

I/N News ... especially for you!

Third Hand Plays High but cheaper of touching cards Excerpted from Andy Robson... Lessons for Beginners!

“highest card necessary”

	<i>North</i>	
	♠ 7 6 2	
<i>West</i>		<i>East (you)</i>
♠ J 9 5 3		♠ K Q 4
	<i>South</i>	
	♠ A 10 8	

After West leads the ♠3, and North plays the ♠2, you must play ♠Q, the cheaper of touching spots. If West sees the trick proceed ♠3, ♠2, ♠K (erroneously), ♠A, he should deduce that declarer holds ♠Q because if you held it, you would have played it.

	<i>North</i>	
	♥ 8 6 2	
<i>West</i>		<i>East (you)</i>
♥ K 7 5 3		♥ Q J 10
	<i>South</i>	
	♥ A 9 4	

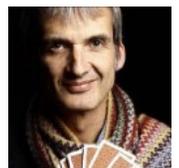
After ♥3, ♥2, you play ♥10. When West sees this force out declarer's ♥A, West can deduce that you also have ♥QJ – or declarer would have won the trick more cheaply.

	<i>North</i>	
	♦ A 5 2	
<i>West</i>		<i>East (you)</i>
♦ Q 6 3		♦ J 10 9 4
	<i>South</i>	
	♦ K 8 7	

West leads ♦3, dummy plays ♦2 and you as East should play ♦9, the cheaper of your highest cards. When West sees this force out declarer's ♦K, he can deduce that you also have ♦J10 – or declarer would have won the trick more cheaply.

It's the beauty of the partnership. It doesn't matter to you which of the equals you play. But it helps partner hugely to draw the right inferences. It also makes partner aware of one or more cards in your hand and that is always helpful counting out the distribution!

In 1995, Andrew Robson founded the highly successful Andrew Robson Bridge Club in South West London. He has written the courses which tens of thousands have taken at the Club over the years. He still teaches several weekends a year. Andrew has written the daily Bridge column for The Times for over 20 years. He has written weekly for Country Life for 30 years and weekly for Money Week for nearly 20 years. He also writes monthly for The Oldie. Andrew produces acclaimed daily instruction “BridgeCast” videos for all levels of players (go to andrewrobsonbridgecast.com) and has seen a meteoric rise in many of his subscribers.



Six-four bid some more by Andrew Robson for Intermediates!

Taken from Andrew's "Rules, Acronyms and Ditties" book...

6/4 distribution is potentially powerful. By being both one-suited and two-suited, you have options in the bidding. Naturally you will open your six-card suit; but will you repeat it, or will you introduce your four-card suit at your first opportunity? Provided it is cheaper, you should introduce your second suit — that way you are showing nine of your 13 cards. The word “cheaper” is key.

You hold:

♠ 7 4
♥ A Q 8 6 4 2
♦ 2
♣ A Q 6 2

Open 1H and rebid 2C... good suit quality in both suits.

Change your hand to:

♠ Q 4
♥ A K J 6 4 2
♦ 2
♣ J 7 6 2

Open 1H and rebid 2H... good hearts but poor clubs.

Your default setting with a 6-4 shape should be to bid the six – then the four – then bid the six again.

South Deals ♠ 4
None Vul ♥ A 6 5 4
♦ K 6 3 2
♣ K 6 5 2

♠ K 10 8 2		♠ J 9
♥ K Q 9 7		♥ J 10 8 3
♦ J 9 7		♦ Q 4
♣ 10 8		♣ Q J 9 7 4

♠ A Q 7 6 5 3
♥ 2
♦ A 10 8 5
♣ A 3

1. Cheaper of fours.
2. Cheaper to introduce the diamonds than repeat the spades.
3. Might try 4♦, but these sort of hands run up short of tricks without a ninth trump.
4. Showing the sixth spade. Six-four, bid some more.
5. South would pass 3♦ with a rank minimum opener even with a 6-4 shape, so 5♦ is a reasonable shot (despite the lack of a ninth trump).

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass	2♦ ²
Pass	3♦ ³	Pass	3♠ ⁴
Pass	5♦ ⁵	Pass	Pass
Pass			

More Robson For Intermediate Players!!!

Robson For Advanced Players...

Three favorite slam tools for Advanced Players

By Andrew Robson ... continued from page 3 to page 4!

