

CHATTANOOGA BRIDGE CENTER

ALERT! December 2025

A Publication of ACBL Unit 206



Editor: Mary Robertson



A Message From Richard Splanger Our President...

It is hard to believe that 2025 is almost behind us. We have had a successful year as we will summarize during our annual meeting and Holiday Party set for December 13.

Our membership has increased and our funds are in a strong position going into 2026.

You are the reason for our success!! I write this as Thanksgiving is just a couple of days from now, so I am especially grateful and appreciative of your support of the club!! We have a strong group of volunteers from helping to bring new people into the club to ensuring a fun experience while playing the game (even hopefully when the cards don't fall your way). You also help by continually being unofficial "ambassadors" for the club as you interact and help the new people evolve with their understanding and joy of the game; plus, in how we interact with each other every game we play. A shoutout to Ann Keown as well as we celebrate the 10th year of the official Ambassador program next year. Another important addition to the game to ensure everyone has a chance to play.

WHAT I NEED FROM YOU: Please feel free to reach out to me or other Board members with ideas on how to further improve the club. We are here FOR YOU. We want to continually improve the experience of being a member of the club and your feedback is essential for the club's success.

Richard

HATS OFF TO Margie Moses and Jim LaFevor

Hats off to Margie Moses and Jim LaFevor for supporting the club as Board members. Thanks to both of them as they rotate off the Board!! Margie has served as Secretary for the Board, enjoying the challenge of properly and accurately (as possible) reflecting what was discussed during each Board meeting. This can be especially fun trying to summarize the varied thoughts expressed by the Board members as key items were discussed and debated. Jim has been a tremendous resource for the club with his legal background. It is surprising how many times key details might have been missed if not for him providing that added perspective. Thanks to both for their support!!

CBC CALENDAR UPDATES & REMINDERS

Look for email updates from Margie Moses
Please note that our December calendar will be busier as the club adds more fun festivities and card games.

For the most current events calendar, follow this link to our club's website calendar for more information: [CBC Calendar](#)

[Calendar of Events](#)

Novice Game

Mondays-6:30-9PM

Enjoy a short lesson at 6:30, followed by a game at 7 and ending at 9 PM. More experienced players are encouraged to come play with Novices. A Novice (newer player) can have zero masterpoints, but simply wants to learn more about playing duplicate bridge. \$5 per player.

99er Game

Saturday, December 6th 10am-12pm

To wrap up the LBIAD classes, there will be a special bridge game for all players with 99 HCP or fewer. So, find yourself a partner and come for the game and celebrate your achievement with cake and snakes

Chat With Joe

Tuesday, December 9th at 10:30 AM

Do you have a question about a particular hand? How is your defense? Here is a great chance to seek feedback from an advanced player. Just bring yourself and your questions.

Annual Meeting STaC Game/Party

Saturday, December 13th at 11:30 AM

During our club's annual meeting Richard will discuss the club's financial position, conduct the election of 2 new Board members, and make other announcements. The Nominating Committee has proposed Marian Creighton and Joe Schatz as our two new Board members. If you know of others to nominate for a Board position, please let Richard know. A main dish, ham, will be provided for lunch, please sign up to bring a side dish. The Open Game begins right after the close of the meeting. Come on

out and spend the afternoon with your good bridge friends.

STaC Open Games

Saturday, December 20 AND Sunday, December 21
Games at 12:30

Winners will have access to Gold points. Lunch is not provided.

Upcoming Bridge Lessons for Intermediate Level Bridge Players

By John Felker

“I HATE this game!!” I have heard this said many, many times—in Jest of course. It is usually said when a player is facing a bidding dilemma—the opponents have interfered and you don’t know what is the best bid at this moment. Does this sound like YOU?

Hello Intermediate players and LBIAD graduates who are expanding their horizons by taking the Saturday and/or similar classes. What do you think is the hardest part of playing Duplicate Matchpoint Bridge? If you answered bidding to the right level in a competitive auction [those pesky opponents keep interfering with you and your partner’s planned bids], then I agree because it’s hard to figure how high you should bid, or whether to pass or even double.

