

# The Hawkeyer

## Prez Sez

By Craig Nelsen

The success of Unit 216 is the result of many hours of volunteer work by our members. As with volunteer organizations in general 80% of the work has been by 10% of the members. Have you done your part???? We need to thank a couple members who have gone the extra mile to support our unit. Linda Johnson has successfully chaired a number of our tournaments, the latest being the Stars of Tomorrow. Preliminary numbers indicate that the Unit will make around \$1000 on the Stars tournament.

Margie Brennan is retiring as treasurer after many years of service. Carolyn Miller has agreed to take on the job.

The Cornbelt Sectional is coming up September 15-18 at the Bridge Center. A new feature will be the "8 is enough" Swiss team game on Saturday. This format has been popular in eastern Iowa and the tournament

committee elected to give it a try. Get your teams together. A team can't have more than 8 points. If you have 1500+ MP = 3 points; 500 - 1500 MP = 2 points; fewer than 500 MP = 1 point.

Barb Maas and Kate Reynolds have agreed to Co-chair the 2017 Regional. Please, there are lots of jobs to be done to pull off a regional. Barb and Kate deserve your support.

The open house held August 27 attracted 6 or so potential players and several former players to check out the facility. It is expected that 3 or 4 visitors will play. Two have shown up at our 0-99 games.

Lee Slorah is working on a phone book update. A questionnaire will be coming out. We need to know if you can pick-up your copy of the Hawkeyer at the Bridge Center and save the Unit mailing costs.

## Sept. 2016 Highlights

Education Report .....	3
Upcoming Classes ....	3
Bad Break .....	4
Probabilities .....	6
Alert .....	8
Free Resources .....	9
Weak 2s .....	10
NT or Major Suit ....	11
Par .....	12
Up the Ladder.....	14
Sectional Info .....	15



---

## Hawkeye Bridge Association

### Officers

Craig Nelsen            President  
Dee Wilson            Vice Pres.  
Sally Nelson           Secretary  
Carolyn Miller        Treasurer  
Rod Burnett Past Pres.

### Board of Directors

2016 Kathi Kellen  
Dee Wilson  
Gary Oliphant  
Sally Nelson  
2017 Eric Hill  
Greg Walsh  
Bonni Newton  
Craig Nelsen  
2018 Kate Reynolds  
Barb Maas  
Penny Rittgers  
Margie Brennan

### Committees

Publicity: Gary Oliphant,  
Craig Nelsen

Appeals: Pete Wityk, Jim  
Swanson, Val Laing

Audit: Rich Newell

Calendar: Scott Riley

Conduct and Ethics:  
Tom Olsson, John Gustafson,  
Val Laing

Education Chair: Penny  
Rittgers

Webmaster: Kathi Kellen

Hawkeyer: Terry Swanson

## Unit 216 Club Directory

### DES MOINES

Bridge Center  
8529 Hickman  
Urbandale, IA 270-0868

Sun. 2-4:30 pm (0-50) New  
players Lesson/ Chat Bridge  
Nancy Wilson 285-9916

### Monday

12 pm (1000/2000/open)  
12 pm (100/300/500)  
Nancy Wilson 285-9916  
6 pm Free mini-lesson by  
Nancy 285-9916  
6:30 pm (0-50) Newcom-  
er Game

### Tuesday

12:00 pm  
(0-2000 Stratified)  
(200/300/500)  
Nancy Wilson 285-9916

### Wednesday

12:00 pm Free lesson  
12:30 pm (20/50/199)  
Bonni Newton 778-0899  
7 pm (500/1000/1500  
or any non-LM partner-  
ship)  
Gregg Walsh 771-4802

### Thursday

12 pm  
(1500/2500/open)  
12 pm (300/750/1000)  
Gregg Walsh 771-4802

### Friday

9:30-11:30 Supervised  
Play  
Bonni Newton 778-0899

### Saturday

12 pm (300/500/750 or  
non-LM (partnership)  
12:30 pm (Open)  
Gregg Walsh 771-4802

### AMES

Heartland Senior Services  
205 South Walnut  
Sun. 1:15 pm (open)

Ira White 292-5616  
802-1246

Tue. 6:30 pm (open)  
Ray Schoenrock 232-4717  
291-3444

Thur. 6:30 pm (open)  
Ira White 292-5616  
802-1246



# Cornbelt Tournament

**September  
15-18, 2016**  
**Greater Des Moines  
Bridge House**  
**At our NEW location!**  
**8529 Hickman,  
Urbandale,  
in the  
Cobblestone  
Shopping Area.**

**See  
a list of games  
on page 15**

---

## From the Education Liaison

By Penny Rittgers

Mentoring this fall will have a different look. Mentoring will be handled by the directors of the beginners' play on Sunday afternoons, Monday evenings, and Wednesday afternoons once a month. The Directors will recruit and pair mentors and mentees.

