



The Kibitzer

October 2021

Editors: Judith and Nicholas Gartaganis

President's Message

Hello Everyone.

I hope this finds our Unit 390 members and their families happy and well. The past 18 months have been more unusual than any in our lives and we can only hope for a return to some degree of normal soon.

Although our Bridge Community has shown resilience during the pandemic, there is some noticeable concern. Our Unit had 1,015 members in March of 2019; 1,058 in March of 2020; 994 in March of 2021, and currently has 960. Of the current 960 members, 545 are 299ers. After doing some statistics for the week of October 3rd to October 9th, in the fifteen open games run that week, 317 members played bridge (76.39% of the 415 members who have 300+ masterpoints). In the five 0-299er games run that week, 120 members played bridge (22.02%). Can you see the problem? The group of 0-299ers are our future and yet 425 of them are nowhere to be seen.

At the time of this article, two clubs have opened face-to-face games and two more are scheduled to open in November. Kudos to those club owners, managers and directors who now must cope with added rules to enforce, and stringent safety measures to establish. Participation levels at clubs will help the Unit determine the feasibility of resuming face-to-face sectional tournaments and other Unit events.

The Unit Board met via Zoom on October 21st. This was our first meeting since January 20, 2020 and a first for many of us on a virtual platform. Keep in mind that, although we have not officially met in several months, the Unit Executive Board and the Associate Board have continued with assigned duties.

A discussion surrounding the January Sectional resulted in the difficult decision a few days later to cancel it. We also discussed the popular Mentorship program and we hope to have this up and going in the near future.

Special thanks to Treasurer Ed Lamb who keeps financials up to date and filed with the government (see Audited Financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2021 contained within this newsletter); to Secretary Olga Williams who keeps records and correspondence with the ACBL up to date; to Notices Coordinator Terri Bedard who looks after preparing and sending out notices; and to Webmaster Daniel Bertrand who maintains the website. And always, for the hours of work entailed in publishing an incredible newsletter – thanks to Judith and Nicholas Gartaganis.

Keep safe and I look forward to seeing you in person in the upcoming months.

Lyman Warner
President, Unit 390

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Mr. Bridge - Charles Goren (1901–1991)

By Janet Galbraith

Goren was born in Philadelphia, PA. to Russian Jewish immigrants. He has a Canadian connection in that he attended McGill University, graduating with a master's law degree in 1923. McGill later awarded him an honorary doctorate of law in 1973. It was at McGill that he took up auction bridge, and after being teased by a woman about his weak bridge playing ability, Goren threw himself into learning as much as he could about the game.

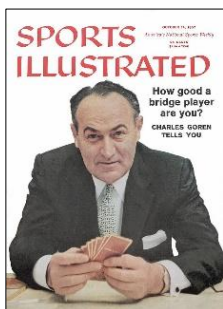


While practicing law back in Philadelphia, his bridge playing talent and enthusiasm caught the attention of Milton Work, a successful writer and lecturer on auction bridge from the same area. Work hired Goren to help with his writing, and Goren eventually began to ghost write Work's material. In 1928, Work popularized the 4-3-2-1 point count system. When he died in 1934, Goren began his own writing career, including writing *Winning Bridge Made Easy* in 1936. The success of the book led him to give up his law career. His breakthrough as a player came in 1937 when he was part of a Philadelphia team that won the National Board-a-Match Teams (now the Reisinger).

Play your partner's game, especially if you know more about bridge than he does.

He became a popular lecturer and instructor, and in 1944 began writing a daily newspaper column, taking over from Ely Culbertson at the Chicago Tribune. The column was eventually syndicated in over 300 papers. One of his bridge partners was Omar Sharif, who had written some of the forwards in Goren's books, and in 1974 Sharif took over

Goren's newspaper column. Goren also had a weekly column in *Sports Illustrated*, extraordinarily "fulfilling" his childhood dream of becoming a "sportswriter." A sports fan, Goren frequently joined Los Angeles Dodgers manager Walter Alston and players for some pregame bridge in the Dodger dugout.



Goren also hosted the television show *Championship Bridge with Charles Goren* from 1959-1964. The show featured prominent players and occasional celebrities (Chico Marx for one) playing in a living room setting, with Goren providing analysis of the bidding (think early VuGraph). Many of these episodes can still be found on YouTube.

Many a brilliant coup has been born of adversity sired by some previous atrocity in the bidding.

Three of Goren's books became standard teaching texts: *Contract Bridge Complete* (1942, now in its 12th edition), *Contract Bridge in a Nutshell* (1946) and *Point Count Bidding* (1949) all contributed to make his methods, soon called Standard American, the most widely played system in the history of bridge. Goren took Work's counting approach and added distributional points (void = 3, singleton = 2 and doubleton = 1) to the system. This approach displaced Ely Culbertson's "honour tricks" system as the preferred method of hand evaluation, and enabled novice players to bid more successfully.

In 1985, the 10th edition of *Contract Bridge Complete* replaced Goren's four-card major bidding system with the five-card major system preferred then by experts. This concession to changing times kept his name in the mainstream of bridge theory. He was a prolific writer, with close to 40 books to his credit that have sold over 10 million copies. In the 1970s he wrote two books on the Precision System and also authored books on other games, including Canasta and Backgammon.

Despite his success away from the table, he remained devoted to tournament play. Goren was a dominant figure in championship bridge from the late 1930s through to the early 1960s, winning the first Bermuda Bowl in 1950 and placing second in 1956 and 1957. He also won 34 national championships, including the Reisinger title eight times, the Spingold five times, and the Vanderbilt twice. His name is synonymous with the game, earning him the nickname "Mr. Bridge," and his global importance was recognized when he appeared on the cover of *Time Magazine* in 1958.



[continued next page]

Mr. Bridge - Charles Goren (continued)

That same year he appeared on the quiz show *You Bet Your Life*. Of note, Goren considered himself to be an amateur player, and was known to give away his bridge winnings to charity.

Goren's most successful partnership was with Helen Sobel Smith, but Mr. Bridge also played with other famous folks, like Dwight Eisenhower, Nelson Rockefeller, and Humphrey Bogart. He was inducted into the ACBL Hall of Fame in 1964.

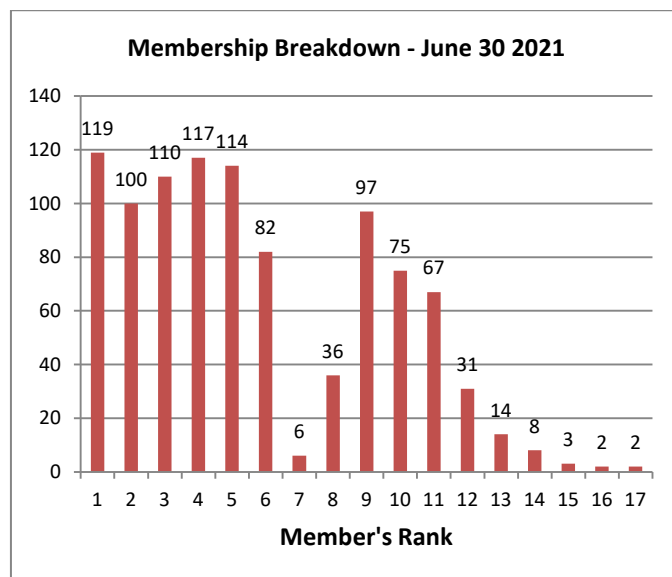
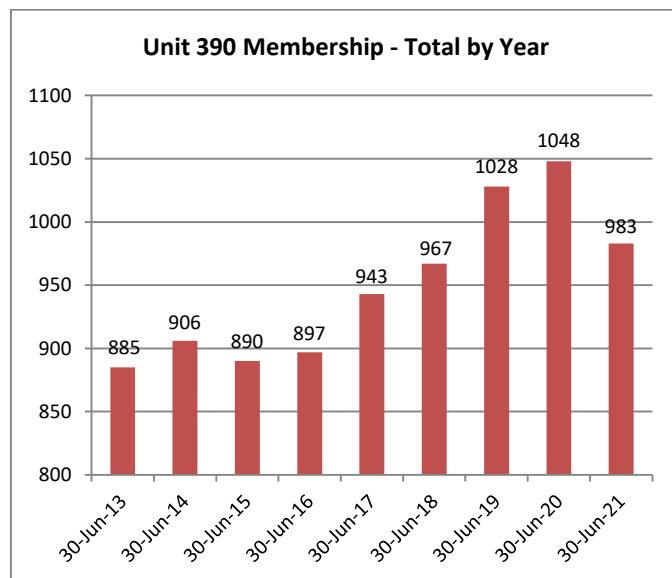
After suffering a stroke, Goren retired from competition in 1966, living in Miami Beach. Goren never married, saying that no woman could put up with his tournament travel. He moved to Encino, California in 1971, living his remaining 19 years with his nephew, before dying of a heart attack soon after his 90th birthday.