Well, we have a new set of classes that will help you decide how high to bid- in either contested or non-contested auctions. Beginning Wednesday, January 14, 2026, John Felker will be teaching methods to help you better evaluate your hand- based on your partner and opponents’ bidding. Classes will last about 45 minutes beginning at 10:45 each Wednesday thereafter.

John will be using techniques from the Losing Trick Count [LTC] and the Law of Total Tricks [LOTT] methodologies to help you better evaluate your and partner’s hands to bid to the best level. After learning about these two methodologies, you will also learn bidding systems that will help you further refine your bidding skills. Does this mean you will always get the bid right? NO, of course not—bidding is not an exact science—but you will have tools to make the right decision more often.

These techniques can be used whether you bid using 2/1 or Standard American.

A general outline of the planned Course is: first 2 weeks will cover LTC with examples, followed by 2-3 weeks of LOTT. There will then be a follow-up week or 2 weeks of discussion and examples of

systems/conventions that can be used to bid to the best level. These discussions will be based on what conventions participants want to further learn about or discuss using LOTT.

Cost will be \$5 per lesson or an initial fee of \$20 to cover all lessons with all fees going to the Bridge Center. Players can also choose to attend some lessons where they are interested in specific aspects of the Course but not others.

If you think these lessons can help you, then make sure your partner[s] also attend as bidding is not a one way street.



One Small Thing

By Bruce Antman

One Small Thing – Who's In Charge?

Understanding bridge isn't easy, no matter how many rules and conventions you know. But there are general principles that help when the going gets tough.

In any partnership it's always good to keep up with "who's in charge". In bridge this applies during bidding and defense.

In bidding, the first rule of "in charge" is simple: Any bid that puts a limit on your resources puts partner in charge. The better the bid describes your hand, the more control you give up. Opening one of a suit limits your hand a little, so partner gets control for the moment. Preempts and no-trump openers have much stricter limits, so they generally put partner in charge for the rest of the bidding – unless partner makes a bid that puts it back on you.

When your partner is in charge, you describe your hand as accurately as possible. Creative bids are strongly discouraged. Her bids usually ask questions, sometimes explicitly like Gerber, other times implicitly like a one-over-one response.

When you're in charge, you're responsible for getting the partnership to the best possible contract. If you know what the final contract should be, just bid it. If you have a question to ask, ask it. Don't worry about describing your own hand, unless you can describe it accurately with a bid that gives control back to your partner.

Let's take an example. Say you're in first seat with

♠K3 ♥A87 ♦KJ2 ♣AQJ82

You open the obvious 1♣. That puts partner in charge, and she responds 1NT (6-10 points). Since that's a limited bid, you're in charge now. Your response is 2NT, showing 18-19 points balanced – very specific, so the ball is back in partner's court. Pass or 3NT ends the auction. 3♣ is forcing for some partnerships, but very weak and passable for others - discuss this you're your regular partners. [If 1NT promises 8-10, the partnership has 26+ points, so neither of you can pass short of 3NT.]

If instead partner responds 1♥, her hand is unlimited, so she remains in charge. You are required to describe your hand further, and you again bid 2NT – a strictly limited bid that further confirms partner's control. Partner bids 3♦, which suggests doubt about no-trump and thus probably short spades (although since she's in charge, it might be something else entirely). You must answer her question by bidding three hearts, showing 3-card heart support. She is still in charge. If she bids 3NT or 4♥ or 6♥, pass. If she bids anything else, she's asking you a question – just answer it, don't get creative.

The same theory works on defense. When choosing an opening lead, normally the better hand should be in charge. The bidding usually tells you which hand that is.

To keep control, lead an A, K, Q, or low card in your own suit; partner should return your suit unless he has something truly great.

