



QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER



Cincinnati
Bridge Association



UNIT 124

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



It has been very difficult for all of us the past few months because of COVID. I want to play live at our club as soon as possible. We all need to be patient for a few more months. State of Ohio was one of the first to lock down and our governor has received a lot of accolades for it. Only if the country at large had adopted the CDC guidelines and made wearing masks compulsory, we would be in a much better place today.

Let me expand. We would not have lost so many lives and we could have started playing live by now.

Meanwhile under the leadership of Pam Campbell, Cordell Coy, John Taylor, participating club managers (and Steve Moese), we are able to play bridge online.

I wish more players support this effort.

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ACBL VIRTUAL CLUB GAMES FOR UNIT 124 CINCINNATI AREA PLAYERS

Day	Time	\$/p	MPs	Pairs	Club	Director
Mon	6:30 P	Free	None	Open	NKy/And	John Taylor or Cordell Coy
Tue	1:45 P	\$3	1.5x Bk	Open	NKy/And	John Taylor or Cordell Coy
Wed	10 A	\$3	1.5x Bk	U750*	CBA	Pam Campbell
Wed	6:30 P	Free	None	IMPs	NKy/And	John Taylor or Cordell Coy
Thu	3:30 P	\$3	1.5x Bk	U1000*	CBA	Pam Campbell
Fri	11A	\$5	1.5x Bk	Open	Cin'ti BC	Isaac Stephani
Fri	1:45 P	\$3	1.5x Bk	Open	NKy/And	John Taylor or Cordell Coy
Sat	3:30 P	\$3	1.5xBk	U1000*	CBA	Pam Campbell
Sun	3:30 P	\$3	1.5x Bk	Open	CBA	Pam Campbell

Our bottom line is the **SAFETY OF ALL OUR MEMBERS**. The board is going to follow Ohio guidelines. Your safety is critical before we recommend opening our club. Please be patient, it won't be long. Last week has shown decline in cases country-wide.

I would like to share with you that our income has declined over the past few months and expenses have not reduced. Fortunately, our financial position has been very good to absorb such a large monthly expense. We thank Pam and John Meinking for donating their Support Your Club or Virtual Club Game revenues to the Unit in support of the Cincinnati Bridge Center. Every little bit helps. For more please see Pam Campbell's report.

Please do not hesitate to share your opinion/concerns to any board member. We love you and please take care. Be SUPER SAFE.

Nalin Mehta

President, Unit 124 Board of Directors

ONE STEP FORWARD

Where to begin?

We have all had our worlds turned upside down by the Covid-19 pandemic.

I can remember a distant April, watching as the infection spread, holding on to a fading hope that we'd get to play in the Columbus 2020 NABC only to watch as the ACBL and the State of Ohio made it abundantly clear we needed to take extraordinary steps to tamp down the pandemic. The Columbus NABC was cancelled the day after the State of Ohio issued its health order disallowing gatherings of more than 10 people. So did our bridge clubs. I am certain we saved many bridge players by taking such a severe step.

I was one of the few (?), ok, many diehards who rejected online bridge. My reasons were simple – the game is cards, we play face-to-face with all nonverbal cues available to everyone. We self-police – meaning that cheating at face to face bridge is much more difficult or devious than online bridge.

Online bridge is all we have for now.

We had to get up to speed in a hurry. The experience was not very satisfying. At the time the help for new BBO members was sketchy and somewhat hard to find. In addition I found there were quirks in the interface from BBO that actually caused me to misplay. Since I consider myself computer literate, I became very concerned about our members. Working with our sanction holders who were running online game we came up with primers for playing virtual bridge on BBO.

As April turned to May we continued to face the uncertainty regarding when face-to-face bridge would return. The end of April and early May also brought the first of several large online tournaments. Regionals (Gold and Red Masterpoints) and Sectionals (Silver Points) are run by the ACBL for the benefit of our members. However Units and Districts have no stake in these tournaments, meaning Units and Districts have no income during these times.

Toward the end of May we asked you, our members for input on returning to face-to-face bridge. Your answers are shared in this issue and have been published to the website. Responses were anonymous.

Not only has bridge play moved online, but so have the Board of Directors Meetings for the ACBL, Districts, and Units. District 11 and Unit 124 run their meetings via Zoom. This meets state regulations about face to face contact and leads to more frequent deliberations. The Board of Governors recently ran its July meeting by Zoom. We expect this will continue.

There is no doubt left, Covid-19 has changed the face of bridge and bridge administration forever.

Joe Jones ACBL Executive Director is projecting a strong profit for the corporation by the end of 2020. It appears that the reduction in staff hours, furloughing field operations and other cost reduction efforts have combined with very successful online tournaments, Support Your Club (SYC) and Virtual Club Games (VCG) income to offer 7 figure profit potential. The big downsides are:

- Membership has declined 5%
- Online tables are about 50% of face to face play in the same period last year.

Both facts are very concerning.

On a positive note, bridge teachers through the American Bridge Teachers Association (ABTA), the ACBL Education Foundation, and the ACBL have done an amazing job providing many tools to bridge teachers to conduct lessons online using Zoom, BBO, Shark Bridge, Best e-Bridge and create marketing campaigns using Canva and Pianola among others. This has allowed motivated teachers to take advantage of the flexibility virtual teaching offers. Our own Larry Newman continues to teach Osher Lifelong Learning Institute online with success. District 11 Education Chair Siraj Haji has conducted online seminars of interest to our teachers. For online learning opportunities see:

https://www.acbl.org/learn_page/online-lessons/

Attempts by the Come and Play supporters to create an online rubber bridge play using BBO went through fits and starts. Unfortunately the BBO platform is not amenable to rubber bridge and players have decided to enjoy the platform in other ways.

One of the major attractions for our advancing players – the CBA Mentoring Program – will be started online ASAP. See more from John Williams in this issue.

Online bridge has brought challenges to the organizers that many hoped would not arise. There have been three widely publicized cases of top flight players (not from Unit 124) cheating online. The method employed is known as self-kibbitzing. BBO has no way to stop one person from having more than one account. Unless a game stops kibbitzing, anyone can log on under a different user name and kibbitz their own table. That way one player can play seeing all 52 cards.

Before you get any ideas, I want to point out that BBO has ways to detect this practice that are invisible to players. They were the first to present these players with incontrovertible data about their illicit behavior.

Here is a press release from the BBO parent company:

<https://blog.bridgebase.com/2020/08/20/press-release-cheating-zero-tolerance/>

The ACBL has stepped up its online ethics policing. They have established an Online Ethics Commission for managing ACBL virtual bridge cases. The ACBL Recorder is asking everyone to submit an electronic player memo whenever we encounter suspect behavior playing online in an ACBL sanctioned game.

If you suspect unethical behavior, submit a recorder form online at:

<https://fs3.formsite.com/acbl/g1rqeexvzd/index.html>

The ACBL has stepped up enforcement for online ethical violations. Robb Gordon the National Recorder has created a special form for BBO play so players can report suspicious behavior for further investigation. These recorder memos are saved to determine a pattern of behavior. The ACBL publishes a dashboard of disciplinary activity:

Disciplinary Cases				
As of July 16, 2020				
Active Investigations	Cases Pending	Negotiated Resolutions	Cases Heard and decided	Members Disciplined
47	10	11	5	14

For more about the ACBL disciplinary activity see:

<https://www.acbl.org/conduct-and-ethics/>

This special DOUBLE ISSUE is chock full of great contributions from our exemplary contributors. I thank them personally for their time and effort during this unpleasant time. I am sure that you will enjoy their offerings.

Dean Congbalay offers his insightful musings on the impact of Covid-19. Pam Campbell provides us guidance for online games in our Virtual Club Corner. Steve Felson and Robert S Brown scale the heights of excellence with their continuing series. Tom Mess offers insights on teaching bridge online. John Williams resurrects the CBA Mentoring Program to start online! Potter Orr shares his perspective on Covid and bridge, and we have 3 articles from Bridge Winners.

The Covid 19 pandemic cut short our sources of material and inspiration to create. We hope this double issue fills a void for you during these times. We will assess whether we publish once more in 2020 or wait for the end of January 2021 for our next issue.

Wishing You Good Bridge and Good Luck,

Steve

Editor, The ALERT moesefamily@aol.com



UNIT 124 NEWS

**BRIDGE
CLOSED**

The games at the ANDERSON BRIDGE CLUB, the NORTHERN KENTUCKY BRIDGE CLUB, and the CINCINNATI BRIDGE CLUB ARE SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

We do not know when face to face bridge will resume in Unit 124. That will be a club by club decision. Resuming tournament bridge depends on the ACBL making tournament directors available to run them and the local conditions for the covid-19 disease at the time of the tournament. All tournaments have been cancelled through the end of 2020.

The ACBL to their credit knew that they had to do something to help bridge clubs and to raise income for the corporation. Working with several successful club managers Jay Whipple, Greg Coles (Director of Operations ACBL) and board members devised the Support Your Club Games. Games would run nationally three times a day (10 AM, 5 PM and 7:30 PM). SYC game award black points. These games would fund BBO and ACBL, and the remaining income would be portioned back to clubs based on each player's 2019 history. So if you played 30% at Anderson, 60% at NKBC, and 10% at one of the games at the Cincinnati Bridge Clubs, proceeds from your entry would be split accordingly.

So the yield to our clubs is small. However members of small clubs with small games benefit because they get to play in large fields. The 18 board format limits masterpoints.

Shortly thereafter followed the Virtual Club Game. Clubs would have pricing and schedule control, and would be able to restrict who plays to players who had played at their clubs in 2019. Clubs could merge their player lists to create alliances.

The Unit Board of Directors has been working with all sanction holders to be ready for reopening the Cincinnati Bridge Center when the time comes. I continue to maintain the Unit Game Calendar on the Unit Website up to date for the current month. I update cancellations monthly.

Unit 124 bridge is not immune from negative financial impacts. See Pam Campbell's report on Unit finances impacted by Covid 19. Thankfully frugal management practices have allowed us to weather this financial storm for now. We will reach out to our membership for help when we need it.

For now, we ask only that you play online in our VCGs. If you already play, play more.

UNIT 124 TREASURER'S REPORT

By Pam Campbell



Surreal times! That's for sure.

I hope everyone is staying safe and sane.

We don't generally see a report from the Treasurer; however, I thought it was appropriate given that we are still paying bills and not generating normal income.

The CBA continues to absorb the monthly loss to maintain the bridge center. The income stream has come from the CBA's share of the Support Your Club income, CBA Virtual Club games and some donations received.

Our income has been under \$1000/month April-July, but in August increased to 1600 due to the Silver Linings week and the new CBA Virtual Club games. Our monthly expenses are roughly \$5200 which includes rent, utilities, and a few miscellaneous items. We have been unable to negotiate any rent reduction from our landlord.

We have \$50,000 in our bank account and our portfolio of investments has recovered since the start of the pandemic. The book value is roughly \$183,000. In addition to the lack of rent from our daily games, we will miss our tournament income of about \$25,000 from this year's cancelled Regional, Summer STaC, Spooktakular and NLM Tournaments. The good news is that our regional contract for space is intact and we will not be paying for that space this year.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pam Campbell at campbell.ps.54@gmail.com or call 513-720-2621.

FINANCES - ONLINE BRIDGE

By Steve Moese

There are two online games that benefit brick and mortar bridge clubs: Support Your Club (SYC) and Virtual Club Games (VCG). Here's where your money goes when you play.

Where \$1 goes	SYC Games	VCG Games
BBO	\$0.131	\$0.193
ACBL	\$0.167	\$0.050
Credit Card Co's	\$0.035	\$0.035
Clubs	\$0.667	\$0.722

Players cannot direct their SYC entry fee to their favorite club. The ACBL calculates a club's share based on the % of the time you played at that club in 2019. That's a complicated calculation.

So, if you want to support your club, choose the VCG games over the SYC games. If you want VCG games at a different time of day, contact one of our VCG directors and ask them to consider adding a game to their schedule.

"He allowed himself to be swayed by his conviction that human beings are not born once and for all on the day their mothers give birth to them, but that life obliges them over and over again to give birth to themselves."

— Gabriel García Márquez, Love in the Time of Cholera

DIRECTING AND PLAYING ON BBO

By Pam Campbell



As the director on Thursday morning and Saturday afternoon, I would first like to say that I miss seeing and interacting with you several times each week. I miss greeting you, chatting to see how your life is going, talking about how many pairs bid that grand slam, and I miss not making egg salad and my spread of food for you when we shut down in March. But this is 2020! I have also thought so many times of what my brother would be saying during this time. I picture that my mom and my brother are both laughing and saying, if we can't play there, nobody's playing there! Wicked!

I am playing bridge regularly on BBO and actually find it quite nice. It will never replace my love for the bridge center, but it has been a welcome distraction. I like that it is 18 boards and that you are finished in 2 hours. You can play twice a day! You have the option of having a practice session, teaching a group, mastering declarer play using BridgeMaster, or playing for free with a buddy or robots.

There are playing options in BBO to earn points and have it be a little more competitive. You can play an ACBL game. These games are cost effective and awards colorless points. You can participate in ACBL Support Your Club games which are generally \$6.00. These games award black points and a portion of the money goes to your club. Because of the CBA structure, these funds actually go to the Club Manager, not the CBA. There are also Virtual Club games. These are a little less expensive than the Support Your Club games and pay 50% more in black points. One of the benefits of the Virtual Club games, is you likely know the director and you will see some very familiar names playing in each game.

In addition to playing, I have started to direct on BBO on behalf of the CBA. The current schedule that I have set is:

Wednesday 10:00 AM - <750

Thursday 10:00 AM – Open

Saturday 3:30 PM - <1000

Sunday 3:30 PM – Open

Visit cincybridge.com to see the full virtual club schedule hosted by Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. Please invite a friend and give it a try.

All of these online games are timed and if time runs out, you are automatically moved. If all players finish early, the next round starts automatically. Most games allow 6 to 7 minutes per board. When we were at the bridge center, we offered 7 minutes per board (for the most part). No more waiting.....except if you get finished early. Once you are finished, you can chat with the people at your table or your partner privately. Once the next round starts, you can no longer chat privately. BBO has done a good job of putting in checks and balances to try to keep the game fair.

In late July, we ran the Silver Linings week. This meant that all games held by Virtual Clubs offered 2X Silver points. Of course, the cost was a little higher because the ACBL charged more sanction fees. All of the Virtual Clubs saw a boost in the participation last week and we were all encouraged. In order to be able to continue to offer these games, and potentially more, is dependent on your participation. I know that I do not mind taking the time to be able to provide these games to you, but it is disheartening when the participation is so low, that we have to cancel a game. If the times are not convenient, let me know. I know I would consider something different. I have pretty much set my schedule for times that I am not currently playing, but do have some flexibility. Feel free to contact me if you have suggestions campbell.ps.54@gmail.com. In addition, please visit cincybridge.com to view help on getting started on BBO.

Stay safe and I hope to see you soon,
Pam



There are many good reasons to play in Unit 124 Virtual Club games:

- Socialize with friends
- Compete locally
- Win 150% ACBL masterpoints
- Support your club

Here's a new benefit! For the months of September and October, back-to-school months, **participating Unit 124 OPEN Virtual Club games offer BB\$ awards.**

- There is no additional cost to participate.
- Play in a Unit 124 OPEN Virtual Club game (NY/Anderson, Cincinnati, CBA)
- Come in 1st or 2nd in your stratification
- Win 2 "credits" for 1st and 1 "credit" for 2nd in your stratification.
- Play often, win more credits

At the end of the month, those with most credits in a stratification win:

- 1st Place (A/B/C): 30 BB\$ in each stratification
- 2nd Place (A/B/C): 20 BB\$ in each stratification
- 3rd Place (A/B/C): 10 BB\$ in each stratification

Each month, we will award at least 180 BB\$, possibly more if there are ties. A player can win in multiple stratifications, but credits may not be combined across stratifications. For details, please see the [conditions of contest](#). Similar to a barometer game, we will post partial standings as the competition proceeds. Specially designated ACBL games (such as Silver Linings, Club Championships, etc.) are excluded from this competition. Decisions of the participating club managers are final.



CELEBRATE LABOR DAY ONLINE!!!

Special schedule for 9/7 Virtual Club Games

Extra points for all Virtual Club Games

- 0-300 game at 1:45 (search CBA)
- Open game at 2:00 (search CBA)
- Open game at 6:30 (search NKBC)

All games \$3.00.

PARTNERSHIPS!

By Mike Burns



If you're looking for a partner for a single game, call the director of the game you want to play in - s/he's the first to know about others who are available for that game. You can find directors' names on the cincybridge.com website. Another great way to meet prospective partners is at lessons or during supervised play. Unsure about an appropriate game? Call me!

If you'd like a regular partner, give me a call or send an email telling me about your game and your interests. How many master points do you have? What system/conventions do you play? Are you a ferocious competitor or a more relaxed player? Which games are you available to play in, and when can you start? I'll do my best to find someone who's also looking for a standing game.

Mike Burns rmikeburnsi@gmail.com
513-574-4067

CBA NAME TAGS

Contact Joanne Earls – 772-4395; jolman@fuse.net

Your Name Here
Cincinnati Bridge



First nametag FREE to new members!
Otherwise \$4 each.

CBA ONLINE MENTORING PROGRAM

By John Williams



What is the CBA Mentoring Program?

The CBA mentoring program matches experienced players (mentors) with advancing players (mentees)



to improve the mentee's bridge skills by playing in duplicate games. Since we don't know when such face-to-face games will return, we want to offer a flexible online version of the program. Although we urge mentor pairs play in the CBA virtual bridge clubs on BBO (to support our clubs), we encourage any online play.

Both mentors and mentees should register by September 30, 2020, after which players will be matched up according to stated desires as closely as possible. After that time, applicants will be paired up as potential partners are available. It is hoped that mentor-mentee pairs play bridge together four or more times by the end of the year.

Click on the link to start your application.

<https://forms.gle/isBUdjNyweMVh2Sg8>

You will need to sign up to play in BBO. The CBA website has instructions how to do that. You mentor might be able to help you. However, we expect mentees to be familiar with BBO.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I get a mentor?

If you are interested in learning more about the game and improving your skills, and can work with an informal coach, then a mentor is for you. If all you want is more masterpoints, then you should look elsewhere.

Why should I be mentor?

Having played bridge for many years, you have experience that can be useful to newer players. Being a mentor also helps you meet new players and helps them feel more comfortable both with their

game and competing against better players. They will remember your advice and what they learn from you. There's no better way to give back to the game than to help upcoming players.

Who may be a mentor?

Any player who is willing and able to help less experienced players.

Who may be a mentee?

Any player with less than 300 ACBL master points (does not have to be an ACBL member) who has an interest in advancing her/his skill.

Can I be both a mentor and a mentee?

Yes, anyone who meets both criteria above. Some newer players will be more receptive and/or less intimidated sitting down at the table with an experienced non-Life Master than with a player with many hundreds of master points.

Can I be a mentor to more than one mentee?

Yes!

Can I choose my own mentor/mentee?

Yes. As long as both of you are in agreement and each other's names are entered on the Mentor-Pair Application, the two of you will be paired together. We prefer that you not choose someone you play with on a regular basis or who you have been paired in the past, although this is not a requirement.

How will mentors and mentees be paired for those who haven't already reached an agreement?

Partnerships will be made based on Masterpoint and experience levels. The information provided on the applications will be used to attempt to make the best pairings possible. For example, the newest players who do not play modern conventions might be paired with non-Life Masters for the most part. An experienced non-Life Master with 200 or more Masterpoints might be paired with a mentor with thousands of points since they are more able to take advantage of the mentor's Bridge knowledge.

Must mentees be ACBL members?

No (although membership encouraged 😊).

What are the responsibilities of the mentee?

Contact your mentor to arrange dates for playing Bridge. Inform your mentor what you would like to work on to improve your play. Ask your mentor for input/suggestions. Be willing to negotiate/compromise.

What are the responsibilities of the mentor?

Be kind and patient with your new partner. Your mentee is less experienced and is looking to you for guidance. The "extent" of your mentoring is up to you. Be willing to share what you know and direct your mentee to any other resources s/he might find helpful. There's lots of information on the CBA website!

What might the follow up look like?

One suggestion that has worked well is to "meet" to discuss the hands, either by phone or by some virtual platform on a day subsequent to playing. The delay means the mentee will be fresher when going over hands, and the BBO features of double dummy information about outcomes at any point during the play and ability to replay the cards one at a time provides a much richer experience than the hand records used after face-to-face games.

Mentee take notes during the game regarding particular hands. There is often time between rounds for this and it helps to make the subsequent discussion with the mentor more productive.

Consider playing in free games that might prove less stressful for the mentee.

For further information, contact

Cincinnati Bridge Center

John Williams

williajp@miamioh.edu

(513)931-6127

Northern Kentucky Bridge Club

Greg Brinker:

gregab999@gmail.com

(859)331-1868

(859)322-1969

by Tom Mess



Love Learning in the Time of Cholera COVID-19

(with apologies to Gabriel García Márquez)

We are now 6 months into COVID-19. The goal of this article is to offer you a sampling of choices on how to enjoy and improve your bridge even in the middle of COVID-19. In person playing and teaching will return; we're just not sure when.

-My situation: I have a computer and I'm comfortable learning/playing remotely.

