a marginal call himself. If he takes the "safe" route in the auction and the opponents call the director, he may very well have the score adjusted so that his decision does not benefit your side.

It is very difficult to do the right thing in these situations. If partner bids in any way that COULD be influenced by your fast pass, the opponents will summon the law. Everyone at the table goes away with a sour feeling, forgetting you are all here to play cards and have fun.

It is important to abide by the rules. In this situation, the rule says that after a skip bid, you must hesitate ten seconds whether you have a problem or not. This way, no one can accuse you or your partner of taking advantage of unauthorized information.

Hope this helps.

Ms.

Part II. Modification to Point Count

The 4-3-2-1 point count, with additions for distributional features, is a good approximation of the trick-taking potential of a hand. However, there are a few minor adjustments which should be made.

The 4/3/2/1 ratio is only an approximation. Aces and Kings tend to be undervalued slightly while Queens and Jacks tend to overvalued slightly. A detailed mathematical model would tell us that an Ace is worth about 4.3 points, a King about 3.15, a Queen about 1.85 and a Jack about .7. To add all these small fractions would make things overly complicated. It is best to simply use the 4-3-2-1 count, adding a point or so if the hand is rich in Aces and Kings, or subtracting a bit if the hand is filled with "Quacks" – Queens and Jacks.

Tens and Nines are not completely worthless; they can often help promote higher honors. An example:

♦ – K54 facing ♦ – J32
is worth a trick 3/4 the time (when the A is in front of the K, or the Q is in front of the J). Our expectation is 3/4 trick. But:
♦ – K54 facing ♦ – JT9
will always be worth at least 1 trick, and will take 2 tricks 1/2 the time (when the Q is in front of the K). Our expectation is 1 1/2 tricks. The presence of the Ten and Nine has added 3/4 trick.

It is hard to assign an exact point value to Tens and Nines, but we should probably add a point or so if we have several Tens and Nines, especially in key suits.

Hands with honors concentrated in long suits should be upgraded slightly; hands with honors concentrated in short suits should be downgraded. When honors are in short suits, our options during the play can be limited. It may be impossible to take or repeat a finesse, and the necessary entires may not be there. For example: ♥ – AKJT facing ♥ – 32 is always worth 3 tricks, and 4 tricks can be won 1/2 the time (when the Q is in front of the AK). Our average expectation is 3 1/2 tricks. But with:

♥ – AK facing ♥ – JT32
4 tricks can only be won if the Q is singleton or doubleton – about a 10% chance. Our average expectation is 3.1 tricks. Also, we will need more entries to get all our tricks.

Hands with major-suit length (especially in spades) tend to be worth a bit more than hands with length in the minors. These hands are not any better in trick-taking potential. However, it is more difficult to make game in a minor suit (we need to

take 11 tricks instead of 10), and should the auction become competitive, the opponents may be able to outbid us if their suit(s) are higher.

Let's look at some marginal opening hands:
Some players would open all of these hands; some would open none of them.

1A) ♠ – QJ4 1B) ♠ – QJ4
♥ – A984 ♥ – A9874
♦ – K72 ♦ – K2
♣ – Q64 ♣ – Q64
12 high-card pts 12 high-card pts
0 distribution +1 for 5 card suit
--- ---
12 pts 13 pts
PASS Open 1♥

2A) ♠ – QJ4 2B) ♠ – AT94
♥ – Q6 ♥ – AT96
♦ – KQ72 ♦ – A72
♣ – QJ54 ♣ – 54
13 high-card pts 12 high-card pts
-1 for Queens and Jacks +1 for Aces, 10's & 9's
12 pts – and major suit shortness 13 pts and 2 4-card majors
PASS Open 1♦

3A) ♠ – AK764 3B) ♠ – 54 3C) ♠ - 98654
♥ – A984 ♥ – 63 ♥ - 8754
♦ – 63 ♦ – A984 ♦ - AJ
♣ – 54 ♣ – AK764 ♣ - AK
11 HCP 11 HCP 12 HCP
+1 for 5 card suit +1 for 5 card suit +1 for Aces + Kings
+1 for As + Ks +1 for As + Ks, long suits -1 for honors in
short suits
13 pts 13 pts 12 pts
with major suit length short majors, rebid problems **PASS**
Open 1♠ **PASS** is probably best

A Summary of modifications to the Point Count system:

Add points for:
A hand rich in Aces and Kings
Tens and Nines, especially in long suits
Honors concentrated in long suits
Major suit length

Conversely, subtract points for:
A hand with honors mostly in Queens and Jacks
Honors concentrated in short suits

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Major suit shortness

Part III. Re-evaluation during the auction

As the auction progresses, we constantly re-evaluate our hand. Some high cards will prove more useful than others; some distributional assets will prove more useful than others. We will add points for shortness only after a trump fit has been established. We make other modifications to our point count as well.