To put partner in charge, lead his bid suit, top of nothing, or a trump. That forces him to choose the next point of attack.

Example: Your partner overcalled in spades, but your left-hand opponent gets the bid. Partner leads a low diamond, and dummy plays low. Between the overcall and the lead, partner is very much in control. Since he didn't lead spades, assume they are something like A-Q-10-x-x, and he should have a diamond honor as a possible entry. Unless your hand or dummy is very unusual, your cards are at partner's service. Play your diamonds to give the best chance of setting up his entry card. Take tricks as soon as you can, and lead spades through declarer. If you run out of spades, lead diamonds. And know you've done your best to set the contract.

Declarer: ♠KJ3 ♥K9862 ♦A9 ♣J63

You: ♠63 ♥QT7 ♦KJ32 ♣Q98 Pard: ♠AQT82 ♥54 ♦Q754 ♣T75

Dummy: ♠975 ♥AJ3 ♦T86 ♣AK42

Quiz: What is the likely contract? Does it make against this defense? Any other defense?

FIRESIDE CHAT WITH JOE-INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED BRIDGE TIPS (Thank you, Joe, for your willingness to create monthly intermediate/advanced bridge lessons for the newsletter)



Bridge is a beautiful game. One thing that I enjoy is analyzing card holdings during the play of the hand. Here is an example.

Recently, I was playing a heart contract with ♦Q642 in dummy and ♦AKT8 in my hand. After drawing trump, I needed to attack the diamond suit. There is no possibility of setting up a trick to discard a diamond.

I have at least 3 diamond tricks, the AKQ, and there is a very good chance of taking 4 diamond tricks is very high. If the suit breaks 3-2, I will win a 4th ♦ because the defenders are out of diamonds.

I can also pick up Jxxx on my right. Since the ♦Q is my only entry to dummy, I should play a high ♦ from my hand first. If LHO shows out on the second (or first) diamond, I can take the marked finesse against RHO. I also take 4 diamond tricks when either opponent has the singleton ♦J.

When I played the ♦A from my hand, RHO followed with the ♦9. This gave me another chance. I played the ♦K from my hand in case the ♦9 was a singleton. If it was, I could lead my ♦T for a

marked finesse against LHO. On this day, RHO had started with ♦J9 doubleton, so it was a simple 3-2 break.

For those who aspire to be world champions: If RHO has J9xx and reads the position correctly, s/he can fool me by playing the 9 on the first diamond lead. If s/he plays a small ♦, I would play the Q next and take the marked finesse, but now I have a losing option – playing the K next to finesse against LHO if the ♦9 was a singleton. If that happens, smile, congratulate your opponent, and tell everyone that s/he is an excellent player.

A similar situation is when you have a 5-3 trump fit missing Jxxxx. For instance, if you are in a spade contract, and dummy has ♠K64 and declarer holds ♠AQT52. If you have limited entries to dummy, win the first spade with the A, and the second spade with the K. Now if LHO shows out on the second spade, you can take the marked finesse.

If you have entries to dummy that aren't needed for another reason, you can start by playing the ♠K in dummy. If you have some high spot cards, this may enable you to pick up a 5-0 split with no losers. If I have ♠AQT82, I can take 2 finesses against RHO when LHO shows out on the first lead.

Important note: I am looking at the play in one suit. Sometimes there are other considerations. For example, I may need the ♠K as an entry after all the trumps are drawn, so I need to rely on a 3-2 trump break.

Our Club Has A Facebook Group -- ChattDuplicateBridge

by John Hubbard, Group Administrator (Bruce Antman is co-Administrator)

This is a discussion group on Facebook for all Chattanooga Bridge Club members and all members of its affiliated clubs. You ask to join. Then one of the two Administrators processes Approvals.. Now you can see the posts made by group members and make your own posts and comments to posts. Its purpose is for the members to discuss any bridge related subject.

Select your Facebook app. Search for the Group by its name -- ChattDuplicateBridge. You will go to this page.