My three favorite slam tools are the Jacoby 2 NT, splinter bids and Roman Key Card Blackwood. Sometimes they all crop up on the same deal, such as this delightful offering from a duplicate at my Club, showed to me by justifiably excited member Howard Jennings.

South Deals	♠ K 4 3 2		
None Vul	♥ A Q		
	♦ A Q 10		
	♣ 9 7 6 3		
♠ J 9 6		♠ 10	
♥ J 7 6 4		♥ 10 8 5 2	
♦ 6		♦ K J 8 7 3	
♣ K Q 10 8 4		♣ J 5 2	
	♠ A Q 8 7 5		
	♥ K 9 3		
	♦ 9 5 4 2		
	♣ A		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♠
Pass	2 NT ¹	Pass	4 ♣ ²
Pass	4 NT ³	Pass	5 ♠ ⁴
Pass	5 NT ⁵	Pass	6 ♥ ⁶
Pass	6 ♠	All pass	

2025 La Crosse ACBL Fall Bridge Sectional

Sanction # 2511341

Wed. Nov. 12 – Fri. Nov. 14
Omni Center
255 Riders Club Road
Onalaska, WI 54650

*Fabulous Snacks & Treats
All Day Long
With Coffee & Beverages*

*Free Parking &
Handicapped Parking*

Schedule of Events

Wednesday, November 12
10:00 & 2:30 Open Pairs/Teams

Thursday, November 13
10:00 & 2:30 Open Pairs/Teams
**Pizza Party & mini educational between sessions - \$5.00*

Friday, November 14
9:00 & 12:30 Stratified Swiss Teams – Lunch served between sessions

All Open Strata: 0-1000 / 1000-3000 / 3000+

\$10.00 per session for ACBL Members
Special Student Rate with Student ID

Partnerships: Linda Mills 608-738-8246 Onalinda41@hotmail.com	Chairperson: Jeri Sebo 608-386-5616 jvsebo@charter.net
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Lots of great restaurants & hotels nearby. Please join us!

Play at the club,
Bring along lunch.
Celery, carrots,
Add a nice crunch!

Be part of the group,
Week after week,
Your game will
improve,
As your system, you
tweak!

As you get better,
This is a leap!
On your system
agreements,
It's "notes" you should
keep!

Experts all do it
To keep up to date.
Remembering
methods
Is truly first rate!

1. Jacoby – showing a game forcing raise in partner's spades.
2. Singleton (void) club in a slam-interested (ie non-minimum) hand. Splintering into a singleton ace is not ideal but, for me, acceptable.
3. Loves the short clubs opposite. 4 NT is Roman Key Card Blackwood.
4. Two of "five aces" (incl. ♠ K); plus ♠ Q.
5. Showing all the keycards and asking about kings for the grand slam.
6. Playing the Specific Kings Method, this shows ♥ K but not the cheaper ♦ K [nor ♣ K, but that was known from the splinter].

(continued from page 3 ... for Advanced Players)

West led his singleton diamond and declarer, Jennings, wisely rose with dummy's ace (other declarers finessed and lost a quick ruff). He crossed to the ace-queen of spades (carefully retaining dummy's king) preparing to claim his slam if both opponents followed. However when he saw East discard on the second trump, he refrained from returning to the king, necessarily leaving West's trump outstanding. It might appear that declarer must lose two diamond tricks to East's \diamond KJ, but enter the Dummy Reversal. At trick four declarer cashed the ace of clubs. He then crossed to the queen of hearts, ruffed a second club, crossed to the ace of hearts, ruffed a third club and cashed the king of hearts discarding a diamond. We have reached the four-card ending below:

\spadesuit K 4		\spadesuit —									
\heartsuit —		\heartsuit 10									
\diamondsuit Q		\diamondsuit K J 7									
\clubsuit 9		\clubsuit —									
\spadesuit J	<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		\spadesuit —
		N									
W			E								
		S									
\heartsuit J	\heartsuit —										
\diamondsuit —	\diamondsuit 9 5 4										
\clubsuit K Q	\clubsuit —										



Clubs may be the lowest suit,
But I like shamrocks. They are cute!
Diamonds over clubs is fine...
I'll take diamonds anytime!
Clubs, diamonds, hearts still higher.
Hearts are what we all desire!
Spades are highest. We "dig" that!
Bidding spades is where it's at!