High cards in partners suit(s) are worth a bit more than high cards elsewhere. Honors in a suit bid by partner are more likely to combine with partner's honors to produce extra honor tricks, or to help set up length tricks. We can add a point for a good honor holding in a suit bid by partner – a holding of A, K, QJ or better. Conversely, we should subtract a point for a bad holding – Ten high or worse.

When the hand is a misfit, we should subtract a point or two. It becomes much harder to develop tricks in a suit when partner cannot provide any help. We may not be able to take or repeat a finesse, and we may have difficulty with entries. Conversely, we can add a point or two when there is a double-fit (good fits in two suits). With double-fitting hands it is usually much easier to develop tricks. Also, if we have a double-fit, it is likely that the opponents do as well. Even if we fail to make our contract, a small minus score may prove to be a good save against the opponents potential contract.

When the opponents enter the auction, we re-evaluate our honor holdings. We can add a bit for honors which seem to be favorably placed, and subtract some for honors which appear to be unfavorably placed. A holding such as KJx increases in value when the suit is bid on our right. We can add a point. We can add perhaps 2 points when the suit is bid preemptively on our right. If the suit is bid on our left, however, we should subtract a point (-2 points if the suit is bid preemptively.)

Unguarded honors, such as singleton King, or singleton or doubleton Queen, are difficult to evaluate. In a suit bid by partner, it is probably best to count the high-card value and disregard the shortness value. (Subtract points for shortness if this suit is going to be trump!). In a suit bid by the opponents, count the shortness but subtract a point or two from the high-card value.

Let's look at how hand re-evaluation works in practice:

Partner opens 1♠.

4A) ♠ – K854 4B) ♠ – 854

♥ – 8 ♥ – QJ83
♦ – AT76 ♦ – QJ4
♣ – J765 ♣ – KJ7

8 high-card pts 10 high-card pts
+1 Spade K -1 bad trumps
+3 singleton ♥ -1 points in Q's and J's

12 pts 8 pts
Bid 3♠ (limit raise) Bid 2♠ only

Partner's hand might be:

♠ – AJ763
♥ – A72
♦ – K5
♣ – QT2

Opposite hand A, 4♠ is a very good contract – the opponents need to get a club ruff and another spade trick, or 2 spade tricks. This is unlikely. Opposite hand B, 4 spades is in great danger – the opponents will get 2 Aces and at least 1 trump trick, plus a possible heart trick and a possible second spade trick.

Partner opens 1♣. We respond 1♠ with:

5) ♠ – KT763
♥ – 7
♦ – A632
♣ – Q92

9 high card points
+1 for 5 card suit

10 pts

If partner now rebids 1NT, we should pass. We have at most 24 points, and the singleton Heart is a liability. If partner raises to 2♠, however, we can add another couple of points for our singleton. With 12 points, all appearing to be useful, we can bid 4♠.

Opposite:

5A) ♠ – Q8
♥ – A853
♦ – K54
♣ – KJ63

3NT is a hopeless contract. The opponents will have several chances to set up at least 3 Heart tricks – and we still have to find a way to bring in the spade suit.

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But opposite:

5B) ♠ – Q842

♥ – A83

♦ – K5

♣ – KJ63

4 Spades is a very good contract. We will lose a club and perhaps 2 spades. We may even make 5 Spades.

Partner opens 1♠. We raise to 2♠ with both:

6A) ♠ – K854 6B) ♠ – 854

♥ – 83

♥ – KQ3

♦ – T764

♦ – KJ64

♣ – K76

♣ – 762

6 high-card pts 9 high-card pts

+1 Spade K

-1 bad trumps

+1 doubleton Heart

8 pts

8 pts

Partner now tries for game by bidding 3♣. Hand A increases further in value; add another Point for the Club King, and with 9 points we can bid 4♠. Hand B decreases in value; Subtract a point for bad Clubs, and with 7 points, we should sign off at 3♠.

Partner's hand might be:

6) ♠ – AQ763

♥ – A72

♦ – 5

♣ – AQT4

Opposite Hand A, 4 Spades is cold, and 5 will make quite often. Opposite Hand B, 4 Spades is a very poor contract. 3 Notrump is a little better but will probably make less than 1/3 the time.

