

I hardly know how to begin! I come from a card-playing family. My grandmother taught me to play casino when I was three years old. My father, mother, and grandmother played bridge, and I was a constant watcher. My aunt was extremely proud of herself. She had over 500 masterpoints and never went to a tournament. Of course, these were the years when, depending on the size of the game, the award for coming in first might be .21 of a masterpoint or .07 for coming in third. I don't remember my age when they started, at my request, to teach me to play bridge. My earliest memory of the game is of my mother's trying to explain a finesse. I simply could not understand what she meant! I guess I finally got it.

I played bridge, mostly duplicate, throughout my high school years. In fact, my social group of both boys and girls would often have five to seven tables for a home duplicate game--really amazing. I played a little in college, but not a whole lot.

During my first marriage of 9 years, I did not play duplicate at all. Once I was single, I immediately found a partner and started playing again. As a single parent, I limited myself to 2 evenings a week, but my son later told me he remembered my leaving him and his sister with a sitter every night to play bridge--NOT SO. A friend stayed with them once during this time so I could attend a tournament, my first one away from home, probably during late seventies.

My second husband and I met at the bridge table and played together for many years until he died in 2003. He was not a religious man, so his funeral was a memorial service at our local bridge club, his favorite place, with a good bridge-playing friend officiating. If I recall correctly, we did win one regional event. The highlight of one regional here in Memphis occurred against Dr. Fisher--I'm sure you remember him. He doubled me in two diamonds, and I made it.

By this time, I had been teaching English (lots of take home grading), so I played only once or twice a week. I did not retire until I was 74 in 2016, and at that time I started playing much more frequently. I do not remember the number of points I had at that time, but my goal has been to reach this milestone. I have attended many tournaments during these years. Until covid, a regular partner and I always attended the Atlanta regional in early September. At an Atlanta national, a Memphis pair convinced us to play in the national senior Swiss team event; we had already bought our entry for the pairs game, but we reluctantly agreed. We were the last qualifying team for the second day. In fact, we did not really qualify. An uneven number qualified, and as we were the top non-qualifying team, we were moved up to play the second day. We came in 26th overall, hence my only platinum points.

The strength of my game is play of the hand, but like all bridge players, I make my share of mistakes. A fine Memphis player, Dr. Arthur Flowers, suggested that I make rules for myself unless the bidding indicates otherwise. With no opposition bidding, I always finesse toward the J if I have a two way finesse. As he pointed out, these little rules eliminate guesswork. A more recent rule is not opening a 12 point, 4/3/3/3 hand as many do today. Sometime these rules work, and sometimes they don't, but they keep me from agonizing. I consider myself an ordinary bridge player who is slightly above average. I read the Bridge Bulletin regularly and get many tips, but I do not always agree with the experts--my bad.