

Attention VCC membership!

It is time to sign up for the Spring 2016 Mentor Program! Deadline for signups is 1-25.

GOAL OF MENTOR PROGRAM: Improve your results in club games and tournaments.

We encourage you to sign up as a group of 6 as evenly matched in experience as possible. We will accommodate you if you sign up as a pair, or as a team of 4 and we will match you up with others with as similar bridge experience as possible. Your mentor will not play and will focus entirely on how to help each pair develop their bridge skills both individually and as partners. Their goal should be to help you and your partner gain confidence and improve your results as your duplicate bridge understanding grows.

We will have twice monthly mentoring sessions, 9:00 AM Tuesdays: February 9 and 23, March 8 and 22, April 5 and 19.

Your mentor will be an experienced teacher as well as an accomplished bridge player. Please provide your mentor a copy of your convention card; for new pairs, get together and write up a card and give a copy to your mentor. Your mentor should study the card, looking for opportunities.

The hands selected for each session will be from recent Village Card Club games where the open and limited masterpoint pairs played concurrent games using the same hands. We will select 4 hands, put the actual results from the website on the video screen, and make hard copies for note takers. The hands selected will cover bidding, play, and/or defense. The hands selected will have had wide discrepancies on actual results and have learnings that are appropriate for a typical 100 masterpoint player; as much as possible hands will also have learnings that are appropriate for advanced players.

Each mentor session will start by each mentor group playing 4 hands without any feedback from your mentor. After that the entire group will discuss the hands with expert panel moderators. Each session will have a rotating group of 3 expert panelists whose task is to “break down” or “take apart” the hands into the most basic form, and must avoid too much complexity. Some of the expert panel comments will actually be “mini – lessons” of core principles. The group panel discussion will focus on what the typical 100 masterpoint player needs to know and therefore topics are to be very basic in nature on broadly accepted general principles and must avoid discussion that has too much complexity. The format is open discussion initiated as much as possible by the mentee group. Mentors must not answer questions from the panel. We encourage your group to sit together for the panel discussion, discuss among yourselves, and give group answers as much as you can.

After the large group discussion, we will break into smaller groups to work with your mentor. Your group will then get into more specific detail with the same hands, bidding, playing and defending each one with your mentor giving specific comments customized to each pair’s existing agreements. You will have the time to discuss each hand in as much detail as you and your mentor would like, and you may go at whatever speed you wish. Your mentor will receive the hand records in advance so they can prepare their comments on what lessons in bidding, play, and defense are appropriate for your experience level to learn from the hands. Often your mentor will have played the hand already. Pairs may need to move around so that NS and EW have similar opportunities to learn; those who don’t have the decision making hand should pay close attention to what they can learn from the hand.

The mentor committee has given the education committee a list of the most important classes we request they provide based on what we have learned from recent mentoring experiences. These classes would be spread out through the fall and we will reference them during the sessions when appropriate.

Students are requested to do the following:

- ✓ We need you to be available for 5 or more of the 6 mentor sessions. Why? To help the group continuity; the experience for everyone is much better the more you are there. **To help us make sure that you attend, we now require up-front payment of \$7 per session as you would for a VCC 2 hour class. By signing up you agree to pay \$42 per person (6 sessions x \$7 = \$42) at the first mentor session. IF YOU ATTEND 5 OR MORE SESSIONS YOU GET ALL YOUR MONEY BACK!! If you attend only 4 sessions you get \$20 back, and if 3 sessions \$10. If 2 or less, none.** This will be a friendly honor system. We do understand if you have an emergency and certainly no problem either for a medical issue, just tell us.
- ✓ Ask questions or seek explanations from the mentor regarding duplicate bridge rules, etiquette, bidding, play of the hand, or defense.
- ✓ Do not be overly sensitive to suggestions and recommendations.
- ✓ If your mentor is not as helpful as you had hoped or your personality does not mesh with that of your mentor, please contact the mentor committee to help work out a solution.
- ✓ Be a good partner, help your partnership develop.
- ✓ Help the mentor committee improve the program by offering constructive suggestions. We are always striving for improvement – help us help you by sharing your ideas with us.

By the end of the 6 mentoring sessions we expect that you and your partner will find benefits in the following areas:

- You will see actual examples from hands you played on what you can do to improve your game – you can quantify the number of matchpoints you will get in the future from learning this material.
- Recognize your own weaknesses and gain new strengths.
- Recognize your own strengths.
- Gain knowledge, confidence, and assistance to enjoy playing bridge even more.
- Become more proficient at the conventions you already play.
- Selectively learn and practice new conventions.
- Solidify bidding understandings/avoid misunderstandings.
- Learn some new play of the hand and defense techniques.
- Feel more comfortable “playing up”.

Thanks for your consideration.

Hope to see you there!

Questions? Please contact your mentor committee: Ned Irving - Chair, Rich Higgins, Alan Trippel, Tony Hoffman, Greg Frank, or Suzanne Stofer.