Each session will offer a recap of the day's play and

hands could be arranged by the director to focus on a specific situation. For the immediate future mentoring will focus on beginning and new players.

The classes below will be offered this fall, but watch the education bulletin board for additional information.



## ***Fall Classes***



**Jessie Chance** (email: [jgchance@gmail.com](mailto:jgchance@gmail.com); phone: 225-1301 or 577-1994) At the Bridge Center, *Losing Trick Count And Other Defense Techniques* Thursdays, beginning Sept. 8, 10:00-11:30.

**Bonni Newton** (email: [bjnbridge@live.com](mailto:bjnbridge@live.com); phone: 778-0899) At the Bridge Center, *Brush-Up Bridge on Wednesdays* Sept. 21-Nov 16, 10:00-11:30.

**Mike Smith** (email: [mike8smith@dwx.com](mailto:mike8smith@dwx.com); phone: 246-9870) At the Bridge Center, *Beginning Bridge* on Mondays from Oct. 31-Dec 19, 6:00-8:30.

**Peter Wityk** (email: [pwityk@dwx.com](mailto:pwityk@dwx.com); phone: 440-1940) At the Bridge Center, *Moving to The A Side* on Fridays at 1:30. Sept. 9 "Defending Against An End Play"; Sept. 23 "Defending Against A Squeeze"; Oct. 7 "Defending with Long Trump And Unusual Trump Defense"; Oct. 23 TBD. Classes in Nov. and Dec. will continue if there is enough interest.

**Paul Spong** (email: [twohawkeyes@msn.com](mailto:twohawkeyes@msn.com); phone 276-2597) At the Urbandale Senior Center *Bridge Basics I*, beginning in Sept. and *Bridge Basics II, Competitive Bidding*, beginning in Nov.

---

# Bad Break

By Pete Wityk

I am first chair with no one vulnerable in a club level club championship match-pointed pairs. I am playing with a regular partner against a strong player, on my left, playing with a new Life Master, on my right, and pick up:

♠A10972 ♥A ♦832 ♣AQ94

We are playing a forcing club. But, I don't feel this hand is strong enough to open One Club. **One Spade** is my choice. Over a **Pass**, partner responds **Two Hearts**. Over a **Pass**, I rebid **Three Clubs**. After the next **Pass**, partner jumps to **Four Spades**. When East **Passes**, I have no problem finding a **Pass**. Partner could have made a forcing raise rather than the Two Hearts call. Partner could have found various forcing calls rather than the Four Spade call. Lacking those, I expect heart values and three card spade support without side shortage. My hand does not fit well with that type of hand for slam—i.e., a singleton ace opposite partner's values and a shabby spade suit are enough to tell me to stay away from the five level. A third **pass** closes the auction,

which has been:

N	E	S	W
		1♠	P
2♥	P	3♣	P
4♠	P	P	P

The jack of diamonds is led and the following dummy appears:

♠K43 ♥KQ742 ♦KQ ♣K82

Jack of diamonds lead

♠A10972 ♥A ♦832 ♣AQ94

For all of partner's 16 HCP and my fleeting thoughts of opening a forcing Club, a minimum of one trump loser and the ace of diamonds make me glad to be at the four rather than the five level. The queen of diamonds fetches the ace and my deuce. The four of diamond is returned to my trey, West's six and dummy's king. I think that I need to unblock the heart suit and start trump from my hand to dummy's king. That allows me to get maximum use of dummy's entries and also pick up bad breaks with East holding length. I cannot pickup length in West's hand, but I can do so if East has four or five spades. Fur-



ther there is little point to leading the ten or nine from my hand. If I lose to a singleton honor, I have needlessly promoted a card in West's hand. If I rise with the king I have wasted the power of my spot cards. And, West is strong enough that he won't cover unless it benefits him.

I lead the deuce of hearts to the trey, the ace and the nine. The deuce of spades goes to the five, the king and the five of diamonds. It appears that I'm going to have to work to avoid three trump losers and the diamond ace that they already have. I call for the king of hearts. After East follows with the five, I discard the four of clubs and West plays the jack. Is this a false-card? He has five spades, two hearts and two diamonds that I have seen. If he has only two hearts then will it hurt me to have him trump the third heart? Not if he has

