



Newsletter

July–September 2020

Playing NVBA Collective and Other “Virtual Club” and Tournament Bridge Games on BBO

by Marty Bley



Where do I start? At the beginning? Okay that’s a very good place to start! “You should have a tune rolling around in your head now!”

Joining BBO is as easy as setting up an email account....no, I take that back—it is *easier*. There are countless videos about how to join, how to navigate around BBO, how to PLAY a hand, how to claim when the rest of the tricks are yours, how to start a table of your own, how to sign up for a tournament, how to chat, how to add friends, how to alert your OWN bids, yes, you heard me correctly ALERT your OWN bids (self-alerting is required), HOW TO FILL OUT A CONVENTION CARD!!!! (If you haven’t done that with your partners, you need to do that. It is important!!!!), and how to update your ACBL number if you didn’t add it when you signed up the first time. Click [here](#) to look at a video about using BBO. If you GOOGLE “BBO Video” you will probably get another group of choices. I have watched multiple ones by different people, and I have learned something EVERY time. NOTE: If you don’t know how to do ALL those things I mentioned up there, please learn SOON. It will make it much more fun for YOU, for your opponents and for the director of the game!

The NVBA Collective was started to support YOU (yes, you and even those who don’t read this) *first* and your favorite *director*S (note the BIG S, because I hope there is more than one favorite!) second. Not all of them belong to the NVBA Collective. Kevin and Livingston decided to venture out on their own. And that is fine! The Collective’s games do not compete with either Kevin’s games or Livingston’s. WBL also has some games available other than the Joint Thursday night NVBA-WBL Unit game that has open, 0-2500, 499er, 199er and 0-20

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NVBA Board Meetings:

We are holding meetings using Zoom and we welcome any NVBA member who wishes to attend. The next meeting will be at 10 am on Sunday, July 26. Look out for the Zoom link in the NVBA email the previous week.



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sections when enough players sign up. Click [here](#) to see the schedule.

There are LOTS of game choices available on BBO. There are ONLY two types of games on BBO that support YOUR local bridge club. One is the Support Your Club (ACBLSYC) Games. These are offered three times a day every day, seven days a week. The times are: 10 am, 5:10 pm and 7:30 pm. When we first started this adventure, if you didn't sign up for the 10 am or 5:10 one within the first 45 minutes or so, you didn't get to play in them. Once there were virtual club games to choose from, the SYC games became easier to sign up for. These earn you ACBL black points and cost \$6.00. \$2.00 goes to BBO, 25 cents of every entry goes to ACBL, and \$3.75 is divided between all the clubs you played F2F (Face-to-Face) bridge in before the shutdown. That money is sent directly to the club manager.

The second way to support your local clubs is by playing in the Virtual Club games that were started by various club managers and/or directors. In most places there is one club that acts as the "Cost Center". [NOTE: They have this "master/servant or master/slave" terminology, which is repugnant to me, so I have changed it to Cost Center. All the other clubs are "under" it.] So, in our case, the Unit Game is the cost center, and all the various NVBA Land clubs and the four clubs from Maryland are in our Collective. A Virtual game can Share or Pool players from its player list to other virtual clubs, which is why we can play in Kevin's Games, Livingston's games, WBL games and Mark Lavine's games, and they can all play in ours if they wish. This \$\$ goes mostly to the Virtual Club Cost Center. We have agreed in our area to charge \$5.00 per person. \$1.00 of that entry fee goes to BBO. BBO sends the rest of it to ACBL, and ACBL sends the \$\$ to the Cost Center. Once it arrives at the Cost Center, the director fees are paid to the various directors. In our case they are Eugene Schuyler, Howard Stevens, Jay Simon, Jim Gerding, and Marty Bley. The table fees are paid to ACBL from it. If you want to know how much that is, you can COUNT up the tables for April and then May. Roughly it is \$1.00 per table...except for Silver Linings Week, it was \$6.00. Jim Gerding and Ann Atcheson, the NVBA Treasurer, are in charge of that ;-) I'll wait while you find it and count. (How do you do that? Go to the results and count up the tables for every game held in April, then every game held in May... Pretty impressive ;-)



Do you remember this?

Livingston, Kevin, Mark and WBL are their own Cost Centers, so when you play in their games, they get all the \$\$ from their virtual games. Back to the Collective \$\$\$. Once all the expenses are paid, the remainder of the \$\$\$ is divided up among the other clubs in the Collective according to their table count for January 2020 to Shutdown in the beginning of March 2020. Some club directors elected not to receive money but to distribute it across the rest of the collective or to give it to a particular club director. Ann issues checks to the various clubs in the collective based on the table count and distribution of the non-participating clubs. The \$\$ is usually deposited by the 10th of the month for the preceding month, and Ann has usually taken care of the accounting tasks and mailed the checks shortly afterwards.