First, congratulations. You have excellent choices available. They are divided into three broad categories: (1) Playing Online Bridge; (2) Bridge Software or Apps; and (3) Online Learning.

1. Online Bridge Choices with Live Persons or Robots:

a. **Bridge Base Online (BBO)** – This is the most popular of all bridge online sites. It was launched April 23, 2001, more than 6 years before the Apple iPhone's release on June 29, 2007. You can play bridge at any time of the day (or night for insomniacs), competing against thousands of players from around the world. You have the option of playing against computer opponents, other players, and in tournaments. You can watch live bridge matches with world class players and chat or kibitz with other players.

BBO has many free options, such as instruction on bidding and play. There are bridge rooms to practice bidding and to play with a partner. You can find a "helper" player (identified by yellow background in BBO's lobby) whose job it is to help newer players find their bridge groove.

There are articles from world class players on the "Deal of the Week" that examine the world class player's thinking as they play a hand. Multiple tournaments are offered every day, for individuals,

pairs or teams. While some are free, many of the rest are around \$1.00.

b. **Shark Bridge** – This is a newer entry to Online playing. It was introduced in 2006. It offers unlimited random hands, ACBL, WBF (World Bridge Federation), and European bridge events with hundreds of boards to study and play. Included are hints and tips in the auction and play. It has a Personal Deal Library that allows you to collect and play deals that you can forward to others via email. There is a Par Contract calculator for each hand you play.

You can play online with friends in both public and private tables. Robots will automatically fill in for empty seats with the ability to set the robot's skill and bidding system.

Shark Bridge is a subscription service with the pricing ranging from a one-time fee of \$19 for the Bridge Enthusiast or \$25/year for the VIP subscription. The \$19 one-time fee does come with a 12-month trial of the VIP subscription.

c. **Trickster Bridge** – This is a free online site that allows you to play bridge with friends and family or get matched with other live players at your level. Trickster Bridge allows you to invite friends. You can designate if you want to play Chicago style (vulnerability rotates) or rubber bridge. It works best if you play with 3 other friends, but you always have the chance to get matched with other players at a similar level.

2. Bridge Software or Apps:

a. **FunBridge** – This is a popular free bridge app, offered by Goto Games. You can download it via Apple iTunes or Google Play. This app's default mode is having you play with a computer partner and computer opponents. It does offer different playing modes, one of which allows you to play with your partner for an unlimited period of time. You can also challenge your friends or other players who have downloaded the app and compete in a best out of 5 series.

A stable internet connection is needed since the app is updated frequently.

b. Bridge Baron – This computer playing bridge programs had its first version released in 1982. It is now on its 29th edition. It does have the ability to play online, but its strength is in the bidding and playing of existing deals in its program. You have the ability to select specific deals to practice new conventions, such as Stayman or XYZ. Each deal can be replayed, and you can see how the bridge program would bid and play each hand. This program does not require a stable internet connection once it is downloaded on your computer.

c. Jack 6 – This has been the World Champion Bridge Computer program an impressive ten times, first winning in 2001. It allows you to generate deals that meet certain criteria, such as specifying for the auction, distributions, combined values for North and South. All

[53,644,737,765,488,792,839,237,440,000](#)

possible bridge deals can be generated. This ensures you won't play the same deal twice. The deals can be printed directly to the printer or exported to HTML files. There is limited network play, but once downloaded on the computer, like Bridge Baron, a stable internet connection is not needed. The AI (artificial intelligence), named Professor Jack, provides advice and analyzes your play.

3. Online Learning (There are many online learning offerings. The three below have CBA Connections. You can always search on your own for other offerings):

a. Cincinnati Bridge Association Bridge 101 & 102 classes are available online! Here's the background. When COVID-19 caused the Cincinnati Bridge Center to close down, the winter sessions for Bridge 101 & 102 had not been completed. Larry Newman started teaching the remaining Bridge 101 & 102 classes online using the Zoom video & audio-conferencing platform. After completing the winter sessions, he offered Spring sessions for Bridge 101 & 102. Both were well attended.

In the fall of 2020, Bridge 101 & 102 will be offered through the UC Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

(OLLI). For more information on the fall sessions, contact OLLI or Larry Newman directly.

b. Bridge Bee – This is a recent entry for online learning. It is a pay per lesson app, but there is a wide variety of topics, allowing you to select your level and topic from a library of hands created by renowned experts and authors. Robert Todd, who has given seminars just before the Flying Pig Regional, is one of those experts. Bridge Bee permits you to try a practice hand for free.

Each curated hand allows you to learn and practice specific skills at the same time. Your personal library of bridge hands is stored on your account, allowing easy access to review past hands and lessons. Comments from teachers and experts guide you through the lesson. If you make a wrong bid or play, BridgeBee has you try again until you get it right.

c. Parrish the Thought - Adam Parrish has given several seminars at the Cincinnati Bridge Center. He teaches students all around the world, both online and in person and heads up the online teaching program at the Honors Bridge Club, the country's largest bridge club. Earlier this summer, he launched <https://adamparrishbridge.com>. With the Silver membership (\$6.99/month or \$75/year), you receive his extensive collection of written convention lessons, written lessons on declarer play and defense, and exclusive weekly videos.

The Gold membership (\$9.99/month or \$100/year) provides the additional benefits of Adam's video lessons on bidding, play of the hand, or defense and practical videos from Adam's classes.

Again, this is short list of online offerings. It's not intended as a solicitation, but as a sampling of what's available.

-My situation: I have a computer, but I am NOT comfortable learning/playing remotely

There are many of us that find the online experience too daunting. We get frustrated with our internet connection; we don't like the various computer programs because it's too hard to learn which button

to push (and the instructions are either non-existent or nonsensical); or we just don't want to spend that much time on the computer.

That's OK. You still have great choices. Before the rise of the Internet, many of us learned by reading wonderful bridge books. We all have a chance to go Old School and read excellent bridge books without once needing to turn on a computer. We could also decide to partially reject our Luddite tendencies and read downloadable bridge books on our devices. Larry Cohen, Audrey Grant, Mike Lawrence, Marty Bergen, Dorothy Truscott, and Ron Klinger are just a few of the authors with downloadable bridge books.

For those just beginning to expand their bridge world, the ACBL Bridge Series is always a good start. The five volumes in this series are:

- Bidding in the 21st Century (Club Series)
- Play of the Hand in the 21st Century (Diamond Series)
- Defense in the 21st Century (Heart Series)
- Commonly Used Conventions in the 21st Century (Spade Series)
- More Commonly Used Conventions in the 21st Century (Notrump Series)

For those happy with their current bidding systems, there is always something more to be gained by reading (or re-reading) Watson's Classic Book on the Play of the Hand at Bridge. This was originally written in 1934 by Louis Watson, but was enlarged and modernized by Sam Fry, Jr. in 1958. Bidding systems can come and go, but we are still need to play the hand with the same 52 cards that existed in 1934.

For a slightly different approach to bridge, try The Tao of Bridge – 200 Principles to Transform Your Game and Your Life by Brent Manley. There are bridge lessons within, but also suggestions on how to score more victories in your day to day life.

For the mathematically inclined, there is Bridge Odds for Practical Players by Hugh Kelsey & Michael Glauert. If you were ever curious about how mathematicians calculated that bridge offers more

than 53 Octillion (American name) deals (53 Quadrillion is the European name; and 53 Thousand quadrillion is the British name), this is the book for you. For reference, 1 Octillion is "1" followed by 27 zeroes, or, 10^{27} , using scientific notation.

-My situation: I only like playing bridge at a table with 3 other people.

This is always a choice, but I first want to share two family tales. In early March this year when it was clear that COVID-19 was a serious problem, my younger brother was in Vietnam. He is a physician located in Los Angeles specializing in infectious diseases. I sent him emails asking if he was safe and whether he would be able to return to the U.S. He did safely return to the U.S. in mid-March. His one comment to me was that he felt relatively safe in Vietnam because wherever he went, everyone was wearing masks. Vietnam has a population of about 95 million with a density of 112.5 people per square mile. The U.S. at 328 million has a population density of 92.9/square mile. The Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Research Center lists Vietnam's total COVID deaths as 32 (as of August 29). If Vietnam's population was comparable to the U.S., the number of deaths would be around 110. Masks alone cannot account for this difference, but it is still quite the contrast.

My second family tale is about my aunt and her husband who had 10 children. Theoretically, they could play 3 tables of bridge within their own family. If they were all living together today and had properly limited COVID-19 exposure by always wearing masks the few times they left their home, avoiding large gatherings, and using either pickup or delivery of groceries, their bubble is probably safe. They could play up to their 3 tables of bridge.

In the absence of having 4 people who have all bubbled safely, it is a risky proposition to play bridge with 3 other people at a table, even if you play with masks. Cards are shuffled and dealt. You will be picking up cards touched by others. You will be within 6 feet of each other if you play at a card table. Just playing 18 boards, you will be exposed for probably 2 hours or more to others who could be carrying the COVID-19 virus.

Please consider fulfilling your bridge appetite by pursuing bridge with one of the safer alternatives suggested above. You can also visit the CBA website for other bridge choices you can pursue during these COVID times.

What should I do and how can the Education Committee help?

Being physically distant does not equal being socially distant. We are fortunate to have the Internet with Facetime, Skype, and Zoom. Just seventy years ago, it was letters and direct dial long distance phone calls. Letters and telegrams were the options about 125 years ago. (This is how Fermina and Florentino communicated in Love in the Time of Cholera.) Let's be grateful for today's advantages.

William Shakespeare lived through two outbreaks of the bubonic plague. In 1593, London closed all theaters, including the Globe, for 14 months. Shakespeare started writing Romeo & Juliet and Midsummer's Night Dream. Fourteen months later, the Globe reopened with larger audiences than before. In 1603, another bout of the bubonic plague shuttered London's theaters. This time, Shakespeare worked on King Lear and Macbeth.

Isaac Newton was at Cambridge University when the Great Plague of 1665-66 broke out. He returned north to his home at Woolsthorpe (about 62 miles away) where he developed his theories on calculus, optics and the laws of motion and gravity.

This is your time to decide how you want to learn and develop your bridge. The important thing is to act. Already mentioned are the offering of Bridge 101 & 102 through OLLI. The Education Committee (through the leadership of Barry Wauligman) tried to have Come and Play (CAP) sessions through BBO. This is where we discovered BBO's website was not conducive to practice games involving multiple tables. It did give the participants a friendly environment to learn how to use BBO. After learning BBO, participants could set up their own practice table for free.

Here's a suggestion - if you plan to set up a BBO practice table and want someone to kibitz with the

table to have some friendly input on bidding, play, or defense, contact me. I will work with other members of the Education Committee to see who might have time for the kibitzing.

If you have other suggestions on what the Education Committee can do remotely, just contact me. We have no monopoly on good ideas.

Tom Mess
Chair CBA Education Committee
tmess7023@gmail.com

2019 UNIT 124 MEDALLION AWARD WINNERS

Celebrations are one casualty of the Covid-19 pandemic and measures to keep everyone safe. The Unit celebration scheduled for early May 2019 was cancelled. However, we want to celebrate the achievements of all our winners:

	Ace of Clubs	Mini McKenney
0-5	Jay Gala	
5-20	Joann Behr	
20-50	Anne Rinaldi	
50-100	Mercer Reynolds	Jonathan Burns
100-200	Warren Sublette	Cecilia Kloecker
200-300	Peter Outcalt	
300-500	Stephen Vogel	
500-1000	Gail Zimmer	William Atteberry
1000-1500	Pam Campbell	Isaac Stephani
1500-2500	Cordell Coy	Dennis Schultz
2500-3500	Kay Mulford	Steve Moese
3500-5000	Cliff Pleatman	Bob Fisk
5000-7500	Lorna Davis	
7.5K-10K	Yauheni Siutsau	
>10K	Bill Higgins	

As you might recall, the Helen Schanbrom Ace of Clubs award goes to the top masterpoint winner from club games, while the mini McKenney award goes to the top Masterpoint® winner from all face to face sources. (Online points do not count).

Congratulations to all who made the top ten in each category. You will receive your awards by mail.

YOUR MOVE OR YOUR FRIENDS MOVE

by Dean Congbalay
dcongbalay@comey.com



You move or your friends move.

It's one of life's constants, but I don't have to like it.

My friend Anita is moving. Not far -- just down 75 from Bradenton to Fort Myers, where she has a brother -- but it's far enough.

Anita and her husband, Chuck, were two of my first friends when I purchased my piece of paradise on Longboat Key. I met them at a duplicate game one Friday night in Sarasota, at a time when I thought that Stayman was a command and not a question.

We liked one another immediately. I have had them over to my condo a number of times; I've enjoyed supper at their home. We played a lot of cards together, at and away from the bridge center.

When we were all novices -- I don't even know if our team had 50 points -- we won a four-session knockout at the Orlando Regional. We also played as teammates in Gatlinburg -- not nearly as much success, but still fun.

I became a Life Master playing with them. Chuck was my able partner that fun January afternoon at the Sarasota Sectional.

A couple years ago, Chuck passed away. I still miss that guy.

Last night, Anita and I met for dinner at the Bonefish Grill near her home. We laughed, joked and told stories.

After a hug outside the restaurant (I know, for a couple seconds we didn't practice social distancing...), I wished her well.

"I'm not going to say goodbye," I said. "I'm just going to say, 'See you later!'"

I'm so happy that Anita is excited about her new life, but I admittedly still drove home a little sad.

You move or your friends move.

It's one of life's constants, but I don't have to like it.

PLAYING BRIDGE IN COVID

By Potter Orr



I have been playing a lot more duplicate bridge since March. A number of factors are responsible.

I no longer do in person bridge lessons and even though I do some online teaching, I have more time.

I find it much easier to fit playing bridge into my schedule because:

- Games are available almost any time of day.
- 18 hands are easier to manage.
- There is no transportation time to play online.

EPISODE 29: PANDEMIC SAFETY PLAYS (SO YOU DON'T GET A COLD AND RUIN YOUR TUM-TUM)

By Steve Felson



In this era of Covid 19 I like to collect all the safety advice I can find. For example, the following time-tested instructions can't hurt and might help. They have been around since 1928, and while singer Helen Kane was probably not a virologist, she did become the inspiration for the cartoon character Betty Boop. Here they are:

- 1) Be careful crossing streets
- 2) Don't eat meat
- 3) Cut out sweets
- 4) Keep away from bootleg hooch and college girls
- 5) Don't sit on hornets' tails or nails or third rails
- 6) Wear your flannel underwear when you climb a tree
- 7) Steer clear of frozen ponds and peroxide blondes and stocks and bonds
- 8) Take the spoon out of your cup when you're drinking tea

If this sounds familiar it's probably because when you were little your mother sang you "Button Up Your Overcoat" (music by Ray Henderson, lyrics by B.G. DeSylva and Lew Brown; add your own "ooo-ooo"). In times of war, famine, or pandemics, such caution is definitely called for.

Needless to say, my pre-pandemic bridge partner, Robert S Brown, scoffs at any such lily-livered conduct. In fact, while danger is not his actual middle name, to my first-hand knowledge he has violated every single precept set forth above except that he doesn't remember ever sitting on a third rail (who would?). He's a full-speed-ahead guy, he damns the torpedoes, he believes the best defense is a good offense, and he always shoots first and asks questions later. For example, in South American dueling circles he is known as *Roberto de los nueve pasos* -- or Nine-Paces Bob -- always one step ahead of those who slavishly follow the rules by counting all the way to ten.

Turning to bridge in outer space, it is hardly surprising that Bob treats safety plays as contemptuously as he does the Universal Internal Revenue Service. This, of course, is my setup for a mysterious piece of entomological magic which took place at an in-person tournament on Amdro, a small, mineral-rich planet covered by a layer of white salt over red soil, located in a distant galaxy (like most obscure planets).

In the old days Amdro hosted a Rebel Alliance outpost; today, a couple of mechanized miners can supply enough mineral wealth to keep the rest of the population in Heath Bars and bidding boxes, no problem. The only disadvantage of living here is that nothing else does -- no plants, no animals, no birds, no insects, nothing.

So, why do Amdronians stay here at all? My best guess is WUPP (the Witness Universal Protection Program), but I'm not eager to ask too many questions about that. At least they've created lots of robot fauna: flyers, crawlers, creepers, scurriers, what have you. In fact, the walk from our ship to the hall is a bit problematic until we master the advice given to us by the welcoming committee: "Just kick

away a couple of the creepers and the rest will let you be."

Early on we pick up this hand, with N-S vulnerable and Bob sitting South and dealing:

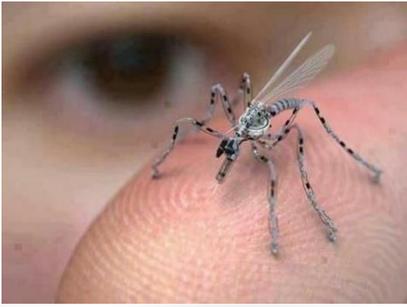
NS Vul South Deals	NORTH STEVE ♠K75 ♥J764 ♦K43 ♣AK3	
	WEST ♠1062 ♥K5 ♦QJ ♣QJ10974	EAST ♠QJ98 ♥92 ♦1098765 ♣8
	SOUTH BOB ♠A43 ♥AQ1083 ♦A2 ♣652	

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1♥	2♣	3♣	P
4♥	AP		

West leads the Queen of Clubs. Bob has probably heard rumors about safety plays but would never consider the depressing possibility that if West gets in again, she might give her partner a club ruff and beat the contract. No -- if a finesse presents itself, Bob Brown finesses.

He wins the Ace of Clubs and duly leads the Trump Jack. East follows low and suddenly a loud whine starts circling the table and something flashes metallic in the overhead light. My guess is that it looked something like this:

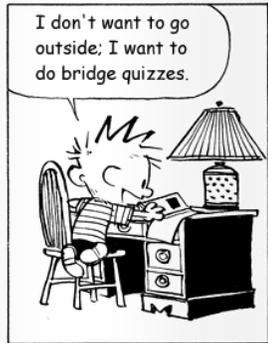


Bob starts waving his free hand defensively. In the confusion, a card drops face up on the table – the Ace of Hearts. The whine fades off

into the distance.



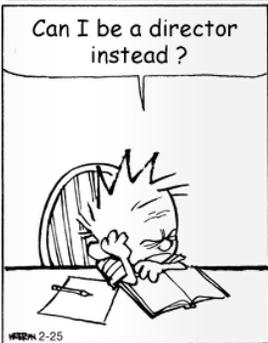
Bob shouts for the director. “Some insect ... insect, I’m telling you, i-n-s-e-c-t ... grabbed my card ... I wanted to play this one [pointing to his hand] but it pulled that one [pointing to the card on the table] ... pulled right out of my hand ... cost a trick ... I want my ace back! *I was going to finesse!*”



The director questions the rest of the players. I acknowledge hearing the whine but admit I didn’t see what happened. Our opponents scoff at the ability of a tiny insect to grab a card from the hand of a grown man.



“If our insects wanted to attack you, you’d be dead by now,” says West.



“Why would a drone mosquito even care what card you play?” says East, apparently having gotten a better look than I did.

“Sorry,” says the director. “Universal Bridge Law 45 is very clear –if you drop a card face up, it is considered played. There’s nothing in here about drone mosquitos.”

So – defeated by a disavowed drone Culcidae. Or were we? Look carefully and tell me whether Bob Brown has just completed the first safety play of his otherwise ultra-risky life. All he has to do is play another trump and he is saved from being set by the loss of the Trump King, a club ruff, a spade, and another club. This he figures out after some minor cogitation and we are good for +620.

I wait until we collect our excellent score for the session and casually ask my partner whether he is glad he didn’t get the chance to finesse and would he play it the same way next time. He stares at me suspiciously.

“That drone mosquito,” he says.

“What about it?”

“That wasn’t?... You didn’t?... Some kind of a sneaky drone bridge lesson?”

“Are you kidding?” I reach into my bag. “The only business I ever do with mosquitoes is through my little friend here.”



SINCE MARCH

By Mike Burns



Since March, I have been feeling more and more isolated and alone. (*Many of us have the same feelings, Mike, you are NOT alone! - Ed.*) Playing bridge has been my primary, but not sole, source of contact with the outside

world since I retired. I sorely miss meeting my partners at CBA and the banter and cajoling to be better players that came with playing together. John Williams was right in being concerned about mental health issues accompanying the closing of the bridge center.

Playing online is OK; there are pluses and minuses. The biggest minus is not seeing your fellow bridge players and sharing the experience. That and the such limited ability to interact with one another.

Attempts to exchange pleasantries falls depressingly short. One advantage of playing online is what happens when a board is slow played. It only lasts one round and doesn't creep into the next or subsequent rounds. Playing a session doesn't take as much time. But that is both good and bad. I miss the twenty-five-minute drive to the bridge center and the time spent alone during the drive, thinking. And then the ice cream reward on the way home.

Since March, it seems my game has gelled more. The bidding conventions I use seem more cemented (although Bob Fisk might disagree) and more comfortable using them. I don't know if I'm just more focused or just less distracted playing online. I've read a book in this interim by Kim Frazer: *Gaining the Mental Edge*, which I really recommend. I don't practice all she preaches but it is a goal.

Bottom line is I miss the game and ALL of you.