Declarer exited with a diamond, West discarding a club and East beating the queen with the king. He next led the jack (best), but West couldn't throw his last club or declarer could ruff low in dummy, cash the king of spades and table the master club. But when West threw his heart, declarer could ruff low in dummy and peacefully ruff dummy's last club with his trump, West following. The last trick saw dummy's king of spades beat West's jack. 12 tricks and slam made.

Note: We are no longer snail mailing any issues of this newsletter. Snail mail has become cost prohibitive.

The newsletters are available online only at the District 13 website.

To access the site and find the newsletters, go to:

<http://acbl-district13.org/ArticlesAndNewsletters.htm>

Newsletters at this address go back to 2001.

You can read them, print them, and enjoy them there.

First Name	Last Name	New Rank
George	Gilbert	Junior Master
Katherine	Heitmann	Junior Master
Joseph	Hoffman II	Junior Master
Alex	Jablonski	Junior Master
Deborah	Johnson	Junior Master
Roger	Johnson	Junior Master
Cynthia	Olson	Junior Master
Glenn	Olson	Junior Master
John	Sanna	Junior Master
Jerry	Sielaff	Junior Master
Mark	Zaborske	Junior Master
Ron	Attreau	Club Master
Robert	Carson	Club Master
Joyce	Carter	Club Master
Mame	Heaney	Club Master
Janet	Reece	Club Master
Nellie	Ross	Club Master
Donald	Walter	Club Master
John	White	Club Master
Roseanne	Worrell	Club Master
Susan	Youngs	Club Master
Robin	Kuhn	Sectional Master
Nancy	Purcell	Sectional Master
Sara	Raffill	Sectional Master
Stephen	Vakil	Sectional Master
Josh	Zhao	Sectional Master
Rebecca	Anderson	Regional Master
Arnold	Grant	Regional Master
Susan	Hagerty	Regional Master
Janet	Howenstin	Regional Master
Kaibai	Liu	Regional Master
John	Mehl	Regional Master
Alec	Sun	Regional Master
Zhaofeng	Wang	Regional Master
Ranmit	Pantle	NABC Master
Margaret	Bohanon	Adv NABC Master
Sandra	Cooper	Adv NABC Master
Elizabeth	Anderson	Bronze Life Master
Patricia	Ballman	Silver Life Master
Jacob	Breneisen	Silver Life Master
Maggie	Dugan	Silver Life Master
Mary	O'Donnell	Silver Life Master
Victor	Johnson	Ruby Life Master
Stewart	Margolis	Ruby Life Master
William	Christense	Gold Life Master
Craig	Henderson	Sapphire Life Master
William	Higbee	Sapphire Life Master
Craig	Jacobson	Sapphire Life Master
W	Harris Jr	Diamond Life Master

Tallied Through October 6th, 2025

Congrats You are All Winners! District 13 Rank Advancements Well Done!!

Leon	Cao	Junior Master
Sedar	Erkoca	Junior Master
Gannon	Evers	Junior Master
Cameron	Kubera	Junior Master
Karen	Kuschewsk	Junior Master
Rachel	Lee	Junior Master
Amy	Paris	Junior Master
Leslie	Pedley	Junior Master
Sandra	Schaefer	Junior Master
Emma	Wang	Junior Master
Richmond	Yeung	Junior Master
William	Baxter	Club Master
Sandra	Davis	Club Master
Jan	Destefano	Club Master
William	McGillivray	Club Master
Jennifer	Voichick	Club Master
Brian	Brown	Regional Master
Harry	Ribbke	Regional Master
Edward	Friedman	NABC Master
Doris	Griffin	NABC Master
Linda	Abrahams	Adv NABC Master
Mary	Phillips	Adv NABC Master
Massimo	Braschi	Life Master
Robert	Listernick	Life Master
Lois	Michaels	Life Master
Martin	Matthews	Bronze Life Master
Lois	Michaels	Bronze Life Master
Massimo	Braschi	Silver Life Master
Neal	Goldman	Silver Life Master
Vladimir	Reznik	Silver Life Master
Harland	London	Gold Life Master
Steve	Neumuelle	Sapphire Life Master
Yvette	Neary	Platinum Life Master



This type of balancing bid is made in the pass-out seat after an opponent has opened the bidding (1 of a suit on your left, Pass, Pass, to you). In these situations, it's often a good idea to stretch to keep the auction alive.