You are on the NVBA Collective list if you won masterpoints in one of these club's games: Virginia Clubs: Arlington County DBC, Arlington 55+, Army Navy CC DBC, Beth El DBC, Loudoun Bridge Buffs, Middleburg Bridge Club, Mt. Tabor Bridge Club, Northern Va Unit 218 (COST CENTER - Jim Gerding), Fairfax Duplicate Club, Four H's DBC, Glen Carlyn DBC, Lansdowne Clubhouse, Little Falls DBC, RSVP Bridge Club, Sterling Duplicate Bridge Club, The Friday Game, The Thursday Game, The Virginian, and Westminster Lake Ridge. Maryland

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Clubs: Camp Springs DBC, Clark Center DBC, DBC of Southern Maryland and Lusby DBC. We also have a list of players that are permitted to play in other virtual clubs in our area, i.e. Kevin O'Brien's Virtual Club, Livingston Johnson's Virtual Club, the WBL Virtual Club and Mark Lavine's Virtual Club.

If you wish to see the financials for any month, you can go to the NVBA.ORG webpage and find the link to the financials for every month previously. They are reviewed and approved at each monthly board meeting and then posted to the website. Same for the minutes of the NVBA Board meetings. They are taken, and approved at the next month's meeting and then posted. When you have some time, go read some of them. Click [here](#) for the financials. Click [here](#) for the minutes.

Virtual game Masterpoints are black and for now they are 50% more. What exactly does that mean? Well, when the results come up, you get BBO points, and let us say you earned .50 for your effort. When the results are posted on ACBL Live, you will have received .75 (50% more). During Silver Linings week you received 3X more.

If you play in a BBO Speedball tournament or other BBO type game, your points are colorless. When Online bridge first started you were only allowed to accrue so many online points before they stopped counting. Thankfully someone pointed out to them the error of their ways...ACBL that is, and so now when you look at your points you will see Black, Red, Gold, Silver and Online points. Online points don't count toward annual award competitions, such as the Mini-McKenney or Ace of Clubs, but they do count in your total. BBO "Tournaments" (games) generally cost \$1.25 or \$1.35 or \$1.75. When you play in them you will meet some of your friends, but mostly you will be playing with people from ALL over the world. And the masterpoint payout amount isn't very good, but you aren't paying much money to play, so why should it be good? VERY little (if any) of the money you pay for speedball tournaments goes to ACBL. It all stays with BBO.



Stratification is by the highest person in the section...the person with the most points is the top, and then all other pairs are grouped in thirds. So, the Top Third are A, the Middle Third is B, and the Bottom Third is C. If Ross and I were playing in a section where many-time National and World Bridge event champions Eric Rodwell and/or Jeff Meckstroth were playing, we would be C's maybe. If we were playing in a section where the highest-ranked player was local top player Ken Davis, we would probably be B's. So, it all depends on who is the top. Likewise, when one section has Eric Rodwell in it as the top and another section has Ken Davis in it, and they both win their section, that would determine the other winners in the other strats as well. You could earn a 50% in Rodwell's section and win points, but in Ken's Section a 50% wouldn't put you in the money...or vice versa. I get questions about this all the time. Look at the percentages, look at the Strat you were placed in (A, B or C), compare the % and Strat level across your section and other sections, and you will see how it works.

Seeding: Right now, at the time of this writing (June 26, 2020) there is NO seeding done on BBO or in the virtual games. That is not OUR choice; that is how the software that BBO uses works. I have played in games where the Top A players never meet...not good. The virtual club directors and managers have asked for seeding, and it is on the TO DO list with a lot of other stuff, some of which is more important and some of which isn't. So hopefully it will be coming soon.

Team games! Part One! I have gotten LOTS of questions about when we can have Team games. Right now, you and your teammates can find another foursome and play a team game on BBO between the 8 of you. How do you do it? From the BBO Home page, you click

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on "COMPETITIVE." Under "OTHER COMPETITIVE GAMES" you click on "Team Matches." Then click on "Create Team Match." A box will appear to give the Match a Title. You can put in your team name vs. xx team name, or whatever you want to call the match. You put in a name for Team 1 and a name for Team 2. Then click on "Create Team Match." You will get two boxes where you must enter the BBO names of all eight participants. You enter ALL of your team's BBO names in one box and the other team's names in the second box. Then when all names are entered and you start the match, the software will move your teammates to the other table.

Team Games! Part TWO! It is my understanding that Team games with more than two teams, such as Knockouts and Swiss Team events, are on the TOP of that list that ACBL and BBO programmers are working on developing. Perhaps in the next couple of weeks there will be a NOTICE about it. Stay Tuned!