[Mike is a member of our Board of Directors. He has personally managed a bridge quiz for dozens of friends and mentors every week (the quiz that's published each Monday in the Cincinnati Enquirer). He has stepped up to help out with partnerships for the limited virtual club games in our area. We are lucky to have Mike on our Board -Ed.]

RUMINATIONS

By Robert S Brown



Senescence has apparently beset me but without the Lethean soulagement normally attendant thereto. Earlier this month, Steve Moese (whoever that is) sent an electronic missive requesting my written submission to a publication to which he is apparently devoted. The now suppurating tendrils of my memory suggest that some sort of card game is involved, but my recollections are too bizarre to be credible.

¹¹ Dear___:

I recognize my right to continued membership in the CBA is endangered by regrettable predilections toward gloating, ill-timed humor, sexist remarks, and occasional irreverence. Rather than employ a modicum of self-discipline to curb my appalling indiscretions, I seek to discourage

Consider:

- 1) My fantasies include my systematic rotation through a maze of tables populated by unmasked players so intent on the game as to ignore our insalubrious proximity.
- 2) I am joined in this insane odyssey by a hulking phantom from my childhood who ironically hectors me to make "safety plays" in an obviously unsafe environment.
- 3) Myriad figures emerge kaleidoscopically from this feckless mingling – Kay the Brownie Goddess, Eugene the Destroyer, Amit the Wrathful, Reeta "Can't Beat Her" – all invincible, all placidly destroying my pretensions to competence.
- 4) Polite play also seems to be encouraged which runs counter to my nature – I remain unostracized only by my assiduous "flowering" of those I offend with an accompanying form letter¹.
- 5) Rigorous ethical constraints are prescribed for the conduct of the game yet the incidence of cheating apparently increases as the level of competition rises.
- 6) Contradictions abound – a game exalting ratiocination rests on a plinth of irrationality where success is rewarded only by intangible and unredeemable digits whose accumulation levels are denominated by invisible jewelry.

Some perversion of sanity must impel my wish to re-enter this fractious world of frustration. It forces me to confess an unslaked desire to rejoin its revelries and rivalries. It also mandates my obeisance to the Moesian imperative requesting this rodomontade which accordingly is -

Respectfully Submitted,
August 2020
Robert S Brown

[All this fun for a mere \$8 per person, \$3 to \$6 online. What more can you ask for? Why, someone who can artfully make 4 syllables to do the work of one. – Ed 😊]

disclosure of my miscreant behavior by blatant bribery – an example of which accompanies this missive.

Sincerely,
Robert S Brown

INSTRUCTIONAL HANDS FROM BBO

By John Williams



What is the CBA Mentoring Program?

I played many individual tournaments on BBO (robots occupy the other 3 seats) before the pandemic and have continued that practice, so when board members were asked to provide an article for this issue of the ALERT, I did not expect to have any difficulty in finding suitable hands to share. Lo and behold, on the same day as receiving the email request (August 7), came the first 3 hands below.

As my former mentees will attest (and I hope at least some of the “Come and Play” participants), I offer a few basic generalizations to start things off. One defensive expectation is to avoid switching suits and thereby “breaking” a new suit for declarer. On the first two hands below, the robots demonstrated the “effectiveness” of doing so, once as my partner and once as my opponent.

Although not one of the first ideas I necessarily expect advancing players to be proficient at, I occasionally point out the necessity of hand re-evaluation as the bidding progresses. Robots do not do that (or at least consider misfits to be irrelevant), as demonstrated on the third hand.

One of my declarer-play generalizations is not to lead out (all) trumps if there is something else that needs to be done first. That was applied in a somewhat unusual manner in my first grand slam on BBO from 6 years ago, September 1, 2014, on the fourth hand. I do hope that you find these hands to be interesting.

1) Defensive suit switching is (not) the thing to do. ACBL Daylong (MP) 2

As indicated by BBO’s double-dummy feature, only a club lead can set the contract and my partner led the 2♣ (woo hoo!). I win the J and return the J♥ (surrounding the 10 on the board). W wins and leads 2♠ to board, then ruffs ♥ in hand, followed by 2 more rounds of ♠, ending in hand. Then leads 7♦ and N plays the K♦ to win the trick (woo hoo!!) and leads the ... 2♦!!!, setting up a diamond for a club pitch. Making 4, for a 29% score instead of an 80%.

2) Defensive suit switching is (not) the thing to do (cont.). ACBL Daylong (MP) 3:

Again, BBO double dummy, East leads small in the only suit that can hold the contract to the minimum number of tricks, the 4♥. Although robots often lead short suits, even against NT, I expected the 4 (the lowest outstanding ♥) to be from a 3- or 4-card suit; 2, 10 (proper card by west!), 3 (by ducking if the opening leader started with 4♥, will not be able to cash the fourth ♥ if spade finesse doesn’t work). West now leads the... 2♦!! Now with the spade situation, making 5 instead of 4 for a 42% score

instead of a 21% (6-club and 4-spade contracts (without a heart opening lead) score better).

3) Misfits are irrelevant. ACBL Daylong (MP) 3.



[A side note: Another interesting feature of BBO robots is that one can scroll over bids (both actual and your potential bids) to see how the robot (will) interprets them.] In this hand (I started as South; since human always declares, I was rotated to North), my 2♣ bid: 5+♣, 10+ hcp, 11-18 total points; North 2♠: 11- hcp, 4-♣, 5+♠, 9-12 total points; my 3♠: 5+ C, 3+♠, 14-15 total points; 4♠: 4- C & 5+♠ (ok), 10-11 hcp, 11-12 total points (really?). Again, double dummy shows the opening lead is the only one that can set contract—A ♠. Stopping at 3♠: 78%; 4♠, down 1: 46%.

4) Trumps cannot always be drawn.



Robots are not great control bidders in slam auctions, the reason for my using 3014 (their system) with a void. On first glance at just north and south, a reasonable contract. Both my club losers can be

pitched on the diamonds, hearts had to be 3-1 or 2-2 to avoid a heart loser, so the issue was spades. No problem if they were 3-3 or 4-2, but what about 5-1? If the latter and the hand with 1 spade had more than 2 hearts, no dice. So, 7♣ opening lead (from either 3 or more or short) to the A; ♥ lead to the K (both following--first hurdle cleared). A & K ♦ pitching ♣ (no ruff--good); 4♥, E pitching ♦ (darn), A♥, ♥. Well, here goes: A♠ with both following. K♠, ♠ from West & North, and ...2♣ from East (woo hoo!). 2♠, ♠ from West, ♥ ruff, J♣. 6♣, ♣, ♥ ruff, K♣. 9♠, ♠ from West, ♥ ruff, 9♣. ♦, ♦, 8♥ ruff, Q♦. Declarer hand high.

COVID-19 & CBC TABLE COUNTS

By Steve Moese

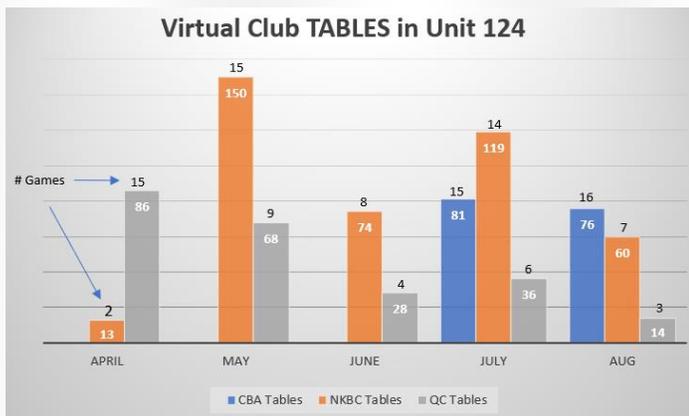
Cincinnati area members are playing a lot less since COVID-19 shut down face-to-face bridge. Simply comparing the 2019 and Online 2020 data from April through August is disappointing.

From the ACBL Live4Clubs website, the Virtual Club Games run for players in our Cincinnati tristate area have totaled 803 Tables from 115 VCGs. Of these, only 3389 tables are from CBC players in 53 games. Northern Kentucky and Anderson created an alliance (recently expanded to include CBC players) that has enjoyed 426 tables from 47 games.

TABLES	April	May	June	July	Aug	Total
CBA				81	76	157
NKBC	13	150	74	119	60	416
QCD	86	68	28	36	14	232
Total	99	218	102	236	150	805

Of the three player pools in the VCG's the Queen City Club started first 4/3/20 with games 7 days a week. NKBC and Anderson followed by 4/17/20. The CBA game began 6/25/20. We summarize all activity from April through the end of August. We do not include SYC games nor do we count free or just for fun games.

Starting up a VCG is not straightforward. The club manager needs a sanction and must be an approved BBO and ACBL director. Our virtual directors had to learn the ropes to direct online. Thank God they did!



Data manually extracted from ACBL Live4Clubs.

However, the question we all want to ask is how does this compare to the same five-month period from 2019? Here's the data:

Cincinnati Area Table Count - 2019						
2019	April	May	June	July	August	Total
ABC	110.5	115	85	160	127	597.5
CBC	470	543	415.5	524	571	2523.5
Total	580.5	658	500.5	684	698	3121
NKY Data for 2019 not available online.						

We see that 3121 Tables were played between Anderson BC and the games at the CBC. Comparing Apples to Apples (CBC Data Only) we find:

Cincinnati Area Table Count - 2019						
CBC	April	May	June	July	August	Total
2020	86	68	28	117	90	389
2019	470	543	415.5	524	571	2523.5
Total	556	611	443.5	641	661	2912.5

Speaking plainly our CBC playing members have not been playing nearly as much bridge. Tables (389) are down 84.6% compared to 2019 (2523.5).

The effects of this decline are profound. Our sanction holders cannot earn their expected monthly income. The Unit cannot collect rent for the CBC.

We urge all our members to make a greater effort to play in a tristate Virtual Club Game. If not that, then play in a SYC game. Support our club managers in this time of need.

Note please that there are daylong tournaments online that award ACBL (clear) Masterpoints® These

games play against 3 robots and do nothing to help Unit 124 clubs and their managers.

If you want a place to play when the covid-19 threat has ended, make the effort now to show our sanction holders your support.

Play more.

www.bridgewinners.com
SiVY: A Story of Youth Bridge Success – Part 2



By Debbie Rosenberg Dec. 26, 2019
 Reprinted with permission.

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/print/sivy-a-story-of-youth-bridge-success-part-2/>

Following up on [my recent Thanksgiving Day article](#), which focused on recognizing the people behind the program, here is more information about Silicon Valley Youth Bridge (SiVY).

There is much to say, and it is difficult to know what folks are most interested in. I will try to answer all questions in the comments section, and encourage other SiVY board members and volunteers to contribute as well!

Getting started

The year 2013 was a whirlwind of activity, and it would take many pages to cover all the details from those first few months. I will try to give a relatively concise overview; some is based purely on memory, so I must apologize for errors and omissions.

When Mukund Thapa and I met that winter to discuss starting a youth bridge program, our initial dream was marketing bridge as a family activity. We weren't sure quite how that would work, and whatever we did we Savvy knew it would require lots of help, so our first step was to explore the level of interest in the local bridge community. It quickly became clear that Unit 503 of the ACBL, at that time presided over by Brian Samuels, was extremely interested! We arranged to give out flyers and a short talk at the next Unit Game, and that is how we began to recruit volunteers.

Also, in Winter of 2013, Kevin and I visited Stanford Bridge Club and learned about Stanford Splash, a "weekend learning extravaganza" for 7th-12th graders. We were asked to help Stanford students Ted Sanders and Emily Kelly offer a bridge class at Splash that April, and happily agreed. Thirty-five students registered (maximum enrollment) and 24 showed up for the three-hour class. We worked on developing a curriculum for that sort of crash course, and in early April, we did a practice run with two tables of Stanford students. I think it worked pretty well at Splash, and that curriculum became the basis for teaching beginners at summer camp. Splash motivated us to get that first pizza party planned quickly, so that we'd have an event to invite all those students to.



Above: Stanford Splash class April 2013

While we were planning for Splash, things were taking off big time elsewhere. As I mentioned above, Unit 503 was tremendously supportive of starting a youth program. Webmaster Alan Templeton posted on the Unit 503 website seeking volunteers, and announcements were made at games and classes. An advantage was that I was personally teaching a couple of large classes at the time, and was able to recruit quite a few volunteers through those, including the magnificent Cheryl Haines. Always the professional, Cheryl Haines got us organized from the start, quickly drafting a program description and sending out volunteer assignments.

After a few discussions with core founders, it was determined that our dreams of family bridge would be put on the back burner, and we would begin with

a more tried-and-true after-school program. We had the experience of Atlanta Junior bridge and other successful programs to guide us, rather than heading straight into uncharted waters. The ACBL had a structured after-school program available for us to implement.

"Critical mass" was my buzz phrase. We didn't want to get a handful of programs going, without any plan for the kids to meet others their age who played bridge. I wanted something bigger, and my partners were with me. Our ambitious goal was to get ten after-school programs going all at once that fall, along with monthly pizza parties at the bridge center for the students to attend.

Side note: One of the many advantages we have in Silicon Valley is a beautiful and centrally located bridge center. While traffic can be bad at rush hour, it isn't always bad, and there are many school districts that can reach the Palo Alto Bridge Center (in Mountain View) by car in 20 minutes or less. Many more can get there in 30 minutes or less, especially on a weekend. I've heard from people organizing school bridge programs in other areas of North America that the situation is rather different, making it much harder to get kids to events outside of school.

We knew we'd need lots of bridge teachers to meet our goals, and Valerie Baldwin, the Unit 503 Education Chair, got busy trying to organize a TAP (ACBL Teacher Accreditation Program). A problem was that we had not done any significant fund-raising yet, as we wanted to wait until donations were tax deductible. We had only a bit of seed money provided by Unit 503, plus small donations in a jar from unit members. In the end, we lucked out, and the ACBL provided a special TAP for us at no charge that July. It happened that the Education chair at that time, Bryan Delfs, was scheduled to be in SF on other ACBL business, and they added this to his trip. We accredited about 35 teachers, with the agreement that they would each commit to at least one semester of teaching in an after-school program.

Cheryl Haines got busy with marketing, partnering with graphic artist Chris Bunz to develop the organization's visual identity. A name and logo were

chosen. Cheryl, Alan, and Mukund worked feverishly on the website, and launched it in May, before the first pizza party.

On April 30, we had a meeting with Lauren Friedman from Center for Bridge Education. This was one of the many ways in which we were blessed. CBE offered to take us on as a "DBA", giving us 501(c)3 status with minimal effort, and no lawyers, as far as I recall. A professional accountant and bridge aficionado, Lauren continued to handle for SiVY all things related to the 501(c)3 (IRS filing, donor acknowledgments, etc.) through 2016, working with our treasurer Mukund. (In early 2017 we moved our non-profit sponsorship from CBE to the Peninsula Bridge Education Foundation (PBEF) of Unit 503. I believe that Alan Templeton and Sue Griswold now handle much of what Lauren did before, with Mukund still acting treasurer.)

While all the rest was happening, all hands were on deck planning the first pizza party. We were determined to have great attendance, and I twisted arms as needed to extract a promise to attend from every junior bridge player I knew within driving distance, plus begging them to bring friends. There were many pleas to unit members to bring their children and grandchildren. That first pizza party on May 19 attracted 38 young people with at least some interest in card games. Helen Chang took awesome photos and these became the face of the program.



Above: The inaugural pizza party, May 2013

After the pizza party, the main focus was on getting after-school programs in place. The relatively easy

part proved to be recruiting and training teachers. Actually, getting the programs into the schools, and kids signed up for them was definitely the harder part. Many volunteers were active in this endeavor. Helen Chang compiled a long list of area schools with contact information, and Lori Spaeth headed up the school outreach effort. A big score was Lynn Shannon's successfully persuading Boys & Girls clubs to give bridge a try, and we ended up with programs at three locations. This was extremely exciting to me, and I had visions of bridge becoming a staple Boys & Girls club activity around the country, the way basketball already was.

The question I am probably asked most often is how we got the schools on board. This requires getting the administration to agree, having a specific teacher (or other staff member) commit to hosting, and then finally signing up enough kids. Cheryl Haines created a PowerPoint presentation of the program we were offering to send to interested administrators. We had brochures and posters ready to be personalized for each school, once a day and time was set up. While the posters and brochures were a professional touch, we no longer use them. The key to recruiting is an insider's personalized outreach. Ideal is a popular student and/or popular teacher who is actively recommending the class. Also, highly effective, in some cases, can be a parent contacting other parents directly. Yet even when you have one or more of those inside recruiters, it is hit or miss whether enough kids will sign up. There were situations which seemed perfect, where we had two or three insiders energetically recruiting, and still could not get enough kids for a class (we started out requiring a minimum of 12 students, hoping to keep at least 8, though we did make exceptions and held classes for some smaller groups). There were at least a couple of cases where we didn't seem to have much going for us and still somehow enough kids signed up.

We were lucky to have many schools to reach out to within our radius. I'd guess in order to get 10 programs started, we worked with at least 30 schools. In most cases we had introductions, though I believe there was at least one success story through cold calling. Many local bridge players responded to

our calls for introductions. Some introductions were to schools their own children or grandchildren attended. Some people knew a staff member. A handful of local bridge players were parents or teachers themselves! That is the ideal scenario, in my opinion. One especially successful and long-running program was started by Leila Sink at her daughter's middle school. Leila, a high-level tournament player, was the head bridge teacher and also had direct contact with many parents. She and her daughter Kyra were great recruiters.



Above: Leila Sink helps a new player

Meanwhile, as we worked to get the after-school programs and pizza parties going, there was much administrative work to be done. Bob Horowitz and his committee conducted an organized fund-raising campaign once our tax-deductible status was set. We needed to establish a Board of Directors, start having meetings, taking minutes, and all that jazz. This was all stuff I knew next to nothing about, yet my partners insisted that I be "President." They assured me that the Vice President does all the work, and while they were probably joking, Sue Griswold did not disappoint. We needed a project manager, and Michael Bedell joined in that role. By August, we were poised for success, with a dedicated board of directors, strong support from the local ACBL Unit, thirty-five accredited teachers, and numerous other energized, competent volunteers.

That's my overview of how we got it all started. Read on for more about SiVY programs through the years.

After School Programs: Plans and reality

Our ambitious goal was to start 10 programs in the fall of 2013, and we did! Nine got underway in August and September, and another was added before the end of the year.

We felt that having younger people teach would be a major asset, and decided that while most of our teachers would be unpaid volunteers, we would offer to pay any college students we could get to teach. We tried to recruit Stanford students, since they were local, and a few were clearly qualified. I believe two Stanford students attended the TAP. In the end we had only one college student teach, and for only one semester. We also had a recent college graduate, Ryan Wessels, teach as a volunteer that first year in a Boys and Girls club, which I think was awesome. The students loved him, and I wish we could have managed to have more of that.

We set out to implement a highly structured support network, where all of our teachers would be part of a team. The plan was to have two head teachers for each class, so that it was likely that at least one could always be there, irrespective of vacations and other conflicts. We also signed up many table helpers, who were not necessarily accredited teachers, and the plan was to have one adult volunteer per table. We inquired and kept records of everyone's likely availability in order to have a structured substitute teacher process. In addition to the TAP, later in the summer of 2013, I offered a smaller teacher training session focused just on the Kitty Cooper Lesson series we were planning to use in the schools. We had a curriculum committee and monthly teacher meetings scheduled so we could share what we were learning about how to best implement this program. Elianna Meyerson, an experienced high school math teacher, offered training on dealing with teenage students.

Peggy Sprague made a six-month commitment as chair of After-School Programs Operations and compiled loads of information for teachers. She was determined to document clear and consistent

processes. As Peggy discovered, the lack of uniformity among various schools and school districts created challenges. Some schools require extensive background checks, including fingerprinting, while others are much looser about who can volunteer. If a teacher has already gone through a background check process for one school, it usually won't be accepted by another school. At that time, California law required that everyone working in schools - students, staff and volunteers alike - needed to have a negative TB test. While we found that not all the schools we were dealing with would ask for proof, we requested that all of our volunteers get this done. Since then I believe the law has changed, and in any case, we are not as structured in our approach, so I believe that our volunteers now get TB tests only if requested.

Betty DePaola took charge of the substitute teacher process. She was quite methodical about it, and worked to set up a system that would be sustainable, though she herself did not intend to continue in that role indefinitely. At the end of 2013, Elinor Tanck took over as essentially a one woman after-school program operations committee. She handled supplies, teacher assignments and more. Sadly, Elinor passed away suddenly in October 2014. Ivy Cheuh then took over, primarily working on supplies.

Gradually, much of the structure loosened, and the program has morphed into one where SiVY provides supplies and guidance to teachers, while they each manage their individual after-school programs largely on their own.



A recent class co-taught by youth players Arthur Zhou and Michael Hu

People usually seem skeptical when I tell them that I personally don't actually have much experience with after-school programs, yet there is good reason. While I was heavily involved in planning curriculum, etc. in that first year, I have never taught regularly in a school. The one program for which I was head teacher fell

apart after just two sessions when we couldn't get enough kids to commit!

I did do some subbing and visiting classes in those first couple of years, but I never did the heavy lifting of being in charge every week for an entire semester or school year. I'm hopeful that others who have done this heavy lifting will be willing to answer relevant questions readers may have.

