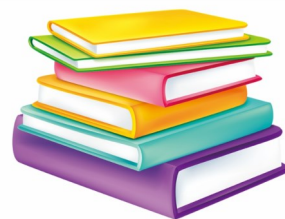


# Library Corner



## Eric Rodwell's Bidding Topics 2 by Eric Rodwell (2019)

Rodwell's goal when writing this book is to provide material that will be of interest to a wide range of players. A writer for The ACBL Bulletin had this to say about the book, "Because it's Eric Rodwell there are inevitable flashes of brilliance that will make an average player sit up in amazement: 'My God, I never thought of it that way before!' Any book that inspired that involuntary response is worth the investment." Half of the professional team Meckwell along with fellow pro Jeff Meckstroth, Rodwell is one of the most successful players in the world and has been for decades. Together Meckwell has won over 100 national and international championships—not bad credentials for someone writing a book on the game of bridge. This book contains chapters on some of the more advanced bidding topics including 4th Suit Forcing, Flannery, Smolen, Lebensohl, Ogust, and more. Rodwell advises (cautions?) the reader to work on one of the topics at a time until the reader and his/her partner have absorbed the material and can apply it correctly. Quizzes at the end of each chapter ask the reader to apply the material presented in the chapter. Between the abundant examples, the quizzes, and answers to those quizzes, this book will be a great one to help bridge players move to the next level of play.



## ALERT!!

*A publication of ACBL Unit 206*

**January, 2024**



**Editor: Sandy Cervantes**

**Features Editor: Cheryl Whitfield**

## A message from the president...

Thanks to all of you! We have made tremendous gains in 2023 because of your support. Our face-to-face table count increased by 30% to roughly 1300 tables. We went from losing money in 2022 to coming out ahead, with a lot of that due to new people coming to the club as well as our current members playing more often. We made a lot of improvements to the building and grounds with the new retaining wall and sealing/stripping the parking lot; plus, replacing the TV/monitor, furnace and water heater.



We are excited for 2024 to keep building on this momentum. We have two key activities for new/newer players with Saturday morning and Monday evening games, each preceded by a short lesson. Please spread the word about these events. PLUS, don't forget our upcoming February 23-25 Sectional Tournament. Start planning now for that tournament because it is just around the corner.

So, again, thanks for your support. Look forward to seeing you at the Bridge Center.

*Richard Spangler*



Why all the smiles, the feathers and the tiaras? These ten happy, happy bridge players were honored for achieving their life master status at a party held at the CBC in 2010. Pictured from left are Sophie Field, Frank Hughes, Cheryl Whitfield, Sandy Cervantes, Claude Walker, Janie Hunt, John Felker, Katherine Gibson, Lorine Lorino and John Friedl.

## Nooga East Bridge Club

### NO GAME ON JANUARY 1st



Every Monday at 12:30 P.M., there's a bridge game at Christ United Methodist Church located at 8645 East Brainerd Road across from Hurricane Creek Shopping Center. You are asked to arrive no later than 12:15 P.M. so the game can begin promptly. For those of you in Cleveland or North Georgia, we are just a hop, skip and a jump away. We are a very welcoming, fun group and are always looking for new players of all levels. Interested? Just email [noogabridgeeast@gmail.com](mailto:noogabridgeeast@gmail.com) to make a reservation. Need help finding a partner or have a question? You can text or call **Sue Riddle (423.509.3583)** or **Sharon Lewis (423.240.5360)**. We are happy to help, although we do hope for some extra time to help you find a partner. And, after you have asked for some help, if you are lucky enough to find someone to play with on your own, please let us know so we can sit back and enjoy our weekend.

Watch your email for food and fun days. If you are not receiving our emails, please let us know by emailing us at the above address. We have lots of special games planned for the rest of the year—remember special games mean extra points. Hope to see you there.

## How to Be a Better Partner

Don't focus on the result of an actual hand. Do not treat a normal action that happened to result in a poor score as a mistake. Bridge is a game of probabilities: normal actions sometimes result in bad scores. Live with it or take up chequers.