Here are some guidelines to help you decide if you should balance after a one-bid is passed around to you:

The BEST time to balance is when:

1. You're short in opener's suit.
2. You have length and high-card strength in the other three suits.
3. You have a good 5-card or longer suit.
4. You're not vulnerable (if you can't make your bid, the penalty will be lower, and may be even less than the score you would have lost if you had defended the one-bid).

The WORST time to balance is when:

1. You have a weak hand (fewer than 8-9 points) and/or a weak suit.
2. You have length in opener's suit. The more cards you have in the opponents' suit, the less chance there is that you and partner will have a fit. It's often best to pass and let opener play in what may be a bad contract.
3. You're vulnerable. If you can't make your bid, the penalty may be expensive.

How strong is partner's hand?

One reason for balancing is to protect partner when he has good values, but did not have a descriptive bid available in the direct seat. In some of these cases, he may have had a "trap pass" -- a strong hand that could not call because of length in opener's suit. To get a general idea of partner's points and distribution when the opponents pass out a one-bid, you can usually assume that:

- **On average**, your side will have around 20-22 points and the opponents will have 18-20 points. Subtract your high-card points from your side's 20-22 to estimate partner's point-count.
- Your side will have an average of 6 cards in opener's suit. Subtract the number of cards you have from 6 to estimate partner's length in that suit.

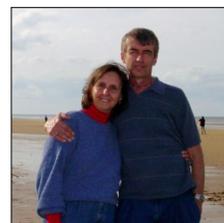
Look for other clues to determine how likely it is that partner's hand falls in the "average" ranges above. If you have a marginal balancing hand, use these guidelines to make your decision:

- **If you have length in opener's suit, strongly consider passing.** Since you know partner is short in their suit, it's more likely he has a *weaker* hand (with shortness and strength, he could have made a takeout double or overcall).
- **If you're short in opener's suit, stretch to balance.** It's more likely partner has the *stronger* hand. His length in their suit may be the reason he couldn't bid.
- **If you're short in opener's suit, don't play partner for more than 15 points.** With length in their suit and a 15+-point hand, partner might have overcalled 1NT.
- **Don't ever play partner for more than 17 points.** He won't usually "trap" with a hand this strong, so you don't need to protect him (or a possible game) when you have fewer than 8-9 points.
- **Consider the vulnerability and level of the opening bid.** If you're not vulnerable and the 1-level was available, partner could have overcalled if he had a long suit and 9+ points.

When vulnerable (or if the opening bid would have forced him to the 2-level), partner will often pass with these minimum hands.

A Balancing Act by Karen Walker

Karen Walker is a National Champion who lives in Champaign, Illinois. She is the editor of the D8 newsletter and the chairman of the annual Champaign Regional. She is both a bridge teacher and writer.



Continued on page 11

Give 'Em A Hand!

Dealer South. Both Vul.

	♠ 9 2		
	♥ 9 3		
	♦ K J 10 6		
	♣ A Q J 7 5		
♠ Q J 7 3		♠ 8 6 5 4	
♥ Q 8 7 6 4		♥ K 10 5	
♦ 7 5		♦ A Q 3	
♣ 10 8		♣ 6 4 2	
	♠ A K 10		
	♥ A J 2		
	♦ 9 8 4 2		
	♣ K 9 3		

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	INT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

In a pairs game, all but two Souths declared in three notrump. The lead was almost universally the six of hearts.

Declarer usually ducked the king of hearts and covered the continuation of the ten of hearts with his jack. West won with the queen of hearts and now had a decision to make. Alas, most continued with a third heart to declarer's ace. When this occurred, the nine of diamonds was run to East's queen. Declarer took the spade shift with his king then played a second diamond to the ten and ace. When East again exited in spades, declarer had nine tricks: two spades, one heart, one diamond and five clubs.

At one table, West did not play a third round of hearts, instead shifting to the queen of spades. When asked later why he did so, West explained, "Playing a third heart seemed pointless as I did not have an entry to cash any heart winners. Also, on the bidding, partner could have at most six points in addition to the king of hearts. So the best chance for defeating the contract was that he had at least three spades plus the ace and queen of diamonds. Also, the switch could work if he had a black king and the queen of diamonds, provided declarer misguessed the diamonds."