You should play the game for fun. The instant you find yourself playing the game for any other reason, you should rack it up and go on to something else – court tennis, maybe, or old maid. Anything but bridge.



Vintage Postcard by Ellen Clapsaddle, circa early 1900s

Unit 390 Membership Stats 2013 - 2021



Legend

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 - Rookie (0-5) | 10 - Silver LM |
| 2 - Junior Master (5-20) | 11 - Ruby LM |
| 3 - Club Master (20-50) | 12 - Gold LM |
| 4 - Sectional Master (50-100) | 13 - Sapphire LM |
| 5 - Regional Master (100-200) | 14 - Diamond LM |
| 6 - NABC Master (200+) | 15 - Emerald LM |
| 7 - Advanced NABC Master | 16 - Platinum LM |
| 8 - Life Master | 17 - Grand LM |
| 9 - Bronze LM | |

648 Non-Life Masters
335 Life Masters

The Only Chance – Déjà Vu

By Judith and Nicholas Gartaganis

Your expert opponents bid to game in the following auction:

You		Partner	
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	DBL	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

You hold: ♠Q542 ♥974 ♦KQJ94 ♣J

Partner was able to muster up a passed-hand double but, with both sides vulnerable, it seemed prudent to pass rather than try 4♦.

Although you have a strong diamond holding, it would be optimistic to count on two defensive tricks in that suit. You will need to generate tricks elsewhere. So you lead the ♣J and dummy appears.

IMPs

Contract: 4♥

Lead: ♣J

♠ KJ1073	
♥ J105	
♦ 8	
♣ 6543	
♠ Q542	N
♥ 974	W ■ E
♦ KQJ94	S
♣ J	

Dummy follows and partner encourages with the ♣2.

Declarer thinks a long time and plays the ♣7. What's going on?

Partner's clubs aren't strong enough to overtake your ♣J. Declarer ducked the opening lead when he clearly could have won the first trick. Partner either has five clubs with KQ8xx or four clubs, likely without the ♣10 (he might have overtaken in that case). Partner can't have six clubs or he surely would have overtaken. So, adding it all up, declarer has at least three clubs with the ♣A, but not the ♣Q.

How should you continue? Partner is a passed hand and we've placed him with ♣KQ. If he has the ♦A he cannot also have the ♠A. But still, partner's Ace and the club ruff you will score only gets the defense up to three tricks.

If declarer has the ♠A how might he play the hand? He could win the opening lead, cash the ♠A (if it were a singleton) and lead a heart to dummy to take a club pitch on the ♠K. Declarer's 3♥ bid and your heart holding suggests partner has nothing in hearts that will cause a problem for declarer.

Declarer has made a fine play ducking the ♣J, particularly if he doesn't have the ♠A. Let's count declarer's tricks. If declarer has seven hearts then there is no chance for the defense (he has 10 tricks via seven trumps, two aces and either the ♠K or a diamond ruff) so we must assume he has only six hearts. If declarer is 1-6-3-3 it makes no sense for him to duck the club (10 tricks are easy via six trumps, two aces and either the ♠K and one diamond ruff or two diamond ruffs, depending on which side ace he holds).

Assuming declarer is 1-6-2-4 can you prevent declarer from making ten tricks even if he guesses spades? If you lead a diamond and declarer wins to play a spade to dummy's ♠J, partner can give you a club ruff, but what then? Declarer will be able to set up spades to pitch both his losing clubs. (He'll use dummy's two trump entries to ruff out your ♠Q and, finally, a diamond ruff to enter dummy in order to cash the last spade).

What can you do to upend declarer's plan? The surprising answer is to lead a heart! Declarer wins in hand and runs a spade to partner's Ace. Partner duly returns a top club. You can ruff out declarer's ♣A and return a heart, leaving declarer one trick short. Your heart switch at trick two removes a vital entry to dummy early and prevents declarer from establishing spades. The complete deal is:

♠ KJ1073		♠ A98
♥ J105		♥ 6
♦ 8		♦ 76532
♣ 6543		♣ KQ92
♠ Q542	N	
♥ 974	W ■ E	
♦ KQJ94	S	
♣ J		
♠ 6		
♥ AKQ832		
♦ A10		
♣ A1087		

The beauty of playing IMPs rather than matchpoints is that you don't have to worry about overtricks. The primary objective is to defeat the contract. With that single goal in mind, you can focus on trying to visualize a distribution that will allow the defense to prevail, even though that distribution might have a low probability.

Note that leading a high diamond at trick one gives the defense no chance as long as declarer guesses spades. It is crucial to dislodge the ♣A before partner's ♠A is knocked out (or, as on the actual hand, set up to ruff it out).

Member Milestones

The following members have reached new masterpoint milestones from the beginning of April 2021 to the end of September 2021. Congratulations to all on their achievements.



New Junior Masters (5+ MPs):

Doug Birrell	Jack McKay
Brad Bowyer	Diane Morais
Peter Charlton	Louisa Powell
Kathleen Goodwin	Toshimi Sembo
Bill Harrison	David Sussman
Sheila Lester	Maria Van Meijel
Darrell Martindale	Georgina Waldie
Trish Mayer	

New Club Masters (20+ MPs with at least 5 black)

Boyd Anderson	Michael Mannas
Susan Ellis	Lorraine Mansell
Sandra Fiell	Dianne McCubbin
Joyce Gibson	Lana McFadden
Lynn Gall	Donna Michael
Stephanie Howard	Adelle Palmer
Libby Jackson	Kathy Pinder
Julie Jacques	Erika Pochailo
Laurie Jones	Melvin Teghtmeyer
Lana Lien	

New Sectional Masters (50+ MPs with at least 10 black and 5 silver)

John Bargman	Lynn Marshall
Matt Bootle	Rita McGillivray
Lyle Brown	Charles Stedman
Audrey Chastko	Christine Stedman
Gary Croxton	Marjory Sword
Nancy Hughes	Babett Valachi
Shail Kumar	Corliss Ward
Ted Lobley	

New Regional Masters (100+ MPs with at least 15 black, 15 silver and 5 red, gold or platinum)

Yurong (June) Cheng	Ken Krug
Shuangbing (Frank) Guo	Maxine Rystephanick
Gail Ingelson	Melissa Wigham

New NABC Masters (200+ MPs with at least 20 black, 25 silver, 5 gold or platinum and 15 additional red, gold or platinum)

Philip Coppard	Grace Galanti
Deborah Cripps	Andrew Melton
Barry Crozier	Ann Miller
Richard Degroat	Judith Muir
Sandra Evans	Thomas To

New Life Masters (500+ MPs with at least 75 black, 75 silver, 50 gold or platinum and 50 additional red, gold or platinum)

Antara Keelor	John Prance
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New Bronze Life Masters (a Life Master with 750+ MPs; 500+ for members prior to Jan. 1, 2010)

Jan Brawn	Janice Gordon
Pamela Caravan	Tracy Horan
Devra Drysdale	Danuta Trafford

New Silver Life Masters (1000+ MPs; a Life Master with at least 200 pigmented points)

Jane Binsted	Richard Piette
Mary Anne Crookes	Caenie Pycz

New Ruby Life Masters (1500+ MPs; a Life Master with at least 300 pigmented points)

Rick Boyd	Jack Sisko
Rosalyn Martin	Carrie Stockman
Sandy Jean Robinson	Brigitte Tetzner

New Gold Life Masters (2500+ MPs; a Life Master with at least 500 pigmented points)

Harold Kroeger

New Diamond Life Masters (5000+ MPs; a Life Master with at least 500 gold or platinum and 500 additional pigmented points)

Martin McDonald



CCBL Announces a Home for a Calgary Bridge Centre!