Thanks to the Hamilton Bridge Center (Canada)







## If You Weren't There You're Definitely Square

On Saturday, December 16, the CBC put on a spectacular holiday event. Two main courses of ham and stuffed turkey anchored a beautifully decorated table of scrumptious sides. In fact, another table had to be added to accommodate all the delicious extras that players so generously brought. If that wasn't enough, tucked on the side was another table laid out with mouthwatering desserts. While everyone ate and ate and ate, President Richard Spangler conducted the annual meeting, and elections were held. Using our swanky white board, Richard was happy to report on the many 2023 positives. The three newly elected board members are John Prescott, Mary Robertson and Richard Spangler. A complete list of Unit 206 board members, committee chairs and club managers is on the following page.

Throughout the afternoon, the club was abuzz with anxious speculation as to whether our much appreciated club manager Myra Reneau would be deemed "nice" or "naughty." It appeared that players were equally divided, and in an effort to break the tie, an independent outsider was

consulted. Unfortunately, due to seasonal exhaustion, Mrs. Claus was not at her best and unable to make a decision. In fact, she finally just threw up her hands in bewilderment!

Many thanks to David and Fran Vine for the delicious ham and turkey entrees (and even more for going to bed very late and getting up uncharacteristically early). Of course, Cheryl Whitfield did her usual unbelievable job working her magic and turning our CBC into a winter wonderland. Her adorable "gnomies" were a definite hit! Thanks, Cheryl, for adding the sparkle and enchantment that provided the backdrop to our lively holiday bash.

Fourteen full tables were in play, and as you might imagine with that many pairs, the competition was fierce and steep. However, after the dust cleared and the final results were in, the following pairs were the winners. Congratulations to all.

### North/South

- 1st Myra Reneau/Larry Reneau
- 2nd Jan Alexander/Stewart Lawwill (tie 2/3)
- 3rd Iris Abelson/Sue Shramko (tie 2/3)

### East/West

- Bert Shramko/Mary Robertson
- Earl Rothberger/Susan Rothberger
- Cheryl Whitfield/Frank Hughes

## Hats off to...

We'd like to tip our hats to several people who supported our CBC annual holiday party! Many thanks go to David and Fran Vine for preparing the delicious turkey and ham main courses and for everyone else who brought a dish. YUM! Thanks also to Cheryl Whitfield for coordinating the beautiful decorations for the event. Finally, a big thanks to Mrs. Claus (Sandy Cervantes). She could easily have visited us directly from Williamsburg. Great to see her holiday cheer and how she jumped in to help with the new players. Thanks to all for a great event!





## 2024 Officers, Committee Chairs and Club Managers

### Southeast Tennessee Unit #206

#### Officers

President	Richard Spangler
First Vice President	Bruce Antman
Second Vice President	Jan Alexander
Secretary	Margie Moses
Treasurer	Myra Tatum

#### Committee Chair

Ambassador	Ann Keown
Asst. Club Manager	Margie Moses
Building & Grounds	John Prescott
Club Manager	Myra Reneau
Directory	Winnell Goodner
Directors	Larry Reneau
Discipline**	Bruce Antman
Education	Dan Chandler
Electronic Contact	Margie Moses
GNT Coordinator	Myra Reneau
Hospitality	Iris Abelson
Library	Cheryl Whitfield
Long-Term Planning	Richard Spangler
Longest Day	Mary Robertson
NAOP Coordinator	Myra Reneau
Newsletter	Sandy Cervantis
Partnership Chair	Jan Alexander
Publicity**	Sue Shramko
STaC Coordinator	Myra Reneau
Special Fun Games	Mary Robertson
Supplies	Leigh Broadway
Tournaments	Richard Spangler
Webmaster	Tyler Smith, Margie Moses

#### Board Member/Term/All voting

Richard Spangler	2024-2026
John Prescott	2024-2026
Mary Robertson*	2024-2026
Iris Abelson	2022-2024
Sue Shramko*	2022-2024
Jan Alexander	2022-2024
Margie Moses	2023-2025
Bruce Antman	2023-2025
Jim LaFevor	2023-2025