*(Bad Break cont. on page 5)*

*(Bad Break cont. from page 4)*  
 three diamonds and three clubs. I don't think that I can make this contract if he has four diamonds and two clubs. The timing will be wrong for an endplay. If he has three hearts, then whether he has two diamonds and three clubs or vice versa, I can make the contract. So, I play the queen of hearts. After East plays the six, I discard the nine of clubs and West trumps with the six of spades. He plays the jack of clubs to dummies deuce, East's five and my ace. I lead the queen of clubs to the trey, dummies king and the six. Now, the eight of clubs is covered by the ten, ruffed with my seven of spades and West follows with the seven of clubs. The eight of diamonds is covered with the ten, ruffed in dum-

my with the trey and East follows with the seven. I call for the four of spades. East discards the nine of hearts, I play the nine and East wins the queen. I claim, as East must now lead from the J8 into my A10. The full hand was

♠K43  
 ♥KQ742  
 ♦KQ  
 ♣K82  
 ♠QJ865    ♠ --  
 ♥J9        ♥108653  
 ♦J106     ♦A9754  
 ♣J73      ♣1065  
 ♠A10972  
 ♥A  
 ♦832  
 ♣AQ94

*made twice and three notrumps took ten tricks twice due to the 3-3 club break. In the other section, +420 was worth eight matchpoints. Such are the inequities of matchpoints. There are many lines that work without taking the double-dummy line of letting a middle spade run if not covered. You simply come to a three card end position where West has QJ8 and you have A109. You can even lead the 9 from hand and force West to lead into the A10. That is what could happen if West exited with a diamond at trick seven. I would trump in dummy, cash ace of clubs, king of clubs, trump a club and exit with the nine of spades.*

### Post Mortem

*Four spades making four for +420 was five and one-half of eight matchpoints. It was*



### *An Open Invitation To Unit 216 Players*

*If you have  
 an interesting bridge hand,  
 an interesting bidding sequence,  
 an interesting bridge convention,  
 or an interesting bridge conversation  
 that you'd like to share,  
 Please send it to*



**hawkeyer@bridgeunit216.org**

---

# Probabilities of Bridge Hands by Suit Distributions

## By Toby White

This is a continuation of a two-part series of articles on probabilities of various bridge hands. Whereas the previous article focused on high card points, here I analyze shape or suit distributions. Ignoring the labelling of suits for now, there are 39 possible shapes one might be dealt among the 635,013,559,600 (52 choose 13) possible bridge hands, ranging from 4-3-3-3 to 13-0-0-0. I now explore some more specific probability-based questions of interest among these 39 shapes, most of which can be derived using the hypergeometric distribution. I conclude by examining the odds of various splits in suits, useful when declaring a hand.

**1) The top 5 Most Common Shapes** – surprisingly, over 71% of all hands have one of the following 5 shapes: 4-4-3-2 (21.6%), 5-3-3-2 (15.5%), 5-4-3-1 (12.9%), 5-4-2-2 (10.6%), and 4-3-3-3 (10.5%). In fact, only one other possible distribution (6-3-2-2, 5.6%) has more than a 5% chance of occurring. Incidentally, the probability of having no 5 card suit or longer is the sum of the three

probabilities for 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, and 4-4-4-1 (3.0%), which is about 35.1%.

**2) NT Distribution** – assuming that you meet the requirement to open/respond 1NT/2NT, the primary shapes of interest are: 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2, 5-4-2-2. The likelihood of holding such a shape is 58.2%. Note that not all 5-4-2-2 hands should be opened in NT (especially if one is naked in both short suits), and that occasionally, someone will open 1NT with a 6-card minor and 6-3-2-2 shape or open 1NT with a singleton Ace, although I do not advocate either action.

**3) Hands with No Shortness** – defining shortness as having at least one singleton or at least one void, there are only 6 possible shapes that contain no shortness: the same four as listed above to open 1NT, but also 6-3-2-2 (5.6%) and 7-2-2-2 (0.5%). Thus, there is a 64.3% chance of having no shortness, perhaps greater than one would expect. Interestingly, the probability of being short (1



or less) in multiple suits (2 or more) is slightly less than 1.5%.

**4) Voids and Splinters** – Voids occur considerably less often than one might expect. Although over half (21 out of 39) of the possible shapes contain voids, the probability of having at least 1 void is only 5.1%. The likelihood of having multiple voids (such as in a 2-suited or even 1-suited hand) is only 0.01%, or about once every 10,000 hands. One can make a splinter, though, with either a void or a singleton, so the probability of having this kind of shape is the complement of the probability discussed above in 3), which is 100%-64.3%, or 35.7%.