By Keith Falkenberg



The Calgary Community Bridge League (CCBL) is pleased to announce that its proposal to the City of Calgary to lease the Ramsay Civic Building for a Calgary Bridge Centre has been

successful. After discussions and negotiations over the summer, the City granted the CCBL access to the facility and a multi-year lease is being drafted and processed. Renovations and repairs are now under way, and we hope to be open for bridge games, lessons, and other activities by early 2022.

The new Bridge Centre is located at 1140 8th St. S.E. in the community of Ramsay just east of the Stampede grounds and south of Inglewood. There is easy access to this central location from all areas of the city. Ramsay and Inglewood are dynamic and developing communities and there are many good restaurants nearby.

We will offer two playing areas of approximately 4,000 square feet each, with kitchen facilities on each level. There is a gentle ramp to the upper hall, while the lower hall access is level with the parking lot in the back.

The basic plan is to provide space to existing bridge clubs at a

very attractive rate so they can ease into face-to-face bridge again as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. We will provide everything necessary for the clubs, including a basic beverage service, and no setup or takedown will be required.

Eventually we hope to obtain a liquor licence so you may enjoy a beer or glass of wine if you wish. Club managers or directors will operate and direct their own games. In addition, we will now have a central venue for lessons, and special bridge events such as Rookie-Master games, GNT and NAOIP qualifying events, private games, and perhaps even small tournaments.

Crystal Mann has been engaged by the CCBL to attend to the myriad of start-up issues. You can find out more about the Bridge Centre by checking out our new website at www.bridgewebs.com/ccbl. You can reach Crystal via email at calgarybridgecentre@shaw.ca

There are photos of the facility on the home page, and you can follow along with progress of the renovations we are undertaking. If you click on the "Information" tab on the left side of the home page, you will find a link to Google Maps showing the location of the Calgary Bridge Centre. It is very easy to get there once you know where it is.

We are excited to finally have a central home for duplicate bridge in Calgary and hope to see you there soon!

Upcoming Unit 390 Tournament Dates

Tournament Sanctions in District 18 have been cancelled for the remainder of 2021.

The ACBL is forging ahead with the Fall NABC in Austin TX which will run November 25 - December 5, 2021.

Calgary New Year's Sectional	..... CANCELLED	January 2022
Calgary Spring Sectional	..... TENTATIVE	March 25 - 27, 2022
Calgary Summer Sectional	..... TENTATIVE	July 8 - 10, 2022
Calgary Fall Sectional	..... TENTATIVE	September 2 - 4, 2022
Lethbridge Regional	..... TENTATIVE	May 9 - 15, 2022



Subterfuge (The Scottish Finesse?)

By Gordon Campbell

This year my team entered the Tonči Radelja Memorial InterCity League, for mainly European teams. Our multi-lingual teammate and captain, Al Simon signed us up, and thankfully could converse with the opponents in several languages. He played with Dan Bertrand while my partner was Ian Findlay. On one memorable deal, as South I held:

♠Q86 ♥AQ65 ♦AKJ6 ♣A6

I started proceedings with 2NT and the following auction ensued:

<u>West</u>	<u>Ian</u> <u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>Gordon</u> <u>South</u>
--	--	--	2NT ¹
Pass	4NT ²	Pass	5♦ ³
Pass	5♠ ⁴	Pass	5NT ⁵

¹ 19-21

² Invitational

³ Natural, denies 4 clubs

⁴ Natural, denies 4 hearts and also denies 4 diamonds

⁵ Nothing further to say

When Ian invited with 4NT our agreement was to bid 4-card suits up the line whenever the invitation was accepted.

Despite my having announced a non-minimum, Ian reassessed and passed 5NT. Often a 4-4 fit will yield an extra trick, but in this case it was clear we had no such fit.

LHO led the ♠2 and Ian tabled his hand.

IMPs

Contract: 5NT

Lead: ♠2

♠ AK94	
♥ J102	
♦ Q83	
♣ Q84	
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W ■ E</div> <div>S</div> </div>
♠ Q86	
♥ AQ65	
♦ AKJ6	
♣ A6	

Oh dear, I thought. This may be embarrassing if I go down in 5NT. As is so often the case, this is a four (maybe three!) or six hand. There are nine top tricks (four diamonds, three spades, one heart and one club).

If the opening leader has the ♠K there is no risk to the contract (you lose one club and one heart if the ♥K is offside). But if RHO has the ♠K then playing the ♠Q at trick one makes it easy for either opponent to continue attacking clubs. Therefore it is correct to leave the ♠Q in dummy and duck the initial lead around to the ♣A. If the ♠K is over the ♣Q (I had the feeling it was) then only West can profitably continue the club attack.

If the ♥K is onside I have 11 tricks and, if either the hearts or spades divide 3-3, then 12 tricks are easy. If the ♥K is offside, I may lose several more club tricks. So, that's it, I guess. It all depends on the heart hook.

Then it occurred to me that even if I lose a trick to RHO's ♥K, I'm still safe. And if LHO has the ♥K, he has not had the opportunity to find out much about the location of my values and may not realize that the ♠2 was such a devastating lead. So, at trick two, I led a low heart towards the ♥J. LHO twitched, but ducked. Now I had 10 sure tricks and I could find 11 with spades 3-3 or some kind of throw-in.

As a nod to my heritage, I'm dubbing this manoeuvre the Scottish finesse!

The full deal was:

IMPs

Contract: 5NT

Lead: ♠2

		♠ AK94	
		♥ J102	
		♦ Q83	
		♣ Q84	
♠ 1032			♠ J75
♥ K73			♥ 984
♦ 1075			♦ 942
♣ 9732			♣ KJ105
	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W ■ E</div> <div>S</div> </div>		
		♠ Q86	
		♥ AQ65	
		♦ AKJ6	
		♣ A6	

The takeaway ... never assume the opponents know what is going on, especially early in the hand. You can see your combined assets – all 26 cards. An opponent cannot see his partner's cards and may not yet have seen any signals. Remember to practice a little subterfuge as declarer, because partner won't mind – he is "le mort".

Crystal Mann - The New ACBL Tournament Administration Coordinator

Crystal Mann was recently appointed ACBL Tournament Administration Coordinator. Crystal was kind enough to answer our questions about the journey leading to her recent appointment.

Hi Crystal. Tell us how you began working for the ACBL.

I was first hired by the ACBL as an Associate Tournament Director in November 2015. My original ambition was to become a full-time Tournament Director with the ACBL. To accomplish this I needed to get experience relevant to the position, so I accepted various part-time positions with the ACBL.

The first of these involved providing clarifications and advice to players who sent ruling requests to "The Ruling Box" (the ACBL's resource for answering questions related to director rulings and the application of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge). My next position involved loading data into TourneyTrax (the ACBL's tournament scheduling and resource assignment software). This information shows up, for example, when you view a tournament's details on the ACBL website.

I was also hired to provide support to clubs. Any time players or club managers phoned the ACBL looking for information about anything related to a club (for example, how to load game information to ACBL Live), they would be forwarded to the club support desk. My job would be to answer their questions, either immediately or by putting them in touch with the relevant expert at the ACBL.

What effect did COVID-19 have on your employment?

When COVID-19 hit, all part-time employees were laid off (along with most of the full-time Tournament Directors), so all my part-time work (and, of course, all my tournament directing) ceased. However, all was not lost. When online tournaments commenced, the remaining full-time Tournament Directors, together with the part-time Tournament Directors, were engaged to direct at online games.

How did you secure the position of ACBL Tournament Administration Coordinator?

In September 2021, an internal announcement was circulated to all ACBL employees (including the directing staff) that



Debbie Vicknair, the long-time Tournament Administration Coordinator, was retiring effective September 30, 2021 and that a hiring competition had begun to find her replacement.