\* part year (filled a vacancy)

#### Club Managers

Chattanooga	Myra Reneau
Fairyland	Dan Chandler
Nooga	Sharon Lewis

\*\* Required by By-Laws





# Myra's Box

Happy New Year to all,

I just wanted to congratulate all the Royal STaC winners. This is an exciting time because the opportunities are rare to win gold at the club. So, to all those who supported these games and were successful, congratulations. All of the points earned will be equally divided  $\frac{1}{4}$  gold,  $\frac{1}{4}$  silver,  $\frac{1}{4}$  red, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  black. ACBL will split them up with the new points release.

Iris	Abelson	2.68	Susan	Kimm	0.48
Jan	Alexander	4.20	Jim	Lafevor	1.52
Bruce	Antman	3.53	Buddy	Landis	1.30
Rebecca	Baker	0.79	Stewart	Lawwill	1.36
Joyce	Boatwright	1.24	Mary	Levine	2.25
Jane	Bricard	0.45	Corinne	Madden	1.60
Leigh	Broadway	1.11	Ian	Madden	1.60
Suzy	Bryant	0.34	Arnold	Meagher	0.69
Donna	Cart	0.88	Margie	Moses	2.14
Doug	Cart	2.40	Leslie	Nelson	0.79
Sandra	Cervantes	3.24	Hilary	Nixon	0.48
Daniel	Chandler	4.36	Suzanne	Nixon	0.48
Gayle	Coleman	0.79	Gordon	Park	0.42
Samuel	Cox	1.46	Larry	Reneau	5.59
Marian	Creighton	0.48	Myra	Reneau	9.05
Susie	Crouch	1.54	Sue	Riddle	0.48
Anne	Donnovin	2.58	Mary	Robertson	2.25
Mary	Emrath	1.71	Earl	Rothberger	5.69
John	Felker	1.97	Susan	Rothberger	4.92
Stephanie	Felker	2.46	Carole	Rowland	0.28
Ginny	Gannaway	1.04	Joseph	Schatz	0.70
John	Graef	1.01	Shayna	Scott	2.40
Alice	Greenleaf	1.97	Bert	Shramko	3.14
Carol	Grisanti	2.74	Susan	Shramko	9.05
Carol	Grizzard	1.25	Richard	Spangler	4.77
Vernon	Grizzard	0.70	Myra	Tatum	1.71
Vicki	Hamlin	0.55	Kenneth	Thompson	3.07
Martin	Hershey	0.42	T	Trivers	2.68
Gary	Higbee	0.85	David	Vine	0.6
John	Hubbard	0.48	Joe	Viola	8.84
Frank	Hughes	1.13	Pat	Whitaker	9.07
Jane	Hunt	3.16	Cheryl	Whitfield	2.66
Linda	Katzman	0.55	Donna	Young	0.45
Ann	Keown	1.28			

*Myra*

# The Fairyland Duplicate Bridge Club

When word gets out that Fairyland is throwing a party, you're never quite sure who might turn up. Players took their holiday attire seriously last month, and everyone at the party was treated to a beautiful sea of red and green. There were bespectacled damsels, a freezing elf, and even the Grinch made a surprise visit. The Mountain City Club outdid themselves with a delicious luncheon, and while members enjoyed their food, the club's annual business meeting was conducted. President Leigh Broadway gave a short report; VP Winnell Goodner reported on membership and Treasurer Carole Rowland presented her annual financial report. Nominations Committee Chair Sandy Cervantes presented the slate and elections were held. Suzy Bryant, President; Winnell Goodner, Vice President; Susie Crouch, Secretary; Carole Rowland, Treasurer; Shayna Scott, Assistant Treasurer; and, Leigh Broadway, Past President were all elected by acclamation.

Congratulations to the overall winners: 1st-Susan and Earl Rothberger; 2nd-Stephanie and John Felker; and 3rd-Richard Spangler and Buddy Landis.