Appleton Springtime Sectional – March 23-25, 2007

Knights of Columbus Clubhouse (NEW location!)

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Date Time Event

Friday, March 23

1:30 p.m. Stratified 299er Pairs

7:30 p.m. Stratified 299er Pairs

Saturday, March 24

10:00 a.m. Stratified 299er Pairs

3:30 p.m. Stratified 299er Pairs

Sunday, March 25

10:00 a.m. Strat. Swiss Teams

Chairperson:

Mary Jane Fero

(920) 725-6454

Maryjanefero@cs.com

Partnerships:

Ed Peck

(920) 729-9288

pecksgoodboy@yahoo.com

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Improve Your Scores and Have a Better Time While Doing It

by Suzi Subeck

Here are some easy steps to making your game more productive and more fun!

First, find yourself a regular partner, one who is available to play when you are. The ideal partner is one who is better than you are so you can learn from him. If that is not an option, find someone at your own level and you can learn from each other! Just be sure you can both play at the same times, whether that be at a local duplicate game or online. That way, you are not disappointed when you feel like a game and can't get one.

Second, if your regular partner lives in close proximity to you, find a game near your homes. Playing in person with others is more satisfying than playing online. It gets you out in the world and you will make new friends and find other potential partners so you have a base of people from whom to draw.

If your regular partner lives outside a reasonable distance to travel for a game, you can always play online at Bridge Base Online. It is free and easy... and there are always people looking for online games.

Once you have a regular partner and a place to play, get yourself up and moving and head out to the game. Duplicate is addictive and it won't take long for you to become an everyday player.

Play as often as time will allow. The more you play, the better you will get. Bridge is a game of revelations. Once you try new plays or new bids and they work, you will want to try them over and over again.

Third, practice bidding with your regular partner. You can improve your play simply by playing... on or off line. But bidding is what makes bridge a partnership game.

You and your partner can bid hands over the phone, discuss any differences of opinion, and simply practice the communication between you when you are not at a game.

The best way to do that is to discuss actual hands your play at a game. If you have already done that and need more material, you can always get on line at Bridge Base and

kibitz some other players. You will find plenty of interesting hands to discuss. In addition, you will see situations that you have never considered, and you can figure out the best way to handle them.

Kibitzing (in person and online) is a great way to improve your game.

Last, after the game ends, go out for coffee with your partner. Take your convention card along and make bridge an integral part of your evening. Talk about problem hands. Discuss how your opponents handled tough situations. Try to remember as much as you can about the hands.

Bridge is much more than a competitive sport. It is a way of life. Once the bug bites you, you will stay bit forever!

After you have some experience under your belt, take in a local tournament. Tournaments are fun. There are games for players at every level so you have no reason to be nervous. If your regular partner can't make the tournament, there is a partnership desk that will arrange a partnership for you.

Tournaments offer free lectures which are really free lessons from local experts. They are well worth attending and you will be surprised how much can be learned. Most expert lecturers speak first and then take questions from the audience. You can ask about hands you have just played or situations you simply want to clarify.

The bridge world is made up of several levels of the game... club games, Sectionals, Regionals, and Nationals. You are welcome at any and all of these. You may think you are not adequately experienced, but you are wrong!! No matter what level you try, you will find players who are better than you and worse than you... and you will love them all. You can learn from those better and help out those worse. In the end, you will all grow and improve your games together.

Try it! When you do, write and tell us about your experience. We will be glad to include your personal triumphs in our newsletter so others can benefit from your experience too. Have fun!

Tournament Results:

Central States Regional, Lake Geneva, WI, October, 2006

Tuesday Afternoon 299ers (10 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.83 1 Nancy Wales, Levering MI; Pamela Ziegel, Petoskey MI
1.86 2/3 Jon Schwestka, Oak Park IL; Sally Gill, Bloomingdale IL
1.86 2/3 William Barnes - Elinor Barnes, Mount Prospect IL
2.26 4 1 1 David Murdoch - Agnes Murdoch, Wilmette IL
0.90 5 Thomas Shepro, Fitchburg WI; Mary Shepro, Madison WI
1.70 6 2 2 Loretta Wexler, Skokie IL; Kent Vlautin, Chicago IL
1.27 3 Betty Zucker - Pearl Freedman, Skokie IL
1.07 4 3 Arlene Vuturo - Christine Weiler, Libertyville IL
0.68 5/6 Jennifer Musson, Racine WI; Irene Bolton, Brookfield WI
0.89 5/6 4 Renee McNitt, Roscoe IL; Karen Pickelsimer, Oakwood Hills IL