Pizza Parties

The first pizza party, which laid the groundwork for the whole program, was a huge success. Much work went into ensuring great attendance, and then a fun time for the guests. The marketing materials said "PartyPizzaPlay and **much more**", and I was determined to deliver on that promise.

At that inaugural party, some form of social bridge or whist was played at every table, with mentors helping. Frank Smoot asked bridge trivia questions and tossed prizes, sporting event style, to those who shouted out the answer. We took advantage of the bridge center's excellent AV system, showing a short fun bridge video compiled by Vinita Gupta, and giving a BBO demonstration on the big screen. There was a bridge Word Scramble which was completed to enter a drawing for more prizes.

Many great photos were taken. While aspects of pizza parties have changed over the years, the great photos have been a staple, as have been the pizza, cake, and prizes.

Starting with the second pizza party, we introduced some form of optional duplicate at each party. As students were learning mini-bridge in the after-school programs, for a short time we had a separate mini-bridge section. That didn't last long, however, in part because some teachers weren't even introducing mini-bridge, and even where they were, the classes were not all up to the same lesson. There was one [special pizza party and mini-bridge tournament](#) held at a Boys and Girls club in November of 2013, and another Boys and Girls club party in Spring of 2014. For the latter, a nearby elementary school brought the bridge class over on a

school bus, and this was the only official bridge field trip I know of. I wish there had been more!

For most pizza parties through the years, there has been a section A and section B. Most recently, attendance from experienced players has been down, and more kids are opting to just play social bridge, so there is usually just one small section of duplicate. There are nearly always at least a couple of brand-new players, and there have been two or three tables of such kids at times. Some come not even knowing what a trick is. We have had volunteers who are especially skilled at working with this level, getting them playing some sort of trick-taking card game within a couple of hours; some even get to bidding in that crash course. Bill Bailey, Margot Livenspargar, Leila Sink, and Randy Ryals all stand out in my mind for having frequently worked effectively with the beginner's tables at pizza parties. Joni Smith has often introduced the game [Handz](#) to younger kids at the parties, and I've enjoyed observing how engaged those tables are.



Above: Joni Smith helps kids play Handz at a 2017 Pizza Party

While somehow we manage to have a pizza party consistently (almost) every month, scheduling is erratic. Stephanie Youngquist and her team do work hard to set dates in time to give at least a couple of months' notice. Still, perhaps attendance would be better if we could always do the same time on, say, the 4th Sunday of the month. However, that is not possible because we must work around the availability of the bridge center and the core volunteers. Also, some pizza parties are held at other locations, in conjunction with sectionals.

Pizza parties were primarily intended as a way for the kids learning bridge in after-school programs to get together at least once a month with young people from other schools. We were eager for them to know they were not the only young folks around playing bridge! To some extent, pizza parties have indeed served that purpose. However, the majority of the attendees at pizza parties have never been from the after-school programs. They are tournament playing youth and their friends, kids who attended summer bridge camp, children and grandchildren of older bridge players, and others who hear about the program via word of mouth. Regular Bridge Winners contributor Michael Xu is a heartwarming example of the seed that can be planted just by offering these pizza parties. See his description in [this article](#).

There are detailed reports of each event [available here](#), most with photos.

Other Programs and Events:

Parent-Child Games

SiVY's first Parent-Child game was held in June of 2013, with 4 tables, and the second in January of 2014 with 5 tables. Parent-Child games continued as a special event, not held on any regular basis. We started out aiming for about every other month, and did manage to hold six events in 2014. Attendance grew steadily for quite a while until it reached a peak of 12 tables. Since then, frequency of events has dwindled, though attendance hasn't.

We were able to get Parent-Child games started, even before any other programs were up and running, due to a handful of kids in the area who already played a bit of bridge. Kevin and Isha were regulars, though they were deemed Not Eligible for masterpoint purposes (we used the objective criteria that when both parent and child were both life masters, they could play for fun, but wouldn't be eligible for masterpoints). This has changed since we are now able to include a separate section for less experienced players, and a handful of "SiVY kids" have become life masters. Also, more recently, when Kevin has played it has been with his grandmother, Judy Zuckerberg, who is not a life master.

It was extremely helpful to have a core dedicated group of parents and grandparents, so that we were always sure of enough tables for an event. It's much easier to grow the event from there than to start from scratch. Soon we were able to have separate sections for more and less experienced players (self-selected). The P-C game has welcomed quite a few first-time duplicate players, both parents and children. It has been especially thrilling and rewarding when a parent has learned to play bridge specifically so that they could partner their child in one of these games.

One event which has been consistently on the schedule for years in a row a special Parent-Child game on Father's Day for five years in a row. The twist on Father's Day is that the "child" need not be a junior, and along with the usual crowd we do get several adult "children" partnering a parent. This event has been especially well attended and enjoyable.



Above: Father's Day Parent Child Game 2016

These events fill me with joy, and I wish we could manage them more often. Will Watson is always happy to direct, but it's amazingly difficult to find a free weekend afternoon, with no Unit games, local sectionals or other conflicts such as our own monthly Pizza Party. Our next P-C game is scheduled for 12PM-3PM Feb 2, 2020, Super Bowl Sunday.

[In January of 2015, Sue Munday published a wonderful article focused on SiVY Parent-Child games in the ACBL Bulletin.](#)

Summer Camp

Patty Tucker of Atlanta Junior Bridge offered a great deal of useful advice overall, and she emphasized the advantages of summer camp. We were determined to get one going, and to get great attendance. We succeeded in doing this for the first time in 2014, with forty-five campers attending the one-week program, including twenty-two in the beginners' group.



Above: Beginners at Summer Camp 2014

Summer camp has several advantages over weekly after-school classes. Kids are not tired and distracted, frequently forgetting what they learned from one week to the next. There is time for socializing as well as bridge. Coaches get an opportunity to interact with parents at pickup and drop-off, which facilitates communication about tournaments and other recommendations to get the kids more involved.

While summer camp programs in Atlanta Junior Bridge were free, we decided it would work better for us to charge about enough to cover costs (renting a venue, snacks, supplies, etc. - staff was all volunteer). We researched similar programs in the area and came up with a fee a bit below market rate. We definitely didn't want cost to deter anyone from attending camp, and we actively proffered scholarships. Teachers in the after-school programs sent home letters with scholarship offers to selected students, and we also tried to make clear that need-based scholarships were available upon request. That first year, we had a couple of students register on free scholarships. Alas, both were no shows to camp. After that, we offered a heavily discounted price, but never a free scholarship. We had learned

that it was useful to have the families invested. We have also learned that few took advantage of our scholarship offers based on financial need, probably because our type of program generally does not work for lower-income families. They are more likely to need all-day childcare, and/or lack the resources to get their children to and from a half-day program. Still, I am confident that even for higher-income families, getting a letter offering your child a scholarship does make them more likely to attend. Unfortunately, as far as I know we no longer have teachers sending those letters home. Maybe we can go back to trying that again this year if attendance needs a boost!

There is much to say about the details of our summer camp program, and perhaps we will dedicate a long article just to that at some point. I'll need help, given that I was involved for only the first two of the six years SiVY camp has been held. There is a huge effort involved. In 2015 we tried two weeks, inviting all levels. I personally was burnt out after that. I may have tried to do too much, including things like engaging guest speakers, getting all campers playing on BBO and "friended", as well as signed up on Bridge Winners and ACBL memberships.

There have been four more years without me involved, and it is still an enormous, and successful, undertaking, though perhaps a bit lower-key. More advanced players are now encouraged to volunteer as table helpers, rather than SiVY offering a separate group for them. My understanding is that this is great for the newer kids, who like learning from people closer to their age.

Attendance has fallen somewhat through the years; I think in part because the pool of local bridge players with children or grandchildren the right age has largely been run through. I believe camp has continued to draw reasonable attendance through word of mouth. It has a good reputation, and deservedly so, thanks to the Herculean efforts of several volunteers.

Casual Fridays

Casual Fridays started in 2014 as a follow-up to the first summer camp. It was something of a

compromise. We wanted to offer weekly Saturday drop-in classes, as the Atlanta Junior Bridge program did. However, there were a couple of stumbling blocks there. The main one was that, despite the abundance of awesome volunteers, nobody was willing to commit to every Saturday (either being there personally, or being responsible for making sure enough volunteers were). The other problem was that there didn't seem to be any one time that was good for many people (we had surveyed campers to try to find out).



Above: Casual Friday Fun

Friday nights are not ideal. The younger kids are tired and tend to be punchy. There is traffic from most places to get to the bridge center.

Yet there were some apparent benefits to Friday nights. There was an existing duplicate, so the club would be open anyway. My instinct was that Friday evenings would be a time many volunteers would be available, even if not every week (alas, my instincts proved wrong on this, and it has often been difficult to get volunteers to come Friday night). By making it "casual", there was no need to stress over how many would show up this week, though we do request advance sign-up, mostly for ordering pizza.

Thanks to the dedication of Will Watson and Randy Ryals, Casual Friday remains a core program five years later. While they don't get huge attendance, it offers a weekly playing option to anyone who wants it. Attendance usually picks up before high school championships, with high school students wanting to practice. Will Watson might have canceled his small Friday evening duplicate by now if not for his

dedication his customers, coupled with the desire to keep the club open for Casual Fridays.

One of my regrets is that we have never managed to offer that weekly drop-in program on Saturdays. If we'd had the volunteers to do it, I feel certain enough kids would have come to make it worthwhile. Even if small at first, had we stuck to a consistent time, I believe some families would have scheduled their other activities around it.

At least with Casual Fridays we accomplished our goal of having some sort of weekly play on offer as a follow-up to camp and other programs.

Mentoring Program

In 2015 SiVY began to offer an individual [Mentoring Program](#), based in part on advice from Lynn Shannon, who has for many years organized and run a highly successful mentoring program for Synopsys Science Fair. Lynn was also one of the first bridge mentors to sign up for the SiVY program.

Janice Nakao agreed to manage the program, and she continues in that role today. The mentor program is available to youth players of any level who are ready to play in open duplicates. As we all know, playing with a strong partner is one of the best ways to improve. I believe this has been a valuable offering, which about 15 kids have taken advantage of "officially" since its inception. While not all pairings are successful, most of them have been. There are a few cases where the mentee became something of a peer (or even stronger player!) than the mentor, and they continued to play together on that basis.

In addition, there have also been quite a few one-time and/or unofficial mentor-mentee pairings. I've found particularly rewarding the handful of "mentoring games" we've organized as part of YNABC training. These have generally been held at Unit Swisses, and either a mentor kibitzes a pair training for YNABC, or partners a youth whose regular partner isn't available that day.



Above: Max Schireson coaches at a 2017 Mentoring game

High School Championship

In 2015, there were just enough area high-school students playing bridge to believe we could pull off a reasonable event. The main idea was to plant a seed, and have an event for our middle-schoolers to work towards when they moved on to high school.

High school championship is not exclusively a SiVY event. It is co-sponsored by CBE and Peninsula Youth Bridge (a separate program, unconnected to the Unit 503 PBEF). We all put a lot of effort into high school championship, and a fair portion of the SiVY budget. I feel this is an important program. While there have been exceptions, it seems much harder to get programs started in high schools vs. middle schools, and high school championships does seem to have the intended effect of incentivizing students to continue with bridge, start bridge clubs at high school, etc. The suggestion to allow middle-schoolers to participate comes up almost every year, and I have fought against that. It "feels right" to have one event per year which is just for high school students.

We have worked to make this a serious championship event, including published conditions of contest, written and maintained by Lynn Johannesen. Will Watson is the director each year. There have been several articles about Bay Area High School championship posted on this site, [in 2018 by Sarah Youngquist](#), [in 2016 by Lynn Johannesen](#), and [in 2015 by Michael Bodell](#).

YNABC sponsorship

We knew from early on we wanted to encourage and support kids going to the ACBL Youth National Championships. I'd had experience with Kevin

playing, and had heard enough from Patty Tucker and others to believe that kids who played in this were far more likely to get hooked on the game than others.

We didn't quite manage to get the program up and running for 2014, though a few SiVY kids did go to Vegas and had a great time playing in it. That was helpful towards getting the program running in 2015 since those kids and their families could speak of their positive experience.

YNABC has been an important program. While some of the kids sponsored would have played anyway, and there were therefore some objections to offering them funding, many more went who would not have otherwise. It has been especially useful to have a specific event to train for, since we don't otherwise offer many formal opportunities for improvement. The specifics of YNABC training have varied from year to year, depending in part of who is managing the program (most recently Max Schireson and Theron Tock), yet it always offers something which is not available the rest of the year.

While it's wonderful that some of our kids have had tremendous results, it's particularly gratifying that they all seem to have a good time and return more interested in the game, with a fun bridge trip to tell their non-playing friends about.

Newsletters

In 2014, SiVY began publishing an online newsletter three times a year, in order to keep supporters informed, as well as youth members and their families. Originally it was produced in conjunction with our parent organization, CBE, and then independently starting in 2017. Thanks to the dependability of Cheryl Haines, often with assistance from Lynn Johannesen among others, the electronic newsletter has been consistently sent out three times a year. Alan Templeton can always be relied on to do what is needed on the website. I enjoy the newsletters as a quick review of SiVY highlights. The [November 2019](#) edition, the 18th, was sent out last month. [Links to past editions can be found here](#), where you can also sign up to be a recipient of future newsletters.

The Big Game of Bridge

When I learned of the traditional rivalry between Stanford and Cal football, known as the Big Game, fortunately both universities had bridge teams at the time, and I knew we had to do this! I also saw a special way to commemorate my friend Rev Murthy, a Cal alumnus, who I've always known would have loved to be part of project like SiVY. Thus was born the Big Game of Bridge for the Rev Murthy Cup.

This event was, in my biased opinion, simply awesome. It was shown on BBO vugraph and lots of fun. We didn't get the press coverage I'd hoped for outside the bridge world, yet it was more than worthwhile. Yet it turns out to be quite a feat to get eight college students from two universities (one 60 miles away) together on the same day, and what was intended to be an annual event has been held only twice. Stanford won in 2014 and Cal in 2015. Both years, a few of us paid a visit after the event to the respective university bridge clubs to present the trophy.

The failure to keep this event going is one of my major disappointments. A large trophy with Rev's name now sits in a closet at the Bridge Center, and saddens me every time I see it.



Above: 2015 Big Game of Bridge

Junior Trials Training Sessions

From the beginning there was a bit of overlap between SiVY and the USBF training program, both having started in 2013, with Kevin, Isha and I all immersed in both, as were a few of our other young volunteers. As some SiVY kids started becoming

serious players, there was a lot more. Now many SiVY kids are participating regularly in the USBF online training program and junior trials. Several have already competed successfully at world championships.

For the 2015 Junior trials there were 14 juniors from the Bay Area participating. Some of them, especially the younger SiVY kids, had never played behind screens and we wanted to give them practice. Parents ordered screens from China, and Will Watson and I held several practice sessions that fall. Barry Goren, who at the time was an active mentor and co-coordinator of the USBF online training program, even came to town for one of them. Will Watson and I, with help from other mentors including Li-Chung Chen, repeated these training sessions in 2017 and have done so again this fall, when there are 25 juniors from the Bay Area who will be competing.



Above: Junior trials training December 2019

"Double Dummy" screening

On January 15, 2019, largely thanks to the efforts of Qing Lu and Michael Hu, SiVY held a screening of John McAllister's film "Double Dummy". After the movie there was a 30-minute Q&A session, which included Adam Kaplan, one of the stars. One hundred and forty-six tickets were sold. It was a fine event, and I'm very glad we did it, though I have no knowledge of whether it brought any new players into the game.

Family Card Game Day

This event was organized by Marcy Tivol and Sandy Erickson, held only once, in conjunction with a 2015 Parent-Child duplicate. About 25 parents and

children attended, primarily families with at least one member who didn't yet play any bridge, including some children too young for bridge, but ready for other card games. There was social bridge, a lesson given by Frank Smoot, and other games.



I recall beautiful snacks and decorations (Marcy is our graphic designer!), and it looked like people had a great time. I would call it an unqualified success, except I remember being disappointed that, AFAIK, none of the families returned for future pizza parties or camps. I could be wrong about that. In any case, I think this is a great idea, and wish we could have more, but it takes a lot of work to organize and promote.

New Life Master celebration



Above: Randy and Sue congratulate Sarah, who in Feb 2018 became the second SiVY kid to make LM

We celebrate each SiVY kid who becomes a Life Master by honoring them at the next pizza party, and adding their name to a plaque which hangs at the bridge center. There are now seven such kids, and several more are getting close!

Annual Volunteer Recognition event



Above: 2016 Volunteer Reception

It took convincing for me to support this event at all at first, and now I recognize its importance. My slowness to come around was a sign of my inexperience. The event has been a lot of fun, with a drawing for gifts which include games with pros, fine wine, bridge books, and gift cards, all donated. It is an opportunity for volunteers to get to know each other better and discuss the program. It's definitely worthwhile to fund some refreshments and champagne.

I highly recommend to anyone attempting to start a youth bridge organization that you cherish your volunteers, and put effort into making what they do fun and rewarding for them as well as the youth players they are helping introducing to bridge!

SiVY By The Numbers

Each spring Michael Bodell puts together some stats from the previous year of operations. Below are totals for approximately 6 years of May 2013-May 2019, as well as more recent numbers.



Above: Michael Bodell with students at the Nov 2013 Boys and Girls Club Mini-Bridge tournament/pizza party

May 2013-Present

In the SiVY database we have 716 youth.

In our schools' teaching program, we have done more than 725 hours of teaching of more than 740 distinct students. We've done about 7,650 student-hours of bridge classes.

We've done more than 100 events (pizza parties, parent-child duplicate, HS championships, camp, etc.): 107 so far. We've had at least 3316 attend these events (obviously not all distinct people). Only the kick-off casual Friday is counted in these events. Other Casual Fridays, and special events such as the mentoring program and YNABC are not counted in the above.

For YNABC we've sponsored 111 youth players over the past 5 YNABC events.

In the year before SiVY started (2012) in district 21 there were 18 youth players and just over 30 juniors (which include the 18 youth). The youth had won 695.26 MP and the top 30 juniors (counting the youth) had won 1796.63.

In 2018 (the last full year) there were more than 67 youth players from District 21 who had won 2020.62 points and the top 66 juniors from district 21 had won 4073.41 points in the year - both more than twice as much.

In 2019 to date (up to Oct 6 MP total) the top 79 D21 juniors (those with 2.31 MP or more in the year) have won 4,715.97 MP - and this is before the last 3 months of the year, and before the SF Nationals! Limiting to the top 82 youth D21 players (those with 0.6 MP or more in the year) they've already won 2,939.73 MP. When you count the last 3 months of the year, including SF NABC, it wouldn't be surprising if 2019 were 50% more MP than 2018 for young D21 players.

2018-19

We sent 21 to the YNABC and all earned masterpoints and there were many successes both in the youth events and in the open events. We had 30 people at the past summer camp, including 10 brand new players. We had 36 high school players at the High School championship. We've had 327 youth attend our pizza parties and events in the past year (this isn't a distinct count, this is a total of the attendance in each pizza party, so if one person attended 3 parties they count as 3 in this count).

Our school programs had 841 student-class-sessions (so if one person attended 5 classes, they'd count as 5 in this count). Included in these there were 54 distinct new-to-SiVY students.

Looking at the junior ACBL masterpoint race there are 54 District 21 Juniors with masterpoints through the end of May, and of those more than 90% are SiVY juniors. Looking at the ACBL as a whole there are 348 Juniors with masterpoints in 2019, so about 1 in 7 active Juniors in the ACBL is a SiVY player.

Here is some of the year by year breakdown of event participation:

	Events	Participants
2013	8	246
2014	20	507
2015	21	653
2016	18	693
2017	16	534
2018	15	434
2019	9	249
YNABC		
YNABC	2019	24
YNABC	2018	21
YNABC	2017	28
YNABC	2016	24
YNABC	2015	14

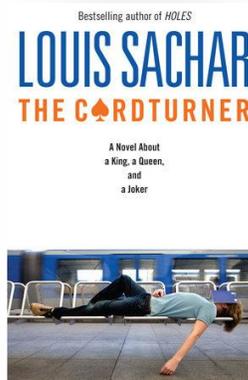
A few more thoughts, including some of my regrets

Social Media

Shortly after we got started, Cheryl Haines created a [Silicon Valley Youth Bridge Facebook page](#), which she continues to maintain and post to regularly. Before SiVY, I was a "Facebook lurker", accepting a few friend requests, and occasionally checking out what those friends had posted, yet never posting or making any friend requests myself. That all changed after SiVY. I started inviting all the bridge players I could find to be my friends, and posting actively about youth bridge. I was especially keen to friend juniors, so that I could "tag" them in my posts. When a photo gets tagged, it will often be seen by hundreds of young friends of that junior. I find it especially gratifying when an obvious non-bridge playing teenager congratulates a friend for a bridge success.

I believe one of the reasons SiVY is seen as so successful is that I have posted about it frequently, both here and on Facebook, and we have gotten several writeups in the ACBL Bulletin. While I doubt that visibility has brought in many new youths, I do think that it helped with eliciting volunteers and financial support. There are other youth programs doing a lot, but perhaps less visibly.