Pictured below from left to right are Donna Bloemker, Barbara Anderson, Leslie Nelson and Betsy Caldwell; our freezing elfette, Iris Abelson; and the Grinch himself, Ken Thompson.



## Online Tuesday Limited Game



A marvel of technology is that from the comfort of our homes, we can enjoy a great game of bridge and earn ACBL masterpoints in the process. If you have fewer than 400 masterpoints, you're eligible to play in our limited Tuesday evening online game. All you need to do is sign on to BBO (bridgebase.com) by 6:45 P.M. Starting at 7:00 P.M., the game is usually over by 9:00 P.M. so you can still get a good night's sleep. Don't have a partner? Put your name in at the online BBO partnership desk. The game is open to anyone with 399 points or less, and there's a good chance you will find someone to play with.



# Upcoming Education Opportunities

Does one of your new year's resolutions involve tuning up your bridge proficiency? Would you like to get some pointers on how to ensure you make your contract when you're declarer. As usual, we've got you covered. We've decided to start 2024 with two new classes to help our newer players expand their knowledge and upgrade their skills. In fact, they're designed to help you navigate the often confusing and, at times, overwhelming bridge roadmap.

## SATURDAY BRIDGE TIPS

Starting January 6th, there will be a class on bridge tips held at the Chattanooga Bridge Center on Saturday mornings from 10 A.M. to noon. This class is for all who are interested, but will focus on newer players. There will a brief TIP presented. This will be followed by lots of hands to play and discuss. Our goal is to have a table monitor for each table and a handout for each tip.

- Jan. 6th** Tips on opening leads against a NT contract and Rule of 11.
- Jan. 13th** Tip on how to respond if no 4 or 5 card major to partners opening NT bid AND tip on how to play NT
- Jan 20th** Rule of 20 and 22 (sounds interesting)
- Jan 27th** No class today. There's a Party today so plan on coming to play and enjoy all the really good food.

There will be coffee. The cost is \$5.00 which goes to the bridge center. If you have any questions, please contact Margie Moses at [margie.moses1@gmail.com](mailto:margie.moses1@gmail.com) or Janie Hunt at [cavehunt1@epbfi.com](mailto:cavehunt1@epbfi.com). We look forward to seeing all who are interested.

## BRIDGE BASICS & BEYOND Play of the Hand in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Bridge Basics and Beyond and the Chattanooga Bridge Center are offering an **online class** "Play of the Hand in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The class begins on **Thursday, January 11, 2024**. Classes will be for two hours from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. This course is designed for students who would like to improve their declarer play.

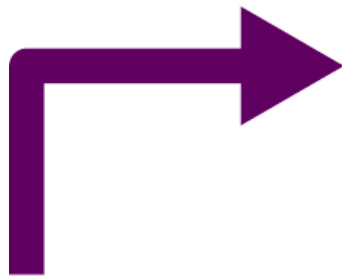
This class is an in-depth study of declarer play and will be split between discussion and supervised play of sample hands. The full class schedule can be viewed on our website. The cost of the course is \$70.00.

Mike Holmes is the course teacher. Mike is a retired educator, Certified ACBL & Audrey Grant Bridge Teacher, Gold Life Master, ACBL Certified Club Director and ACBL Certified Tournament Assistant Director. He has been teaching the game of bridge for over eighteen years.

You can call Mike at 303 928-9187 or email him at [mdholmes8@yahoo.com](mailto:mdholmes8@yahoo.com) to register for the course. Payment for the course is due by the first day of class.







# Arnie's Angle

By Arnie Meagher

## The Complex History of New Year Celebrations

The earliest known record of a New Year festival dates from about 2000 BCE in Mesopotamia, where in Babylonia the new year began with the new moon after the spring equinox (mid-March) and in Assyria with the new moon nearest the autumn equinox (mid-September). For the Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Persians the year began with the autumn equinox (September 21), and for the early Greeks it began with the winter solstice (December 21). On the Roman republican calendar the year began on March 1, but after 153 BCE the official date was January 1, which was continued in the Julian calendar of 46 BCE.