The Tournament Administration Coordinator position provides tournament-related support and information to Units, Districts, Tournament Directors and other ACBL staff. In short, the job entails acting as the ACBL's support person for all things to do with tournaments. In normal times, the major part of this involves reviewing sanction applications to ensure they meet the ACBL's guidelines (for example, with respect to geographical distance between tournaments). It also involves sanctioning Unit games and STaCs (Sectional Tournaments at Clubs).

Currently, a lot of the work involves helping members navigate the new ACBL website. Many of the calls go something like "How do I find the place to request a Unit Game? I used to know where it was on the old website, but I can't find it now."

I decided to apply for the position. Getting the job involved working my way through the ACBL's application process. It wasn't much different than the hiring process for many jobs: completing a behavioural assessment to see how my personality matched to the requirements of the position and going through an interview process with Greg Coles, the Director of Operations at the ACBL.

Currently this makes me the third full-time ACBL employee in Canada. This is down somewhat from what it used to be, with the retirement of long-time National Tournament Directors Steve Bates and Matt Smith in the West and Guy Fauteux in the East.

So how will your new position affect the work you do?

My work will involve a combination of directing and tournament support, with a bit of a balancing act between the two on some occasions. I will still be directing at all the tournaments that I would have directed prior to COVID-19. Although I will be travelling to work at tournaments and to visit the ACBL headquarters in Horn Lake, for the most part I will be working from home. Thankfully, the ACBL has embraced technology so that most of my work can be accomplished using my computer (or even my phone!).

This is the perfect position for me. I can direct at tournaments, which is really my passion, and I am able to work from home helping ACBL clubs, units and districts across North America.

Thanks for speaking with us Crystal. Congratulations from Unit 390 and all the best in your new adventure.

1978 Regional Memories

By Allan Simon

The 1978 Edmonton Regional is fresh in my memory. I was still a year away from achieving Life Master, but I had caught the bridge bug.

Driving into Edmonton in my tiny Honda Civic, I encountered one of the worst thunderstorms I have ever seen. The intersection at 51st Avenue was under at least two feet of water, and all traffic had stopped. But it was 20 minutes to game time! I had to get through! With the water spilling over the hood and lapping at the windshield I entered the intersection, when right in the middle the engine died. Miraculously, it started up again and I was able to get to the game site with five minutes to spare. But there was hardly anybody there! Of course, the Head Director Phil Wood delayed the start of the game until the players were able to make their way. Phil could only shake his head at my stupidity.

My partner was the late John Lang, who spoke with a Hungarian accent and would have been about 60 years old back then. He was an old school European gentleman. One of my favourite John Lang stories involves a trip to a Lethbridge tournament. In the hotel, John was to share a room with another unforgettable character who is no longer with us, Ricky Tewari. Ricky was just about the loudest snorer in the world. John couldn't fall asleep. But being the gentleman he was, rather than wake Ricky, John went to the lobby and got himself another room. At 7:00 AM he got up and snuck back to Ricky's room and got into bed, so that Ricky wouldn't know the trouble and expense John had gone to.

Back to the Edmonton Regional. John and I won an Open Pairs game. It was my first Regional win and one of my earliest bridge thrills. I keep a notebook of my most interesting hands and the following deal is from that event.

With both sides vulnerable, I picked up:

♠ x ♥ Kxxx ♦ AKJ10987 ♣ x

John, the dealer, opened 4♠. In my youthful exuberance, I said to myself "If John has solid spades and an outside Ace, my diamonds should cover any losers. So, if I ask for aces (Key Card wasn't invented yet), and he shows two, I'll bid 6♠. If he has only one, then I'll pass 5♦! Brilliant!"

Imagine my shock when he responded 6♦, showing one Ace and an unknown void. I bid 6♠ and a diamond was led.

	John		Allan
<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
--	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	6♦!	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Apologizing profusely, I tabled dummy. John said "thank you, partner" and called for the Ace. To my surprise, everybody followed suit. John played a spade from dummy and my LHO played the Ace, followed by the Ace of clubs. John ruffed and claimed. The four hands were:

Matchpoints
Contract: 6♠
Lead: ♦ small

♠ KQJ10xxx		♠ xx
♥ Ax		♥ Qxxx
♦ Qxxx		♦ x
♣ --		♣ QJxxxx
♠ Axx		
♥ Jxx		
♦ x		
♣ AKxxxx		

	N	
W	■	E
	S	

♠ x
♥ Kxxx
♦ AKJ10987
♣ x



A Pivotal Deal

By Ian Findlay

Three teams entered this year's District 18 GNT Open - Qualifying Tournament. All the teams were closely matched, and the play seemed very level. As dealer I pick up:

♠A2 ♥98 ♦J832 ♣AK1086

I commence proceedings with 1NT and the auction goes as follows:

East	Ian South	West	Gordon North
--	1NT ¹	Pass	2♥ ²
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT ³
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	DBL	All Pass

¹ 1NT = 11⁺-13 when vulnerable

² Transfer to spades

³ Invitational

Over Gordon's invitational 2NT bid I chose 3♠ because of my weak heart holding. Eight years ago I was playing in a rubber bridge game with Swedish star Bjorn Fallenius and I remember him doing something similar that worked out well. (Editors' note: 3♣ showing a doubleton spade, 5+ clubs, and a hand unsuitable for NT might have been more descriptive.)

Gordon holding ♠Q9865 ♥AQ4 ♦A ♣7542 now upgraded his hand, and who could blame him. He raised to 4♠. This was passed around to West who doubled rather quickly.

Bad news ... it didn't sound as though trumps would be breaking, but perhaps any required finesses would be onside (good news)! LHO leads the ♣9 and Gordon tables the dummy.

IMPs

Contract: 4♠x

Lead: ♣9

♠	Q9865
♥	AQ4
♦	A
♣	7542
<div><div></div><div>W<div>N</div>E</div><div>S</div></div>	
♠	A2
♥	98
♦	J832
♣	AK1086

East plays the ♣J and I win the first trick with the ♣A. West's lead looks like a singleton. The good news is that the clubs and the spades should be onside and I'll need the ♥K onside in order to make the contract. It is time to plan the play. The timing could be critical, and I do have to watch the entries going back and forth.

I lead the ♥9 to dummy's Queen which holds the trick. A club to my 10 confirms my suspicion as West ruffs with the ♠3. West exits with the ♦4 to dummy's Ace (East follows with the ♦7). I continue with my plan to force West to ruff. A club to East's Queen and my King results in West ruffing with the ♠4.

West continues with another diamond and I ruff in dummy. Now, I play a spade to my Ace, and a spade back towards dummy (East shows out on the 2nd round). West continues with a third diamond, but I am in control.

I can ruff in dummy and pull West's last trump. My long club takes care of dummy's losing heart and I score up +790.

West made an error at the critical point after he had ruffed the second club. This was the layout at that stage:

	♠ Q9865										
	♥ A4										
	♦ --										
	♣ 7										
♠ KJ10		♠ --									
♥ K10		♥ J652									
♦ Q65		♦ K109									
♣ --		♣ --									
	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>■</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W	■	E		S		
	N										
W	■	E									
	S										
	♠ A2										
	♥ 8										
	♦ J83										
	♣ 86										

If West had found the right card to play, it would have been his team, not mine, that made it to the final match with a chance to win and qualify for the North American GNT Final (and the opportunity to play the likes of Meckstroth and Rodwell on BBO). Take a few minutes to think what you would play and why.

[continued next page]

A Pivotal Deal (continued)

There is only one suit to return to beat it. You must lead a heart! The reason is simple and, if you look at the deal from declarer's perspective, you will see the solution. Declarer needs to concede the ♠K and draw West's last trump so he can discard a heart on South's good clubs. But if the ♥A is gone, then when West wins the ♠K, he will have a heart to cash. If declarer instead ruffs dummy's last heart and then plays the ♠A, he will eventually have to lose two more spade tricks. When the position is complicated you must always take sufficient time to work out what the best line of defense might be.