The spade shift worked very well. Declarer took the queen of spades with the king and ran the nine of diamonds to East's queen. The spade continuation limited declarer to just eight tricks for a shared top.

Dealer South. EW Vul.

	♠ Q 9 3		
	♥ J 10 5		
	♦ A K 5 3 2		
	♣ 6 3		
♠ 7 5		♠ 8 6 4	
♥ A Q 9 7		♥ K 8 6 4 3 2	
♦ J 9 4		♦ 10	
♣ A 10 8 5		♣ K J 9	
	♠ A K J 10 2		
	♥ —		
	♦ Q 8 7 6		
	♣ Q 7 4 2		

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	INT ¹	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♠ ²	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. FIR
2. Invitational, 3-card support

This deal arose in a team game, with both North/South pairs playing a similar system. It was suggested in the post mortem that a rebid of three diamonds (or three hearts) instead of three spades here should be fit-showing.

Both declarers received the lead of a low trump which was taken in hand with the ten. The first declarer played quickly. He drew trumps in three rounds then cashed the ace and queen of diamonds, discovering too late that the diamond suit was blocked. All he could do was to cash two diamonds before conceding four tricks to the defence.

The second declarer paused to consider the diamond suit. He saw that all would be well if the diamonds were 2-2 but not if they were 3-1. So, he played a low trump

(continued on page 8)

to dummy's queen and led the jack of hearts from dummy. East followed low and declarer threw the six of diamonds from hand. After ruffing the heart continuation, declarer drew the outstanding trumps with his ace and ran the diamonds, taking five trumps and five diamonds.

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ 10 9 8 5 2
 ♥ 10 8
 ♦ A K
 ♣ J 9 8 7

♠ 6 4
 ♥ A Q 9 6
 ♦ J 8 6
 ♣ K Q 4 3

♠ A K Q 3
 ♥ K 2
 ♦ 10 7 5
 ♣ A 10 5 2

♠ J 7
 ♥ J 7 5 4 3
 ♦ Q 9 4 3 2
 ♣ 6

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	INT
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

In a team game, neither player in the West chair wanted to make an aggressive lead because each of them felt such a lead could give the contract away. As a result, they both led a trump.

The first declarer played the ten of spades from dummy and took East's jack with his queen and drew the remaining trumps with the ace. He crossed to dummy with a diamond to the king and ran the seven of clubs to West's queen. West exited with a low diamond to dummy's ace. Declarer continued by playing a club from dummy. East's diamond discard meant that he had a second club loser and that the contract would depend on the king of hearts making a trick. Alas, West had both the ace and queen of hearts and this declarer was down one.

At the other table, declarer also drew a second round of trumps with the ace at trick two. Then he cashed dummy's ace and king of diamonds, returned to hand with a trump to the king, ruffed the ten of diamonds in dummy and, finally, ran the seven of clubs to West's queen. As cashing the ace of hearts seemed pointless, West exited with a low club which was won in dummy with the eight, East discarding a low diamond. Declarer then played the ace and another club to West's king. That defender found himself endplayed for a second time on the deal. With only hearts remaining, West cashed the ace of hearts and continued with a low heart to declarer's king, the game-going trick.

Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ J 8 4
 ♥ 3
 ♦ A 10 9 6 4 3
 ♣ 9 5 4

♠ Q 7 5 2
 ♥ K J 10 5 4 2
 ♦ 2
 ♣ K Q

♠ 3
 ♥ A Q 8
 ♦ 8 7 5
 ♣ J 10 8 7 3 2

♠ A K 10 9 6
 ♥ 9 7 6
 ♦ K Q J
 ♣ A 6

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♠
2♥	2♠	3♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

As declarer, one of the most annoying things is to lose control of the trump suit. Avoiding this fate often boils down to asking oneself the question, "What would happen if trumps break in such a way that the contract is at risk?" Using that approach would have saved declarer on this deal.

How would you play four spades when West leads the two of diamonds? Suppose you win the diamond lead in hand and draw one round of trumps with the ace. On the above layout the game can no longer be made!

Doubtless you will continue with the king of trumps. If trumps had broken 3-2, you could then return to the diamond suit, using dummy's jack of trumps as an eventual entry to the remaining diamonds (after a defender ruffs at some stage with the queen). Alas, with trumps breaking 4-1 there is no way to avoid the loss of four tricks. Suppose instead that you play a heart after cashing one round of trumps. East will win and return a diamond. After ruffing the return West will exit with the king of clubs, which will set up a club winner as the fourth trick for the defenders, to go with West's trump queen.