Partners in OTHER parts of the country! So, when this all began, there was a plan in place to let people ONLY play with the people in their club, virtual that is, and the people were limited to play with ONLY those people. So, I couldn't play with my friend who lives in Florida or my brother who lives in Philadelphia or my father who is in heaven...wait, No...sorry. The criterion that was used for being able to play in a particular virtual club was you had to have won master points in that club in 2019 or 2020. Reasonable? Yes, except you and I know of people who might play a whole year without earning any points....so they expanded it to GNT or NAP participants...still not big enough. You see the problem is that, prior to ACBL LIVE postings, at the end of the month when club directors sent in the reports of masterpoints won in their games and paid their table fees, the options were to report ALL Players in the game AND masterpoint winners OR just report masterpoint winners. Some club directors chose the latter, so if you didn't win, they didn't know you were there ;-(

If you remember the first VIRTUAL game some of you played in, you were blocked! One reason was that you weren't on our "user" list. WHY? Well, it could be that you didn't win any points in that club game in 2019/2020. OR it could be that you went to Florida in October and so you were on your Florida Club's Virtual player list but not ours...because you see they didn't want you in two, really. OR it could be that your ACBL number was not associated with your BBO account. I and some of the other club directors have sent out instructions about making sure you enter your ACBL number in your BBO account. OR it could be that you were one of the 50,000 people who had NEVER played online bridge before in your 60 years of playing bridge, and NOW all of a sudden you have NO Choice but to do the online thing! And, of course, you needed to be associated with a Virtual club, and because there were 49,999 other people, you fell through the cracks...but we got you now! PLEASE note: They purged the User Lists on June 22, in the wee hours of the morning, so you MIGHT have had to be added again. Until you sign up once...best to sign up early, that way if there is a problem you can contact the director of the game and the director of the game can fix it for you!

You are thinking...50,000, boy is she exaggerating...NOPE I am not. When I first joined BBO over 20 years ago, if there were 10,000 people on line, it was A LOT. By the end of March 2020 there were 40,000 on line. BBO added another server...fast forward to 60,000 on line at once in the end of April/middle of May, and that is when they put the Casual Players AKA Party bridge/social bridge players on another server and left the duplicate/virtual games on the Lobby server.

Okay, so back to the partner deal. When it first started in March, they thought the SYC games would be for you and your Mom to play, when she lives in Maine, or you and your son to play when he lives in California, or you and your sister to play when she lives in South Caro-

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lina, because she/he has their OWN virtual club they can play in with the partnerships they have established there. AND you have your own partnerships here where you live that you have established. BUT, why wouldn't I want to play with my Mom/Sister/Son...now that I can online, and why wouldn't I want to do it IN my club, so that my friends could "meet" them? Perfectly logical...except that the powers that BE didn't see it that way. They saw it as your Mom/Sister/Son/Friend being "stolen" by our club from the club they belonged to. That wasn't the intention or even the thought...SO we had this form we had to fill out and submit, which basically said that the Mom/Sister/Son/Friend could play in OUR virtual club with YOU, and YOU could play in their virtual club with them. And it was up to the two of you to be equitable in your games played in either place. In addition, partnerships that hadn't existed for years were reestablished in the early weeks of online play, and THEY wanted to be able to play with one another in either virtual club. They were INUNDATED with requests! So about 40 days ago, they decided NO more requests to be added are allowed. They were not going to UNDO the ones that had been done. (EXCEPT THEY did, when they purged the lists on June 22 ;-)) The NEW way to handle it is to BE a GUEST! So if you want to play with your MOM or SON or SISTER or FRIEND in OUR virtual game, they can be a guest...you could do the same in their virtual club, and I hope you do "share" yourself with their club too.

How exactly does the guest thing work? Glad you asked. To be a guest, you must tell the Director ahead of time. The day before is best, but the day of is okay, preferably BEFORE the signup window is open. The director account for the NVBA Collective is VACB139840, so you can add that account as a Friend on BBO, and if you see them online on BBO the day before or the day you plan to play, you can send them a message with the BBO name of the partner you want to play with, and have them added. Or you can send an EMAIL to jimgerding@verizon.net or campspringsduplicatebc@gmail.com (Marty Bley) indicating that you and your GUEST want to play. You give us the BBO user name of your partner. That said, you should register EARLY, so that in case someone forgot to add your guest name or some other issue crops up, we can deal with it and VOILA, you can play that game with them. We would like 24 hours' notice, but can live with 12 and patience ;-)) The names have to be added the day of, because overnight the lists are purged of non-members automatically.

You can also be a GUEST in their virtual club, following the same rules. Please understand that this is for occasional partnering. If you want to play with them every week, or once a day, then you should arrange to play in a SYNC game with them. Both of you will be supporting any club that is in your profile as a player prior to shutdown of F2F bridge.

Your next question is how often can I do this? We are not permitted to have more than 5% of guests seated at our tables. So that is one person for every five tables of our players. My suggestion is that you play with your Guest partner, one week in our game, and the next week in their game. If you want to play more frequently than that, you need to email us and someone, not me, needs to do math ;-)) and they will get back to you!



In no particular order the following situations have occurred. This is FYI for you!

1. Robots will be used as SUBS, especially in limited games. When we have robots sitting in for the sitout, we adjust their scores. Why? Because there is a possibility they will win, and we think you should get the points, not the robots.