**5) Long-Suited Hands** – The probability of having exactly

*(Distribution cont. on page 7)*

---

*(Distribution cont. from page 6)*

one 6-card suit is 16.5% (while the probability of having two 6-card suits, or being 6-6-1-0, is 0.07%). The probability of having a 7-card suit is 3.5%; the corresponding probabilities for suits of even longer length are 0.47% for 8, 0.04% for 9, and 0.002% for at least 10. Obviously, only 4 of the over 635 billion hands are literally single-suited (13-0-0-0) so the chances of this are only 1 in about 158.75 billion. I do remember getting some 9-card suits and maybe a 10-card suit, but nothing ever longer.

**6) Two-Suited Hands** – defining a two-suited hand as having at least 5 cards in two different suits (such as when one does a Michaels or Unusual NT overcall), there are 8 possible shapes: 5-5-3-0, 5-5-2-1, 6-5-2-0, 6-5-1-1, 6-6-1-0, 7-5-1-0, 7-6-0-0, and 8-5-0-0. The probability of being dealt one of these shapes is 5.6%. I remember getting hands of all eight of these shapes at some time, including the 7-6 (about 1 in 18,000) and 8-5 (about 1 in 32,000). If you tweak the above definition to also include 5-4 hands, the probability grows from 5.6% to

37.2%.

**7) Five-Card Suits** – Most people still require five hearts or five spades to open or overcall one of a major suit, although there is a growing trend toward opening 4-card majors in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat or overcalling a 4-card major with multiple top honors in the suit (again, not my style). The probability of having at least 1 suit of 5-cards or longer is the complement of the probability discussed above in 1), which is 100%-35.1%, or 64.9%. If you are talking about hearts or spades only, though, the probability of having at least one major of 5 cards or longer is only 34.3%.

We now shift toward the probabilities of various splits, which one might find valuable when declaring a hand. We initially assume that there is no information available from the auction about the shape of either opponent's hand and that no cards or tricks have been played yet.

**8) Splits when Missing 2-6 Cards in a Suit** – When missing just two cards in a suit, there is a 52% chance the suit splits 1-1 among the two opponents and a

48% chance it splits 2-0.

When missing three cards in a suit, the 2-1 split occurs 78% of the time whereas the 3-0 split occurs the remaining 22%. When missing 4 cards, the probabilities are 40.7% (2-2), 49.7% (3-1), and 9.6% (4-0). When missing 5 cards, the probabilities are 67.8% (3-2), 28.3% (4-1), and 3.9% (5-0), and when missing 6 cards, they are 35.5% (3-3), 48.4% (4-2), 14.5% (5-1), and 1.5% (6-0).

**9) How Split Probabilities Change as a Hand Progresses**

– You may or may not realize that the odds given in 8) above change as various cards are played in a specific deal, even just after the opening lead and initial trick. For example, let's assume 8 tricks have been played already. Now, there are only 10 cards left between the opponents' hands instead of 26. Then, the probability that 2 missing cards in a suit split 1-1 is now 55.6%, whereas the 2-0 split is at 44.4%. When missing 3 cards, the probabilities are now 83.3% for a 2-1 split and 16.7% for a 3-0 split.

**10) Summary of the Results Contained in 8) and 9)**

– In general, if you are missing an even number of

*(Distribution cont. on page 11)*

---

## Alert—Announce—Alert

Pull out a convention card and take a look. Notice nice red and blue lettering or symbols on some of the bids. Believe it or not this is not just to look pretty. The colors indicate bids that are supposed to be ANNOUNCED or ALERTED by the *partner* of the player making the bid. In general bids that are announced or alerted have special meaning or contain information that must be shared with the opposition.

Let's look first at bids that should be ANNOUNCED. These are shown in blue on the convention card. The *partner* of the bidder is supposed to announce the information as soon as the bid is made.

Below are the main bids that should be announced and what you should say

Partner Bids: A non-forcing bid of 1 of a minor

You say: "May be short" (If suit has less than 3 cards)

Partner Bids: A transfer to major suit at all levels

You say: "Transfer"

Partner Bids: Forcing NT

You say: "Forcing" or "Semi-forcing"

Partner Bids: 1 NT opening bid

You: Give the opening range (in all cases)

Partner Bids: A NT overcall

You: Give the range if it is outside of 14-19 points.

Now to bids that need to be ALERTED. Bidding has changed considerably in the past 20 years and old school bids have been replaced. If you look at the bids in red that require an ALERT, most have a modern meaning that is different from prior years. An alert by the *partner* of the bidder says "our bid means something different than you may expect."

Some of the more common bids that require an alert are

- Transfer to minor suits
- New minor forcing
- Jacoby 2NT
- Splinter
- 4th suit forcing
- Weak jump shift not in competition
- Defense to NT, except natural
- Non-forcing new suit after partner makes a weak 2 bid

If your partner makes a bid



that requires an alert you should tap the alert card and say, "alert". In our club the practice is to just say "alert" before the next player bids. If the other team has alerted a bid AND it is your turn to bid, you can say "please explain". If it is not your turn to bid, you must wait. The explanation should be enough to give opponents a clear understanding and NOT just the convention (do not say "We play reverse 2 way Drury or that's a Reverse Bergen Raise"). This obviously depends on the experience of the other team.