Since the contract would be easy if trumps break 3-2, you should assume a 4-1 trump break and direct your efforts to countering that. Lead a low trump at trick two! What can the defenders do now? If West wins with the queen and crosses to partner's hand with a heart to receive a diamond ruff, you will be able to draw trumps when you regain the lead. If instead West ducks the first round of trumps, you can duck another round of trumps. West has to win this round and can do nothing to harm you. Whether he plays a club, or two rounds of hearts to force dummy to ruff, you will be able to draw his remaining trumps and run the diamond suit.

It's an important technique to remember. When you can afford to lose a trump trick, lose the trick at a time when the defenders can do you no damage. On this deal, it would be dangerous to lose a late trump trick because dummy will then have no trumps left to protect against heart plays.

Friday, Dec 5

- 9:30 Open Pair Team Game
750 NLM Pair Game
- 2:00 Open Pair Team Game
750 NLM Pair Game

Hospitality voila!

- Coffee | Herbal tea | Hot Cider | Cocoa
- An array of delicious snacks provided daily by the Madison bridge community including former chef & restaurant owners, Mike & Barb Pratzel and dairy farmer & cheese company founder, Mike Gingrich.
- A special Sunday bridge community lunch prepared by former chef & restaurant owner, Kira Milanich and her bridge playin' sous chefs.

Free lesson

- Saturday 1:15-1:45 pm

Stratifications & Pair Team Matches

- Open stratifications: 0-1000, 1000-3000, 3000+
- 0-750 NLM stratifications are done by director
- Pair Team: you may buy a team-of-four entry

Entry fee

- \$10/session for ACBL members
- Free with 0-5 points
- \$4 extra charge with no current ACBL membership

Tournament Chair

Leah Creswell
(608) 712-5117
lcreswell@gmail.com

Partnership

Errol Hartman
(608) 770-6637 (text preferred)
Errol.hartman51@gmail.com
Partners guaranteed up to ½ hour before game

Mad City
Winter Sectional
Patrick Henry Building
313 W Beltline Hwy, Madison, WI



Saturday, Dec 6

- 9:30 Open Pair Team Game
750 NLM Pair Game
- 2:00 Open Pair Team Game
750 NLM Pair Game

Sunday, Dec. 7

Madison bridge community lunch (\$8)
included with ALL Sunday morning entries.

- 9:30 Open Swiss Team Game
2-session play-through
- 9:30 750 NLM Pair Game
- 1:30 750 NLM Pair Game

Good Hope School (follow signs to 4 Aces Bridge Club) 2315 W. Good Hope Road - Glendale WI

DIRECTIONS:

From 1-43: Exit #80 Good Hope Road West for VA miles
Turn left just before the tennis courts on the south side
From 1-41: Exit #47 Good Hope Road East for 5.5 miles;
Turn right just after the tennis court on the south side.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

- 9:30 AM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 499er Pairs
- 2:00 PM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 499er Pairs

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

- 9:30 AM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 499er Pairs
- 2:00 PM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 499er Pairs

TOURNAMENT CHAIR: Yvette Neary
Phone: 414-526-9035
Email: yneary@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

- 9:30 AM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 499er Pairs
- 2:00 PM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 499er Pairs

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

- 9:30 AM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 499er Pairs
- 2:00 PM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 499er Pairs

Strats: Open Games 0-1000/1000-3500/3500+
499er Games 0-100/100-300/300-499

Strata may be adjusted as attendance warrants

Valentine Sectional
4 Aces Bridge Club
Good Hope School
Glendale, WI
Feb 11 - Feb 14,
2026



More info at
<https://unit222.com/tournaments/>
when available

**Unit 123 WinterFest Sectional
January 30-February 1, 2026
Irish American Heritage Center,
4626 N Knox Avenue
Chicago, IL**

Come for the Fun! Take home the Silver!

**Friday Jan 30 10:00 AM pair/ team game*
3:00 PM pair/ team game***
**Saturday Jan 31 10:00 AM & TBD
Swiss Teams (2 sessions)
499er Pairs (2 separate events) 10 AM & 2:30 PM
6:00 PM annual dinner **
and Unit 123 membership meeting
(Reservations will be Required)**
**Sunday Feb 1 10:00 AM pair/ team game*
3:00 PM pair/ team game***
All pair team events are single session
* pair/team games will be held if number of entries
allows for this format. Separate pair/team events for
under 500's at Director's Discretion.