The Cardturner



What factors persuade a student to sign up for a bridge class, club or camp? A strong recommendation from a teacher or friend is commonly what it takes. In many cases the student has a parent or other family member who has played bridge, or at least has some positive association with the game. Often it takes a combination of these factors.

Yet there is one other factor I have seen in play over the years, independent of the others. From time to time, it comes to our attention that the only reason a student was interested is that they read Louis Sachar's The Cardturner.

The most impactful anecdote I have in mind is what happened when Kevin started a high-school bridge club senior year. He had persuaded enough of his friends from chess club to attend to satisfy the minimum requirement for getting the club registered. Then he started advertising, not expecting much result.

On the first day, six freshmen girls that neither he nor any of his friends knew showed up for bridge club. Their only knowledge of the game came from reading *The Cardturner!* Though most of that group didn't get serious about the game in high school, five years later, three of them took part in the USBF Junior Training program and will be competing this week at the Junior Trials.

Louis Sachar is a popular, often humorous, children's author, and also an avid tournament bridge player. Virtually all school-aged children and their parents are familiar with his books, and most have read one or more (*Holes*, which won awards and was made into a movie, is probably the best known).

Over the years, SiVY has ordered numerous copies to give as prizes, and arranged to have them autographed by Louis Sachar. I've encouraged kids to give their copy to a friend who doesn't yet play bridge when they are done. Though I can't claim to have done any empirical research, getting this book more widely circulated seems like a worthwhile investment to me. If you aren't sure what to do to help attract younger people to bridge, consider liberally gifting *The Cardturner*. Though it's generally listed as a teen/young adult novel, I've found that it's fine for most kids as young as 9 or 10, and most adults enjoy it.

The Personal Touch

Anyone involved with promoting any event surely knows that sending a mass email is nowhere near as effective as a personalized message. And anyone involved with promoting bridge probably knows that sending a general invitation to play is nowhere near as effective as an invitation which includes "I have a good partner for you."

This applies to youth as much as to older players. An experience I have relived multiple times goes something like this: I send a message to about 30 kids encouraging them to play, and offering to help them find partners for an upcoming sectional. After several days, only one has responded. This one is now my asset. I now send a personal message to three or four appropriate potential partners saying that I have someone I think they'd match well with who needs a partner. Can they play? Almost invariably at least one of them will indeed want to play, despite the fact that they didn't reply to my earlier message. If I'm lucky, exactly three of them will want to play, and now I can make two partnerships!

This type of personal outreach works, and can feel rather rewarding. Yet it is also exhausting. It isn't uncommon for a player to ask for help finding a partner, then be slow to respond to follow-up messages.

The same sort of personal outreach improves attendance at pizza parties and just about any event. Back in the early years, when I was living, eating and breathing SiVY, and it was all personal for me, I couldn't bear the thought of a poorly attended event. If signup didn't look good for an upcoming pizza party, I'd get busy with personal messages. It almost always made a significant impact. If you are willing and able to spend the time and effort needed, I highly recommend incorporating as much personal outreach as you can into your programs.

Regrets, I have a few...

In keeping with the personal touch thoughts above, one of my regrets is that we have never been able to maintain an active "tournament coordinator" A couple of times I've had a relatively young tournament player agree to take on this role, but then life got in the way and they weren't able to remain active. My vision is a young player who can relate well to the kids, who gets to know them (perhaps by attending pizza parties and Casual Fridays) and encourages them to play more, helping form appropriate partnerships and teams as needed.

Along the same lines we have never maintained a "retention" program. There have been many, many

kids who have attended pizza parties, sometimes even several parties within a year, and then disappeared without us following up on why, or attempted to get them back. I used to do some of this myself, but I confess I got burnt out. Alas, this just doesn't seem to be a volunteer role that appeals to anyone. I'm pained by how many kids we used to see regularly, and now not at all. The good news is that I am confident that even if we never see them again at a SiVY event, a seed has been planted and they are far more likely to take up bridge when the opportunity arises at some later point in their lives. They are also far more likely to sign up their own children for a bridge class or club.

I feel quite badly that there is less going on bridge-wise at Stanford University, which is in our backyard, than before SiVY existed. I'm not sure why we haven't made more effort, or why any efforts made haven't been more successful. It's been a couple of years since Stanford has even had a team in the ACBL Collegiate Bowl. On a related note, it's a real shame that there isn't always a bridge class at the biannual Stanford Splash program (for middle and high school students) which helped inspire SiVY back in 2013. Such programs, where a bridge class is almost certain to be well attended, are the low-hanging fruit of youth bridge. Even if few of the attendees continue with bridge in the near future, these programs are a relatively easy way to plant seeds. The DeCal bridge class at Berkeley (see Part I of this article) is another example of such a program. Given how hard it usually is to get young people in the door for a bridge class, I think we are remiss in not putting more effort into programs where that aspect is not a problem.

Another thing that's disappointing to me is that there isn't more "peer mentoring". For example, I would love to see the youth camp volunteers each take one or two kids under their wing and follow up with them persistently after camp (Sarah Youngquist has indeed done some of this). Of course, bridge isn't for everyone, and some kids won't be interested in continuing. But for the majority, they will have interest, but many conflicts, and personalized outreach will be key to getting them to find time for bridge. Find them partners and/or invite them

personally to events with assurance that there will be at least one familiar and welcoming face. This is true in so many areas, yet I understand that volunteers have their own lives, and most are not willing to go this far.

This brings me to my biggest regret. When I was president and more actively involved in all aspects of SiVY, I did not properly appreciate my fellow board members and all the volunteers who worked with me. For a while I was obsessed, and did not have patience for those who purported to care about youth bridge, yet dared to have a life outside of SiVY. I think the rest of the board members tolerated me only because they cared so much about our mission, and felt I brought a lot to the table, despite my faults. I remember hearing that I was described as "relentless", and I suppose that was more of a positive than a negative. Yet I recognize that I did not treat people well, perhaps in part because I had never tried to run anything before, and was never comfortable in that role. Through this experience I have perhaps gained some maturity, and have definitely gained respect and appreciation for all the contributions of the wonderful people I've worked with.

OK, I'm going to stop here, in the hopes that I've offered some useful perspective, answered some readers' questions, and haven't discouraged anyone from taking the plunge and giving a youth bridge program in your area a try! Looking forward to the comments!

www.bridgewinners.com

The Theory of Total Tricks: Part IV – Handling the Gritty Details

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/print/part-iv-handling-charges-and-other-gritty-details/>



Steve Bloom April 18, 2013

It is time to finish analyzing completely pure hands – hands where both sides hold all the honors in their two long suits. The length of those two suits, combined, is called the second fit

number, or SF, and plays a major role in the total tricks available. As I noted in [Part 3 of the Theory of Total Tricks](#), for completely pure hands,

- **Total Tricks are approximately SF + 3**

Here is the key Table 2 again:

Table 2: Expected Defensive Winners for Completely Pure Hands

Second Fit	Length of Longest (Solid) Suit	Length of Next Longest (Solid) Suit	Defensive Winners
14	7	7	4.36
14	8	6	4.18
15	8	7	3.82
15	9	6	3.85
16	8	8	3.28
16	9	7	3.49
16	10	6	3.32
17	9	8	2.95
17	10	7	2.96
17	11	6	3.06
18	9	9	2.62
18	10	8	2.62
18	11	7	2.70
19	10	9	2.09
19	11	8	2.16

Looking at this, we see that, when SF=17, there will be around 20 total tricks available. For SF=18, the trick total climbs to around 20 ¾ and close to 21 ¾ for SF=19.

The next case, SF=16, is much more complicated. First off, the loser count is not consistent – we see around 3 ¼ expected defensive tricks when our suits are 8-8 or 10-6, but 3 ½ winners to cash for the 9-7 case. Interesting. This is also the first time we’ve run into a potential eight card trump fit. As I pointed out in Part II, seven and eight card trump fits are awkward – maybe there are only three losers, but that doesn’t mean ten winners.

Marginal trump fits carry additional handling charges. These don’t quantify easily, but it appears reasonable to add these handling charge losers:

- For an eight-card trump fit – half an extra loser
- For a seven-card trump fit – a full extra loser.

With this in mind, I will work out, in complete detail, the 8-8 case. First off, we can cash, on average, 3.28 tricks. Since our SF=16, our opponents' SF is also 16. Thus, they too will have either 8-8, 9-7, or 10-6 fits[1], so they can cash against us, either 3.28, 3.49, or 3.32 winners. This averages to 3.36 winners. As to handling charges, we have an eight-card fit, which generates an extra half loser. The opponents seem to have an eight-card fit in one of the three cases, so I’ll add in another 1/6 of a handling charge loser for them. Adding these up, we get

$$3.28 + 3.36 + .5 + .17 = 7.31$$

Our handling charge estimates are pretty loose, so I will round this off to the nearest quarter of a trick, and conclude that there will be around 18 ¾ total tricks available in the 8-8 case. A similar analysis of the 9-7 and 10-6 cases gives us this:

Table 3: SF = 16, Total Tricks for Completely Pure Hands

Lengths of Longest Suits	Total Tricks, to the Nearest Quarter Trick
8-8	18 ¾
9-7	19
10-6	19 ¼

So, we get SF+3, or 19, as expected, but adjusted up or down depending on our trump length. Indeed, if we can tell from the auction, or our own short suit holdings, the length of their trump fit, we can adjust even more, with total tricks varying from 18½ to 19½ depending on total trumps.

[Larry Cohen](#) will be pleased. Total trumps really matter here, but the actual impact of an extra trump is about a quarter of a trick, not a full trick.

[1] I have intentionally ignored one case, where a side has an 11-card fit, and three 5-card side suits.

This is rare, but not impossible.

Similar calculations finish the analysis, and give us

Table 4: Expected Number of Total Tricks for Completely Pure Hands

Second Fit	Length of Longest (Solid) Suit	Length of Next Longest (Solid) Suit	Approximate Total Tricks, to the Nearest Quarter Trick
14	7	7	15 ³ / ₄
14	8	6	16 ¹ / ₄
15	8	7	17 ¹ / ₂
15	9	6	18
16	8	8	18 ³ / ₄
16	9	7	19
16	10	6	19 ¹ / ₄
17	9	8	20
17	10	7	20
17	11	6	20
18	9	9	20 ³ / ₄
18	10	8	20 ³ / ₄
18	11	7	20 ³ / ₄
19	10	9	21 ³ / ₄
19	11	8	21 ³ / ₄

This concludes the analysis of completely pure hands. It is clear, now, that we should estimate total tricks based on the potential defensive winners in our long suits, and losers in our short suits. Such calculations depend primarily on the SF number, and only secondarily on the length of our longest suit. The Law of Total Tricks has it wrong, but works out well anyway, because SF and Total Trumps are highly correlated.

After a short theoretical break in the next installment, I will move away from pure hands to more typical hands. See you then.

Find the complete Theory of Total Tricks Series by Steve Bloom on BridgeWinners at:

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/series/theory-of-total-tricks/>

www.bridgewinners.com
The Theory of Total Tricks:
Part V – I/O

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/print/part-v-io/>



By Steve Bloom May 3, 2013

[Ed Note: For clarity, I/O refers to the information *in* and *out* of a process.]

The first really major and important backlash against the Law was Wirgren and Lawrence's excellent book, *I Fought the Law* (Lawrence & Wirgren, 2005). Unfortunately, from my perspective, they went astray in the latter part of the book when they developed a vast improvement on the Law using a combination of high-card points, long-suit information, and short-suit information. This is too much input – they were cheating a bit! Obviously, if you have available more information about partner's hand, you will predict Total Tricks more accurately. I would be a world class bidder if Betty would simply lay her hand face up on the table at the beginning of every auction.

More to the point, let's imagine that partner opens one heart, and you hear a one spade overcall. You carefully bid two diamonds, then support hearts, and finally show your spade shortness, painting a perfect picture of your 1-4-5-3 shape. When they save at four spades, you can confidently pass this around to partner, who will always make the right decision. Dream on! Real opponents don't give you that much time. If they will bid to four spades, it will happen quickly, and you won't have the time to exchange all the Wirgren-Lawrence information.

One of the truly lovely elements of the Vernes' Law of Total Tricks is that it requires extremely minimal input. The ratio of input-to-output, the I/O ratio, is quite startling. This Law predicts the total number of tricks available, on average, from two trivial inputs:

1. The length of our longest combined suit, and
2. The length of their longest combined suit.

When the auction turns competitive, we won't have much time to communicate important information to

partner. With our 1-4-5-3 hand, we could, however, use a Rodwell Raise to four diamonds,

1♥ (1♠) 4♦ = three more hearts than spades giving partner perfect Total Trump input, and trusting partner, and the Law, to handle a four spade continuation.

This is a crucial ingredient of any complete theory of total tricks. I'll call it the **I/O Rule**:

Any complete theory of total tricks must make predictions based on extremely minimal input data.

The Law satisfies the I/O Rule perfectly, using input about the lengths of two of our suits, our longest, and our *shortest*.

Last time, I completed the analysis of completely pure hands, hands where all the honors are held in our long suits, and came up with Table 4:

Table 4: Expected Number of Total Tricks for Completely Pure Hands

Second Fit	Length of Longest (Solid) Suit	Length of Next Longest (Solid) Suit	Approximate Total Tricks, to the Nearest Quarter Trick
14	7	7	15 ¾
14	8	6	16 ¼
15	8	7	17½
15	9	6	18
16	8	8	18 ¾
16	9	7	19
16	10	6	19 ¼
17	9	8	20
17	10	7	20
17	11	6	20
18	9	9	20 ¾
18	10	8	20 ¾
18	11	7	20 ¾
19	10	9	21 ¾
19	11	8	21 ¾

Notice here that this table only uses such minimal input,

1. The length of our longest combined suit.
2. The length of our second longest combined suit.

Thus, this theory in development also satisfies the I/O Rule. My goal, in this study, was always to develop a complete theory of total tricks *based on such extremely minimal input*, that you could, of course, adjust by looking at your own hand. My approach uses information about our two longest suits, two pieces of input. Vernes' Law uses information about our longest and shortest suits, also two pieces of input. In my world, when the bidding starts one heart, one spade overcall, and we have the 1-4-5-3 hand, we also bid four diamonds, but *fit-showing*, trying to describe the lengths of our two longest suits, so partner can judge the degree of second fit over four spades.

A viable theory of Total Tricks *must be based on very limited input*. The Lawrence-Wirgren Working Points – Short Suit Total makes for expert hand evaluation, but requires too much information. So, it is not a viable theory of Total Tricks. Vernes' Law uses only data about the lengths of two of our suits, data that we can discern quickly, using methods like the Rodwell Raise. My Table 4 uses only data about our two longest suits, data that we can uncover quickly using two-suited conventions, like Michaels or Fit-Jumps.

No doubt, there will be other theories of total tricks developed. But, until the rules of bridge are changed to allow insufficient bids, any such *practical* theory must satisfy the I/O Rule.

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For these and all details, see the Unit 124 website	
Find all help for online play at: http://www.cincybridge.com/BBO.html	

2020 Online Event Schedule



American Contract
Bridge League

Schedule subject to change

July 4-5	NABC Robot Individual Warm-Up NABC Robot Individual practice tournament
July 11-13	Summer 2020 NABC Robot Individual NABC Robot Individual tournament
July 23-Aug.2	North American Online Bridge Championships Knockout event and pair event
July 25	Virtual Youth NABC Pair event and cardrhook games (age 20 and under)
July 27-Aug. 2	Silver Linings Week Silver masterpoint® awards in Virtual Clubs

Aug. 27-30	Virtual Vacation Regionally rated events
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Sept. 7	Labor Day Event Upgraded masterpoints awards in Virtual Clubs
Sept. 21-27	Club Championship Week Upgraded masterpoints awards in Virtual Clubs

Oct. 15-18	Fall into Bridge Regionally rated events
Oct. 26-Nov. 1	Club Appreciation Week Upgraded masterpoints awards in Virtual Clubs

Nov. 7-8	NABC Robot Individual Warm-Up NABC Robot Individual practice tournament
Nov. 14-15	NABC Robot Individual Warm-Up NABC Robot Individual practice tournament
Nov. 21-23	Fall 2020 NABC Robot Individual NABC Robot Individual tournament
Nov. 23-29	Club Championship Week Upgraded masterpoints awards in Virtual Clubs
Nov. 29-Dec. 5	North American Online Bridge Championships Knockout event and pair event

Dec. 17-20	Winter Wonderland Regionally rated events
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How to Join BBO

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Recommended by Klaus Reps
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Bridge Base Online

Social play. ACBL Games. Tournaments. Solitaire.

User name

Password

Log in

Remember me Forgot your password?

Invisible

Become a member (free!) Click Here

Watch Anonymously

Become a member (free!)

User name Required M ax 10 characters 0/10 Real name

Password Required M ax 10 characters 0/10 ACBL Number

Confirm password Required M ax 10 characters 0/10 Other

E-mail address Required

Skill level

Private
Novice
Beginner
Intermediate
Advanced
Expert
World Class

Country/Region

Notthem Ireland
Norway
Oman
Other
Pakistan
Palestine
Panama

I agree to the [Terms of Service](#) Register

Help Privacy policy

Fill out the fields.

A User Name is the name that BBO will display when you are online.

You choose your own skill level.

Choose USA and agree to the terms of service.

When you complete the form, the register button will light up. Follow instructions and you are a member.

Best Practices using BBO to play Online Bridge for Unit 124 Virtual Club Games

BBO and the ACBL came to the rescue of many clubs across the country by providing virtual club games to support existing sanction holders. The games have been popular across the country. Not everybody is familiar with BBO, and some have never played bridge online. Until face to face bridge returns, online bridge will be how we play the game.

This intends to help everyone get the best out of their BBO experience.

We assume you already have a BBO account and that your ACBL number is successfully associated with that account. We urge you to add your real first and last name to your BBO account so that Unit 124 members and friends from the club know who you are when playing in our virtual club games.

For help learning how to join BBO, see:

<https://blog.bridgebase.com/2020/03/18/how-to-log-in-to-bridge-base-online-and-play-acbls-support-your-club-game/>

For a video guide of BBO site see: <https://www.acbl.org/bbotutorials/>

It is up to each player to be familiar with the BBO interface to get the most out of your online experience.

How to find an NKBC or CBC game on BBO is here:

<http://www.cincybridge.com/20200331-HOW-TO-JOIN-CBC-Online-BBO.pdf>

There are several important points to remember to maximize the enjoyment of playing online – **failures can occur at each link in the 6-link chain between you and BBO:**

Link in Chain	Failures	Fixes
	Inattention Phone calls TV and other media Reading Being on another website Friends and family Partner not available Interruptions away from device	Do not use you phone during play Stay off all media Keep the App/Browser running on the BBO Page for your game Keep the BBO tab open and live. Tell people not to disturb you for 2 hours. Make sure partner is online BEFORE game time. You cannot register Late.
	Battery Power Data Service WiFi Connection Dropped (Do you remember your password?) Touch Screen Screen Size leads to touch errors Phone data service out of reach Phone calls interrupt game Device goes to sleep or turns off	Be sure your device is fully charged or you are near a charging outlet. Have your power cord available. Suggest you turn on confirm bids and plays so that touch screen aberration don't foil your game (masterpoint games do not allow Undo's). Stay where you have connection. Change your sleep setting to allow the device to stay on.
	Mouse malfunction Internet connection (WiFi/Lan) Insufficient resources to handle play in real time (rare). Device goes to sleep or turns off.	Check mouse before each game. Check WiFi before each game Shut down programs not used in play. Change your sleep setting to allow the device to stay on.

	<p>BBO App not compatible with installed operating system. App interrupted by phone calls. Finger/Touch Screen Errors Glitchy behavior</p>	<p>Make sure the App connects before you try to play. Do not buy your BBO\$ through the App – there is a 40% premium paid to the app owner. Practice with the App so you know how to touch choices accurately. Turn your device off for 20 seconds before logging in. Turning on will clear cache and other issues causing glitches.</p>
	<p>Older browsers might not support the new version of the BBO site. Different browsers work on different devices and behave differently.</p>	<p>Be sure you use the latest version of the browser or BB Application on your device. Check the URL for BBO to be sure the site engages as intended.</p>
	<p>WiFi problems Router Failure Router Power Internet Connection Failure Power Outage Weak wifi spots in your home/playing area (walking around with your device) Speed restrictions in public areas</p>	<p>Be sure the WiFi is working and power is connected. Stay in a place where you are comfortable and the WiFi signal is very strong. Stay away from weak spots with poor WiFi connection in your home/play place.</p>
	<p>System overloads – too many players/tables Dropped out during game. Dropped out before game Can't log back in Other BBO specific problems</p>	<p>Peak times are daytime EDT. When tables approach 50,000 slow response and dropping out might occur. If dropped simply log back in. If not able to log back in, try again every 20 seconds or so.</p>

Tips to Have the Most Fun Possible:

1. Be sure to **prepare a convention card online** for you and your partner. Each partnership needs a separate card. When you put your partner's screen name on the card, it will show up for every (paid) game that you play. (If you keep a convention card on BBO you can make a tinyurl link for the pdf of that card and include the tinyurl in the system description line at the beginning of the card. That link will be live and allow people to see a regular ACBL card format. BridgeWinners membership is free. Tinyurl is found at <https://tinyurl.com/>. Be sure to add the browser link to your Browser links list so you can create a tinyurl on the fly).
2. If you intend to play, be sure to log on under your screen name – **DO NOT CHOOSE INVISIBLE**. If you do, you will not be found for the game! Invisible means you hide from everybody including the director and your partner.
3. Be sure to know your partner's screen name. Log on, and look for your partner's screen name under **PEOPLE** tab on the far right of the BBO window. You have to follow your partner to have them show up in your people window. **Search** their **BBO name** and follow them. (On the **PEOPLE** Tab **Search** is at the bottom of the pane).
4. Once your partner shows up in the **PEOPLE** tab, send them the invite to play (either partner can invite). You can also chat with them on BBO before the game and between rounds by clicking on their name and using the Chat line in the dialog box. Alternatively, you can click on the destination button on the site chat and select your partner's name then begin chatting.