With lots of red on the convention card it's easy for a pair to forget to alert a bid that needs an alert. If you forgot to alert a bid, you need to inform the other team of a failure to alert at the proper time. If you are

(Continued on page 9)

---

# Two Mostly Free Bridge Resources

by Rich Newell

## **Bridgebase Online (BBO)**

You can play here for free, play ACBL masterpoint tournaments for \$1, or watch NABC or world championship events on VuGraph. I have played with several players from the club and have partnered with people from countries all over the world. Toby and I will play a fair amount on there when he is not teaching, and I have played with others in our unit. The ACBL tournaments are 12 boards in 60 minutes and you get 60% of the club award. I would happily play one time with anybody in the club who asks, although you have to add the BBO funds in \$10 increments so be prepared to play with others or play Robot tournaments also. If we win masterpoints, I will play again until we fail to do so.

## **BridgeWinners**

This is the go-to site for experts to discuss all manner of bridge problems, and there is also an intermediate/novice section as well. You can ask questions about anything – line of play, auctions, leads, and so forth. Plus, there will be updates about NABC events and anything important in the bridge world.

I also recommend you select

Explore > Videos > Road to Victory where pro Gavin Wolpert created a video series which shows you his thoughts on each hand enroute to winning a 2011 NABC Open Pairs victory. These are totally free and give you insight into the mind of an expert player – you are sure to learn a lot from watching them (I have watched the entire set of videos twice).

## **Terrible Hand**

Finally I want to show you a terrible hand I was dealt on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Dave Stark agreed with me that it was the worst hand either of us had

*(Continued from page 8)*

declarer you should inform the defenders prior to the lead being faced. The presumed dummy can also inform them of a failure to alert. (Remember, he is not the official dummy until the lead card is faced). If you are on defense, you must wait to announce the failure to alert until the hand is over and the result is agreed to. **DO NOT inform partner that he failed to alert until play is over** as this gives him unauthorized information which makes the director very unhappy.



ever seen, and of course Toby and I had to calculate its unlikelihood.

♠7654 ♥62 ♦652 ♣6543

The probability of having a hand with all cards 7 or lower is 1 in 254,398. If you played one 26-board game of bridge every day of your life, you would only expect to see this once every 26.8 years.

## **Leading Against Trump Contracts**

Here's a guide for selecting a suit to lead in order of preference:

1. Lead partner's suit
2. Lead a 3-card or stronger sequence
3. Lead a suit headed by the A-K
4. Lead a singleton
5. Lead your strongest suit

Ron Klinger

# Too Weak 2 Bid or Not Too Weak 2 Bid

By Joan Anderson (Jan 2012 Hawkeyer)

Here are six hands that look like you might open them with a weak two bid. Decide how and why you would open each one

Hand	Seat	Bid	Explanation
♠-xx ♥-AQJxxx ♦-Qxx ♣-xx What would you bid in each seat? 1st/2nd ____ 3rd____4th____	1st, 2nd, 3rd 4th		This is a classic weak two-bid opener. In the 1st or 2nd seat a disciplined approach is a must. <b>Ideally?</b> A 6-card 3rd suit with 5 playing tricks headed by 5 HCP. Point count range? Pick a range that is comfortable for <i>your</i> partnership. Would you open with only KQ109xx and nothing on the outside? <b>How about quick tricks?</b> Partner will expect only one or two quick tricks. In 4th seat an opening two-bid is a moot point. A 4th seat two-bid is CONSTRUCTIVE: you expect a plus score.
♠-Kxx ♥-xx ♦-QJ10xxx ♣-Kx Should you open this hand or does it have a flaw?	1st, 2nd, 3rd 4th	P	Should you open this hand or does it have a flaw? It should not be opened. It has a flaw. The hand has two outside honors. Suppose you open this hand 2♦ and partner bids 2NT, asking you for an outside feature (an Ace or a King). With two, which one do you show?
♠-AKJxxx ♥-void ♦-xxxx ♣-xxx Would you bid or is there a flaw? 1st/2nd ____ 3rd____4th____	1st, 2nd, 3rd 4th	2S P	Should you open this hand or does it have a flaw? Yes to both! Tend to avoid opening a weak 2nd two with a void. There are times, however, where you would lose the disruptive value of the preempt. This is one of those times.
♠-QJ10xxx ♥-x ♦-KQxxx ♣-x What is the flaw in this hand?	1st, 2nd, 3rd 4th	P	What is the flaw in this hand? The distribution. If you open a weak two-bid with a 6-5 pattern, it will be next to impossible for partner to find the best contract. <i>Offensively</i> , your hand has trick-taking potential that partner would not expect. <i>Defensively</i> , partner needs a reasonable picture of your hand to make the best decision in a competitive auction. Pass for now. Later...6-5 come alive!
♠-KJxxxx ♥-KJxx ♦-xxx ♣-void Flaws?	1st, 2nd, 3rd 4th	P	Flaws? There are three flaws in this hand? First, is the poor-playing quality of the 6-card suit. Second, the hand has a <i>very good</i> outside 4-card major. What about a very poor 4-card major? Most experts ignore it. The third flaw is the void. Three flaws equal a pass.