Thursday Evening 299ers (5 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.12 1 1 Joanne Behling, Wauwatosa WI; Nancy Meylor, Pewaukee WI
1.59 2 2 1 Ron Sackheim, Highland Park IL; Marcus Gottlieb, Deerfield IL
1.19 3 3 2 Don Malone, Sharon WI; Karen Pickelsimer, Oakwood Hills IL
0.78 4/5 4/5 Linda Scheible - Michael Scheible, Kenosha WI
0.78 4/5 4/5 Karen Friest - Lynda Schimberg, Cedar Rapids IA

Wednesday Afternoon 299er Pairs (14 tables)

MPs A B C Names

3.39 1 1 1 Debbie Sears - Michael Sears, Boyne City MI
2.54 2 2 Renee McNitt, Roscoe IL; Katherine Freeman, Beloit WI
1.91 3 Gunilla Flater, Highland Park IL; Jim Peterson, Lincolnshire IL
1.43 4 Chaz Davis - Sicy Davis, Mundelein IL
1.50 5 3 2 Judy Anderson - Bunny Hultman, Chicago IL
1.12 6 4 3 Sue Protzman, Oneida WI; June Goltz, Green Bay WI
0.84 5 Ellen Gilman, Lake Forest IL; Douglas MacDonald, Evanston IL
0.88 6 Linda Scheible - Michael Scheible, Kenosha WI
0.80 4 Arlene Vuturo - Christine Weiler, Libertyville IL

Wednesday Evening 299er Pairs (7.5 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.54 1 1 Debbie Sears - Michael Sears, Boyne City MI
1.91 2 2 Don Malone, Sharon WI; Karen Pickelsimer, Oakwood Hills IL
1.43 3 3 1 Marlene Backus, Brookfield WI; Dianne Kiehl, Muskego WI
1.07 4 4 Liz Leibert - Gordon Leibert, Elgin IL
1.03 5/6 5/6 2 Sandra Culver, Green Bay WI; Beverly Wood, Suamico WI
0.70 5/6 5/6 Rae Gene Burger, Des Moines IA; Cindy Rovner, West Des Moines IA

Thursday Afternoon 299er Pairs (12 tables)

MPs A B C Names

3.11 1 Pamela Ziegel, Petoskey MI; Nancy Wales, Levering MI
2.66 2 1 1 Thomas McDonald - Karen Anderson, Batavia IL
1.75 3 R Schwartz - Barbara Schwartz, Morton Grove IL
2.00 4 2 2 Sue Folkoff, Glencoe IL; Bernard Schwartz, Wilmette IL
1.50 5 3 3 Karen Pickelsimer, Oakwood Hills IL; Barbara Worden, Rockford IL
1.12 6 4 David Raitt, Madison WI; Eleanor Seaman, New York NY
0.84 5 4 Beth Lageschulte, Barrington IL; Helen Lacher, Deer Park IL
0.57 6/7 John Corley - Jean Corley, Burnsville MN
0.57 6/7 Virginia Grace - Jill Lauer, Lake Forest IL

Monday Evening 299er Pairs (4 tables)

MPs A B C Names

1.98 1 Thomas Shepro, Fitchburg WI; Mary Shepro, Madison WI
1.73 2 1 Sue Protzman, Oneida WI; June Goltz, Green Bay WI
1.30 3 2 Shirley Carpenter, Harbor Springs MI; Jerome Krueger, Green Bay WI

Friday Evening 299er Pairs (7 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.10 1/2 1/2 Jane Huff, Columbus OH; Marcy Rowan, Topinabee MI
2.10 1/2 1/2 1 Jean Corley - John Corley, Burnsville MN
1.35 3 Charles Johnson - Demaris Johnson, Aurora IL
0.89 4/5 Carole Jackson, Park Ridge IL; Patricia Horn, Rolling Meadows IL
1.20 4/5 3 Carol Williams, Oshkosh WI; Carol Konrad, Neshkoro WI
1.34 4 2 Carol Duffy - Marilyn Richards, Wilmette IL
1.01 3 Marlene Backus, Brookfield WI; Dianne Kiehl, Muskego WI
0.76 4 Marlene Beranek, Glenview IL; Mary Hilman, Mt Prospect IL

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You will be glad you did!