If West had found the winning defense I would have been -200. We won the match by only three IMPs. If I had gone down, we would have lost by 17 IMPs. Thanks to our teammates Al Simon and Dan Bertrand who were as steady as the rock of Gibraltar.

Here is the full deal.

IMPs

Contract: 4♠x

Lead: ♣9

♠ Q9865		
♥ AQ4		
♦ A		
♣ 7542		
♠ KJ1043		♠ 7
♥ K103		♥ J7652
♦ Q654		♦ K1097
♣ 9		♣ QJ3
	N	
	W	E
	S	
♠ A2		
♥ 98		
♦ J832		
♣ AK1086		



Thank you to everyone who contributed material for this edition of the Kibitzer.

The Editors welcome submissions for future issues of The Kibitzer. Email your articles and news items to 390kibitzer@acblunit390.org

The next edition is scheduled to be out in April 2022.

Calgary Ladies

By Crystal Mann

As most of you are probably aware, Calgary Unit 390 has two invitational ladies' duplicate bridge clubs. Prior to the disruptions caused by COVID-19, the North Calgary Ladies held games on Tuesday afternoons in the Varsity Community Centre and the South Calgary Ladies held games Friday afternoons in the Haysboro Community Centre.

What you may not know is that, when COVID-19 stopped face-to-face bridge in April of 2020, these two groups joined forces and began playing online games as a single club. Online, the virtual club is known as **Calgary Ladies (North meets South)** and they play every Friday afternoon.

From the outset, the ladies decided that they wanted to help those people who were finding it extremely difficult during the pandemic. The decision was made to donate all profits from this weekly game to the Calgary Interfaith Food Bank.

To date this amalgamated group has raised and donated \$12,523.35 to the Food Bank!

The ladies' clubs are heading back to face-to-face bridge at their respective clubs. However, for the moment, the virtual game will continue as there are players who are uneasy about returning to live bridge. While the online game continues, the proceeds from the virtual games will continue to help support the Calgary Interfaith Food Bank and those less fortunate.

Ladies, job well done!

"A bank is a place that will lend you money if you can prove you don't need it."

Bob Hope

Greed and Planning

By Daniel Bertrand

Playing online, I find myself in 3NT after partner opens 1♥, I respond 1NT and partner raises to 3NT. The lead is the ♣6.

Matchpoints

Contract: 3NT

Lead: ♣6

♠	AK9
♥	AJ943
♦	AK
♣	1095

	N	
W	■	E
	S	

♠	52
♥	107
♦	QJ96543
♣	AQ

I count my tricks: two spades, one heart, seven diamonds and two clubs (after the lead) for a total of 12. Maybe I should have bid 6NT! What is your plan?

Since I have 12 sure tricks, my plan is to try to make 13. Any ideas?

To try to find out what is happening in clubs, I play dummy's ♣10. RHO follows with the ♣7 and I win the ♣Q. LHO must have the ♣K and ♣J. I cash dummy's ♦A and ♦K, RHO discarding a small spade on the second round of diamonds. What would you do next?

I could come back to my hand with a club and run diamonds. But what five cards would I discard from dummy? The opponents would have an easy time discarding and would likely take the last trick. Do you see any way to get that 13th trick? Now is the time to plan some more!

First, I cash dummy's ♥A and then return to my hand with the ♣A. I run diamonds now, discarding dummy's hearts and watch the opponents' discards. I am looking for the ♣K, ♣J, ♥K and ♥Q.

This is the four-card ending:

♠	AK9		♠	J107
♥	--		♥	K
♦	--		♦	--
♣	9		♣	--

♠	Q83		♠	52
♥	--		♥	10
♦	--		♦	3
♣	K		♣	--

	N		
W	■	E	
	S		

LHO has discarded the ♣J, but still has the ♣K. RHO has discarded the ♥Q. I play my last winning diamond and LHO discards a small spade; so, I throw dummy's ♣9. RHO thinks and discards the ♥K (he actually has no good discard). My ♥10 is good now, and I can claim 13 tricks. This was the full deal:

♠	AK9		♠	AK9
♥	AJ943		♥	AJ943
♦	AK		♦	AK
♣	1095		♣	1095

♠	Q83		♠	J10764
♥	6		♥	KQ852
♦	1072		♦	8
♣	KJ8642		♣	73

	N		
W	■	E	
	S		

♠	52
♥	107
♦	QJ96543
♣	AQ

If RHO had discarded a spade instead of the ♥K, I could have led to dummy's spades and the ♠9 would have won trick 13.

I was lucky that only RHO had hearts stopped. If LHO had a high heart, he could have kept it along with the ♣K, allowing his partner to keep a spade stopper. Still, I gave myself a chance to make 13 tricks and it worked.

Especially at matchpoints, greed pays!

Editors' Note: Cashing the ♥A before running the diamonds is called a Vienna Coup, an unblocking play in preparation for a simple squeeze. If you'd like to learn more there is plenty of information on the internet.



After the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the 2019-20 national final of the Grand National Teams, competitors were very happy indeed to see the event resurrected in 2020-21.

The Grand National Teams (GNT) is a grass-roots event that usually begins with qualification games in local clubs. Each of the ACBL's 25 districts then holds playoffs to name district champions who become eligible to compete in the North American final held at the summer nationals. There are four separate flights in the GNT: Championship Flight open to anyone; Flight A (under 6000 MP); Flight B (under 2500 MP) and Flight C (non-life master under 500 MP).

Since clubs remained closed continent-wide and face-to-face tournaments were still not permitted, this year's event had to be re-designed.

District 18 waived club qualification, as did most if not all of the other ACBL Districts. For some years now, the District 18 playoffs have been held as an online event so this year was no surprise. However, in 2020-21, all other Districts had to follow this model, and it was unexplored territory for many of them.

Of course, there was no way for competitors at participating sites to gather in one location for monitoring. Instead, while a match was in progress, players were required to have an ongoing video or audio session with their screen mate.

District 18 Final

This year's District playoff was held over two separate weekends to allow players to compete in two different flights if they were eligible. The Flights A and C District finals ran May 15 - 16, while the Flight B and Open District finals ran May 22 - 23.

There were five teams in Flight C, two of those from Unit 390. Both teams advanced from the preliminary round robin to the final, and they placed 1-2! Congratulations to:

- 1 Shuangbing (Frank) Guo, Yurong (June) Cheng, Hailong Yu and Guangren Wang, Calgary, AB
- 2 Antara Keelor, Danuta Trafford, John Prance and Carol Thompson, Calgary, AB

Flight B attracted the most entries - 10 tables. Fifteen Unit 390 members played on five of the 10 teams, and three of our members made it to the final, finishing either 1st or 2nd.

- 1 Michael Farebrother and Ellen Kuiper, Calgary, AB
- 2 Alex Heron Jr, Calgary, AB

Eight teams entered Flight A, four from Calgary. Three of the Calgary teams advanced to the final showdown.

Congratulations to:

- 1 David Johnson, Jadwiga Polujan, Janet Galbraith and Christopher Galbraith, Calgary, AB
- 3/4 Yi Peng Mai, Runan Du, Shuo Shi and Zengfu Liu, Calgary, AB
- 3/4 Emelie Quennell, Ellen Kuiper, Elizabeth Sprague, Calgary, AB and Melissa Martin, Whitefish, MT

And finally, three teams entered the Championship Flight, including six players from Unit 390 playing on two teams. One Calgary team took the title. Congratulations to:

- 1 Ian Findlay, Gordon Campbell, Daniel Bertrand and Allan Simon, Calgary AB

National Final

The winning team in each flight was eligible to represent District 18 in the National finals July 14 - 15, 2021. The event was held online as a result of the cancellation of the scheduled Summer NABC.

Unit 390's Flight C team (Guo, Chen, Yu, Wang) qualified handily for the knockout phase, but lost a close one (80-92) in the round of 16.

In Flight B, where District 18's top two teams qualified for the national final, Alex Heron's team made it to the round of 8 before falling.

Our Flight A team didn't fare so well, failing to make it to the knockout phase.