---

## NT Points And A 5-card Major—What to do?

Sometimes opener's balanced hand will have a 5-3-3-2 pattern. When the five card suit is a minor suit, opener has no decision to make, and with a hand of the right strength (14 to 16 HCP plus one point for the five card suit) opener easily bids one notrump. When the five card suit is a major suit, opener must decide whether to open one notrump or one of the major. Three factors determine this choice.

1. If opener is to bid one notrump, the hand should hold three cards in the other major. The reason

for this is simple. If opener has only two cards in the other major suit and opens one notrump there is the risk that responder might transfer to that other major and then pass. If responder does this and also has three cards in opener's major, the contract will be in the two-five major fit rather than the five-three and will probably take fewer tricks.

2. If opener has a bad doubleton, the hand will be more oriented to suit play and less to notrump play. Opener should have

at least a jack in the doubleton suit before concealing the major suit in favor of an opening a notrump.

3. Hands that are "toppish" mostly aces and kings—play better in suits. Hands that have texture—mostly kings and queens play better in notrump.

So, if opener has three cards in the other major, no empty doubleton, and a hand mostly texture, it is best to conceal the five-card major and open one notrump. If the hand fails any of the three tests, it is best to open the five-card major.

---

*(Distribution cont. from page 7)*

cards in a suit, the most likely split is one off from an equal one (3-1 for 4, 4-2 for 6); the one exception to this is when you are missing only 2 cards, when the probabilities are almost equal between 1-1 and 2-0. However, if you are missing an odd number of cards in a suit, the most likely split will be the most equal one possible (2-1 for 3, and 3-2 for 5). As the hand progresses, and fewer cards are available, the more equal splits become

even more likely.

Note: for the math geeks out there, the analysis done in 8)-10) above becomes more complex when an opponent has already shown some number of cards in a missing suit – then, declarer must incorporate 'conditional probability', but alas, this is beyond the scope of this article.



**People with small minds talk about other people. People with ordinary minds talk about events. People with great minds talk about ideas. People with warped minds talk about bridge hands.**

**Did you know?**

**43.6 percent of all slam contracts fail.**

**62.7 percent of all bridge players are women.**

**97.8 percent of all bridge statistics, including these, are made up.**

---

## Par for The [Bridge] Course?

by Herb Strentz

So, what do you make of the “par” scores listed on the summary sheet of the hands played at our Bridge Center? How useful are they? Sometimes, the hand record results are contrary to contracts that seem more logical and biddable.

To deal with some questions, take the Thursday, Aug. 4, afternoon pairs session, and consider the 724 hands played that day by a total of 57 NS and EW pairs in the A and B sections. (The scores of the day — the percentages posted for each pair at the end of each game — were compared to what percent of the outcomes of each hand were at or above the “par” listed on the hand record.)

The results need to be put in the context of what the hand-record “Par” means — that both NS and EW pairs bid and play the best they can.

Dee Wilson provided helpful information from the website of Bridge Composer, the software used to generate the hand record (<http://bridgecomposer.com/Par.htm>): “The par score is the number of points of a deal based on the trick score of the result, with open cards

(double dummy). ...In other words, a par contract has been reached when neither side can improve [its] score by bidding again.”

Also, if you look at the hands played, the par declarer always seems to drop the off-side singleton King and take the right finesse in the right direction. “Par’s” sacrifice bids at the 5-, 6-, and 7-levels also work out well, regardless of vulnerability.

So the par score on the hand record is, in a way, theoretical or optimum. Par still provides some insight to how we’re doing. There is some correlation between doing well in the bridge par results and your final percentage standing — but being tops in one does not mean being tops in the other.

Given all this, did we shoot par on Aug. 4?

Yes, and then some! Overall, the 57 pairs played at or better than par 55.8 percent of the time. By sections and directions, the results were A-NS 57.3; A-EW 55.49; B-NS 53.89. and B-EW 56.7.