(Continued on page 9)

Saturday Afternoon 299er Pairs (9 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.35 1/2 1/2 Diane Boger - Steve Boger, Buffalo Grove IL
 2.35 1/2 1/2 1 Jean Corley - John Corley, Burnsville MN
 1.51 3 Chaz Davis - Sicy Davis, Mundelein IL
 1.27 4 3 2 J Bradner - Norma Bradner, Addison IL
 0.95 5 4 3 Lynn Ulreich - John Ulreich, Frankfort IL
 0.72 5 Beckie Roberts - Bruce Vining, Rochester MN

Friday 300/200/50 Pairs (9 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.68 1 1 Jean Corley - John Corley, Burnsville MN
 2.01 2 2 Beckie Roberts - Bruce Vining, Rochester MN
 1.51 3 3 Jo Terlato, Lake Forest IL; Susan Marsland, Chicago IL
 1.13 4 4 Cynthia Bixel - Sandra Petrille, Naperville IL
 1.37 5 5 1 Marlene Backus, Brookfield WI; Dianne Kiehl, Muskego WI
 1.03 2 James Karolewicz - Kathy Karolewicz, Mequon WI

Sunday Morning 299er Swiss (11 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.97 1 Joan Wilson - Geneva Carlson - Sylvia Sommerfeldt - Dorothy Kelly, Janesville WI
 2.23 2 1 Stephen Willson, Village Of Lake IL; David Vietti - Vicki Vietti, Cary IL; Pamela Duncan, Woodstock IL
 1.67 3 Patricia Bailey, Lake City MN; Robert Miller, Alma WI; Patricia Horn, Rolling Meadows IL; Carole Jackson, Park Ridge IL
 1.60 4 2 Carol Konrad, Neshkoro WI; Diane Treslo, Rolling Meadows IL; Carol Williams, Oshkosh WI; Karen Dale Kent, Barrington IL
 1.55 1 Marlene Beranek, Glenview IL; Mary Hilman, Mt Prospect IL; Carol Duffy - Marilyn Richards, Wilmette IL

Sunday Afternoon 299er Swiss (9 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.68 1 Leslie Phelps, Vero Beach FL; Dianne Kiehl, Muskego WI; Ronald Cohn, Glendale WI; Marlene Backus, Brookfield WI
 2.01 2 1 Carol Konrad, Neshkoro WI; Diane Treslo, Rolling Meadows IL; Carol Williams, Oshkosh WI; Karen Dale Kent, Barrington IL
 1.51 3 Joan Wilson - Geneva Carlson - Sylvia Sommerfeldt - Dorothy Kelly, Janesville WI
 1.32 4/5 2/3 Stephen Willson, Village Of Lake IL; David Vietti - Vicki Vietti, Cary IL; Pamela Duncan, Woodstock IL
 1.55 4/5 2/3 1 James Karolewicz - Kathy Karolewicz, Mequon WI; Kurt Litscher - Janet Litscher, Greendale WI

Chicago Fall 299er;s, Darien, IL, October, 2006**Saturday Afternoon Stratified Pairs (10 tables)**

MPs A B C Names

2.02 1 1 Robert Block, Deerfield IL; Michael Stein, Highland Park IL
 1.52 2 2 1 K Stavenger - Mary Currier, Naperville IL
 1.14 3 Elizabeth Delange - Timothy O'Reilly, Naperville IL
 1.02 4 3 J C Chupack, Gurnee IL; Bryan Delfs, Pleasant Prairie WI
 0.76 5 4 Harland London - Holly London, Woodridge IL
 0.89 6 5 2 Mary Warren, Wheaton IL; Carolyn Satrum, Downers Grove IL
 0.67 3 Joan Jerpe - Elizabeth Fisher, Naperville IL

Stratified 299er Pairs (10 tables)

MPs A B C Names

2.02 1 1 Robert Block, Deerfield IL; Michael Stein, Highland Park IL
 1.52 2 2 1 Edward Grant - Barbara Stone, Chicago IL
 1.14 3 3 2 Martha Kemp - Peggy Beyer, Hinsdale IL
 0.85 4 4 3 Lynn Ulreich - John Ulreich, Frankfort IL
 0.72 5 5 4 Andrew Haider, Gurnee IL; Kelvin Wursten, Lake Bluff IL
 0.51 6 6 5 Helen Pinsky - Carol Palmer, Northbrook IL

Compact KO Teams (14 tables)

MPs Rank Names

3.63 1 Leonard Dubin, Skokie IL; Douglas MacDonald, Evanston IL; Honor Mogul, Northfield IL; Olivia Shapiro, Highland Park IL
 2.72 2 Fred Dix, Arlington Hgts IL; James Roth, Arlington Hts IL; Terrance Rieck, Winfield IL; Richard Roberts, Naperville IL
 2.00 3 Sally Gill, Bloomingdale IL; Carl Bonfiglio, La Grange Pk IL; Raymond Rimkus, Oak Brook IL; Joyce Schneiderbauer, Western Springs IL
 1.63 4 Gerald Tietz - Pamela Tietz - Richard Spear - Sherilynn Spear, Naperville IL