And finally, the Championship Flight team (Findlay, Campbell, Bertrand, Simon) easily got through to the knockout round of 16 where they were nipped 147-150 by the team that eventually finished second in the event.

The Kibitzer - October 2021

2021 Ace of Clubs Awards

Unit 390 Year-to-Date Standings - October 6th

0 to 5	1	Lana Lien	Calgary AB	19
	2	Celia Gaudet	Calgary AB	19
	3	Gregory Hollingsworth	Strathmore AB	19
5 to 20	1	Eric Rosenstein	Calgary AB	41
	2	Lana McFadden	Calgary AB	39
	3	Marion Misura	Foothills AB	36
20 to 50	1	Harihara Mahadevan	Calgary AB	99
	2	John Abra	Calgary AB	64
	3	Jay Peers	High River AB	55
50 to 100	1	Matt Bootle	Calgary AB	101
	2	Robert Hemmingway	Okotoks AB	87
	3	Craig Bowyer	Calgary AB	59
100 to 200	1	Allan Tough	Calgary AB	208
	2	Barry Crozier	Cochrane AB	197
	3	Don Bacon	Calgary AB	88
200 to 300	1	Terry Kaufman	Calgary AB	134
	2	Richard Cripps	Calgary AB	78
	3	Sandra Stewart	Calgary AB	71
300 to 500	1	Howard Coren	Calgary AB	256
	2	Martine Parent	Calgary AB	207
	3	Beverley Erickson	Calgary AB	153
500 to 1000	1	Richard Piette	Calgary AB	254
	2	John D Aguiar	Calgary AB	215
	3	Brent Muir	Calgary AB	188
1000 to 1500	1	Brigitte Tetzner	Calgary AB	364
	2	Andy McKaig	Calgary AB	149
	3	Linda Martin	Calgary AB	145
1500 to 2500	1	Michael Covey	Calgary AB	187
	2	Delores Hedley	Calgary AB	182
	3	Tom Nault	Calgary AB	177
2500 to 3500	1	Dave Adelman	Calgary AB	198
	2	Faiz Nadir	Calgary AB	146
	3	Lois Dunsmore	Calgary AB	132
3500 to 5000	1	Stephanie McAdam	Calgary AB	290
	2	Martin McDonald	Calgary AB	191
	3	Jadwiga Polujan	Calgary AB	153
5000 to 7500	1	Nicole Beauregard	Calgary AB	251
	2	Allan Simon	Calgary AB	120
	3	Abdul Fakih	Calgary AB	108
7500 to 10,000	1	Pierre Beauregard	Calgary AB	271
	2	Daniel Bertrand	Calgary AB	259
	3	Francesca Walton	Calgary AB	10
Over 10,000	1	Gerry Marshall	Calgary AB	224
	2	Steven Lawrence	Calgary AB	21
	3	Nicholas Gartaganis	Calgary AB	20

2021 Mini-McKenney Awards

Unit 390 Year-to-Date Standings - October 6th

0 to 5	1	Lana Lien	Calgary AB	19
	2	Celia Gaudet	Calgary AB	19
	3	Gregory Hollingsworth	Strathmore AB	19
5 to 20	1	Eric Rosenstein	Calgary AB	41
	2	Lana McFadden	Calgary AB	39
	3	Marion Misura	Foothills AB	36
20 to 50	1	Harihara Mahadevan	Calgary AB	100
	2	John Abra	Calgary AB	64
	3	Jay Peers	High River AB	55
50 to 100	1	Matt Bootle	Calgary AB	101
	2	Robert Hemmingway	Okotoks AB	87
	3	Craig Bowyer	Calgary AB	59
100 to 200	1	Allan Tough	Calgary AB	208
	2	Barry Crozier	Cochrane AB	197
	3	Philip Coppard	Calgary AB	100
200 to 300	1	Terry Kaufman	Calgary AB	141
	2	Thomas To	Calgary AB	85
	3	Richard Cripps	Calgary AB	82
300 to 500	1	Howard Coren	Calgary AB	257
	2	Martine Parent	Calgary AB	234
	3	Beverley Erickson	Calgary AB	161
500 to 1000	1	Richard Piette	Calgary AB	265
	2	John D Aguiar	Calgary AB	224
	3	Brent Muir	Calgary AB	188
1000 to 1500	1	Brigitte Tetzner	Calgary AB	364
	2	Andy McKaig	Calgary AB	149
	3	Linda Martin	Calgary AB	145
1500 to 2500	1	Michael Covey	Calgary AB	188
	2	Delores Hedley	Calgary AB	182
	3	Tom Nault	Calgary AB	177
2500 to 3500	1	Dave Adelman	Calgary AB	198
	2	Ian Findlay	Banff AB	183
	3	Faiz Nadir	Calgary AB	147
3500 to 5000	1	Stephanie McAdam	Calgary AB	290
	2	Jadwiga Polujan	Calgary AB	209
	3	Martin McDonald	Calgary AB	191
5000 to 7500	1	Nicole Beauregard	Calgary AB	251
	2	Gordon Campbell	Calgary AB	224
	3	Allan Simon	Calgary AB	210
7500 to 10,000	1	Daniel Bertrand	Calgary AB	349
	2	Pierre Beauregard	Calgary AB	271
	3	Francesca Walton	Calgary AB	18
Over 10,000	1	Gerry Marshall	Calgary AB	228
	2	Nicholas Gartaganis	Calgary AB	104
	3	Steven Lawrence	Calgary AB	26

Luck of the Irish

By Judith and Nicholas Gartaganis

Your expert opponents (who have won multiple championships) reach a grand slam on this bidding:

You	North	Partner	South
West		East	
--	--	--	2NT ¹
Pass	3♣ ²	Pass	3♦ ³
Pass	3♥ ⁴	Pass	3NT ⁵
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	7♦
Pass	Pass	DBL	All Pass

¹ 20-21

² Stayman, but does not guarantee a major

³ No 4-card major, but could have five spades

⁴ Artificial, usually angling to play in 3NT, but could have a minor suit slam try

⁵ Does not hold five spades

You hold this collection:

♠QJ7543 ♥QJ952 ♦73 ♣--

What is the meaning of partner's double? Assuming the opponents are not insane, partner is alerting you that he is void in a suit and can ruff the opening lead. Your choices are a heart or a spade and it seems that spades is your best choice since it is your longer suit. You lead the ♠3 alerting partner that he should return clubs (the lower of the remaining suits) once he ruffs the opening lead.

The dummy tables the following hand:

♠A86 ♥43 ♦AJ954 ♣865

You envision beating the grand slam four tricks on a spade - club cross ruff, but a feeling of apprehension grips you as you review the auction and realize that declarer has denied having four or more spades. Partner cannot be void! To your horror, partner follows suit with the ♠9 and declarer wins with the ♠10.

He then displays excellent technique by proceeding to squeeze partner for his 13th trick, scoring a cool +2330.

It slowly sinks in that your lead has given declarer his 12th trick and the 2-2 trump break allowed declarer to execute his squeeze!

This was the full deal.

IMPs

Contract: 7♦x

Lead: ♠3

♠ A86		♠ 92
♥ 43		♥ A1086
♦ AJ954		♦ 62
♣ 865		♣ J10743
♠ QJ7543		♠ K10
♥ QJ952		♥ K7
♦ 73		♦ KQ108
♣ --		♣ AKQ92

After winning the ♠10 declarer cashed two diamonds in hand and then the ♣A. When he saw the 5-0 club break he travelled to dummy with a diamond and led a low club. East was forced to split the ♣J10 to prevent an immediate finesse of the ♣9. At this juncture, declarer cashed the ♠K and played his last diamond to dummy. The ♠A followed and this was the position when declarer led dummy's last diamond:

♠ --		♠ --
♥ 43		♥ A
♦ J		♦ --
♣ 8		♣ J74
♠ QJ		♠ --
♥ QJ		♥ A
♦ --		♦ --
♣ --		♣ J74
♠ --		♠ --
♥ K		♥ --
♦ --		♦ --
♣ Q92		♣ --

When the ♦J was led East could not keep both the ♥A and a long club.