But wait a minute: Those are not all that bad percent-



ages, given that par means the best a declarer or defense can manage.

True enough, but the par calculations are inflated. For one thing both pairs will be at par if the result — NS +110 and EW -110 — is also the par for the hand. That’s 100 percent par. So while in the master-point system the overall percentage for each hand is 50, the par-or-better percentage can be as high as 100 — as in a flat board where all declarers are +600 and all defenders -600.

Predictably, the defense always is hundreds of points above par when the opposition doesn’t reach the “best” game contract or know where all the cards lie in order to make that contract, even if bid.

Consider my favorite of the day, Board 4, where the par contract was EW making three-no for 600. Of the 25 EW pairs who played that

board only two made 600; one other pair was a plus 130. The other 22 were down -100, -200 or -300. (Margie Brennan and I defended 4♣ for plus 300.) Think of it: A contract best played at par 3N when the holdings include three singletons, a void and four doubletons! (So, on that hand 8 percent of the declarers and defenders were at par and 92 percent of the defenders were above par.)

Board 4 , W deals:

♠9	
♥K7	
♦105432	
♣KJ632	
♠K2	♠Q865
♥AJ1093	♥84
♦AQ9876	♦J
♣—	♣AQ10985
♠AJ10743	
♥Q652	
♦K	
♣74	

So that's why relying par or better as a guide can be suspect. Nonetheless, here are the top three NS and EW pairs in the A and B sections, their already-posted percentage game followed by their percentage at hand-record par or better:

A-NS: Brennan/Strentz 63.3 and 61.54; Gustafson/Wityk 62.02/73.07; KStowe/McGinn 58.65/73.07

A-EW: Nelson/Hutter 60.58/73.07; the Olssons 56.89/57.69; White/Kelly-Burger/Rovner, tie, 55.13/60.71.

B-NS: Furtwangler/Riley: 62.98/66.67; Copple/Boyd: 61.35/ 58.33; Johnson/Nelsen 59.35/70.83.

B-EW: The Krentzes, 63.37, Hoy/Nulph 55.4 and Swanger/McPhail, 54.82; all were at 61.54 par.

What can you make of this? That if you have a good game you'll also likely do well at "par." But the well above par

scores on many boards — some resulting from "gifts" — may drive the differences between the par and match-point percentages.

Only 1 of the 12 lowest game scores had a par score better than 50 percent.

Looking at the par scores can offer reassurance that you could not have made three spades anyway and offer some diversion as to how on earth to bid to reach the par contract. But trying to improve one's game by in-depth analysis of par outcomes likely is wasting time.



## Up the ACBL Ladder (Apr, May, June, July, Aug, Sept)

New Members: Steven Ad-  
dington, Jane Lane, Dotty  
Thurston, Ewa Pratt, Suzann  
Wilson, Liz Hansen, Lily  
Packrandt, Scott Rothfus,  
Alexander Schulz, Koki To-  
moeda

Jr. Master: William Stork,  
Nathan Pike, Jeanne Rooney-  
Graves, David Grace, Mike  
Murphy, Joseph Lakers,  
Ruth Lakers, Diane Mitchell.  
Jill Bassman, Lucy Hughes,  
Mary Beth Richards

Club Master: Hattie Bee-  
cher, Gloria Moyer, Nathan

Pike, Sondra Sittner, Dana  
Terndrup, Roberta Riddle

Sectional Master: Melvin  
Dostal, Bonnie Fenimore,  
Jennifer Townsend

Regional Master: Donald  
Lang, Marilyn Lang, Rose  
Legg, Paul Robert, Barbara  
Maas

NABC Master: Craig Nel-  
sen

Adv NABC Master: Kristin  
Welter

Life Master: Mary David.  
Bronze Life Master: Pat Gra-  
ham, Craig Nelsen, Don Per-  
ry

Silver Life Master: Sally Nel-  
son

Ruby Life Master: Kathy Kel-  
len

No new Dia. LM, Gold LM,  
Sapphire LM, Emerald LM,  
Platinum LM, or Grand LM.



## Unit 216 Membership Rankings (Sept. 2016)

Total Membership	455	NABC Master (200+)	59	Gold Life Master	16
Rookie (0-5)	42	Adv NABC Master	3	Sapph Life Master	7
Jr. Master (5+)	35	Life Master	22	Dia Life Master	7
Club Master (20+)	46	Bronze Life Master	58	Emer Life Master	1
Sect. Master (50+)	53	Silver Life Master	33	Plat Life Master	1
Regl. Master (100+)	56	Ruby Life Master	24	Grand Life Master	1

**After partner has described his hand AND  
you know what the final contract should be, bid it!**

***The one who knows, goes!***

**Say partner opens 1NT (15-17) and you have 18 HCP points, balanced.**

**There are least 33 points between the two hands  
so bid 6NT!**

**If leaping so high scares you,  
go to a mirror and say 6NT out loud. *Do it!***

Eddie Kantar

WELCOME to our  
New Bridge House!!!!