5. Join the game as early as you can. You can log off after you and your partner join, but you **MUST LOG BACK ON BEFORE THE GAME STARTS – no exceptions**. The director cannot add you back in if you aren't online when the game starts.
6. **Pay attention** to the game – do not allow distractions during play. If you have to take a quick break do it between rounds or when partner is declaring a hand. Tell the table “brb” for “be right back” and return before the next deal starts. Tell the table “I’m back”. If you need more time, take your device with you.
7. If you are **inactive** too long while playing a game, or **unresponsive** when a director asks you a question, the director might drop you out temporarily and replace you with a standby player. If this happens, simply log back in and accept the invitation to return when it shows up automatically. You will join your partner for the next hand.
8. If a game starts and you have been dropped before the first hand, message the director – if there is a way to return you to the game, they will. If not, then review what happened and avoid what didn't work next time. Some watch-outs:
 - a. If you play solitaire on BBO while waiting for the Virtual Club Game make sure you **keep the tab and page where you signed on to the virtual club game open**. If it isn't, BBO doesn't know you are there – free games and services are on a different server from the paid games, and one does not communicate with the other.
 - b. If you sign on as **invisible** – you will not be found by the system or the director when game time come. Avoid using the invisible option when intending to play. You cannot play as invisible.
 - c. Once you and partner log into the game, **leave that browser tab open**. If you want to go to another website, **open a new tab** for that site.
 - d. Pay attention to the **audible signals** that BBO offers – “*shuffling the deck*” when dealing a new hand – a “*boink*” sound when it's your turn to bid, a “*swish*” when a card is played, and a “*ping*” when someone chats with you directly. This sound will happen as long as your BBO **browser tab stays active**, and the **sound is turned up** on your device. So, if you go to amazon.com while waiting for the game to begin and you hear cards shuffling, you know to go back to the BBO tab immediately.
9. BBO frequently checks **inactive browsers** with a message to see if you are still there. If you do not click yes in time, they log you off. If this happens while playing a game, simply log back on and you will be automatically be invited to play in the same game with the same partner. Don't panic.
10. **Etiquette:**
 - a. Add your **real first and last name** to your BBO account. People want to know who they are playing.
 - b. Offer a **first name introduction** along with your system and defense before the first hand of the round. “Hi! Steve & John – Precision UDCA 3/5s 4N” is one example. (Precision is our general approach, Upside Down Count and Attitude, 3 and 5th versus suits, and 4th vs NT).
 - c. Avoid praising partner during the round – you might not know the opponents were responsible for the result. “wdp” for well done partner is enough if you must say something.
 - d. Never comment on opponents play except to offer them **praise** for their play and **good luck**.
 - e. Each player owns a responsibility to be part of everybody's fun.
 - f. Remember **ACTIVE ETHICS** and **ZERO TOLERANCE** apply.
11. During the game remember that **you have to alert your own bids**. You opponents see your (and partner's) alerts. You only see your own alerts – partner does NOT see them. This keeps Unauthorized Information between partners to a minimum. Create and save a text file or word document with short phrases for the most common alerts. Keep this page open in a narrow window on your computer, so that you can cut and paste phrases quickly onto the alert line.

12. **Self-alerting:** write the alert before you bid. Once you select the number and strain the bid is made. If you bid and remember to alert, click on the bid you made and fill out the explain line, then click submit. If you need to modify the alert, click on explain for the bid and make the change. The opponents will know that an alert is coming.
13. **Propriety for Chatting** During Game: Never ask about bids with the chat aimed at the **TABLE** – Partner is not allowed to know about your questions. Instead point the chat line to “**Opponents**”. They will answer you.
14. Be sure to pay attention to any chat request from opponents during bidding or play. A **request for explanation** about a bid might show up as a bright yellow dialog box – simply fill out the explanation. If they message the **table**, reply to the **opponents**, and not to the table. Help the opponents do the right thing. If they message you, reply to the asker. Avoid the temptation to chat to the table to talk to your partner about the hand you just played. Wait until the round is over and **chat privately to your partner**, not to the table.
15. You cannot **communicate with partner** during a hand or round. Don’t try. You can communicate with partner between rounds and before and after the game.
16. **Claims** – make them often. Obvious claims require no explanation. If you need to draw trumps, say so. Use the explain line on the claim dialog box to state your play, then claim the number of tricks you expect to make. If you are certain your side cannot win any more tricks, concede. Playing out every hand wastes precious time. If a dispute arises over a claim, call the director only if you believe your side has been damaged.
17. **Call the director** to report an infraction or procedural problem. Continue to play while the director comes to your table. Describe the issue simply and directly. **DO NOT STOP PLAYING** – you will be dropped from the game!
18. The **time for each round** is strictly controlled. If you are running out of time, **DO NOT STOP PLAYING**. Purposely allowing the clock to run out to avoid a bad result is highly unethical. If this happens be sure to call the director if you believe either side has been damaged.
19. Finally, keep a **contact list for the directors** handy on your device or a piece of paper. If you get logged off and cannot return, call or text them and let them know. They might be able to help you reconnect. Your partner will continue playing with a substitute. (One way to do this is to keep notepad or word open on your desk and copy the information from the director’s introductory chat and paste it to the page. Note: you can always scroll back to the directors information, but if you are dropped from the site, well.....).

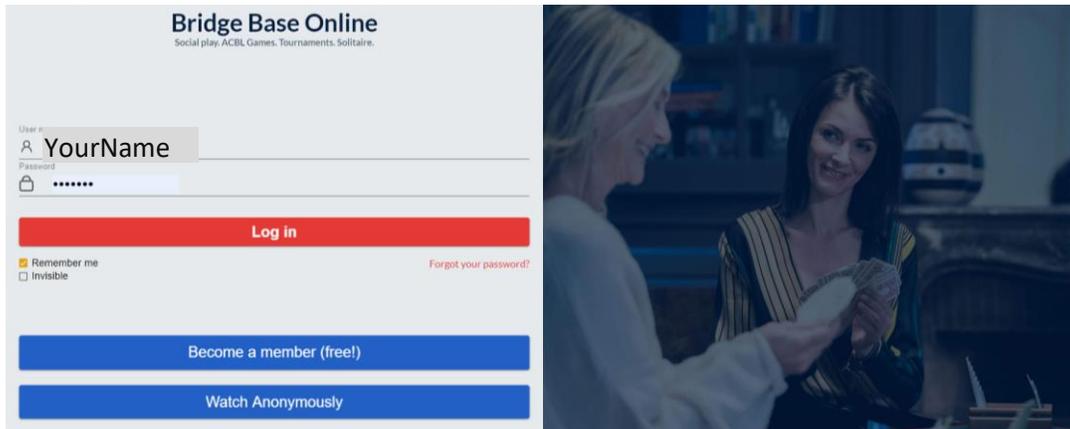
Please let one of your BBO directors know when something doesn’t work right after the game is over.

We will update this tips list with every useful tip we learn from you.

Steve Moese on behalf of John Taylor, Cordell Coy, Isaac Stephani for Unit 124
30 May 2020

HOW TO JOIN BBO GAMES by the CINCINNATI BC or the NKBC

Join BBO and create your member name and password (It's Free). Log into BBO

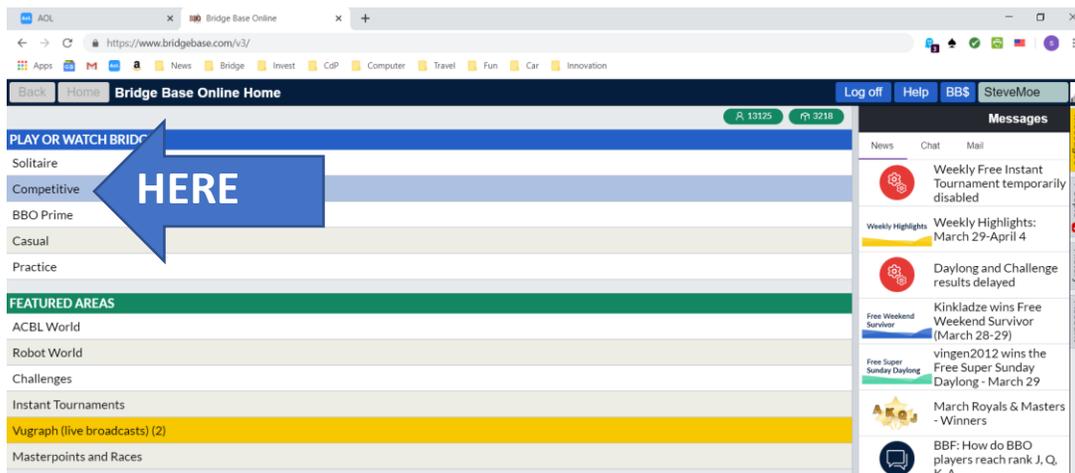


Once logged on look for FREE games in a different place from the ACBL virtual club (black masterpoint) games.

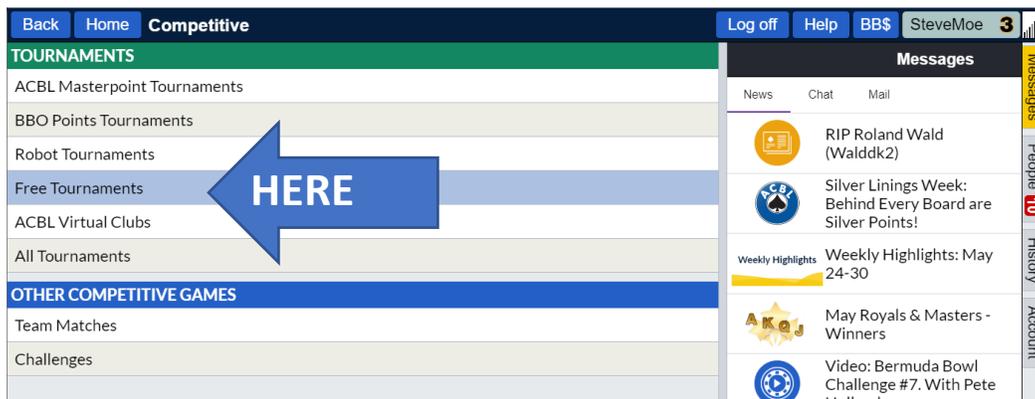
FREE GAMES:

Note: BBO has partitioned their site so that free games and solitaire play are on a different server than pay to play games. This means that you must be on the right server when the game starts. It also means that your convention card from the pay side is not available on the free side.

Click on Competitive



Then Click on Free Tournaments



The Search for NKBC (See Schedule for Free Games)

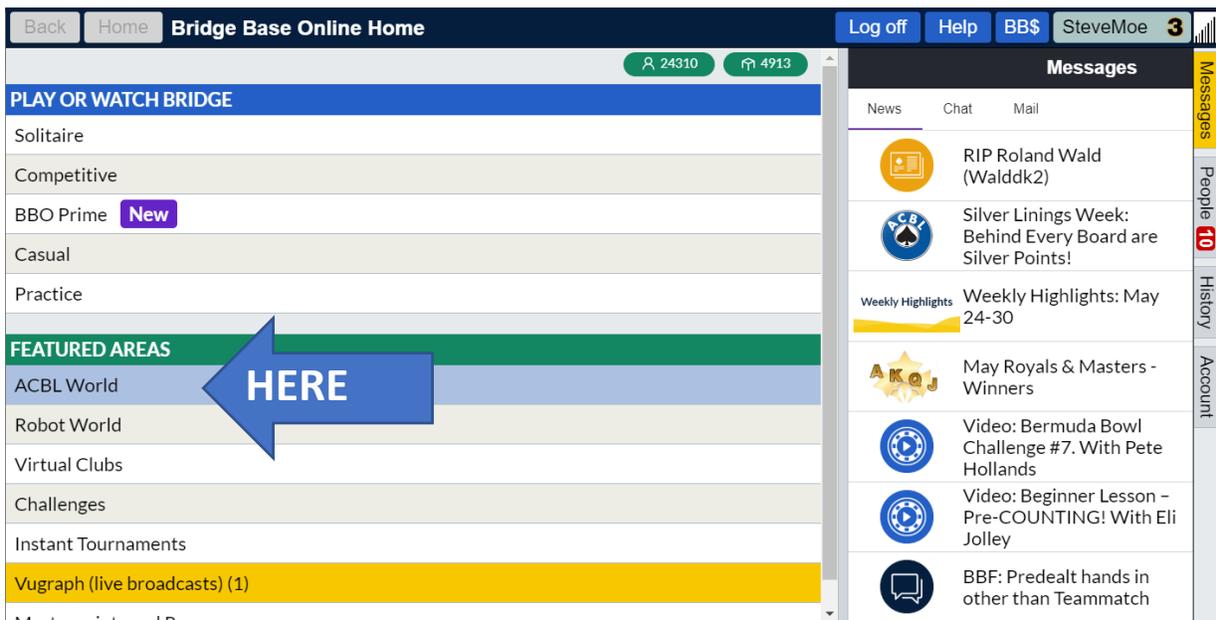


Click on the Game line and see the pop up window to invite your partner. Type in your partner's screen name and send an invite – If your partner is not on line you will get a message and will have to wait until partner logs on.

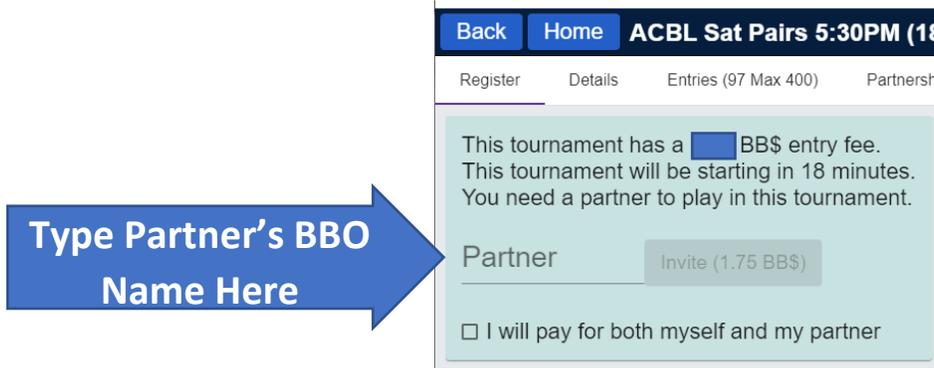
Sanctioned ACBL Club Games (Black Points)

There are two types of sanctioned games that support clubs. The **Support Your Club (SYC)** game is played by any ACBL member from anywhere and awards 1X black points these games run daily at specific times 10 AM, 5 PM and 7:30 PM. You will not be playing with people you know. The cost is \$6. To find the next SYC Game:

Click on ACBL World



Scroll Down/Search "Support" to find the pending SYC Game and click on the line to enter



Your partner must be online and accept your invitation or the invite will fail. Once a game starts you cannot enter. You must be on time.

The **Virtual Club Game (VCG)** is run by a director you know and combines player lists from one or more games you have played in in the past year. You will play against players you know and one or two pairs that help fill in the movement. The card fee depends on the game owner and all profits go to the owner of the virtual sanction (after ACBL and BBO fees).

Select ACBL Virtual Clubs



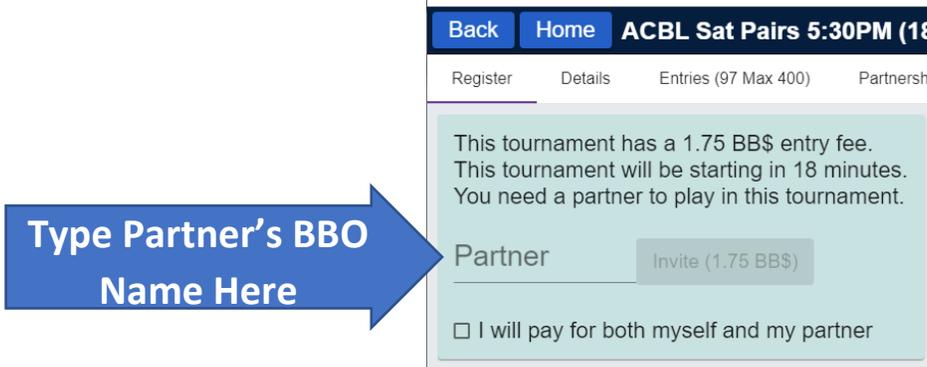
Select the Pending Tab in the upper left corner



Search for "Cincinnati" or "NKBC" the search is dynamic as you type!

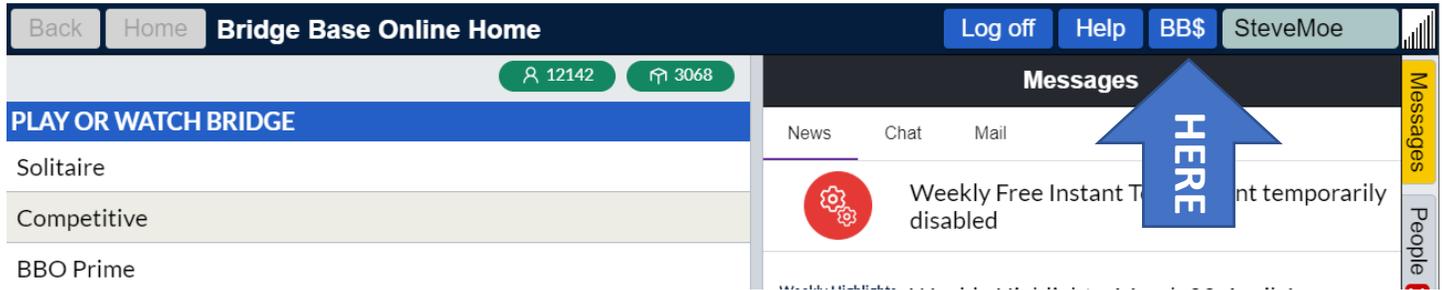


Click on the Cincinnati Bridge Club Game or the NKBC game when it appears in the search list

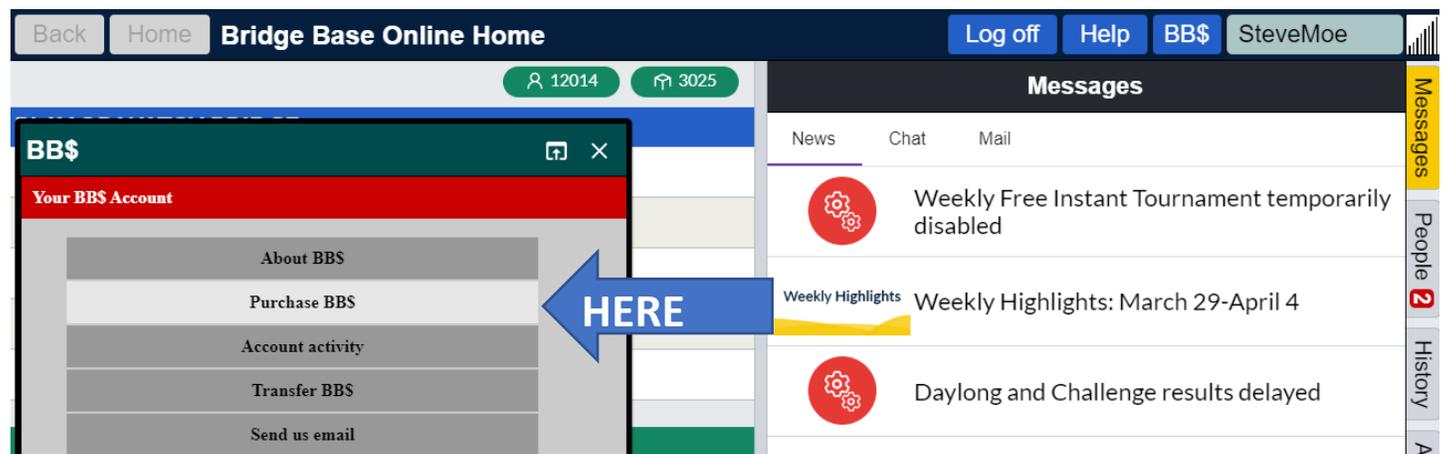


The game listing in the Pending list will appear ~2 hours prior to game time. Be sure both you and your partner are logged in at least 5 minutes before start of the game or you will not be allowed to enter/register. Be sure you have purchased BB\$ ahead of time to pay for your games.

To buy BBO\$ Click on BBO\$



Click on "Purchase BB\$"



Choose Payment Method and follow instructions.

[Start over](#) Bridge Base Online - **Purchase BB\$** support@bridgebase.com

Use this screen to purchase **BB\$** with a credit card. **BB\$ are not refundable, not withdrawable.** Please read the [Details...](#) as we have changed the Expiration Period effective December 1st, 2019.