Although neither North nor South possessed an ounce of Irish blood there is no doubt they were the beneficiaries of an amazing stroke of luck!

A Winkle in Time – An Introduction to Bridge Squeezes

By Janet Galbraith

This term ... Squeeze ... conjures up visions of players squirming in their seats trying to wriggle out of their inevitable doom. There are few greater thrills in bridge than identifying and executing a proper squeeze – and few greater miseries than being the opponent caught in the crosshairs.

What is a squeeze in bridge? A simple definition is that it is a play that forces an opponent to discard something they would rather not throw. The situation usually appears toward the end of a hand, with only a few cards remaining.

The term "squeeze" originated in the 1920s with Sidney Lenz, who named the play after the same play in baseball. Prior to that, the action was called "forcing discards" and "putting the opponent to the discard", and originally, a coup. (In a baseball squeeze, the hitter bunts when a runner is on third base – the hitter expects to be thrown out at first base but the runner will score, since the fielder cannot get both of them). The baseball term was invented in 1894 during a game at Yale University.

Ely Culbertson published the following rule for squeezes in his 1934 book *Red Book on Play*.

Count the number of busy cards in plain suits (non-trump) held by one adversary. This number is represented by the symbol N. N minus 1 equals the number of uninterrupted winners the declarer needs for a squeeze.

Let's take a look at some terminology commonly used for this topic:

Squeeze card:

When this card is played, it forces the opponent to give up an important card.

Threat card:

Also called a menace, this is a potential winner that will take a trick if the opponent's holding becomes unguarded.

Guard:

This card prevents declarer from establishing extra winners in that suit.

Busy card:

This card will either win a trick or guard a potential winner.

Idle card:

This card can be discarded with no impact on the play.

Vienna Coup:

This is an unblocking technique used to avoid entry problems when executing a squeeze. It was first recorded in Vienna during the whist era (see later example).

Rectifying the count:

This is a technique of purposely losing tricks in order to reach a certain number of remaining losers (usually one). It tightens the end position so that a squeeze on one or both opponents is achieved. Usually, a defender cannot be squeezed unless all their cards are busy guarding against a threat. If they have idle cards, they can easily pitch them while keeping their guards. To make sure that all the remaining cards are busy, a declarer should lose all of the tricks they can afford to lose early in the play. For example, if you are declaring 4♥, lose three tricks early, and in 6♠, lose one.

Below is an example of a Vienna Coup:

♠ AJ				♠ KQ
♥ A				♥ K4
♦ --				♦ --
♣ 2				♣ --
	♠ N			
	W	♠	E	
		♠ S		
♠ 4				
♥ Q2				
♦ --				
♣ A				

If South plays the ♣A East can afford to discard the ♥4. However, if South first plays the ♥2 to dummy's Ace and then cashes the ♣A East has no recourse.

Clyde Love wrote a classic text, *Bridge Squeezes Complete*, in 1959 (2nd edition 2010) and created a mnemonic that is still used today: **BLUE**

- B – Busy:** One defender has both controls stopping your threat cards from becoming winners.
- L – Loser:** You have one loser remaining, so the count has been rectified.
- U – Upper:** At least one of your threat cards is in the Upper Hand (which plays after the person being squeezed).
- E – Entries:** You have entries to any winners that are established.

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XYZ - And All That Jazz

By Judith and Nicholas Gartaganis

When tricky bidding situations are identified, it isn't long before enterprising bridge players come up with a myriad of treatments and conventions to handle the auctions. Such has happened for hands in which responder wishes to seek 3-card support for his bid major or has interest in the other major. Consider the following three hands:

Hand A

♠ QJ854
♥ Q1062
♦ 7
♣ J53

Hand B

♠ QJ854
♥ AJ106
♦ K53
♣ 7

Hand C

♠ QJ854
♥ AQJ6
♦ A53
♣ 7

Hand A: After 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT, you would like to sign off in two of a major -- hearts if partner has four, spades otherwise.

Hand B: After 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT, your hand is good enough to invite, and you would like to explore for a major suit fit. If partner has four hearts, you can raise. If partner has 3-card support for spades, you can invite with 3♣. Otherwise, you can invite in notrump.

Hand C: After 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT, your hand is good enough to force to game. You likely belong in a major suit game if you can locate a fit. Otherwise, notrump will be the spot.

Vintage "standard" bidding used an approach-forcing strategy in which new suits by either hand were forcing for one round. That left no good option with Hand A, since 2♥ over 1NT would be forcing and bidding 2♠ could easily miss a 4-4 heart fit.

On Hands B and C, it was safe for responder to bid 2♥ at his second turn to try to find a major suit fit.

New Minor Forcing

It wasn't long before bidding theorists devised a method to better cope with these hands - new minor forcing.

It is used to find a 5-3 fit in responder's major or a 4-4 fit in the unbid major after a sequence of bids in which opener has rebid 1NT.

After 1minor - 1major - 1NT, a bid of two of the other minor is artificial and asks opener about his major suits. Responder will either have five cards in his first bid major or interest in the other major or perhaps both.

Bidding new minor shows at least invitational values. Bidding anything else at the two level is non-forcing, including two of opener's minor.

With Hand A, the auction will proceed 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♥ showing five spades, 4+ hearts and less than invitational values. Opener can pass or correct to 2♠.

With Hands B and C, the auction will proceed 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♦ showing five spades, possibly four hearts and at least invitational values. It is important to discuss with partner how opener is to proceed holding four hearts and 3-card spade support. It is common to show the other major first and, if responder isn't interested, opener will know that the reason for the new minor forcing bid was that responder had five spades.

When responder has five hearts and four spades, things change. Partnerships should discuss whether opener's 1NT rebid might also include a 4-card spade suit. If yes, then all the implications of new minor forcing stand. If not, then spades can no longer be a trump suit unless responder has five of them, so if responder uses new minor, he can only be looking for 3-card support for his heart suit.

You can still play 1♣ - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♠ as a natural game-forcing reverse, showing 5+ hearts and 4+ spades (responder will later rebid spades with five).

With neither four in the other major nor 3-card support for responder's major, opener may rebid a 5-card minor, or no trump.

Since responder is showing at least invitational values, it is common for partnerships to agree that opener will jump with any hand accepting an invitation and make a simple bid with minimum values. Responder can then proceed accordingly, making sure that game is always reached with Hand C.

With this agreement, opener's jump to three of responder's major, three of the other major or 3NT all show non-minimums.

After using new minor forcing, responder's subsequent minor suit bids require discussion. A suggestion is as follows:

Returning to opener's minor is natural and game forcing. Rebidding the new minor promises a 5-5 hand, and should also be game forcing.

What should it mean to jump in the new minor? Probably the best treatment (in our opinion) is that it is to play, showing a

[continued next page]

XYZ - And All That Jazz (continued)

hand with four cards in the bid major and 6+ cards in the minor. That means there is no way to show a weak 5-5 (just sign off in 2 of your major) and no way to show an invitational 5-5 (just go through new minor and then bid 2NT).

Similarly, a 3-level jump in opener's minor is also to play showing 4+ cards in that suit. This forces your side to play one level higher, but simplifies other auctions.

Two-Way New Minor

This treatment takes "new minor forcing" a step further, in order to distinguish between Hands B (invitational) and C (game-forcing).

After 1minor - 1major - 1NT, both minor suit bids by responder are artificial.

Responder bids 2♣ as new minor forcing with invitational values and 2♦ as new minor forcing with game values.

Over 2♣, opener should jump with an accepting hand or make a simple bid to decline the invitation. Over 2♦, there is no reason for opener to jump, as game is forced.

Since opener's 1NT rebid tightly defines strength and distribution, in many cases responder will be able to simply bid a game, without any exploration. When he wants to get further information, these are the main possible reasons:

- finding a 5-3 major fit
- finding a 4-4 major fit in an unbid suit (remember, this may include spades, depending on your partnership's agreements)
- deciding between game in a minor and 3NT (perhaps because of extreme distribution, lack of adequate stoppers, or both)
- exploring slam possibilities

As in simple new minor forcing, opener's priority is to clarify his major suit holdings. If he cannot contribute in that respect, then opener should describe his hand naturally (for example, rebidding his minor or bidding NT).