What we would REALLY like is for you to SUB for one of our games. If you
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would like to try that, you need to sign up as a sub and tell the director of the game you want to be one of the subs if one is needed, and then you wait. You don't pay if you sub. We still pay BBO and ACBL fees for you if you sub, but that is okay, we like you;-)

2. Schedule: We have added 0-20 games. It doesn't cost us to put them in the schedule. The Thursday night is big ;-). The others hopefully will grow. There is one a day. They are Monday/Wednesday and Friday mornings, Tuesday afternoon and Thursday night. It was requested by some 0-20 players to have day time games. I don't think they have played in them yet ;-). (We will not take them out for a while....to give them a chance to be played. If there are not 6 pairs 3 minutes before game time, we will pull the game and those players can sign up for the 499er game that is being played at that time. We also have a 199er game 4 times a week and a 499er game 5 days a week. There is a 999er ONLY on Thursdays. There are OPEN games twice a day Monday through Friday. We are trying to make some of them speed-ball events (5 minutes per board), haven't been very successful with that so far, but we aren't going to give up quite yet.

3. Convention cards: It is necessary for you and your partner to have one filled out. Once you fill one out and you put your partners BBO user name in the partner slot, it will FOLLOW you and your partner EVERYWHERE you go. You won't have to remember it or load it or anything, unless the loading software isn't working that day. If, however, you do NOT have a convention card filled out for the person you are playing with for a game, the Default card will be the Standard American Yellow Card (SAYC). You will be expected to USE that system if that is the card that is loaded. When you played F2F Bridge prior to the March Shutdown, you had a card with you for every partner you played with. THIS is NO different. It is required and expected and as we find partnerships with no card, we will request that you fill one out. Repeated abuses of this will be dealt with accordingly. As opponents playing at a table with a pair with no card filled out and the default SAYC card loaded, if you do not TELL the director running the game, the director will not know. We do not look to see a CC for people unless we have been informed that they don't have one previously. IF YOU NEED Help filling one out ASK!!

4. When you first arrive at a table, it is nice to give a brief overview of your playing style. As in "Hi Opps! 2/1, standard carding" or whatever is pertinent for you and your partner. Likewise N/S could say, "Hi, Opps, Welcome, Precision, o/e discards". There is a way to save these in the "Chat Manager" so that you don't have to type them over and over. Want to know how???? Hmmm... I wonder who knows?

5. Timed Event: Virtual Bridge is also a timed event, right down to the second. You have 21 minutes to play three boards, 14 minutes to play 2 boards....SEVEN minutes per board. WE the directors have NO control over the clock. We can't add a minute or take away minutes. YOU can take away minutes if EVERYONE playing finishes a round with 5 minutes to go, EVERYONE is whisked to the next round when everyone is finished the present round. IF one table is still working at 20 minutes and 59 seconds at 21 minutes everyone is whisked to the next round. THIS is why we ask you to CLAIM when you have the rest instead of playing out each card one at a time. So then You play all the cards in the hands instead of the software figuring out what you would have done. OR the director having to figure it out if the software cannot. That way if you mess up, you got no one to blame/fuss at except for yourself. We cannot change this feature, so PLEASE do your part by claiming when you can.



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6. Responding to people at the table is done by CHAT. There is TABLE chat and PRIVATE chat. You will know it is PRIVATE because it has the word PRIVATE between the person who sent it to you and the message. If it is PRIVATE you should answer privately. TO DO THAT click on the word PRIVATE and the persons profile will come up, you can type your message to them PRIVATELY. This is especially helpful when an opponent wants clarification about a bid you made and forgot to alert OR a bid you made and didn't alert that should have been alerted. The sender doesn't want anyone to know that a question was asked except for the two of you. When you don't respond privately but respond to the whole table there is Unauthorized Information out there and the director can be called.

7. Lessons on Thursday! If you aren't aware, professional player Jeff Roman, who lived in our District for many years, is back and doing the lessons on Thursday via Zoom! If you don't know who he is...take my word for it HE is MOST excellent. When Ross and I were playing in the 199er game he did the lessons every week, until he moved to Oregon ;-). He has done 3...I missed this past Thursdays, sad to say. But I won't miss anymore. There is a link sent out in the weekly NVBA emails with the time and topic etc. Don't miss the next one!

6. Psyching! If an opponent psychs at your table in one of our virtual games, please call the director as SOON as you realize it happened. Excessive psyching and psyching by experienced players against beginners are considered unsportsmanlike and will be treated as disciplinary offenses. If you don't know what I am talking about, educate yourself by googling Psych bids in bridge and read!

7. Cheating! I sure hope no one is, talking or texting with their partner on the phone while they are playing in the virtual club. Can we tell? Well, yes...you see when you talk to one another about certain things you might do better than the other people, and when it is suspected that you are doing that, the algorithm is applied and a record is kept. A warning is issued, if it isn't heeded then the authorities are notified and evidence is gathered and you are notified and the consequences are dealt out. Right now several ACBL members are under suspension, including two in our area who were found to be cheating. If they violate the terms by playing bridge online, the consequences will be severe. If they are caught repeating the behavior during the two-year probation period following their suspension, their membership in ACBL will be terminated.