In early medieval times most of Christian Europe regarded March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, as the beginning of the new year, although New Year's Day was observed on December 25 in Anglo-Saxon England. William the Conqueror decreed that the year begin on January 1, but England later joined the rest of Christendom and adopted March 25. The Gregorian calendar, adopted in 1582 by the Roman Catholic Church, restored January 1 as New Year's Day, and most European countries gradually followed suit: Scotland, in 1660; Germany and Denmark, about 1700; England, in 1752; and Russia, in 1918.

The religions and cultures using a lunar calendar have continued to observe the beginning of the year on days other than January 1. In the Jewish religious calendar, for example, the year begins on Rosh Hashana, the first day of the month of Tishri, which falls between September 6 and October 5. The Muslim calendar normally has 354 days in each year, with the new year beginning with the month of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar and one of 4 sacred months when warfare is forbidden. The Chinese New Year is celebrated officially for a month beginning in late January or early February. Other Asian cultures celebrate the day at various times of the year. In southern India the Tamils celebrate the new year at the winter solstice; Tibetans observe the day in February; and in Thailand the day is celebrated in March or April. The Japanese have a three-day celebration, January 1-3.

Many of the customs of New Year festivals note the passing of time with both regret and anticipation. The baby as a symbol of the new year dates to the ancient Greeks, with an old man representing the year that has passed. The Romans derived the name for the month of January from their god Janus, who had two faces, one looking backward and the other forward. The practice of making resolutions to rid oneself of bad habits and to adopt better ones also dates to ancient times. Some believe the Babylonians began the custom more than 4,000 years ago. These early resolutions were likely made in an attempt to curry favor with the gods. In the West, particularly in English-speaking countries, the nostalgic Scottish ballad "Auld Lang Syne," revised by the poet Robert Burns, is often sung on New Year's Eve.

Symbolic foods are often part of the festivities. Many Europeans, for example, eat cabbage or other greens to ensure prosperity in the coming year, while people in the American South favor black-eyed peas for good luck. Throughout Asia special foods such as dumplings, noodles, and rice cakes are eaten, and elaborate dishes feature ingredients whose names or appearance symbolize long life, happiness, wealth, and good fortune.

Many people mark the new year with religious observances, as, for example Jews on Rosh Hashana. Buddhist monks are presented with gifts on the day, and Hindus make oblations to the gods. In Japan visits are made to Shintō shrines of tutelary deities or to Buddhist temples. Chinese make offerings to gods of the hearth and wealth and to ancestors.

Because of the belief that what a person does on the first day of the year foretells what he will do for the remainder of the year, gatherings of friends and relatives have long been significant. The first guest to cross the threshold, or "first foot," is significant and may bring good luck if of the right physical type, which varies with location. Public gatherings, as in Times Square in New York City or in Trafalgar Square in London, draw large crowds, and the countdown to the dropping of an electronic ball in Times Square to signify the exact moment at which the new year begins is televised worldwide. The first Rose Bowl Game was played in Pasadena, California, on January 1, 1902, and college football games have come to dominate American television on New Year's Day. The Tournament of Roses parade, featuring floats constructed of live flowers, and the Mummers' Parade in Philadelphia are popular New Year's Day events watched by millions on television.

*This history (with minor edits) is taken from the Encyclopedia Britannica, updated by Amy Tikkanen.*





# MANNERS ARE IMPORTANT!



## Respect the time of others

- ♦ We recommend that you arrive at least 15 minutes before starting time.
- ♦ Watch the timer and be considerate of others; move when the round is called. Don't move early or late; move only after the round is called.
- ♦ Have a completed Convention Card (both you and your partner).
- ♦ Make your opening lead or table the dummy before you enter the contract in your private score sheets or the BridgeMates. Remember the opening lead is to be led face down to allow for questions!
- ♦ Bid and play in a timely manner.
- ♦ When moving to a new table, make sure you are at the right table with the right opponents.
- ♦ Also check to see that Bridgmates and Place Card agree.



## How would you fill in the blank? "To me bridge \_\_\_\_."

"is a great way to meet some groovy new people. It makes my brain function and improves decision making!"