Sectional Bridge  
Tournament  
Sanction # S1609007

# Cornbelt

September 15-18, 2016

Greater Des Moines Bridge House

8529 Hickman, Urbandale, in the Cobblestone Shopping Area.



New address  
New game

## Newer Player Events

For all events, points  
are averaged

Strata for newer player events:  
A 200-300, B 100-200, C 0-100

New Player events held if sufficient attendance



<b>Friday</b> Sept. 16 1 p.m. 0-300 pairs 7 p.m. 0-300 pairs	<b>Saturday</b> Sept. 17 10 a.m. 0-300 pairs 3 p.m. 0-300 pairs
--	---

## Open Events

Thursday, Sept. 15 7 p.m. Stratified pairs

Friday, Sept. 16 1 p.m. Stratified pairs  
7 p.m. Stratified pairs

Saturday, Sept. 17 Light brunch at 9:30 a.m.  
10 a.m. **NEW Team Game: Eight is enough team game**  
(Teams of 4 cannot have more than 8 points) Player with 1500+ mp=3 points  
500-1000 mp=2 points, and players with less than 500 mp=1point)

3 p.m. **Stratified pairs (single session)**

Strata for pairs events: A-1500+, B 750-1500, C 0-750

Sunday, Sept. 18 10 a.m. **Two session Strata-flighted Swiss Teams**  
Flt A: (Strata: 2000+ and AX 0-2000); Flt B: (Strata: B 500-750 & C 0-750)  
(2 session play-through \$84/team)

Director in charge: **Larry Brobst**

ZERO TOLERANCE  
TOURNAMENT, PLAY AND  
HAVE FUN!

Motels  
Wildwood Lodge 11431 Forest  
Avenue 1-800-728-1223 or  
515-222-9876

Sleep Inn

11211 Hickman Rd.  
Urbandale, IA  
515-270-2424

or

Hotel Renovo  
11167 Hickman Road 1-800-395-  
7675 or 515-276-1126

or

Try booking on the internet

Chairperson: Linda Johnson 515-254-9031  
cell 515-360-6100  
ljohnson1938@msn.com  
Co-chair: Elaine Olson 515-777-2314  
Pleasanthillelaine@gmail.com

Partnerships:

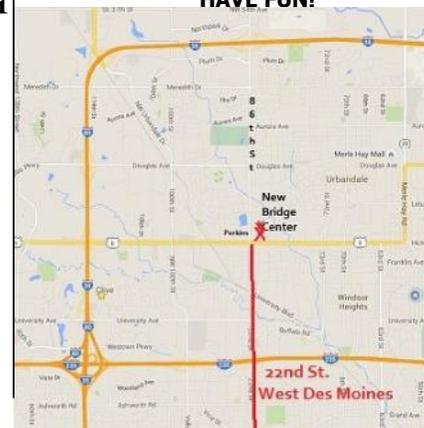
0-500 Norma Comp 515-987-4821

njcomp@q.com

500+ Mary Lou Agoes 515-225-2454

LAgocsjr@aol.com

For additional info, visit our web site:  
<http://www.bridgeunit216.org/>



THE HAWKEYER  
UNIT 216 OF ACBL  
8529 Hickman Rd.  
Urbandale, IA 50322

name  
street  
City St zp

### Mark Your Calendar

#### Unit 216 Sectionals

**Cornbelt**  
Sept. 15-18, 2016  
Urbandale, IA

**Hawkeye Holiday**  
Jan. 5-8, 2017  
Urbandale, IA

**Spring Festival**  
Mar. 30-Apr. 2, 2017  
Urbandale, IA

**Stars of Tomorrow**  
Aug. 19-29, 2017  
Urbandale, IA

#### District 14 Regionals

**Bloomington**  
May 22-28, 2017  
Ramada Mall of America  
Bloomington, MN

**Greater Des Moines**  
Jul. 3-9, 2017  
Sheraton Hotel  
West Des Moines, IA

**Council Bluffs**  
Aug. 7-13, 2017  
Mid-America Center  
Council Bluffs, IA

#### ACBL Nationals

**Orlando, FL**  
Nov. 24-Dec. 3 2016  
Swan & Dolphin

**Kansas City, MO**  
March 9-19 2017  
Westin & Sheraton

**Toronto, ON**  
Jul. 20-30  
Convention Center