8. Tournaments! So far, ACBL has run two regionals online to allow ACBL members the opportunity to win red and gold points; the second one was June 25-28, 2020. The second one had many more events, including two double sessions of Gold Rush Pairs daily. ACBL plans to run more of them. Apparently 60 people played in ALL 16 sessions of the Regional Event! I bet they were tired on Monday! Jamie Dalhberg did quite well in the events he played in! In case you don't know, ACBL will not be staffing face-to-face bridge tournaments for the remainder of 2020 so all of our local sectionals and regionals for this year have been canceled. I suspect it will be longer than that. So far, they have run one event that offered the opportunity to win silver points online. That was Silver Linings Week – it was in May. The Virtual clubs held it. LOTS of Silver points were won! I don't know when the next one will be held, but hopefully soon! The Longest Day was also celebrated June 20/21. Lots of people participated. It still isn't too late to donate to Bridge Heroes and support the Alzheimer's Association. Go to the [webpage](#) to donate!

I guess that is enough for now. Please stay safe! Add Moosicth and Bossyross to your friends list on BBO, so you can say Hi to Ross and me at the table, when we meet!

Hugs,
Marty

Jack of Hearts

By Marshall Kushner

With no NABCs to report on and the country in a state of unrest, the following story is relevant.

Most of you have heard of the Tuskegee Airmen, the Army Air Force unit that served mostly in Europe during WWII. Their primary duty was bomber escort service. So skilled were they that in over 1500 missions, they lost not a single bomber. They were also all African Americans, although no one called them that back then. This was still the time of Jim Crow and, despite their record, they were subjected to the same abuse as others of their race. Last summer, I read with interest that one of the last survivors of that unit had passed away. His name was Col. Robert Friend, and I had met him once. The thing is, at the time I had no idea he was such a hero. I knew him only as a bridge player. I also knew that over forty years after the war ended, the abuse had not. The Jack of Hearts tried in vain to right the wrong that was done to him and his partner. The story below is excerpted from the Southern California Bridge News in 1989.

* * * * *

“Upon the fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds, that on other fields on other days will bear the fruits of victory.”

—Gen. Douglas MacArthur

I long admired the poetic quality of MacArthur’s words, but I began to wonder if the fields of friendly strife might not also be a proper place to sow the seeds of brotherhood? I began to muse about this at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles during a morning session that featured qualifying heats in the 100-meter dash. The first four finishers in each heat advanced to the next round while the rest retired to the sidelines. “What an incredible waste,” I thought. “A lot of money is spent to send a guy over here from Korea or New Zealand or Qatar, and his entire Olympic experience is over in ten seconds.” Then the light went on. Something about being there made me realize that while his Olympic “participation” might have lasted ten seconds, the experience went on the full sixteen days. For sixteen days, these young men and women, whether they won or lost, interacted with winners and losers from other nations, shared their common striving, their triumphs and their disappointments. For sixteen shining days in the crucible of competition, lasting friendships were forged and, more importantly, myths were destroyed. Whence they came and whither they went, each Olympian took back to his native land the message that folks from elsewhere, hey, they’re just like us.

The Epsom (Worldwide) Pairs seemed the best hope for achieving something like that in bridge. Remember the first year the game was held? Wasn’t it exciting to compete with players around the world, to know that they were staying up until the wee hours in Europe and getting up at 6 am in Asia to compete against you? People on the East Coast, for goodness sakes, were playing through dinner. That first year, the top mixed pair in each district was invited to play in the World Championships in Miami. Since then, however, the game seems to have lost some of its luster. The bugs have never quite been worked out and the promise seems to have exceeded the reality.

This was best illustrated in 1988, when a little-known pair, Mr. Willis Troy and Col. Bob Friend, finished first at the Culver-Marina club in California. Two fouled boards resulted in a reduction of their score, but still left them with a very nice 1691 (70.45%). The scoring process was long to begin with, and the fouled boards, which were reported the following morning, delayed it further. By the time the club finished processing, the reporting deadline to HQ

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Climbing the Ladder

New Junior Masters

Seema Behl
Paul Bernstein
Paula Ferrey
Barbara P Frisbie
Zander B Kuebler
Melvin Lew
Arnold Meyers
Mitchell Wiener

New Club Masters

Shahla Batmangheijdj
Allison Horn
Roy H Reuter
Louise M Rosenburgh
George Saile
Sharon Saile
Mala Vasudevan

New Sectional Masters

Dr Sylvester C Booker
Leslie Kenne
Dr Jon Labadie
Romey A McPherson

Linda K Moncrief
Cindy J Nusbaum
Chuck Wolfson
Murray A Yost
Sheila R Zedlewski

New Regional Masters

Sartaj Alag
Will D Downs Jr
Anne Hastings
Dan Heily
Jonathan L Ramseur

New NABC Masters

Jason E Carter
Benjamin S Sharp
Ruth A Warren

New Advanced NABC Masters

Becky A Killbourne
Atish Sanyal
Ellen Simonoff
Nancy S Smagala
Michael Sofocleous