Thanks to Joe Schatz for our January answer

## Bridge Tip for January



Concentrate and never take your eye off the game, unless you're the 'dummy player'. Even with a bad hand, you can substantially affect the outcome of a game.

Andrew Robson

## EXTRA, EXTRA READ ALL ABOUT IT ROSSVILLE GIRL SCORES BIG

A big High 5 to Shayna Scott on achieving the rank of Life Master. Shayna and her partner Doug Cart played in the online Myrtle Beach Regional Tournament game on Tuesday, January 2. Shayna needed 4.9 gold points to complete the Life Master requirements, and she and Doug came in 5th overall scoring 5.02! Congratulations, Shayna. We're so happy for you.





## January Special Game

Come one, come all. Many of you have expressed enthusiasm for team games, and we have listened. We've scheduled a special GNT qualifier game on Saturday, January 27. For our newer players, the **Grand National Teams (GNT)** is a team knockout event held at the summer North American Bridge Championship (NABC). The event is broken into four flights (Championship, A, B, C) and is restricted to those who have qualified in their local ACBL district. No player on a flight A

team can have more than 6,000 masterpoints. No player on a flight B team can have more than 2,500 masterpoints. No player on a flight C team can have more than 500 masterpoints, or be a Life Master.

Teams first qualify at the club level and then move on to the district level. Our unit 206 is part of District 7. The District 7 qualifiers will be held at various venues depending on the flight. The National finals will be held at the Toronto, Canada NABC starting Wednesday, July 17, 2024. The playing site is Toronto Intercontinental, Sheraton and Westin. A stipend will be awarded to the winners of the district final, as well as some additional amounts for others that are awarded trips.

Everyone loves these games because more often than not, the winners come down to the last round. As you can see, all levels are welcome and your team just might be the winner of a trip to Canada. Lunch is at 11:30 A.M., and the game will follow at noon. Players are asked to bring a dish to share or a dessert.



## Chattanooga Open Sectional Tournament Friday to Sunday February 23-25, 2024

Can you believe it" Seems like it was just yesterday that Unit 206 held it's Fall Sectional and next month, we're hosting another tournament at the Chattanooga Bridge Center. Must be true that time does fly!

There will be morning and afternoon single session pair games on Friday and Saturday, February 23 and 24, for both open and NLM/499 categories. Games are scheduled at 9:00 A.M and 1:30 P.M. On Sunday, there will be a 2 session Swiss team event at 9:00 A.M.

It's time to lasso in your favorite partner so you don't miss any of the fun or competition. Remember since we are holding the tournament at the CBC, space is limited and reservations are a must. Please email Margie Moses at [margie.moses1@gmail.com](mailto:margie.moses1@gmail.com) to reserve your spot.





# Online Mentor/Mentee Game

Pull out that brand new 2024 calendar right now and mark off January 8 and 22. Those are the second and fourth Mondays of January, and you know what that means—our online Mentor/Mentee game. **Anne Donnovin** (aaddonovin@bellsouth.net) heads up this activity, so if you are interested in playing, let her know early so she can match up mentors with mentees. Anne asks that if you are a regular and unable to play, please contact her on a timely basis so she will not include you in the month's assignments. Also, please let her know as soon as possible if you run into a conflict. She sends out a reminder a week prior to matching mentors with mentees. Mentees are asked to contact their mentors to develop an online convention card. The game starts at 7:00 PM, so please sign on to BBO (bridgebase.com) by 6:45 P.M.



Remember, mentees should contact their mentors. If you are having a problem, contact Anne and she will try to help.



## Bridge Etiquette

If the lead is made from the wrong hand, but the next person plays a card, the lead is deemed to have been accepted, and play continues.

## Friday Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee Game

Wow! We thought we couldn't top last month's 14 tables, but December saw the CBC filled to the gills with 16 tables. As always, everyone who played had a great time. This month the third Friday coincides with the tournament in Pigeon Forge, so we will not have a game in January.