**Stratification (with masterpoint averaging)
A=5000+ B=2000-4999 C=0-1999**

**Separate 750 pair/team events if
attendance permits (Director's Discretion)**

**Tournament Chair:
Betsy Downs loverofbeagles@gmail.com**

**Partnership Chair:
Jan Churchwell jan8242@gmail.com**



Saturday night,
Inside the venue...
Annual Meeting
And dinner on menu!

The State of the Unit,
The Finance report,
Loring and Missy
Both will hold court!

Electing the slate
Requires a quorum.
We need your vote,
No discussion or forum.

Award Presentations,
"Thank you's" and more
Will help take your mind off
Your afternoon score!

**Now 'bout the dinner
And how to reserve,
As well as the items
That we plan to serve:**

Our subsidized meal,
Like last year will be:
**Pizza and Salad,
With chippy Cookie!**

Your cost:15 dollars,
The rest we will pay...
We hope you will join us
Following play!

Checks should be sent
To **Fran Lyne's** direction.
By 1/17
With pizza selection!!

**Sausage or Spinach
Or Pepperoni,**
If none of those wanted,
Then cheese it will be.

Checks **MUST** be
Written to **CCBA.**
The bank has insisted
We write them that way!

**Pick up your tickets
From Fran** at the site.
And share with your friends,
A fun winter night!**

****Fran Lyne**
6538 N Greenview Avenue
Apt 2
Chicago, IL 60626
773-972-5014
TheLynes.21stcentury@rcn.com**

When you balance over a one-bid, you are, in effect, bidding some of partner's values for him. This means you can "shade down" many of your bids. As a guideline, most of your balancing bids promise about one King fewer than you would need to make the same bid in the direct seat.

- **Minimum suit bid (1D-Pass-Pass-1H) = 8-14 points**, usually a 5+-card suit (but may be a good 4-card suit at the one-level). The better your suit, the fewer points you need to bid.
- **1NT (1D-Pass-Pass-1NT) = About 11-14 points with stoppers (or moderate length) in the opponent's suit.** If the opening bid was 1H or 1S, raise the range to 13-15 (it might be a poor 16) points.
- **A jump in a new suit (1H-Pass-Pass-2S) = 13-16 points and a strong 6+-card suit.** A jump in the balancing seat *invites* game -- it is *not* a strong jump-shift or a preempt.
- **Double = Takeout, 10+ points with shortness in the opponent's suit.** A takeout double can also be used to start the description of a better hand (15+ points) that was too strong to balance with a simple suit bid or 1NT. After partner responds to your double, you can show the stronger hand by rebidding 1NT (to show 16-18 points) or freely bidding a new suit (to show 15+ points and a 5+-card suit).
- **Bid of the opponent's suit (1H-Pass-Pass-2H) = Two-suited overcall (Michaels convention).** If the opening bid was 1C or 1D, the cuebid shows 5-5 in the majors. If the opening bid was 1H or 1S, the cuebid shows 5 of the other major and a 5-card minor.
- **Jump to 2NT (1S-Pass-Pass-2NT) = This can be assigned one of two meanings:**
 - 1 - 21-22 points balanced; **or**
 - 2 - Unusual, showing length in the two lower unbid suits (this meaning is probably more valuable).

Balancing after a Notrump Opening Bid (1NT - Pass - Pass - ?)

A SUIT BID in the pass-out seat can be whatever you and partner agree -- a natural one-suited hand or a conventional bid showing two suits. Don't worry too much about high-card strength. It's much more important to have a good, long suit and playing strength when you balance.

Check the vulnerability. Since it's guaranteed that the 1NT opener has some length and defense against your suit, you'll want to have decent strength if you're vulnerable. If you're not vulnerable and the opponents are, you can stretch to bid with .

A DOUBLE in the pass-out seat can have different meanings at different vulnerabilities.

- **If the opponents are vulnerable and you are NOT,** it can be valuable to play a "light" double that shows as few as 12-13 points. If partner has fair strength (8+ pts) and can pass, the reward is great. If partner is weaker and pulls the double to his long suit, you have the safety of being non-vulnerable.
- **If the opponents are NOT vulnerable,** a double should show a better hand (14+ points). Partner will bid or pass accordingly.
- **If YOU are vulnerable,** a double shows a real powerhouse (at least a "great" 18 points). Partner will pass with almost anything.