New Life Masters

John Graf
Paula Mohler
Michael K Siebenhaar

New Bronze Life Masters

Pat Cook
Gary E Scavongelli

New Silver Life Masters

Barbara I Hodges
Alan B Munro
Rita H Winkel

New Gold Life Masters

Hal W Jones Jr
Marvin D Raines
Barry S Sparks
Ron Sutter

New Sapphire Life Master

Jeffrey Klemm

New Diamond Life Master

Helen Cheng



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had passed. When the winners were published in the ACBL Bulletin, Troy and Friend were not listed. Nor were they included when a revised list was published. Willis Troy dashed off letters to all concerned and received apologetic replies. Everyone agreed that they had been wronged, and everyone was sympathetic, but no correction was forthcoming. A second revision was hinted at but didn't happen. Maybe the event organizers were embarrassed to admit that the game took six months to score. Maybe they thought that by then no one cared. At least two people did. Troy and Friend began to wonder if the wheels of justice would turn so grudgingly for "name players." Or for white players. I hope I'm not naive in believing that bridge is color-blind, but Mr. Troy and Col. Friend cannot be denied their suspicions. It has been over a year since these events began to unfold, but the wound still festers and continues to infect Los Angeles' black bridge community. What should have been a bumper crop of brotherhood has become a bitter harvest of divisiveness.

* * * * *

By the time I met Col. Friend it was 1991. I ran into him at the Summer NABC in Las Vegas. He was still playing with Mr. Troy. I reiterated my regrets and he thanked me for my efforts. "One good thing came out of it," he said. "I found out who my friends were and that's a lot to know."

Hail and Farewell

We welcome the following new members into our Unit:

Gabriele P Aulisi
 Leroy R Barnes
 Anne C Carter
 Julie K Coburn
 Bonnie Firestone
 Karen Fygi
 Sylvia S Hall
 Peter F McCloskey
 Dee M Miller
 Donna Neuland
 Christel M Nugent
 Dunia Pasternak
 Andrzej Pronczuk
 Rebecca Rafferty
 Meghan Rainey
 Thomas Richardson
 May E Roy
 Shahin Shakib
 Gordon Wheeler
 Sheryl Wilkerson

We welcome the following transfers into our Unit:

Lauren E Alexanderson
 Chris Allen Jr

Sherrill A Bartholomew
 Betty Ann Beck
 Edith Z Berman
 Rosetta J Boyd
 Henry H Culman
 Charles E Davidow
 Regina F Franklin
 Dr Joseph F Harrington
 Helen J Lindquist
 Helen Marek
 Doris C Masorti
 Dr Herb McVay
 Suzanne McVay
 Sharad D Naik
 Terrence E Nelson
 Irene R Reiter
 Phyllis Remy
 Thomas A Schmitz
 Scott Sorkin

We give our regards to the following people who have transferred out of our Unit:

Edith Z Berman
 James N Bexfield
 Virginia R Chapman
 Charles E Davidow

Judy Carr Evans
 Joanne B Falkowski
 George E Kramer
 Yiran Liu
 Neal McKinney
 Betty Nolte
 Jerry Nolte
 Sheldon J Richter
 Helen S Schumacher
 Jean W Senseman
 Andrea S Stanley-Miller
 Cynthia A Stenholm
 John C Stewart
 Murray A Yost

We are sorry to note the passing of four of our members:

Carol Aitken
 Mary Lynn O'Keefe
 Neil L Mark
 George Schropp

Parade of Winners

We have no tournament results to report, but we are pleased to tell you that Jamie Dahlberg finished 4th in the masterpoint list for ACBL's Endless Summer Regional. He won 57.12 points playing in the Gold Rush Pair events and ranked 4th out of 9,710 masterpoint winners. He won 25.88 gold playing with Alan Munro and 21.73 gold playing with Benjamin Sharp. Congratulations Jamie, Alan and Ben!

Rank	MPs	Name
1	74.91	Bill Schreiber <i>Valley Glen, CA</i>
2	59.72	Robert Hughes <i>Manchester, CT</i>
3	59.72	Anmarie Hughes <i>Manchester, CT</i>
4	57.12	James Dahlberg <i>Arlington, VA</i>
5	54.52	Alexander Kolesnik <i>Los Angeles, CA</i>
6	51.77	Peter J. Boyd-Bowman <i>Greensboro, NC</i>
7	49.76	E.R. 'Bud' McKinney <i>Cary, NC</i>
8	46.49	Michael Schreiber <i>Plano, TX</i>
9	43.43	Ann Nutting <i>Stockton, CA</i>
10	43.43	Bill Nutting <i>Stockton, CA</i>

Letter of Appreciation from Thomas Jefferson HS Bridge Club Sponsor Thom Larson

To: Suzanne Abrams, Catherine Bardsley, Fred Gramlich, Craig Olson, Ron Kral, and Livingston Johnson

The school year (such as it is) is drawing to a close. I want to thank you all for supporting our students' interest in bridge, and to thank you all for taking the time and making the effort to come out to the school on Friday afternoons. I know the school security procedures have sometimes added to the hurdles that you have had to jump to volunteer for our students. I want to thank you for your persistence in negotiating those hurdles. We could not provide the activity to the students without your dedicated support.

I'd especially like to thank Suzanne Abrams, and to remember Nancy Cartwright, who were our volunteers when I took over faculty sponsorship of the Bridge Club. Without Suzanne's dedication to our students and efforts to recruit new adult volunteers, the program certainly would not be what it is today. The program has been so successful that we have had to cap the number of tables at 8 (32 students), mainly because of the limitations of the available space. We routinely have a full signup for both 8th period blocks with about a quarter of the students staying for both blocks. This means that we usually have around 50 students join us to play bridge on a typical Friday.