Find the blue Join button under the Bridge Center picture and tap it to ask to join. (John is a member and so this picture shows the blue Invite button.)

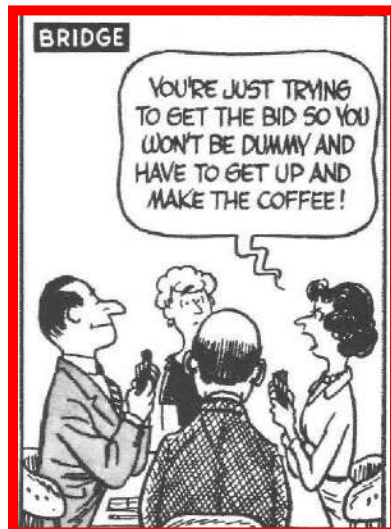
Following is the About information for this Group.

This Group will get better and better as more members join and start interesting discussions.

Use this group to ask for a last minute partner, to share an interesting hand, to find out who is going to a tournament, maybe seek to share a ride to the tournament. Even seek help with a project or activity you do for the club's welfare. You can write prose and add pictures to your post, just like in your own Facebook page.

Join and enjoy!

[Chattanooga Bridge Club](#) - click on this link to see our Facebook page



A little humor: One advantage of bad bidding is that you get practice at playing atrocious contracts.

LOOKING FOR A BRIDGE GAME?

'Nooga East Bridge Club

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. Players 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, this is 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. Are you interested? Just email noogabridgeeast@gmail.com to make a reservation. Need help finding a partner or have a question? You can text or call Sue Riddle at 423.509.3583 or Sharon Lewis at 423.240.5360.

The Fairyland Duplicate Bridge Club

The Fairyland Bridge group plays every Thursday at our Club. This group often combines celebrating special occasions along with a delicious lunch and great cards. Stay tuned to upcoming game announcements to make sure you don't miss the fun. Players should be registered before 10:15 to allow play to begin at 10:30. Lunch is provided between 12-12:30, afterward the game resumes. Reservations are appreciated, please reach out to Susie Crouch at 423.443.6889. See below for details on the Holiday party.



Friday Face-to-Face Mentor/Mentee Cancelled November & December

Because of the November and December holiday schedule, there will be no Mentor Mentee games in November and December. Our popular Friday Face-to-Face will resume in January 2026.

However, there will be an Open game at the usual time, 12 noon, on these Fridays. Come play!

Partnership Coordinate

If you need a partner, our Partnership Coordinator can help. Contact Anne Donnovin at 423.605.2996. Welcome back, Anne, you were missed.

**Arnie's Angle - For Those Who Wish To Learn More
About The World In General
By Arnie Meagher**

Reindeer - My Story



Greetings! My name is Northstar, so named because I am the star animal of the arctic north. You may be familiar with the nine names of Santa's reindeer-Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, and Blitzen. Before Clement C. Moore wrote *The Night Before Christmas* in 1823, no one knew about Santa and his team of nine sled-pulling reindeer. Nor did anyone know about Rudolph and his red nose until catalog writer Robert L. May wrote a children's book in verse for his employer, Montgomery Ward, in 1939, entitled *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. Today, the 10 above-mentioned reindeer names are known virtually to everyone at least in the western hemisphere. But unlike these 10 fictional reindeer, I am not the product of anyone's imagination. I am real with a fascinating evolutionary history that has enabled me and my brothers and sisters to thrive in cold, harsh climates, living today almost exclusively in the northern points of the globe, in arctic Greenland, Scandinavia, Russia, Mongolia, Alaska, and Canada.

