

THE NORTH PENN FINESSE

NORTH PENN DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

118 South Line Street
Lansdale, PA 19446

215-361-1436 www.bridgescore.com/npenn/

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June 2009
Volume 2, No. 2

President's Message: As I sit here thinking about the club, trying to figure out what to write about it strikes me that there has been a ton of new players in the past year or so. Why is that? There are probably some demographic and economic factors but more importantly it's us. Over and over again people have told me that North Penn has the nicest players. So, to the long time players I say 'thank you' and to newer members I say 'welcome', and I hope you enjoy playing and continue to do so. To everyone, whether you play for social or competitive reasons or both, it is OK to have fun. Laughing out loud is not a violation of the rules!!

Now I want to shamelessly promote one of my favorite events: North American Pairs (NAP). Qualifying rounds are held at clubs throughout the summer. See the schedule elsewhere in the newsletter. Each District will then qualify 3 pairs in each flight (A: 0-∞, B: 0-2000 and C: NLMs 0-500) to play in the National Finals. And the best part of this year's event is that North Penn will be one of the sites hosting the flight C district finals. That will be on Saturday, October 17 at the club. It'll be a fun day and who knows, you could win a spot in the National finals in Reno, NV next March.

Mitch Snyder, President, e-mail bridge4all@comcast.net

Club Manager's Message: Over the past six weeks, we have had our annual membership drive for all our players. We are pleased to report that the number of players joining for 2009 has exceeded 180. This is an increase of over 30 players. This certainly is an indication that new players are attending our games which bodes well for the future of our Club. Our \$10 membership fee continues to be a bargain and provides each member with the opportunity to earn free plays, pay less each time than non-members, and have voting rights on all club elections. Also, our members realize that North Penn DBC is the lowest priced game in the area.

Many of you may have noticed that personal drinking cups have begun to appear on the shelves over our refreshment area. We are asking all of our regular players to bring their own cup for use at each game. If everyone starts to do this, we will not only save the cost of the plastic/paper cups but will eliminate a lot of trash that accumulates when using these paper cups. Please consider bringing a cup the next time you play.

Real Fradette, Club Manager

Sunshine: On April 10 Kingsley Jarvis lost his battle with cancer. He was a kind and generous man. He was known to be the attorney in Norristown who represented those in need. Whether it was a client with a civil right issue or a mentally challenged individual, Kingsley would never turn them down. Thank you to everyone who supported me through this difficult time.

Marie Jarvis

Member Achievements:

Gerald Feldman	Junior Master	Woody Woodbury	Junior Master
Virginia Woodbury	Junior Master	Arlene Lessack	Sectional Master
John Dickenson	Bronze Life Master	Tom Coles	Bronze Life Master
Terry Fair	Bronze Life Master	Carole Witty	Bronze Life Master
Elaine Clair	Silver Life Master	Janet Rankin	Bronze Life Master
Tony Zacchei	Gold Life Master	Morris Ashinsky	Gold Life Master

Tournament Highlights: A team consisting of Mitch Snyder, Marty Burman, Bill Grosnick, and Edie McAlpin won X in the AX Swiss Teams at the Conshohocken Sectional on April 5. In one of the matches Mitch and Marty were playing against Arnold Selig and Nate Schatz. A possible swing hand occurred with Marty opening one spade. Arnold overcalled two hearts, holding KQJ1096 of hearts, AQ1096 of diamonds, and two black singletons. Mitch bid 2NT, and both Nate (void in diamonds and two little hearts, and 11 black cards) and Marty passed. Arnie rebid three diamonds. Mitch passed, and Nate elected to pass, too, afraid that Mitch or Marty would double three hearts. Arnie played in a five/zero fit – down four. At the other table, Bill and Edie were in four hearts – down three undoubled. Nate avoided a big swing by passing with a void! (Mitch says he was planning on doubling 3H.) Congratulations to Mitch, Marty, Bill, and Edie!!