Contact accounting@bridgebase.com for accounting issues.

Notice: As of July 15, 2019 we have been collecting sales tax in NY, MA, and WA. [Click here](#) for more information.

We need your BBO username and password to purchase via credit card.



[Start over](#) Bridge Base Online - **All done** support@bridgebase.com

All done.

The purchase was successful and your account will be updated momentarily.

The order number is [redacted]

You can setup your account for automatic purchases of BB\$ in the future by [starting over](#) and selecting **Remember CC#** and an amount from **Auto Purchase**.

You can contact us via an email to support@bridgebase.com

Check your BB\$ Balance by clicking on account activity

The screenshot shows the Bridge Base Online Home interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons for 'Back', 'Home', 'Log off', 'Help', 'BB\$', and 'SteveMoe'. Below the navigation bar, there are two green buttons with icons and numbers: '11724' and '2925'. The main content area is divided into two sections. On the left, there is a 'BB\$' account activity menu with options: 'About BBS', 'Purchase BBS', 'Account activity', 'Transfer BBS', and 'Send us email'. On the right, there is a 'Messages' section with tabs for 'News', 'Chat', and 'Mail'. The 'News' tab is active, showing several messages: 'Weekly Free Instant Tournament temporarily disabled', 'Weekly Highlights: March 29-April 4', and 'Daylong and Challenge results delayed'. A vertical sidebar on the far right contains navigation links for 'Messages', 'People', 'History', and 'Account'.

Enter your account name and password

The screenshot shows the BB\$ account activity page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'BBO', 'VUGRAPH SCHEDULE', 'HAND RECORDS', 'MASTERPOINTS', and 'BB\$'. Below the navigation bar, there is a yellow box with the following text: 'This screen will display your BB\$ balance and account history.' followed by a list of bullet points: 'Activity on this screen is logged', 'Contact accounting@bridgebase.com for accounting issues', and 'Contact support@bridgebase.com for technical support'. Below this, there are two input fields: 'Username on BBO' and 'Password'. Below the input fields, there are two buttons: 'Show recent activity' and 'Show all activity'. At the bottom, there is a copyright notice: '© 2020 Bridge Base Online, Inc. • [About](#) • [Privacy](#) • [Rules](#) • [Terms and Conditions](#) • [Advertise](#) • [Support](#) • [Robot Convention Card](#)'.

Choose recent or all activity

The screenshot shows the BB\$ account activity page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'BBO', 'VUGRAPH SCHEDULE', 'HAND RECORDS', 'MASTERPOINTS', and 'BB\$'. Below the navigation bar, there is a list of bullet points: 'Contact accounting@bridgebase.com for accounting issues' and 'Contact support@bridgebase.com for technical support'. Below this, there is a section titled 'Current BB\$ balance for stevemoe: 20'. Below the balance section, there is a section titled 'Recent (last 20 transactions) transaction history:' followed by a table with the following data:

Time (CST)	Action	Amount	Balance	Description	Details
2020-03-31 21:18:02	Offline Deposit	20	20	Deposit (S)	2000

At the bottom, there is a copyright notice: '© 2020 Bridge Base Online, Inc. • [About](#) • [Privacy](#) • [Rules](#) • [Terms and Conditions](#) • [Advertise](#) • [Support](#) • [Robot Convention Card](#)'.



stephen moese <stephenmoese@gmail.com>

Visit Another Virtual Club!

1 message

American Contract Bridge League <emailservices@acbl.org>

Fri, Jul 24, 2020 at 3:53 PM

Reply-To: noreply@acbl.org

To: stephenmoese@gmail.com



The rules for visiting Virtual Clubs on [Bridge Base Online](#) (BBO) have relaxed, letting you play more online bridge than ever.

Previously, to join a Virtual Club you needed to have played face-to-face bridge at that club in the last year. Now you can play as a visitor!

If you used to play face-to-face bridge at that club but moved – you can play! If your partner is a regular at the club – you can join them!

Some rules do apply. Virtual Clubs are limited to a certain percentage of visitors each week, and club managers still control who may access the Virtual Club.

Here's how you can be a visitor:

From the [BBO home screen](#), click on “Competitive.” At this point there are several options.

One is “ACBL Virtual Clubs.” If you go there, you will only see games that you are able to play in as a non-visitor. In other words, these are clubs where we have a record of you playing in face-to-face over the last ~18 months.

If you wish to see other clubs, instead of going to “ACBL Virtual Clubs,” go to “All Tournaments.” This will produce a very long list.

To narrow that list down, you can type the name of a specific club into the search box at the top of the screen. Alternatively, if you wish to see all Virtual Club games, type “vacb” in the search box, and it will show you all Virtual Club games that are open for registration.

The club director of the Virtual Club you wish to attend will need to “follow” you in order for you to be able to register for their game. Quite often the club will put instructions for this in the “Details” tab. You can also send them a private message by clicking on the VACB number that is in the “Host” column in the list of tournaments

Back by popular demand, it's [Silver Linings Week!](#)

The second Silver Linings Week begins Monday, July 27, and runs to Sunday, August 2. Visit acbl.org/virtual for details on how you can win DOUBLE points that are SILVER in a regular Virtual Club game!

New Scam Alert

Request to Purchase Gift Card: This scam is often directed at unit/district officers, but anyone could be targeted. In this scam, a request appears to come from someone you trust, like a fellow officer. The scammer asks you to purchase a gift card (often for the benefit of a charity) and then transmit the card number and pin number over the phone or via email. Do not share any payment information, including gift cards, over the phone or internet.

For more information on potential scams and measures to report them, visit acbl.org/scamalert.

Click here for the 2020 Online Event Schedule

[MyACBL](#) | [BridgeFeed](#) | [Virtual Games](#) | [Member Benefits](#) | [Renew](#)



American Contract
Bridge League



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American Contract Bridge League | [6575 Windchase Blvd., Horn Lake, MS 38637-1523](#)

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Sent by emailservices@acbl.org powered
by



How to Use ACBL Live to Get (Virtual) Club Game Results

22 JUL 2020

This works for **regular face to face club games** and for **virtual club games**, but not for Support Your Club Games or free unsanctioned games you play on BBO. For Those games see how to review your hand History on BBO.

Go to www.acbl.org:

ACBL American Contract Bridge League

MyACBL Join Us Renew

Search

Clubs Tournaments **Live** Races Teach Learn Juniors BridgeFeed About

Do you know someone who should be the Goodwill Member of the Year?

We invite you to nominate an outstanding fellow ACBL member from your bridge community. Nominations close October 15.

UPCOMING EVENTS

[NABC Online Robot Individual Results](#)

[Play Online For Masterpoints](#)

Click on "Live" to get:

ACBL LIVE American Contract Bridge League

Search LIVE Tournament Results

Search results by player name or ACBL member number

ACBL Number or Name (last, first)

ACBL LIVE FOR CLUBS

Looking for results from your club game? Live for Clubs is here!

[VIEW CLUB RESULTS](#)

To receive instant notification of your results via email or text message:

- Log into your MyACBL Portal
- Go to Privacy Settings

NABC Results

Regional Results

Sectional Results

GNT / NAP Results

Club Results

Other Results

Click on "View Club Results" to get:

ACBL LIVE FOR CLUBS

My Results Stephen Moese

CLUB Results

♥ Favorites

📍 Clubs in your Area

type club name or location

Show 10 entries Search:

Name	Club	Date	
#1003 SanJose Monday Night Bridge	San Jose Bridge Center	Jul 20, 2020	Results

Click on "Clubs in Your Area" to get:

CLUB Results

♥ Favorites

📍 Clubs in your Area

- 277210 - Pasadena Pomona Downey VBC (0.00 Miles)
- 277087 - Baywinds Duplicate Bridge Club (0.00 Miles)
- 276790 - Wood Bridge (0.00 Miles)
- 277251 - Non Life Master (0.00 Miles)
- 139402 - Cincinnati Bridge Assoc (6.39 Miles)
- 139162 - Thursday AM DBC (6.39 Miles)
- 275529 - Debbie's Wed Evening Game (6.39 Miles)
- 273953 - Queen City Duplicate at the CBC (6.43 Miles)
- 115949 - Deschappelles Bridge Club (6.43 Miles)
- 274944 - Pam's Games at CBC (6.43 Miles)
- 114389 - Middletown DBC (8.59 Miles)
- 235069 - Lebanon Duplicate Bridge Club (10.47 Miles)
- 265561 - Thursday Bridge Club (11.46 Miles)
- 149377 - Erie Ave Belles DBC (12.82 Miles)
- 265892 - Cincinnati Country Club (13.54 Miles)
- 269654 - Cavendish (14.17 Miles)
- 262576 - Sycamore Creek DBC (19.49 Miles)
- 112318 - Anderson Bridge Club (19.69 Miles)
- 248955 - Northern Kentucky Bridge Club (24.01 Miles)
- 197145 - MVBA Bridge Center (28.20 Miles)

There are only 3 Virtual Club Games in the CBA area (yellow highlight)

Click on the highlighted CLUB you played in to get the list of results by date:



Northern Kentucky Bridge Club

Florence, KY ([Club Website](#))

[Add to Favorites](#)

Recent Games

Date:

Show entries

Search:

Date	Event	Type	Session	Tables	Results
07/17/2020	#3363 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (MATCHPOINTS 1)	Club Rating Point	Fri Aft	9	Results
07/14/2020	#1528 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (MATCHPOINTS 1)	Club Rating Point	Tue Aft	8	Results
07/10/2020	#6620 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (MATCHPOINTS 1)	Club Rating Point	Fri Aft	10	Results
07/07/2020	#6028 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (MATCHPOINTS 1)	Club Rating Point	Tue Aft	7	Results
07/03/2020	#5323 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (18 bds/6 min)	Club Rating Point	Fri Aft	8	Results
06/30/2020	#5859 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (18 bds/6 min)	Club Rating Point	Tue Aft	8	Results
06/23/2020	#4416 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (18 bds/6 min)	Club Rating Point	Tue Aft	8	Results
06/19/2020	#2877 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (18 bds/6 min)	Club Rating Point	Fri Aft	10	Results
06/16/2020	#9817 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (18 bds/6 min)	Club Rating Point	Tue Aft	9	Results
06/12/2020	#63 Pairs NKBC/ANDERSON 1:45pm \$3 (18 bds/6 min)	Club Rating Point	Fri Aft	8	Results

Showing 1 to 10 of 99 entries

Previous ... Next

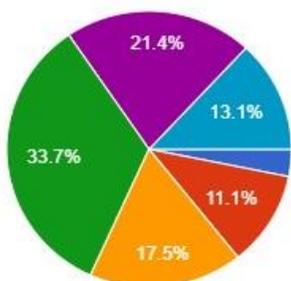
Click on "Results" for the game you played in to find your results.

To find results for free games not sanctioned by ACBL use [BBOMyHands](#)

Unit 124 Survey – Return to Face to Face Bridge

This survey was conducted from May 19 through May 26, 2020 by a link sent to members via Pianola. The questionnaire was promoted on the Unit website and during several Virtual Club Games on BBO. There are 887 Members in Unit 124. Of these 693 receive emails from the Unit and the ACBL. 194 of our members have chosen not to allow email communication. While an appeal for those members was made on the website for 5 days, only two members asked for the survey link. In all we received 252 responses – a 36% response rate – making this report representative of the Unit members polled.

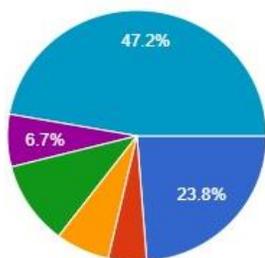
1) How many times per month did you play duplicate bridge in the Cincinnati Area from March 2019 to March 2020 prior to the pandemic? *(any of the Unit clubs: CBC, Anderson, NKBC, country clubs, Middletown, Lebanon, and Sycamore Creek) Choose ONE*
252 responses



- None
- 1 - 2 times per month
- 3 - 5 times per month
- 6 - 10 times per month
- 11 - 15 times per month
- 16+ times per month

None	8
1 - 2 times per month	28
3 - 5 times per month	44
6 - 10 times per month	85
11 - 15 times per month	54
16+ times per month	33

2) How many times have you played bridge online since March 12, 2020? *Choose ONE*
252 responses

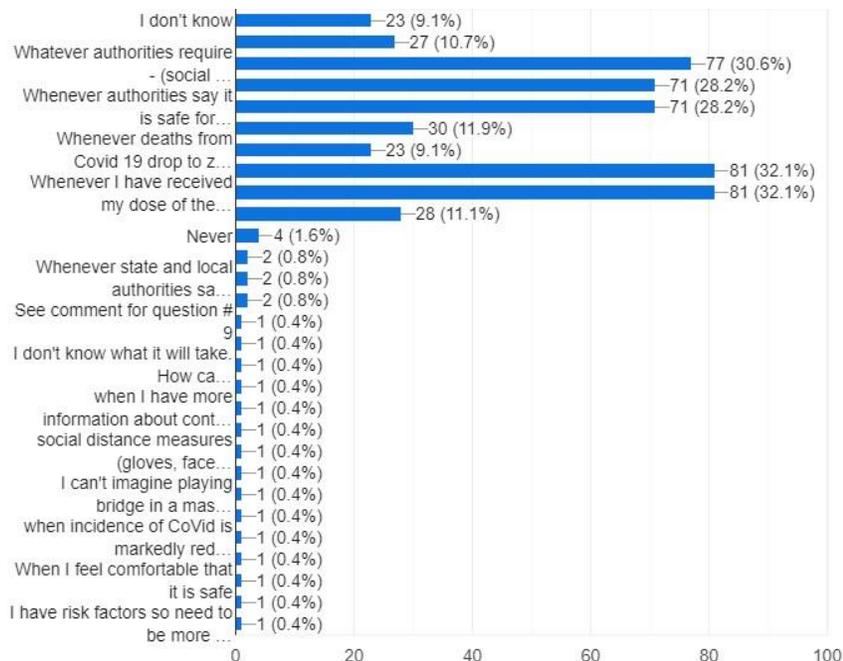


- None
- 1 - 2 times
- 3 - 5 times
- 6 - 10 times
- 11 - 15 times
- 16+ times

None	60
1 - 2 times	12
3 - 5 times	17
6 - 10 times	27
11 - 15 times	17
16+ times	119

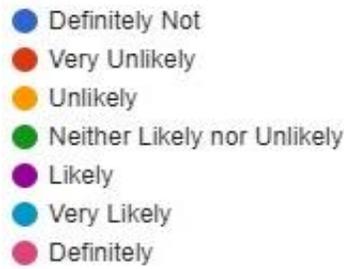
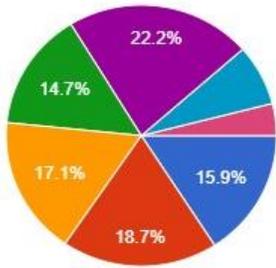
3) What information from the states and local authorities do you want before you intend to play face to face duplicate bridge again: *(Choose all that apply)*

Value	Count	OTHER	
I don't know	23	Barriers yes, my concern is the cards	1
None – I will play now if a bridge club were open.	27	Whenever state and local authorities sa...	2
Whatever authorities require - (social distance, masks, dividers, spacing, and more).	77	When everyone is required to wear a mas...	2
Whenever authorities say it is safe for mass gatherings without social distance measures.	71	See comment for question # 9	2
Whenever authorities say it is safe for elderly to gather in group of 100 or more.	71	When it's safe. Frankly, I don't it ha...	1
Whenever new cases of Covid 19 drop to zero and stay there	30	I don't know what it will take. How ca...	1
Whenever deaths from Covid 19 drop to zero and stay there	23	Whenever state and local authorities sa...	1
Whenever a vaccine proven safe and effective is available.	81	when I have more information about cont...	1
Whenever I have received my dose of the vaccine	81	whatever advice is offered from my Reti...	1
Sometime Later	28	social distance measures (gloves, face...	1
Never	4	Not certain if I'm ready to play yet, b...	1
		I can't imagine playing bridge in a mas...	1
		In general, I witness lack of hygiene p...	1
		when incidence of CoVid is markedly red...	1
		I don't have enough information at this...	1
		When I feel comfortable that it is safe	1
		CDC approved vaccine	1
		I have risk factors so need to be more ...	1



4) How likely would you be to play face to face bridge at your usual club if you had to observe social distance measures (gloves, face masks, temperature taking, barriers on tables, distance between tables, limitations on attendance)? (Check ONE)

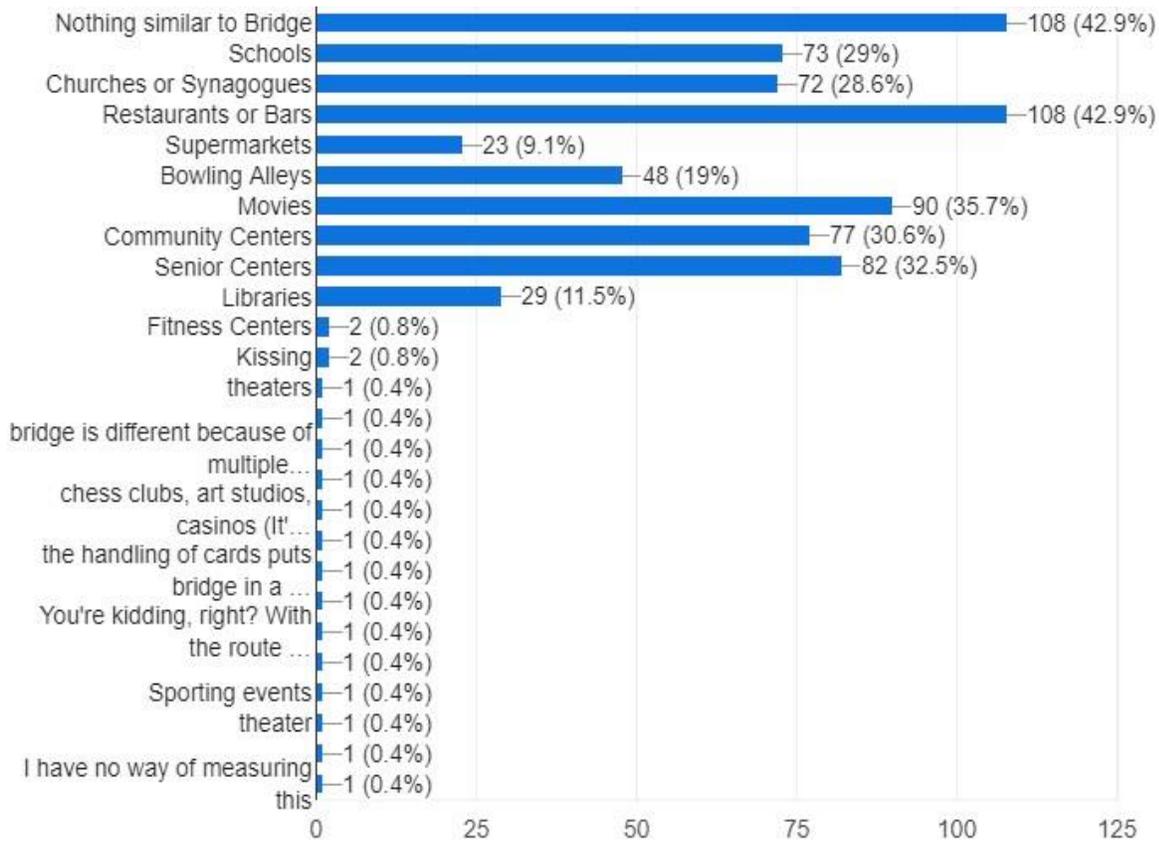
252 responses



Definitely Not	40
Very Unlikely	47
Unlikely	43
Neither Likely nor Unlikely	37
Likely	56
Very Likely	19
Definitely	10

5) What other entertainment venues have similar exposure risk to playing duplicate bridge face to face for 3- hours? (Check all that apply)

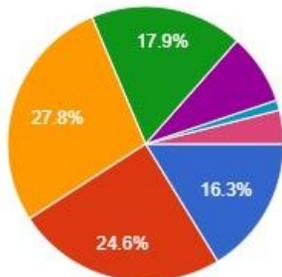
Value	Count	OTHER	
Nothing similar to Bridge	108	Fitness Centers	2
Schools	73	Kissing	2
Churches or Synagogues	72	theaters	1
Restaurants or Bars	108	All of the above venues have an exposure risk. I would consider face to face bridge an elevated risk exposure	1
Supermarkets	23	All of the above venues have an exposure risk. I would consider face to face bridge an elevated risk exposure .	1
Bowling Alleys	48	canasta, Mahjong, Pinochle	1
Movies	90	chess clubs, art studios, casinos (It's the shared cards that make the biggest problems.)	1
Community Centers	77	Any activities where people are stationary, in close contact or are touching a shared object	1
Senior Centers	82	the handling of cards puts bridge in a different category along with other high risk scenarios	1
Libraries	29	Ballroom dance	1
		You're kidding, right? With the route by which this particular disease moves, some of these are greater but none of them are less.	1
		sporting events,	2
		theater	1
		dancing, theater, concerts, bars	1
		I have no way of measuring this	1



6) How important is it to you that your favorite partners return to play face to face bridge at the same time?