Our Evolutionary Story: We reindeer belong to the Capriolinae subfamily, and share a common ancestor with species like the moose and the white-tailed deer. What this common ancestor looked like is difficult to determine. Climatic conditions, such as the movement of glaciers and soil acidity destroyed most of the fossil evidence of this common ancestor. The species that descended from this common ancestor were already distinct species by the time conditions allowed fossil evidence to be preserved. We reindeer emerged as a distinct species about 1 million years ago. We have become well adapted to arctic conditions thanks to our amazing evolutionary enhancements. Our noses are specially adapted to warm the air we breathe before it enters our lungs and to condense water in the air, which keeps our mucous membranes moist. Our fur traps air, which not only helps provide us with excellent insulation, but also keeps us buoyant in water, which is important for swimming across massive rivers and lakes during migration. Even our hooves are special. In the summer, when the ground is wet, our foot pads become soft, providing them with extra grip. In the winter, our foot pads tighten, revealing the rim of our hooves, which we use to provide traction in the slippery snow and ice and to dig food from beneath the snow. There are two major groups of reindeer, the tundra and the woodland, which are divided according to the type of habitat we live in. We are further divided into 9 to 19 subspecies, depending on who is doing the classification. Today, we reindeer stand about 4 feet tall at the shoulder and our adult males

can weigh anywhere from 240 to 700 pounds, while our adult females typically weigh between 180 to 460 pounds.

Our Food: We reindeer are herbivores, meaning we only consume plants or other vegetation, no matter the season. We eat moss, fungi, tree leaves, herbs, ferns, and fresh grass shoots during the spring. During the winter months, we rely on a diet of lichens, mosses, and grasses to sustain us through the harsh winter conditions. These foods are high in fiber and provide essential nutrients to keep us healthy and energized. In addition we also forage for twigs, leaves, and bark to supplement our nutrition. Mushrooms are a delicacy for us and we go to great lengths to seek out these hallucinogenic delicacies often buried beneath the snow, and eating the fungi makes us behave drunkenly, run about aimlessly and make strange noises.

Our Predators: Our primary predators are wolves, bears, and wolverines, each employing different hunting strategies and posing unique challenges. These formidable animals pose a significant threat to our herds. Wolves are our most feared predator. They hunt in packs, using coordinated strategies to pursue and bring down their prey. Wolves are opportunistic hunters, often targeting vulnerable individuals such as our calves, old or sick reindeer, or those struggling in deep snow. Both brown bears and polar bears prey on us, although their hunting strategies and the extent of their impact vary. Brown bears attack us in terrestrial environments, while polar bears target us in coastal areas or when we venture onto sea ice. Wolverines, though smaller than wolves and bears, are formidable predators with a reputation for tenacity and scavenging. They are a particular threat to our calves and weakened individuals. Wolverines are highly adaptable and can thrive in harsh environments, making them a persistent threat.

- **Our Reproduction:** Reindeer breeding season, or rut, typically occurs in the fall. Males compete for access to females, often engaging in fierce battles using their antlers. After a gestation period of 7-8 months, females usually give birth to a single calf in the spring. Calves can stand and walk within hours of birth, allowing them to keep up with the migrating herd.

- **We Reindeer Play an Important Role in Indigenous Cultures:** Many northern cultures have long relationships with us. In Scandinavia and Canada, reindeer hunting helped keep Indigenous peoples alive, from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods all the way into modern times. In Norway, it is still common to find reindeer trapping pits, guiding fences, and bow rests dating from the Stone Age. In North America, the Inuit people rely on reindeer for food, clothing, shelter, and tools. The Sámi people are indigenous to Sápmi, a cultural region of Europe and Russia that covers the northern parts of Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Russia. For centuries, the Sámi people relied on reindeer herding for food, warmth, and income. Sámi people use every part of the reindeer after butchering it. Reindeer hides are dried and sewn into mittens and *nutukas*, which are short boots that are incredibly warm and provide excellent traction in the snow. Our hides are also used to make the *gákti*, a traditional pullover top and our fur lined leggings and other pieces of clothing to keep humans warm even in the most frigid temperatures. Since the 18th century, the governments of Norway, Finland, and