I also want to thank Ron Kral and Livingston Johnson for volunteering their time to serve as directors for our tournaments. Having duplicate bridge tournaments with directors where the students can begin earning ACBL masterpoints makes our program richer and helps build student interest. We weren't able to hold as many tournaments this year as we would have liked, but we'll try again next year!

Finally, I have signed up to sponsor bridge next year and look forward to seeing you all again next year. We still don't know what the next year will look like when school starts, but I will keep you informed of any news I hear that affects our bridge program.

Thank you all again! Best wishes to you and your loved ones for good health.

Sincerely,

Thom Larson

Thomas G. Larson, PhD
Instructor, Biological and Chemical Sciences, and Integrated Biology, English, and Technology (IBET) Program
Division of Science and Technology
Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
Alexandria, VA 22312



Results of Recent Meetings of the ACBL Board of Directors

from District 6 Director Margot Hennings

The current financial status of the ACBL following the success of the first regionally rated online and Silver Linings games is much improved.

- Six of the 23 furloughed TDs returned to work at the beginning of June to assist with the increased workload generated by the magnitude of online play and the planning and running of the upcoming special online games (see proposed schedule below) through the end of the year.
- Most furloughed HQ personnel will return to work in August.
- Management (notably Greg Coles), with the help of Jay Whipple of The Common Game, and working together with BBO, has done an amazing job of moving virtual bridge clubs online and running both regional rated tournaments (Red and Gold points) and Silver Linings events so that our players can get the pigmented points that they seek. These special events, coupled with increased club game play and major cuts in expenses should bring the ACBL into a profitable position at year end. A complete report will be presented in mid-July at the time of the Montreal meetings.

Online Play 2020 vs Face-to-Face Play 2019 Analysis: Key Takeways

Online Points: Players winning points in BBO games (unpigmented) has almost tripled but the points per player has not changed. More players but not playing more.

Black Points: Approximately 43% of players won black points compared to an average month. Players are playing more than normal as evidenced by table count being about 2/3 of a typical month despite 43% of players playing.

Silver Points: In May we awarded 80% more silver than an average month, but we awarded 0 silver in April. June will also award no silver. In May, silver points were won by almost 32,000 players. This is over 10,000 players more than an average month. Players won an average of 2.3 points as compared to the typical 1.9 points.

Red/Gold Points: Less than 2000 gold points won during the Regional@Home, less than 1/6 of an average month. The average award per player was about 1/3 less than an average month.

The table about online play on the next page, provided for the data hounds among you, was provided by Management to the BOD in mid-June

Motions

Note: Four of the six motions we were asked to vote on were deferred rather than voting them down, which is what would have happened to all, based on the discussion that ensued. Procedurally, once a motion has been defeated, it cannot be brought back in essentially its same form until after at least six months have passed. Therefore, the same motion can be brought back if it is deferred, with the addition of "friendly amendments" to bring it into a position where a definitive vote can be cast.

Item 20S2-01—flight/stratum designations for winners of Grand-Life-Master-eligible events—was a cleanup motion from the wording of the motion passed at the May Special Meeting. This motion passed unanimously.

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Comparison of results of online play in April and May 2020 with corresponding monthly averages for 2019

	Number of points won			Number of players winning points			Average points per player	
	2019	April 2020	May 2020	2019	April 2020	May 2020	2019	May 2020
Online	10,111	25,347	28,526	10,009	25,067	28,263	1.0	1.0
Black	207,081	150,465	172,211	88,098	31,152	38,091	2.4	4.5
Silver	40,263	0	72,457	21,398	0	31,759	1.9	2.3
Red	37,698	887	5,979	18,662	800	4,382	2.0	1.4
Gold	12,222	427	1,554	7,124	363	1,352	1.7	1.1
Platinum	854	0	0	473	0	0	1.8	0
Total	308,230	177,126	280,817	145,764	57,382	103,847	10.8	10.3

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Item 20S2-02—regulations to decrease the percentages of pigmented masterpoints awarded during online non-club events—was deferred (18-7-0, I voted in favor of deferral) after considerable discussion to the next Special Meeting after Montreal. This will give an appropriate amount of time for the popularity of online play to settle down and the work of the “Future of Bridge/Online Task Force” (see #3 below) to be finished and their recommendations taken into consideration. This motion came from the non-Board Masterpoint Committee—established several years ago and comprising TDs, HQ staff, and BOG members in addition to two BOD members—through the Bridge Committee.

Item 20S2-03—regulations decreasing the number of masterpoints in all games based on 24 boards for 100% award—was deferred (20-5-0, I voted in favor of deferral) again after much discussion to the next Special Meeting after Montreal. Similar reasoning for deferral as Item 20S-02 immediately above, but in addition, instead of treating all numbers of boards from 18 and above (in pairs games) as “full-length games,” all games—**whether virtual or face-to-face**—of fewer than 24 boards would be given a proportional reduction in masterpoints from those awarded for a “base game” of 24 boards. This motion also came from the non-Board Masterpoint Committee through the Bridge Committee.