In early February, there will be a sign-up sheet at the club for the game on February 16. If you are unable sign up in person, text or call **Sandy Cervantes** at 423.315.1953 to let her know you would like to play. We all know there can be last minute complications or conflicts, so if you run into a problem, please let Sandy know as soon as possible so she can try to find a replacement for you.



Congratulations to the following pairs who scored big at the December game:

### North/South

<b>First</b>	Richard Spangler/John Prescott
<b>Second</b>	Janie Hunt/Myra Tatum
<b>Third</b>	Earl Rothberger/Walter Miller

### East/West

Bruce Antman/Carol Grisanti
Joe Viola/Mary Jane Emrath-
Larry Reneau/Anne Donnovin
Sam Cox/Ginny Gannaway

# dates to Remember



January 8 & 22  
Monday

Online Mentor/Mentee Game  
7:00 P.M. BBO

January 11-13  
Thursday-Saturday

Nate Silverstein Sectional  
Lightman Bridge Center  
Memphis, TN

January 17-20  
Wednesday-Saturday

Non-Life Master Regional  
Winterfest 2024 Sectional  
Pigeon Forge, TN

January 19-20  
Friday-Saturday

Montgomery Bridge Club NLM Sectional  
Montgomery Duplicate Bridge Club  
Montgomery, AL

January 26-28  
Friday-Sunday

Hofstadter/Ogburn Start the Year Sectional  
Henry Tift Bridge Center  
Macon, GA

January 27  
Saturday

Special GNT Qualifier Team Game at CBC  
Lunch at 11:30 A.M./Game at Noon

February 5-11  
Monday-Sunday

Hilton Head Lowcountry Regional  
Marriott Resort & Spa

February 23-25  
Friday-Sunday

Chattanooga Sectional  
Chattanooga Bridge Center

February 29-March 3  
Thursday-Sunday

Atlanta NLM Regional & Open Sectional  
Marriott Atlanta Perimeter Center

## PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE



We've got a great way to kick off the new year—more bridge! Don't let the cold weather wreak havoc with your mental state. There's no need to isolate and let depression start to take hold. There's room at the Chattanooga Bridge Center for all who want to join in the fun, engage in lively conversation and enjoy a stimulating mental challenge.

Our Partnership Committee can help. All you need to do is email the Partnership Committee Chair **Jan Alexander** ([janalexander@epbf.com](mailto:janalexander@epbf.com)) and let her know that you're interested in playing more often. Jan and her group do their best to match players with similar experience and skill levels.



# One Last Thing...

By John Friedl

## Jacoby 2NT or Splinter Which is Stronger?



At a recent club game I was asked which bid is stronger, Jacoby 2NT or a Splinter bid in response to partner's opening bid of 1 Heart or 1 Spade. Seems like a reasonable question, as both bids are forcing to game and looking for a possible slam. So let's explore each bid and see what they tell us about their relative strength.

Jacoby 2NT in response to partner's opening major suit bid promises at least four card support for partner's suit and at least opening hand values, typically a minimum of a "good 12." It is also important to remember that Jacoby 2NT denies a singleton or void in any other suit in Responder's hand. Ideally, Responder would have a hand something like this, in response to a 1 Spade opening bid:

♠Q1094      ♥874      ♦AK85      ♣KJ2

Responder has a good 13 high-card points with good four-card trump support. The key to this hand, though, is the worthless three cards in the heart suit. Opening bidder is required to show a singleton or void, if he has one, on his next bid.

What is Responder hoping for? Not 3 Clubs or 3 Diamonds, but 3 Hearts! A singleton or void opposite Responder's holding in either minor suit would mean there are wasted values in the combined hands. But a singleton or void in hearts means there is no more than one loser in that suit. If all of Opener's honor cards are in the other three suits, the possibility of a slam is much greater. It's as if you are playing for 12 tricks with a 30-point deck.

Compare these two possible hands for the Opening bidder:

1)	♠AKJ32	♥A53	♦9	♣Q864
2)	♠AKJ32	♥5	♦93	♣AQ864

In the first hand, there is no way to avoid an obvious loser in both hearts and clubs. Declarer can sluff one heart from his hand on Dummy's king of diamonds and one heart from dummy on the long club in his hand, but only after losing the ace of clubs. Stuck with a heart loser, there's no possibility of slam.