Bridge Classes: There is a monthly class for advancing players on the third Wednesday before the regularly scheduled game. The class starts at 9:45 and ends around 11:15 a.m. The game is at noon. The cost is \$10 for the lesson or \$15* for the lesson and game. Reservations are not required. Contact **Mitch** for more information.

*(*does not include extra charges for special games)*

Friday Morning Game: There is a Friday morning game (formerly Tuesday mornings) at 10:00 a.m. for Novice/Intermediate (0-750). The game is followed by a free lesson in the form of a post-mortem. Reservations are not required. Contact Mitch for more information.

Saturday Night Game: A new Saturday evening game began May 9. Game time is 7:00 p.m. The regular schedule will feature a charity Swiss teams game on the 1st Saturday of each month and pairs games the remaining weeks.

Swiss Teams: There are two Charity Swiss Team games every month: on the 1st Saturday and 2nd Friday. The Friday game is at 7:30 p.m. and the Saturday game is at 7:00 p.m. Come as a team or pair (teammates guaranteed). Singles will be accommodated if possible.

Charity Games:

June 8 to 12 – ACBL Charity Foundation July 13 to 17 – Charity selected by our club
August – No charity games (*Please note that all charity games yield “triple points.”*)

Roger Willig, Charity Chair

There’s a New Coup in Town, Partner: I’m sure you’ve all heard of some of the exotic bridge plays known as coups. Many of them have colorful names such as the Dentist’s Coup, the Merrimac Coup and the Scissors Coup. In a recent club game, defending against a no-trump contract, West led his long suit. Declarer won and the suit was established. East, upon winning a trick in another suit, was unable to return West’s suit as he had started with a singleton. West suggested that East should have *illegally held up* his singleton so he could return it later and aptly named it the ***Jesse James Coup!***

At The Table: This particular hand occurred at the club. South held AK86, KQ9832, T, A8. RHO preempted 2H at third position. What would you do? (Non vs. Vulnerable)

I decided to pass. LHO bid 3D, North and East passed. Now what? My partner must have something in clubs and spades and at most one heart. I doubled 3D, and partner bid 4C. I probably should have passed, but bid 4S gambling that partner had some spades. Partner passed mumbling about what a strange bidding sequence that was! Partner held QT32, T, J3, KJ10642.

The opening lead was the Ace of diamonds. When I saw my partner’s hand, I thought I had hit the jackpot until RHO showed out on my lead of the Ace of spades after ruffing a diamond continuation to the Q from RHO. (LHO had 5 spades!) What would be your plan?

It looked like LHO did not have the K of diamonds although she might have tried to reach her partner to give her a heart ruff. Still, she should not want to ruff because she knew she could not afford to ruff even once. If she did, we would play her for the Q of clubs and the game would be over. How did we know she had that card? We may not have any choice because we need to have trump control. However, RHO was marked having the A and J of hearts, the Q and most likely the K of diamonds. There is no way RHO could have the Q of clubs.

Therefore, I cashed the A of clubs and played another club. The Q popped up from LHO, saving some anxiety. After winning the K of clubs, I played the J of clubs forcing LHO to ruff. Now she had the same length of trumps. Everything is under control. She actually returned another diamond which I ruffed WITH THE K OF TRUMPS after discarding the lone heart from table. Now I could finesse with the 10 of trumps and cash the Q. I ran the clubs and lost only the J of trumps at the end. West held J9754, void, A98764, Q7 and East held a void, AJ7654, KQ52, 953.

Albert Horng, Club Member

“Help Suit” The Philosophy and Implementation of Game Tries (HSGT): The ability to recognize which deals will yield a makeable game cannot be overemphasized. The traditional “rules” about how many points are needed to make a game (or a slam) are guidelines, but the location of the honor cards and the distribution of the hand are all important.

As an example...

You hold: ♠ A K J 8 4 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ 7 ♣ A Q 7 4
Partner holds: ♠ Q 7 3 2 ♥ 9 ♦ 9 4 3 ♣ K 8 6 5 3

We would conclude that a spade game should be easy to make, and yet...Suppose....