Item 20S2-04—Conditions of Contest (CoC) for online play—was deferred (24-1-0, I voted in favor of deferral) until the Montreal Meetings. These regulations were thought to be a much-needed addition to our regulations, but the overwhelming consensus was that they were incomplete. The Competitions and Conventions Committee—a non-Board committee chaired

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by Danny Sprung was asked to make these CoC for online play more detailed, based on the longer period of time for extensive online play that will have been had in the coming month since they were first developed back in early May.

Item 20S2-05—Guest Membership—was approved unanimously with one abstention (I was not the abstention). This motion phases out the current \$7.99 Temporary Membership established several years ago and establishes a free up-to-120-day membership for anyone who does not have or has not had an ACBL membership previously. This is a marketing effort to encourage all of the new online players who have not been ACBL members before to join and enjoy certain benefits. It is expected that the Temporary Membership will no longer be available but that Guest Memberships will, after appropriate programming changes have been made. More on this in July.

Item 20S2-06—approval of Memphis as the site of the Spring 2025 NABC—was deferred unanimously until the Montreal Meetings. The BOD has grave reservations about committing to a new NABC contract with hotel rates, room blocks, attrition, and guaranteed hospitality minimums that require 9000 tables to break even. Management has been asked to re-negotiate the cancellation clause so that there would be very little to lose should we decide to commit in late July and then cancel or downsize the commitment within the next 12-24 months.

Important Actions

The “Future of Bridge/Online Task Force” that the President created at the May Special Meeting will report and put forward recommendations in advance of the late August/early September Special Meeting regarding all aspects of online bridge (including masterpoints awarded per the above deferred motions).

TF Committee Members remain the same as I reported on June 3—please refer to that document for the full list of TF members. At the first TF meeting, five subcommittees were subsequently created:

1. Teaching/Membership Growth/Promote the Brand
2. Types of Bridge (e.g., Robot Teams of four, “synthetic” events where “sectionals” can be created by grouping participants)
3. Social Issues (how to make online play more “fun”)
4. Point Pigmentation/Levels of Competition
5. The Long Term (FTF, Online, “Hybrid”)
6. Platform Options

I lobbied strongly when the Subcommittee Leads were asking for recommendations for subcommittee members that David Rodney be included on the “Long Term” Subcommittee. A number of other well-qualified folks now comprise that Subcommittee, as well as the other subcommittees that have been augmented with additional BOG and other members. The “Long Term” Subcommittee has formed Focus Groups comprising even more members ACBL-wide to help ensure that varied cross-country opinions are all taken into consideration when formulating the TF recommendations to the BOD. I am sure David will send you an update as soon as there is something to report. As always, there is more work to be done than there is time, and priorities continue to compete, but I expect that this TF and its Subcommittees will be able to produce some meaningful recommendations when it concludes its research in late August.

The table on the next page is a **tentative** Special Events schedule provided by Management at our June meeting.

	Date	Event	Masterpoints	Fees
June	20-21	Longest Day	2xBlack	Extra \$3/ table
	25-28	Endless Summer (Regional-rated)	80% Regional rating	\$15pp
	27-28	NABC Robot Prac- tice*	Per BBO Contract	Free
July	4-5	NABC Robot Prac- tice*	Per BBO Contract	Free
	11-13	NABC Robot Individ- ual*	Per BBO Contract	\$50/3 days
	12-18	Youth/Collegiate Tournament	TBD	Free
	19-25	Team Event—Top- Flight Players**	MP awards/rating (Regional/NABC), point colors, etc., all TBD. Not defi- nite—numerous concerns. Likely “by invitation.”	TBD
	7/27- 8/2	Upgraded Club Championship	2x, 25% Gold, 75% Black	Extra \$4/ table
Aug.	27-30	Regional-rated Event	80% Regional rating	\$15pp
Sept.	7	Labor Day 1-Day Event	2x Black	No Extra
	21-27	Silver Linings Week	2x Silver	Extra \$4/ table
Oct.	15-18	Regional-rated Event	80% Regional rating	\$15pp
	10/26- 11/1	Club Appreciation Week	2x Black	No Extra
Nov.	7-8	NABC Robot Prac- tice*	Per BBO Contract	Free
	14-15	NABC Robot Prac- tice*	Per BBO Contract	Free
	21-23	NABC Robot Individ- ual*	Per BBO Contract	\$50/3 days
	23-29	Upgraded Club Championship	2x, 25% Gold, 75% Black	Extra \$4/ table
	11/29- 12/5	Team Event(s) (Open)	MP awards/rating/titles?/(Regional / NABC), point colors, etc., all TBD. Not definite—numerous concerns.	
Dec.	18-21	Regional-rated Event	80% Regional rating	\$15pp

*These events have been run immediately prior to the three NABCs for the past 3-4 years.

**Similar to how the “Reynolds Teams” are currently being run online. Possibly Zoom Rooms for screen-mates. Lots still to decide.

Northern Virginia Bridge Association

702 Plum Street SW, Vienna VA 22180

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