Stratified Swiss Teams (18 tables)

MPs A B C Names

4.24 1 1 Jon Schwestka - Jonathan Fry, Oak Park IL; Patricia McElligott, Orland Park IL; Kenneth Prouty, Geneva IL
 3.18 2 2 Bette Mathews, Glen Ellyn IL; James Roth, Arlington Hts IL; Raymond Rimkus, Oak Brook IL; Joyce Schneiderbauer, Western Springs IL
 2.39 3 Thomas Hurt - Mary Hurt, Lombard IL; Stephen Bell, Warrenville IL; Robert Kucaba, Downers Grove IL
 1.77 4/6 3/5 1/3 Carol Johnson - Mary Currier - Sandra Zwagerman - K Stavenger, Naperville IL
 1.77 4/6 3/5 1/3 Patricia Leatherwood - Richard Leatherwood, Aurora IL; Lucille Plachetka - Carol Cue, Oswego IL
 1.77 4/6 3/5 1/3 Lou Curotto - Glenda Duncan, Lagrange IL; Rosemarie Mochel, La Grange IL; Dolores Lewis, Indian Head Prk IL

Fall Fest Sectional, Lombard, IL, November, 2006

Friday Morning 299er Pairs (13 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 2.32 1 1 1 K Stavenger - Mary Currier, Naperville IL
1.74 2 2 2 John Anderson, Mt Prospect IL; William Zamzow, Glenview IL
1.31 3 Raymond Rimkus, Oak Brook IL; Joyce Schneiderbauer, Western Springs IL
1.18 4 3 3 Ted Mchugh, Mt. Prospect IL; Steve Schwartz, Blenview IL
0.88 5 4 Judith Ann Bittner, Hinsdale IL; Ann Shewman, Lombard IL
0.68 6 5 4 Lenore Madden, Oak Brook IL; Anne Emmons, Hinsdale IL
0.58 6 5 Bette Mathews, Glen Ellyn IL; Pamela Tietz, Naperville IL

Friday Afternoon 299er Pairs (8 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 1.82 1 1 1 William Zamzow, Glenview IL; John Anderson, Mt Prospect IL
1.37 2 2 2 Steve Schwartz, Blenview IL; Ted Mchugh, Mt. Prospect IL
0.90 3/4 3 Celeste Jacklin - Ann Witt, Aurora IL
0.90 3/4 Raymond Rimkus, Oak Brook IL; Joyce Schneiderbauer, Western Springs IL
0.67 5 4 3 James Williard, Arlington Heights IL; Judy Freeman, Arlington Hts IL

Saturday Afternoon 299er Pairs (8 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 1.60 1/2 1/2 1/2 Lynn Ulreich - John Ulreich, Frankfort IL
1.60 1/2 1/2 1/2 Roxanne Stevenson - Bonnie Katzenstein, Naperville IL
1.02 3 David Booth - Betty Hettinger, Aurora IL
0.96 4 3 D Kelly Sullivan - Loretta Sullivan, Elmhurst IL
0.72 5 4 3 Alice Leuffgen, Indian Head Pk IL; June Dostal, Naperville IL
0.54 5 4 David Wilson - Nancy Wilson, Davis IL

Sunday Evening 299er Swiss (10 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 2.02 1 1 Celeste Jacklin - Ann Witt, Aurora IL; David Wilson - Nancy Wilson, Davis IL
1.52 2 Richard Edholm - Sue Edholm - Donna Kenski - Joseph McCormack, Libertyville IL
1.14 3 Janet Chien, Woodridge IL; Ping Liu - Bonnie Katzenstein, Naperville IL; John Steiner, Wheaton IL
1.28 4 2 1 Kathryn Lefty - Mary Dandurand - Christel Gallagher, Glen Ellyn IL; Karen Grottke, Wheaton IL
0.96 3 Mary Rose Smith - Tricia Smith, River Forest IL; David St John - Kate Gancer, Oak Park IL