You hold: ♠ A K J 8 4 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ 7 ♣ A Q 7 4
Partner holds: ♠ Q 7 3 2 ♥ 9 4 3 ♦ 9 ♣ K 8 6 5 3

The exact same distribution and the same honor cards will likely fail as the opponents will probably cash three hearts and a diamond before you can gain the lead.

In both cases, you will open 1♠, partner will raise to 2♠. If you invite partner to game with an investigatory 3♠ bid, upon what basis will partner make that decision? The two responding hands look (and, in fact, are) identical. How can partner make the correct decision?

In today's game, a popular approach is the Help Suit Game Try (HSGT). It consists of telling partner the suit in which you need help in order to have a reasonable chance of making a game. Typically, a suit in which you might need "help" might consist of three low cards, Qxxx, or some similar combination of losing cards.

The HSGT asks partner to "cover" those losers in one manner or another. Clearly, an Ace or a King-Queen combination is Help. So is a void or a singleton in the Help Suit. Sometimes a doubleton may be help, as well. In the original examples, the sequence 1♠-2♠-3♥ tells partner that you have heart losers that need to be eliminated. In that example, this would be the critical information that partner can use to decide the viability of the spade game.

A recommended agreement is that opener's trump rebid at the three-level (1♥-2♥-3♥) can be used to ask for "help" in the trump suit (asks about the quality of responder's trumps); conversely, a rebid by opener of 2NT (1♥-2♥-2NT) asks about the general high-card strength of responder's hand (no specific weak suit).

You decline the invitation by returning to three of the trump suit. You (usually) accept the invitation by bidding four of the trump suit (see the exception explained below).

Should you accept the invitation? If you hold an ace, a king-queen combination, a void, or a singleton in the "help" suit, accept the invitation and bid the game. If you hold a king without the queen or a doubleton, only accept the invitation if you are at the top of your original raise (9-10 points).

If partner asked for help in trumps, accept the invitation if you can limit the trump losers to 2 if partner opened a suit headed by the 9 (for example, accept the invitation with A-Q-x), but decline with Q-10-x, even if you are at the top of your bid otherwise. Partner can't get around trump losers.

If partner asked for general strength (1♥-2♥-2NT, or 1♠-2♠-2NT), accept the invitation with 9 or 10 points. Accept the invitation if your hand is 8 points containing (at least) one ace. To accept the invitation, bid the game in the trump suit **unless your hand is 4-3-3-3, with only 3 trumps and at least one stopper in the suit in question. In this case you should accept the invitation by bidding 3NT.** This alerts your partner to the fact that your hand will not be ruffing any tricks, and permits partner to choose the 9-trick no-trump game if that is more attractive.

While there are some optional refinements that you can later add to this convention, just adding the basic tool will greatly improve your results at the table.

Dave LeGrow, Club Board Member, dave.legrow@att.net

Upcoming Events

(subject to change)

Weekly Games	Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays – 12:00 noon Tuesdays and Fridays – 7:30 p.m. Friday - 10 a.m. (0-750 mps) Saturday - 7:00 p.m.
World-Wide Pairs	June 5 (Friday Evening)
Club Championships	June 19 to 26 (all games)
STAC (Silver Week)	August 24 to 29 (all games)
Instant Match-points	September 9 (Wed. Evening – tentative)
Club Appreciation Week	October
Charity Swiss Teams	2 nd Friday (7:30 p.m.) and 1 st Saturday (7:00 p.m.)

NORTH AMERICAN PAIRS

North Penn NAP Qualifiers (subject to change)

Monday, noon	6/29	8/3
Tuesday 7:30 p.m.	6/16	8/11
Wednesday, noon	7/1	8/19
Thursday, noon	6/4	7/23
Friday 7:30 p.m.	7/31	
Saturday 7:00 p.m.	6/13	8/8

NAP National Finals

Reno, NV – March 2010

Additionally, 1st place finishers in each District flight receive \$700 and 2nd place finishers receive \$300 each to help defray costs.