Responder's Bids (after partner balances over a one-bid)

Remember that partner may have stretched to keep the auction open for you, so don't hang him. In general, most of your responses promise about one Queen more than you would have if partner had taken action in the direct seat.

If partner balances with a suit (showing 8-14 points):

Partner usually has less than opening-bid strength, so pass if you have a weak hand without a fit. The meanings of your other bids are:

- **"Free" raise of partner's suit** (1H-Pass-Pass-1S / Pass-**2S**) shows a constructive hand (8-12 playing points).
- **Competitive raise of partner's suit** (over an intervening bid -- 1H-Pass-Pass-1S / 2H-**2S**) shows support, but may be made with a slightly weaker hand than a free raise. If opener bids again (or if his partner comes into the auction), compete if you have a fit and fair playing strength (7+ points).
- **Jump raise of partner's suit** (1H-Pass-Pass-1S / Pass-**3S**) invites game -- 11-13 playing points.
- **Low-level notrump bid** shows good strength, stoppers in the opponent's suit and no fit for partner's major. (1NT = about 9-12 points. A jump to 2NT = 12-13 points A jump to 3NT = 14+ points)
- **New suit** (1H-Pass-Pass-1S / Pass-2D) shows a 5+-card suit and good playing strength. If partner balanced with a major, your new-suit bid usually denies support for his suit.
- **Cuebid** (bid of the opponent's suit -- 1C-Pass-Pass-1S / Pass-**2C**) can have one of two meanings, depending on your partnership's preference:
 - 1 - Artificial, showing a **very** strong hand and interest in game; **or**
 - 2 - Natural, showing a desire to make that suit trumps. The natural meaning is usually used only if the opponent's opening bid was a minor suit (if he opened a 5-card major, the cuebid of his suit should be artificial).

If partner doubles (showing 10+ points):

Remember that partner can be relatively light in high-card points. With most hands, respond at the cheapest level possible. Don't jump unless you have at least 10-11+ points.

If partner balances with 1NT (showing 11-15 points):

- **Pass** with most fairly balanced hands of up to 10 points. If the opening bid was a major, partner may have as many as 15-16 points, so invite with 10-11 points; bid game with 12+ points.
- **Play "system on"** -- 2C is Stayman, 2D and 2H are transfers, 2NT is invitational, etc.
- When deciding whether to pass, invite or bid game: Assume partner will be nearer the top of his range when vulnerable and that the range for his 1NT balance will be a bit higher when the opening bid was a major instead of a minor.

AT THE TABLE

The auction goes 1S by your LHO (left-hand-opponent) - Pass - Pass to you. What is your bid with:

♠KQ3 ♥Q4 ♦AJ86 ♣QJ92 ?

1NT. This is about the strongest hand you should have for a balancing 1NT.

♠QJ4 ♥J103 ♦AQ972 ♠K10 ?

1NT. A 2D bid is also a possibility, but with your balanced shape and heart stopper, 1NT is a better description.

♠65 ♥K4 ♦J102 ♣AJ10954 ?

2C. Don't be afraid to balance light if you have a good suit, especially if you're relatively short in your opponent's suit.

♠3 ♥QJ92 ♦A874 ♣K1032 ?

Double. You have minimum points, but you have right distribution.

♠7 ♥AQJ108 ♦Q54 ♣AK103 ?

Double. This hand is too strong for a simple 1S balance, which can show as few as 8 points. You plan to rebid 2H over partner's response, showing a "good" overcall.

♠43 ♥J6 ♦AQ7 ♣AKJ1087 ?

3C. This hand is too strong for a simple 2C balance. Jump to show your strong suit and invite game.

♠QJ74 ♥7 ♦Q7654 ♣AQ7 ?

Pass. Your long suit is very weak and you have length in opener's suit. Also, they may have a better contract in spades, and will have the opportunity to find it if you reopen the bidding for them.

♠J973 ♥73 ♦KQ1032 ♣Q5 ?

Pass. You have a good suit, but you're very weak. Partner's failure to bid suggests that opener has a powerhouse, or that the opponents have a better fit somewhere.