(Choose ONE)

252 responses

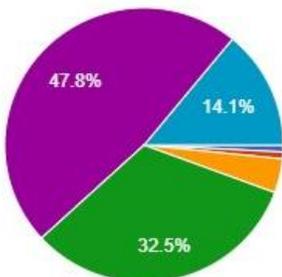


- Extremely Important
- Very Important
- Important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Unimportant
- Very unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

Extremely Important	41
Very Important	62
Important	70
Neither important nor unimportant	45
Unimportant	21
Very unimportant	3
Extremely Unimportant	10

7) Please choose the applicable range for your age *(choose ONE)*

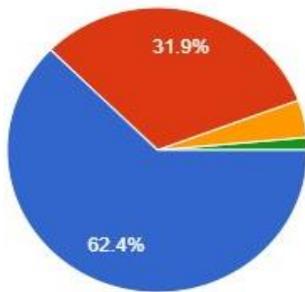
249 responses



- Under 40
- 40-50
- 51-60
- 61-70
- 71-80
- 81+

40-50	2
51-60	10
61-70	81
71-80	119
81+	35
Under 40	2

8) Please tell us how many miles you live from the club where you play most often (Choose ONE):
 141 responses (an error stopped this question from recording data beyond this point)



Under 10 Miles	88
11 - 20 Miles	45
21 - 30 Miles	6
31 - 40 Miles	2
41 + Miles	0

9) Please tell us anything that would help us make reopening clubs in our Unit feel safe and appropriate for you to return to face to face bridge:

- Reinforce safe behaviors. Encourage face masks. Eliminate finger foods and snacks. Consider using table barriers. Limit the people who attend to maintain self distance. Do not require gloves. Provide hand sanitizer.
- Risk is simply not worth it at this time. Will reconsider after Labor Day.
- I guess seeing the cases drop. We are the most vulnerable population and playing a game in the closest quarters touching all the same supplies. I'm happy online in my house.
- barriers mask on bidding box
- Clear guidelines, protocols and etiquette
- Complete transparency regarding cleaning protocols and expectations
- Better cleaning company
- Have a nurse test everyone the day before with the rapid test. If it is negative, they can play. Just wear a face mask.
- I will do whatever is required to play Bridge sooner than later.
- This is a tough one. I truly believe that most people will avoid face to face bridge until there is a vaccine.
- Tuff to know. Vern Goetz
- not too concerned about it. Ill people should not play and use common sense.
- I don't think you can guarantee safety.
- Unfortunately, I feel duplicate bridge is extremely high risk due to multiple types of exposure 😞
- I cannot imagine how the bridge center can make it risk free to touch the cards and boards that everyone else in the room is touching.
- NO snacks or coffee. Everyone face masks at all times. Table distancing. No rest room breaks without complete washing of hands and sanitizing at table before starting to play again.
- No
- Remain cautious in re-opening.
- You may need to limit attendance and have fewer boards
 More team games with duplicated boards so that they would be touched by one table only
 Perhaps an imp league may be more workable
- I would wear a mask if I had to. Social distancing is impossible so why talk about it?
- Serve no food
- hand sanitizers near tables or on tables (1 bottle per every 4 tables)
- I am enjoying online bridge so don't feel urgency to get back to the club.
- Everyone wears face masks. You are given a bidding box which you can take home to be sure no one else touches it. Everyone wears gloves so you don't have to touch cards other people have touched. Cards are sanitized after each game. Seats and tables are sanitized. Tables are 6 feet apart. Doors are kept open so you don't have to touch them to enter the club. No sharing of food or drinks.

- Entries by reservation only; limit games to 10-15 tables.
- Masks required (player provided and worn properly, i.e., over nose) and gloves provided would be great. Temps would be great also.
- Keep safety measures in effect. Use only 1 bidding box. Sanitize everything including boxes between games, keep careful records for contact tracing
- Considerate hygiene: managing cold symptoms, hand washing, touching food (public), putting hands to mouth and then touching common areas.
- Some way to avoid physically passing decks of cards around from person to person. Perhaps use of electronics, such as iPads.
- super clean tables, playing cards, card racks and bathrooms
- I would like physician input. The bridge center is not something the governor would know about. It's the highest risk activity I can think of for this demographic. 3 hours is longer than church!
- Knowing that if someone violates the policy (masks, etc) they will be removed immediately; everyone provide their own bidding boxes
- when I think that 40,000 to 60,000 people die each year of the Flu, and there is a vaccine for that, I am willing to take a chance and play face to face with the above precautions in place
- I would probably like to hear from some of our medical experts on what we should be doing or not.
- Figure out how we are not constantly touching the same cards
- No food, require masks, gloves, spaced tables, personal bidding boxes, only use cards once a week.
- barriers, masks
- I was disappointed that the club did not immediately close when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. Based on that, I will make my own decision of when I feel it is safe to return.
- I like playing on line, safe and comfortable, no need to get dressed, no transportation issues
- How do you sanitize the bidding boxes after each play
- All new bidding box inserts, new cards, wearing masks and gloves a requirement. Obviously, social distancing cannot happen around a bridge table.
- Immunization
- No food to snack on between, during or after the game. Bathrooms cleaned before and after each game. A person to wipe down the table doors and any other surfaces that may contain a corona virus germs.....
- Sanitary measures. Allowing masks, for example, would prohibit coughing into hands and touching faces - something which many of our players do although some are done inadvertently - out of habit.
- Some people often cough or sneeze and do so into their hands. Then do not wash hands. Old habits of coughing or sneezing into hands. "cover your mouth". Need to be more stringent about hygiene since we all touch the same cards!
- When face coverings are no longer suggested
- Maybe masks would be appropriate to start
- I don't feel comfortable going back to the bridge center because we all handle the cards, and the air circulation there isn't adequate. I don't mind wearing a mask. Gloves don't help because it takes a lot of tactile skill to fan cards, something hard enough now with my arthritic hands. The only thing that comes to mind to keep from transmitting germs on the cards is for everyone to have their own deck. Somehow the director could give each person a sheet with the cards for that hand, they would take them out of their own deck while not at the table, and play with those 13 cards. Do this for each hand. We should each have our own bidding box as well. Or maybe we bring laptops and play at the bridge center with our own laptop? Tablets would have to have a vertical rack to stay upright.
- A magic wand would help--and I'm not sure what else would suffice
- Glad its you and not me.
- Definitely barriers and gloves
- Eliminate Food, Sanitizers at each table, cards cleaned after games
- Vaccine available
- Restrict buffet style food until vaccines readily available. Individually wrapped food would be okay.
- we have an elderly population and a very high risk activity because of close proximity and handling of cards and boards. the handling issue probably will be very ill advised until vaccine has been utilized and herd immunity can be established.
- See Ques 3's Answer

- 1: If gloves are not required, alcohol pumps at each table. 2: Info to players that gloves are only helpful if you don't touch your face or food with the exposed gloves
- My favorite partners are very reluctant to return to the bridge center where cards would be shared, food and drinks shared, people could be coughing, and especially big gathering of people in small area where social distancing is difficult.
- Sensible and common sense procedures followed with rigor
- Wearing face masks
- Perhaps start with games that are typically small to find out how well things work, and to seek suggestions for health safety improvement. Also, a shorter game is a possibility, at least until the government leaders give an all clear.
- Nothing you can do because the media has succeeded in making most seniors totally afraid.
- Permit only food that participants bring in for their personal consumption. No more counters of uncovered food items.
- Be very cautious
- Unlock the doors and allow bridge playing
- Probably if temps are taken, hands are washed on arrival, and maybe sanitized between rounds, no eating at table +dividers installed(clear?),bring your own bidding box and the hope that others comply (this is the issue)
- When it's all over
- wearing a mask, I plan to wear gloves, greater spacing, everyone bring their own food and snacks and drinks and for the virus not to be increasing in Ohio but lowering for two or three weeks after this main lift of social distancing.
- Masks hand sanitizers
- social distance measures (gloves, face masks, temperature taking, barriers on tables, distance between tables, limitations on attendance)?
- Cannot see that it would be safe sharing same cards, boxes & chairs, tables etc.
- How do you sanitize the bidding boxes after each play
- A proven, available vaccine
- I don't know of anything that can make bridge safe. As long as we touch the same cards, boards, bidding boxes, tables, etc. over and over we will be in contact with anyone who is a virus carrier.
- Sanitizer use before and after bridge
- next week would be fine...the sooner we get started the better.....I would be happy to wear a mask...anything but let's play!
- No food, masks, limited number of people.
- Nothing you can really do
- I do not plan to return to the club anytime in the near future.
- personal bid boxes. Playing with tablets on computer hands
- Two years ago I was diagnosed with lung disease, but I do not look sick. No one knows yet. Too many people do not take the virus seriously enough nor are they concerned about others' health.
- I was disappointed that the club did not immediately close when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. Based on that, I will make my own decision of when I feel it is safe to return.
- Cannot be safe
- I am not anxious to play face to face with chronically sick people who may disguise their illness as allergies, etc. Based on some past experience with the local clubs.
- It's utmost important to take all measures and precautions before starting table bridge because most people are over 60 years
- Make sure that management operating the club are very responsible group to make sure that all comply with the regulations and also concerned about the well being of all the members. Management decisions should make safety as it's top priority.
- Social distancing and everyone wearing a mask
- 1. Have 4 tables arranged together in a square as one enlarged table (OR have barriers on tables) and have the tables 6' apart.
- 2. Have bidding boxes, boards, tables, chairs and doorknobs disinfected before people arrive.
- 3. Before beginning first round, everyone wash hands well AND use paper towels to turn off faucets AND to open doors to exit bathrooms.
- 4. Gloves, and masks with full coverage.
- 5. Have people move from table to table in one direction only.

6. Hand (glove) sanitizer at each position on every table which MUST be used before and after each round.

7. No food allowed.

- This is a created plan to take away civil liberties and make money for the drug companies
- Mask barriers own bidding box
- People coughing or sneezing in to or on to their cards and hands have to be mitigated somehow
- Clear dividers on the table, masks on players, and vinyl gloves on players.
- space the tables, sanitizers after each round, maybe check temps if convent
- No food, masks, limited number of people.
- The risks as specified by health specialists and the course of the epidemic become clear enough to make coming in close contact with others reasonable
- Requiring the use of hand sanitizer both before and after the play of each hand, or require wearing gloves.
- As long as we all take precautions - we can be safe.
- NO snacks or coffee. Everyone face masks at all times. Table distancing. No rest room breaks without complete washing of hands and sanitizing at table before starting to play again.
- vaccination, temperature taking, masks,
- I think that unfortunately Bridge is one of the most difficult activities to make compliant, because not only is there closeness, facing each other, difficult to put barriers up on each table, we play in room that is not circulated well, there is not currently staff to monitor restrooms. there would have to be frequent and longer breaks for restrooms for social distancing and staffing to clean while we are playing. It would have to be at a time when people could manage without eating or drinking because then you have to remove mask, and players are close together. dont' know about card dexterity playing with gloves. It there ever were an activiity that is COVID alien unfortunately bridge seems to be that.
- I would like plexiglass dividers and gloves. Masks are awful and one is constantly readjusting and putting hands to face.
- I like playing on line, safe and comfortable, no need to get dressed, no transportation issues
- Masks, gloves, temperature entry checks, disinfection prior to session essential. Barriers on each table not needed. Snacks and foods not a good idea.
- Space the tables, bring your own food, require hand sanitizers and masks
- I am concerned about the cards staying clean even with gloves. People with gloves on can still touch the mouth, nose, etc. and then pass on virus.
- See Ques 3''s Answer
- Being inoculated with a CDC approved vaccine
- Thank you for asking it's everybody touching the cards and gloves would take care of that.
- Probably if temps are taken, hands are washed on arrival, and maybe sanitized between rounds, no eating at table +dividers installed(clear?),bring your own bidding box and the hope that others comply (this is the issue)
- It's the card handling And bid box that may be the most difficult to solve
- New cards every game. Tables 6 fr apart temperature taken masks and gloves. New budding boxes
- I don't think you can prevent social interaction at the bridge center. Handling the cards and bidding boxes, not knowing the true health status of other players,, close proximity of people and objects make it difficult for me to feel safe.
- Need to consider how to clean cards and bidding box items with each hand. Barriers between players at table.
- When virus is gone
- just open
- It will be hard to screen out people who exhibit symptoms from playing.
- More extensive testing to get a realistic handle on the trends. Too many unknowns
- No food and no people with colds or other illness.
- No food, masks, limited number of people.
- The risks to high risk populations are pretty substantial at a bridge club. The story about the bridge clubs in Colorado that was on the front page of the New York Times should be enough to scare all of us. Would the CBA really want to have any responsibility for cover spreading among players? I am sure there are others who do not see it like that and will come, however it is highly unlikely that I would attend until the coast is clear.
- No food

- Follow science. Experts
- Hand sanitizer at every table, which doesn't seem practical
- A way to ask people who don't follow suggested guidelines to leave.
- We should have our own bidding boxes. People who are ill should. Be respectful and not come
- Let us be safe and not open prematurely and pay a price.
- be responsible in making the decision to re-open the club. Communication with club members is critical. We might consider having a members meeting before the first session to air out concerns.
- No food allowed. Everyone must follow restrictions with no exceptions
- Plenty of hand soap and people not come when coughing or sneezing
- face masks, temperature taking, & barrier on table are the three things I can tolerate.
- This is a difficult question to answer. I'm curious to see the results of the recently relaxed public openings. I know I cannot commit to return to face to face bridge now
- Cannot see that it would be safe sharing same cards, boxes & chairs, tables etc.
- Definitely barriers and gloves
- have participants bring their own bidding box
- handling cards that everyone touches is extremely problematic for me

10) Is there anything else that you would want us to know about your return to face to face bridge at your club and area tournaments?

- Please do not open before the State and local authorities say it is safe to do so.
- where can we get barriers
- I consider it irresponsible to play f2f bridge unless the only people you see are other bridge players. If you go to the grocery, you should not play f2f bridge. Zero active infections in the tri-state area or an approved vaccine should be the requirement.
- I would expect to return to club play for a while before making plans for tournaments
- I will do whatever is required to play Bridge sooner than later.
- looking forward to it!
- Nothing
- So long as the game involves touching cards that others have touched of coughed on I won't return, until I have had a vaccine that I'm confident will protect me.
- The virus will always be with us. We have to learn to live with it and safely return to our lives.
- The number of hands touching cards, the number of different opponents, the number of different seats and tables you come in contact with is the problem. Duplicate bridge has an extremely high level of exposure compared to many other activities.
- I'm willing to wear masks to shop, but I think wearing a mask for three hours in order to play at the bridge center would be very uncomfortable.
- Raise prices to play to compensate for reduced tables.
- No
- At time of re-opening, I think the following might help, but does not eliminate all risk
 1. Sanitizer at every table
 2. Eliminate food table
 3. Possibly get additional sanitizing services
 4. Have Clorox wipes available for discretionary use
 5. Mandate manual movement of bidding boxes.
- People who don't feel safe can stay home. Might as well let the rest of us come to play.
- Vaccine required
- if you are sick at all stay home
- no gloves - still touch everything and can't be sanitized between rounds like bare hands.
- Would be easier to start after lunch (12:30/1 pm) so there is no eating involved.

- You did not ask if we've played sanctioned bridge on-line, such as SYC, which I have not.
- I can concentrate better playing online because it moves faster. I am new and feel less manipulated by opponents' bidding .
- I would not feel safe to return under the normal prior circumstances. I can't think of a more unhealthy environment than passing decks of cards around among players. I have similar concerns about my fitness club. It is now a different world. We will have to adapt. It may be the future is online.
- I am pretty risk averse when it comes to COVID-19. My lungs don't do well with any kind of respiratory infection. I will be cautious about coming back.
- cannot imagine sitting down at a table ,even with barriers and handling cards that others have handled. i probably would not come back until after the 1st of the year.
- There should be absolutely no food available or brought in
- Hope I will find a partner that is willing to do the same as I .
- We all want to get this right. If we come back too soon, or come back and have an outbreak at the bridge center, we could do lasting damage to our club and members.
- How will you enforce rules? People came sick to BC before virus and some have bad personal hygiene/habits. Recent info states the longer you are in the presence of virus, the more likely you are to get it. Perhaps have to cut game length down. No known guarantee that a person is not carrying virus (asymptomatic). Legal ramifications if someone is sick and spreads virus (like Colorado Springs BC).
- No
- Nothing
- Everyone should have their own bidding box...and carry it to each table.
- Unfortunately, food service might have to curtailed for safety reasons, at least initially.
Thank you for sending this. I hope you have a large response, particularly from those who are not currently playing.
- When risk for older adults is very low
- It's a high risk situation and I would make a very conservative decision about when to return. But I do miss seeing everyone.
- given the prevailing age of our club players I do not feel the center can safely reopen before there is a vaccine
- Everyone playing should answer a health questionnaire and pledge
- Data on the fresh air exchange at the bridge center, how many exchanges per hour, info on the sanitizing of the tables, chairs, etc. Disinfectant wipes for the table and chairs available.
- It's going to be a problem to get people to return.
- As much as I like bridge, I will not risk exposing myself and family until vaccinations are readily available.
- Just because State or Local officials say it's okay to return with groups of 100, that would be far from my green light to do so. I would look to the scientists views and statistics for Hamilton Cty
- Snacks are out. People should bring their own and even better to not eat while touching cards. Maybe drinks only during the session.
- I think people miss the face to face bridge games but are very wary about returning to the bridge center or any gathering of people where items are shared and physical distancing is difficult.
- I intend to be cautious about when to resume playing, since I do have multiple risk factors.
- playing at a small NKBC is very different from Flying Pig. But the future may change quickly.
- No
- My spouse and I are both age 65+; no health issues; but I still would not want to expose myself/spouse to Covid-19
- as long as we are all careful...let's play
- i will be very reluctant to return this year
- I'm high risky
- I do think the clubs' owners should make the decision. People can choose to come or not, whatever they are comfortable with.
- No
- Not going to happen
- I don't want to take a chance just yet on face to face bridge. I have no idea when I would be ready.
- Can't say not

- The only reason I don't currently play face to face bridge (and haven't substantially in the past 5 years) is my life is just full of too many other things right now. I actually hope to return somewhat soon now that the kids are getting older. When I do return, I generally play in NKY where I live.
- Safety biggest concern for all.
- ready to play
- i will be very reluctant to return this year
- plastic barriers in front of each player would be expensive but quite reassuring
- If it is decided we need to wear masks and gloves, I will certainly try to do that. It might be uncomfortable enough that I might limit the number of times I do play.
I really appreciate all you are doing to get the club reopened. Good luck, as it will not be at all easy to keep all members happy, even in the best of times!
- Bridge is important for the ability to socialize - and keep our brain active.
- Raise prices to play to compensate for reduced tables.
- I do not want to have or give the virus to anyone.
- I am sure that others will feel more comfortable, however age wise I am in a vulnerable group and my husband is even more vulnerable because he is having chemo for cancer. We are taking stay at home very seriously. Only out a few times for shopping at quiet times for groceries, usually ordering through instacart, Have been outside for walks, keeping social distance and wearing masks if others around.
- I miss you guys.
- I think it will be later rather than sooner, which is disappointing to me. I feel I will have lost most of my frequent Bridge Center partners, and I'm unlikely to enjoy playing bridge for bridge's sake w/o a partner I know and enjoy.
- Nothing
- No
- Just because State or Local officials say it's okay to return with groups of 100, that would be far from my green light to do so. I would look to the scientists views and statistics for Hamilton Cty
- I respect the way the club is addressing the COVID-19 issue
- I would be very uncomfortable if I had to wear a mask.
- I wish you well and I wish we were not in this health situation, I think it is going to be difficult for elderly people to return to normal activities and bridge players are old!!! Thank you for continuing to try.
- No
- I will be cautious
- I would need to be tested to make sure I was at least initially COVID-19 free before resuming face to face bridge
- i will be very reluctant to return this year
- Assurance that people who are ill are not there
- Is there a way to sanitize cards between rounds? Wearing gloves that have been exposed just passes on the risk.
- Limit numbers Clean and sterilize
- no. People just use common sense
- None
- Not at the moment...I'm definitely waiting to see what happens in the next few months. I really miss all of my bridge friends!
- No
- From everything I have read the most dangerous situation is an airconditioned room in which you spend more than 1 hour. Second is a small bathroom used by many people. Add to that touching cards, getting coffee, etc and the bridge center is a problem irrespective of the social distancing.

I write that with extreme sorrow as I truly enjoy the social aspect of bridge--which is one reason I am not currently playing on line.

I expect I would come back in the fall when we can turn off the air conditioning and/or install a better air recirculating system for both the center and bathrooms. I also would recommend a time change from prior to lunch to 1230 or 1 to limit food, and that the director pour coffee and tea for participants. With some social distancing, I think by then we will have a better understanding of the issues that may allow us to meet again.

Interestingly, I am not as concerned about myself as I am about my young grandchildren--given the recent news

on the problems they may face. I need to convince my children and their spouses that I am engaging in some social distancing and there is no way I can justify meeting at the bridge center at this time.

Currently I am playing golf, tennis, and meeting friends outdoors--at home and, perhaps, outdoor restaurants. That is what I am planning on doing this summer and will revisit the issues in the fall---when I expect that we will have more answers about how to treat this if we become ill---because I am not counting on a vaccine.

Best wishes, and hope to see you in the not so distant future at the bridge table.

END

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