Sunday Afternoon 299er Swiss (10 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 1.77 1/2 1/2 Celeste Jacklin - Ann Witt, Aurora IL; David Wilson - Nancy Wilson, Davis IL
1.77 1/2 1/2 Gerald Tietz - Pamela Tietz, Naperville IL; Bette Mathews, Glen Ellyn IL; Ken Svehla, Downers Grove IL
1.14 3 Janet Chien, Woodridge IL; Ping Liu - Bonnie Katzenstein, Naperville IL; John Steiner, Wheaton IL
0.96 4 3 D Kelly Sullivan - Loretta Sullivan, Elmhurst IL; Peggy Beyer, Hinsdale IL; Mary Warren, Wheaton IL
1.02 1 Kathryn Lefty - Mary Dandurand - Christel Gallagher, Glen Ellyn IL; Karen Grottke, Wheaton IL

Holiday Regional, Lake Geneva, WI, December, 2006

Wednesday Afternoon 299er Pairs (6 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 2.26 1 1 Renee McNitt, Roscoe IL; Katherine Freeman, Beloit WI
1.70 2 2 Marlene Beranek - Michelle Winand, Glenview IL
1.27 3 3 Don Malone, Sharon WI; Karen Pickelsimer, Oakwood Hills IL
1.67 4 4 1 Jane Clark, Stephenville TX; James Carey, Clinton IA
1.25 2 Bobbi Gordon - Robert Gordon, Northbrook IL
0.82 3/4 Marlene Backus, Brookfield WI; Dianne Kiehl, Muskego WI
0.82 3/4 Stan Lieberman, Mequon WI; Aaron Feldman, Milwaukee WI

Thursday Afternoon 299er Pairs (7 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 2.40 1 1 1 Ronald Niesing - Judy Niesing, De Pere WI
1.58 2/3 Richard Edholm - Sue Edholm, Libertyville IL
1.60 2/3 2 2 Donna Kenski - Joseph McCormack, Libertyville IL
1.20 4 3 3 James Karolewicz - Kathy Karolewicz, Mequon WI
0.90 5 4 4 Thomas McDonald - Karen Anderson, Batavia IL

Madison Wisconsin Winter Sectional, Madison, WI, December, 2006

299er Pairs (5 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 1.51 1 1 1 Mary Spyers Duran, Shorewood WI; Joanne Behling, Wauwatosa WI
1.21 2 2 1 David Raitt, Madison WI; Jim Mulbrandon, Verona WI
0.91 3 3 2 Marlene Backus, Brookfield WI; Dianne Kiehl, Muskego WI
0.64 4 Jackie Olson - Fran Kakuska, La Crosse WI

299er Pairs (5 tables)

MPs A B C Names

- 1.51 1 1 1 Thomas Christopher - Sheryl Burkel, Wausau WI
1.13 2 Mary Spyers Duran, Shorewood WI; Joanne Behling, Wauwatosa WI
1.00 3 2 2 Dianne Kiehl, Muskego WI; Marlene Backus, Brookfield WI



I wonder if it was something I said.
She is running to the partnership desk to see if
they can arrange a tall, dark and handsome
partner for today's pair game!

(continued on page 11)

Being Fearless Pays Off in the Game by Suzi Subeck

You never want to miss reasonable scoring opportunities. Scoring opportunities are defined as undoubled contracts that are set or underbid games and slams that are made.

Underbidding occurs most often with minimum values in both hands where distribution is a factor and it is ignored. You must re-evaluate your “points” to consider both game and slam possibilities with each bid from partner. Shortness in suits where partner shows a lack of values is a very good thing. You and partner can each hold minimum high cards and still be on for game or slam when you have opposing shortnesses. Cross ruffing works perfectly in this situation to produce maximum tricks as long as you hold adequate trumps split relatively evenly in both your hands.

Underbidding also occurs when “fear” of getting too high keeps one partner or the other from making a jump bid... a close limit raise or a marginal jump shift. And the worst situation of all is when responder passes his partner’s opening bid holding six points! (And that includes distribution!) If you pass partner’s opening bid with enough points to respond, you will have to rely on the opponents to balance in order to get back into the hand and that is unlikely to happen. There is nothing to be gained from timid bidding! Slam and game bonuses are worth a lot in the end game and you don’t want to give away those points.

Penalty doubles of game contracts that are set more than one trick produce good scores, especially when vulnerable. When game contracts make doubled, the bonus to the declaring side is negligible and the possible gain outweighs the loss by quite a bit. The only danger here (and it is a real danger) is the possibility of a redouble. Redoubles are unlikely when your doubles are reasonable and contain length in the trump suit.

When to most reasonably double game contracts:

1. Your partner has bid and you have some points
2. Opponents have bid three suits and end up in 3NT - no fits - a contract **most often** very difficult to make.
3. The opponents have struggled to get to game and hesitantly make the final bid that puts them there. Say that you have the contract “booked” in your own hand. It is not

unreasonable to count on partner to take one trick in a hesitant auction.