In the second hand, the singleton heart in Opener's hand opposite three low hearts in dummy means there is only one heart loser, and the rest of the tricks will be made for a slam in spades. Note that the combined high-card points in both cases is the same – 14 points for declarer and 13 points for dummy, a 27 point slam!

If Responder's hand has a singleton or void, instead of a worthless two, three or four card holding in a side suit, then the correct bid is not Jacoby 2NT but a Splinter. The Splinter bid is a double jump into the short suit. Here are the possible sequences:

1H-4C; 1H-4D; 1H-3S; 1S-4C; 1S-4D; 1S-4H.

The purpose of the Splinter bid is conceptually the same as for Jacoby 2NT, except the search for wasted values in the partner's hand is reversed. In a Splinter bid, Responder is showing shortness in the hope that Opener has several low cards in that suit. If so, there will be zero or one losing trick in that suit but all of the partnership's honor cards will be in the other three suits, and the possibility of a slam with something like 27 high card points will exist.

# One Last Thing...

*Continued*

Here's an example of a hand that should splinter:

♠K1094      ♥3      ♦AQ962      ♣AJ8

After Opener's bid of 1 Spade, Responder should bid 4 Hearts, showing 4+ card support for spades and a singleton or void in hearts, along with at least opening high card strength. If Opener has three little hearts, he can initiate a key-card ask and probe for slam. But if Opener has something like KJ2 in hearts and a minimum opening hand he would sign off in 4 Spades. Compare these two possible hands:

1) ♠AQJ83      ♥985      ♦KJ      ♣Q95  
2) ♠AQJ83      ♥KJ2      ♦87      ♣Q95

In the first hand, Opener sees that there is at most one heart loser and his honor cards in the minor suits may fit well with Responder's holding. In the second hand, Opener has a wasted value in hearts and not much to contribute to the minors. Hand #1 opposite Responder's Splinter bid will yield an easy slam by ruffing two hearts in dummy and sluffing two clubs on dummy's diamond AQ. Hand #2 requires two successful finesses to make 12 tricks. In both cases the combined holding is 27 high-card points.

As you can see, the relative strength of both the Jacoby 2NT bid and the Splinter bid is the same – a minimum of a good 12 high card points and at least 4-card support for Opener's major suit.

Is there a maximum for these bids? In my opinion, it is not a good idea to make either bid with a hand that is far above a minimum opening hand. What is too far, you ask? I'd say anything more than 16 high card points, maybe even a little less in a distributional unbalanced hand. The reason for this is that both Jacoby 2NT and the Splinter are designed to find a slam when the combined holding of both hands is lower than what we normally expect when we probe for a slam, say around 33 points. We compensate for the lower high-card combination by adding value for shortness in either Opener's hand or Responder's hand, but only when that shortness is opposite several low cards in that suit in the other hand.

If as Responder you have a really good hand with four-card support for Opener's suit, I'd suggest first bidding another suit (if possible, at the 2-level to create a game forcing two-over-one sequence), and then bidding partner's suit to show support. The reason for this is that the Jacoby 2NT bid takes out an entire level of bidding and, if Opener does not have shortness, his next bid of 4 of his major suit takes away even more space for you to probe for slam. And a Splinter bid takes out two whole levels of bidding.



What do you do with an 18 point hand and a singleton if you make a Splinter bid at the 4-level and partner signs off in game? Now you're bidding 4NT asking for key cards but you won't find out anything more than that. Did partner open with a measly 12 point hand or did he have a good 14? Does he have wasted values in your short suit? If you find out you are missing one key card, is your slam going to require a successful finesse? Or two successful finesses?

Normally I don't advocate manufacturing a bid in another suit when you have four-card support for partner's opening major suit, but with an exceptionally strong hand you can, and probably should, make a game forcing bid first, then show support, and proceed slowly to determine whether slam is in the works.