Sweden have created limits on the practice of herding reindeer in a limited area. This has included reducing the number of reindeer that one person is allowed to own, as well as banning licenses for those who don't make enough profit from their herds. As a result of Sámi activism, the Norway Government passed the The Reindeer Husbandry Act in 2007 in an effort to protect Sámi culture and customs. The act declared that only people who are Sámi and have a parent or grandparent who practices reindeer husbandry as their primary occupation are allowed to own and herd reindeer. Reindeer ownership is tracked by earmarks, which are small cuts in a deer's ear that identify which person or family the animal belongs to. The Sámi were also forced to assimilate after being colonized by Christian missionaries in the 17th century. Sámi languages were banned in many schools and children were sent to boarding schools to be separated from their culture, where some were used for dehumanizing scientific experiments. At one point, reindeer herders were considered an "inferior race" and were sent to schools to ostracize them from society. Shamanism, a religious practice used by Sámi people for centuries, was demonized to encourage the Indigenous people to convert to Christianity. Some churches have since apologized for their actions toward the Sámi people. Today, many Sámi women seek higher education to support their families and pass on their heritage. Victories from activists in the mid-20th century allowed Sámi families to teach their children about their culture once again, including the practice of reindeer husbandry. Sámi in Norway, Sweden, and Finland all have their own parliaments, as well as an international organization called the Saami Council, to help advocate for the rights of their people. These organizations are currently trying to prevent actions that could cause even more harm to their communities, like building wind turbines in Norway that would encroach on land used during reindeer migrations. They're also fighting to get back the land that was stolen from them, which could help reindeer herders revitalize their culture and traditional reindeer husbandry.

- **The Sámi people were once completely nomadic.** Groups of several families would-migrate with their Reindeer herds to follow the animals' natural patterns. By using new technology like GPS tracking and snowmobiles, the Sámi have found new ways to monitor and manage their herds. As a result, a few herders will travel with their reindeer alone during the summer and winter while their families and other community members live in permanent housing. The most recent surveys estimate that about 40,000 Sámi live in Norway, 20,000 live in Sweden, 6000 live in Finland, and 2000 live in Russia

Facts You May Not Know About Us Reindeer:

- 1) Reindeer and caribou are the same animal with different names.
- 2) During certain times of year, you can tell the sex of a reindeer by checking for antlers. That's because our males lose their antlers in winter or spring, but our females shed theirs in the summer.
- 3) We are the only mammals that can see ultraviolet light. This ability lets us see things in the icy white of the Arctic that we would otherwise miss. Things like white fur and urine are difficult, even impossible, for humans to see in the snow, but for us reindeer, they show up in high contrast.

- 4) We migrate longer distances than any other mammal. The North American reindeer travel up to 3,100 miles yearly, covering around 23 miles per day.
- 5) Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer is actually a white-tailed deer.
- 6) Within only 90 minutes of being born, a baby reindeer can already run.
- 7) We reindeer can run up to 50 mph and we can swim at 6.2 mph.
- 8) The last caribou/reindeer in the contiguous United States was removed to a Canadian conservation breeding program in 2019.
- 9) It's rude to ask herders how many reindeer they own. Because herders make their living from us reindeer, this is essentially the same as asking someone how much money they have in their bank account.
- 10) Only ethnic Sámi are allowed to own and herd reindeer in Norway.
- 11) Reindeer milk is far richer in protein and has less lactose than cow's milk.
- 12) The reindeer is the only fully domesticated species in the deer family. It is also the only deer that has a worldwide distribution: spanning boreal, tundra, subarctic, arctic and mountainous regions of northern Asia, North America, and Europe.
- 13) The color of our fur changes with the seasons, going from a darker shade in the summer to a lighter one in the winter. Some Arctic reindeer even turn almost completely white, sporting white patches on their belly, neck, and hooves.

Thanks for reading my story. I hope it gave you a good understanding of how we live and thrive in the arctic north. Please share it with your friends.

Yours truly, Northstar

Email: ajmeagher@aol.com