Slam bidding, like game bidding, is important in the scoring. When it becomes obvious that both hands may hold sufficient points to pursue a slam, the first partner to establish a suit or no trump preference becomes “Captain” and asks for Aces and Kings, utilizing Gerber or Blackwood when applicable. Do not be afraid to contract for and play for twelve tricks. It is a frequent problem for novices to commit to slams... small or grand, and the bonuses go to the brave. Not only will you score better by bidding reasonable slams, but your play will improve with the challenge of having to take enough tricks. It is easy for intermediate/novices to become complacent and simply go for plus scores... Remember, in pair’s games and duplicate bridge, it is the amount of the plus score that matters!

Consider this when thinking of redoubling and grand slam bidding:

Sensible players in modern theory believe it is only right to redouble or bid a grand slam when you, yourself, can count enough tricks to make it a logical alternative. If your bidding and partner’s bidding tells you that there are enough tricks there to fulfill the contract, barring some highly unlikely bad split, you can bid a grand slam. Before you do, however, count tricks and see if the promised length in various suits adds up for you.

The principle is the same for redoubling... however, there is an added caveat. If the opponents have exhibited competitive bidding, and your redouble will get them to run to their suit where your double will produce less score than simply your doubled game (for example, +590 for four of a major doubled versus +500 for their down three in a non-vulnerable contract), then pass and play the doubled contract. If in the aforementioned example, the opponents are vulnerable, feel free to redouble since the penalty will be better than your doubled score.

There is no place for fear in bridge. You will suffer plenty of failed contracts over time. Some of your doubles will not work out for you. But, overall, these strategies will pay off well and improve your overall ranking in the field.

Upcoming Tournaments

Valentines Sectional, Milwaukee, WI, Feb 9 - Feb 11

Appleton Sectional, Menasha, WI, Mar 23 - Mar 25

Kenosha Sectional, Kenosha, WI, Apr 13 - Apr 15

Spring Regional, Lake Geneva, WI, Apr 23 - Apr 29

ABA/CCBA Sectional, Chicago, June 9 - June 10

Summerfest Regional, Rosemont, IL, July 9 - July 15

Dousman Sectional , Dousman, WI, Aug 3 - Aug 5

WUMBA Regional, Escanaba, MI, Aug 20 - Aug 26

Labor Day Sectional, Skokie, IL, Aug 31 - Sept 3

FallFest Sectional, WI, Sept 28 - Sept 30

Central States, Lake Geneva, WI, Oct 23 - Oct 29

Holiday Sectional, State Fair Park, Dec 27 - Dec 30

Practicing Good Table Manners by Suzi Subeck

It is always appropriate to thank partner when he lays down his hand. It doesn't matter if you have experienced a misunderstanding during the auction. Saying anything else or shaking your head gives the hand away to the opponents. When they see this, they defend more carefully and frequently they will find a defense to beat you because you tipped them off about a problem. Dummy should say, "good luck partner" when he puts his hand on the table, and declarer should say, "thank you partner" no matter what the hand reveals. In online bridge clubs, you will see these comments shortened to "glp" and "typ." This simple exchange of courtesies maintains partnership harmony and exhibits excellent sportsmanship.

Other recommended pleasantries include greeting opponents as they come to your table. An introduction and a smile puts everyone at ease. You need not exchange handshakes, but bridge is a game where you can make new friends and meet potential partners just by being friendly. At the end of a round, it is common for both pairs to say "thanks" or "good luck" to one another. This way everyone leaves happy.

During the play of the hand, whether it is regular or tournament bridge, talk is usually kept to a minimum. Declarer can call for cards from dummy, and he, along with the defenders, may claim (to win a surefire, specific number of tricks). Aside from that, players should refrain from chatting until the hand is finished.

Dummy especially should never say anything to assist declarer. The only thing dummy is allowed to do in tournament bridge is to ask partner if he is void when he fails to follow suit. Dummy is NOT allowed to make or suggest a claim, or question any play that declarer makes.

When a hand is over, it is appropriate to compliment any player who did something particularly well, either in the bidding or the play. If you are praising partner, be sure not to overdo it because this may be perceived as gloating. Do not praise partner for an opponent mistake. This will be misunderstood and cause hurt feelings.

It is considered proper manners to refrain from criticizing partner for some wrong action he took... especially while the opponents are still at your table. Squabbling after a hand makes the game less fun for everyone at the table and others still have to play the boards. It conveys information to them about the hand. Good behavior is key to having a good time!