As noted above there is no way to play in two of a minor using this treatment. Responder must jump to three of a minor "to play".

Two-way new minor (weak, limit, forcing) is more flexible than regular new minor forcing (weak, limit+), particularly for slam bidding.

XYZ

And finally, we come to our title treatment, the XYZ convention. Here we first describe what is commonly referred to as XY Notrump.

After any auction that proceeds 1X - 1Y - 1NT, responder bids 2♦ as new minor forcing with game values. However, the auction 1X - 1Y - 1NT - 2♣ forces opener to bid 2♦. Responder can pass! Any other bid shows invitational values, including 2Y (which shows 5+ card suit), 2 of the unbid major (which shows 4+ cards), and 2NT (which denies either of the two previous hands).

This treatment has the advantage of being able to play in 2♦. That might seem inconsequential, but it only takes a few successful hands over several sessions to pay off.

Responder's other 2-level suit bids are to play. 2NT is natural and invitational (there are other more complex meanings for 2NT which are not discussed here).

A jump to 3♣ is natural, to play. With invitational values, responder can bid 2♣, then 3♣.

Some play a jump to three in any suit other than clubs as natural, slammish. However, you may choose to make these bids invitational with extra length and/or distribution (thus you must go through 2♦ with all game forcing hands).

With less than invitational values, responder may rebid a 5+ card major suit to play, or simply pass opener in 1NT.

Some players have extended XYZ so that any auction that proceeds 1X - 1Y - 1Z where Z is any 1-level bid, triggers XYZ. Using this variation, fourth suit game forcing no longer applies -- responder always uses 2♦ to force to game and 2♣ as a relay to 2♦ for invitational hands (or the occasional pass of 2♦). So an auction such as 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♠ - 2♥ is natural and non-forcing, showing less than invitational values.

There are some important differences between auctions involving a NT rebid and auctions involving a suit rebid, though, and they must be taken into account by partnerships using the XYZ convention.

A suit rebid by opener has a much wider strength range and more undefined distribution than a 1NT rebid. In the XY Notrump form of the convention, it is mandatory for

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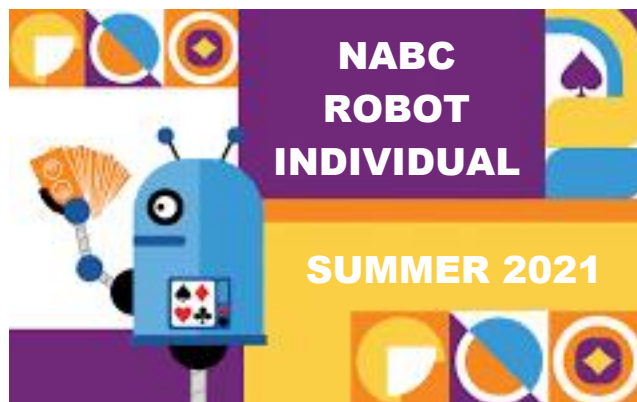
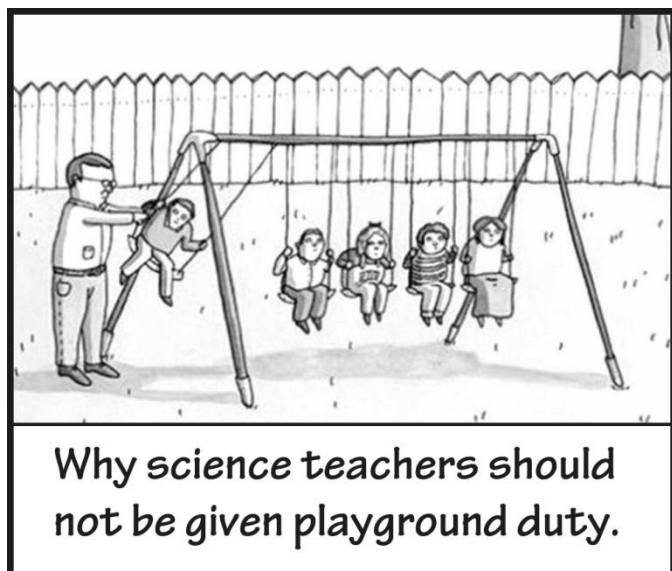
XYZ - And All That Jazz (continued)

opener to complete the 2♣ relay to 2♦. However, when Z is a suit, opener must be allowed to break the relay with any hand too good to risk being dropped in 2♦. Opener will make his most natural unexpected rebid with an unexpected hand!

Summary

There is plenty of information available on the internet with details about all these conventions, including the advantages and disadvantages of one over the other and the meaning of later rounds of bidding.

By far the most important thing is to have solid agreements with your partner. Get your footing on the first couple rounds of bidding and you can usually muddle through from there. And, as always, partnerships need to discuss when any of these treatments will apply in competition (if at all) and by a passed hand (if at all)



The NABC Robot Individual is a three-day, three-session robot duplicate event hosted by Bridge Base Online (BBO). In the pre-COVID days, the Robot Individual was held prior to the start of every NABC. More recently, the event has been staged in advance of each On-line NABC. The event is stratified with three Flights: A - Unlimited; B - Under 2000 MPs; C - Under 500 MPs.

The first offering took place in Summer 2017 and this summer, the 12th Robot Individual was held.

Each session consists of 24 boards and spans one calendar day. Contestants play one session per day for three days. They can choose their own start time and have until midnight each day to complete their 24 boards. Matchpoint scores from the three days are averaged to determine a player's percentage.

For security purposes, the event utilizes deal pools. Not every player plays the same boards. Each board from the pool is "recycled" a limited number of times.

The robots used are GIB robots (Ginsberg's Intelligent Bridgeplayer Robots) playing a modified 2/1 system. The player sits South, with robots at the other three seats at the table. The event is played best-hand style: the player always receives the hand with the most high-card points at the table (or tied for the most high-card points). The player declares for his robot partner when their side wins the contract. Who wouldn't love it! You always have the best hand, and most times, you get to play the contract.

The 2021 Summer Robot Individual drew 2,351 entries. The winning percentage was 69.38%. The best performance by a Unit 390 member was turned in by **Francesca Walton** who posted a 3-session average of 57.97%.

Fourteen players from Unit 390 played in the summer event.

The next NABC Robot Individual is scheduled for November 20th - 22nd, prior to the Fall NABC in Austin, TX.

CALGARY DUPLICATE BRIDGE ASSOCIATION UNIT 390

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

MARCH 31, 2021

CALGARY DUPLICATE BRIDGE ASSOCIATION UNIT 390

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT MARCH 31

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 12,505	\$ 9,307
Term deposits	31,989	31,585
Prepaid expenses	<u>-</u>	<u>270</u>
	\$ 44,494	\$ 41,162
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ -	\$ 512
Deferred revenue	-	536
Funds held in trust	<u>3,669</u>	<u>3,669</u>
	3,669	4,717
NET ASSETS		
Members' equity	40,825	36,445
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 44,494	\$ 41,162

Approved by: _____ (Director)

Approved by: _____ (Director)

CALGARY DUPLICATE BRIDGE ASSOCIATION UNIT 390

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31

	2021	2020
<hr/>		
REVENUE		
Sectionals	\$ -	\$ 743
ACBL rebates	5,193	5,103
Board duplicator revenue	-	540
Bridgemate lease payments	536	479
Equipment rental	-	4,220
Interest income	<u>404</u>	<u>684</u>
	6,133	11,769
<hr/>		
EXPENSES		
Special events	-	2,378
Meetings and hospitality	131	1,391
Office and general	1,009	2,393
Travel subsidies	350	3,550
New members & mentorship	60	1,072
New and replacement equipment	-	4,696
Free plays	160	800
Bridge in schools	43	1,809
Trophies	<u>-</u>	<u>337</u>
	1,753	18,426
<hr/>		
Excess (shortfall) of revenues over expenses	4,380	(6,657)
NET ASSETS - Beginning of the year	36,445	43,102
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NET ASSETS - End of the year	\$ 40,825	\$ 36,445
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