



Palmetto Pre-Empts



South Carolina Unit 160 of the American Contract Bridge League

January to March, 2006

National Champions In South Carolina

We are proud to report that several South Carolinians have won national ranking in their master point category. **Robert Hampton** of Blythewood, SC, is the ACBL Sectional Master of the Year. **Paul Wright, Jr.**, of Mt. Pleasant, SC, is the ACBL NABC Master of the Year. **Linda Luther** of N. Charleston is the ACBL Life Master of the Year.

A Play Problem For South

North
♠ AK93
♥ 95
♦ T865
♣ 984
South (You)
♠ Q842
♥ A
♦ AQJ3
♣ AKJT

The auction went

You	West	North	East
1D	2H	Dbl	3H
4S	P	P	P

After the opening high heart lead, you play a spade to the king as West shows out. Can you make the hand?

Inside: Mini-McKenney winners, Ace of Clubs winners, Charleston Ace, New Minor Forcing, tough leads, and much much more!

The Mini-McKenney Unit 160 Races

Each year the Unit honors those players who score more master points from all sources than others in same master point category. The results are given below. The players listed began the year in the category indicated, but of course many have moved up a notch or two

Rookie 0-5 points

- ½ George Boltz, Greer, SC, 116
- ½ Carolyn Boltz, Greer, SC, 116
- 3. Daniel Schmidt, Anderson, SC, 93

Junior Master 5-20 points

- 1. Happy Porter Gregg, Florence, SC, 85
- 2. Eugene boros, Hilton Head Island, 60
- 3. Janice Ripley, Lexington, 56

Club Master 20-50 points

- 1. Darrell Elder, Surfside Beach, 168
- 2. Kenneth Kerr, HHI, 119
- 3. Barbara Kokenes, HHI, 94 (Con't p.2)

Ace of Clubs Winners For 2005

The ACBL and the South Carolina Unit 160 are proud to announce the SC winners of the Ace of Clubs awards for our Unit. The winners scored the most master points from club games than other players in their point categories.

The winners are:

Rookie of the Year

- 1. Daniel Schmidt, Anderson, 69
- 2/3 George and Carolyn Boltz, Greer, 57 (Con't p2.)

(Ace of Clubs, con't.

Junior Master of the Year

1. Eugene Boros, HHI, 49
2. Janice Rip[ley, Lexington, 39
3. Karen Galleher, Pawley's Island, 25

Club Master of the Year

1. Kenneth Kerr, HHI, 58
2. Gail Whigham, Greenville, 56
3. Sylvia Freeman, Seneca, 54

Sectional Master of the Year

1. Sherril Cuzzell, Summerville, 80
2. Tanya Goff, HHI, 65
3. Mary Ann Ranch, Anderson, 53

Regional Master of the Year

1. Donald Clayton, Seneca, 115
2. C. Buchanan, Anderson, 105
3. Eleanor Buchanan, Anderson, 99

NABC Master of the Year

1. James Johannigman, Spartanburg, 96
2. Mina Dupree, Folly Beach, 79
3. Sam Pate, Taylors, 71

A Second Play problem

North
♠ 864
♥ A6
♦ AK8
♣ K8643

South (You)
♠ AK95
♥ K7
♦ 53
♣ AT752

You are South, declaring 6C, and West leads a small diamond. The clubs are 3-0. Plan the play. Solution p7/8.

(Mini-McKenney con't.

Sectional Master

1. Robert Hampton,* Blythwood, 790
2. Joyce Hampton, Blythwood, 281
3. Shirley Dalvo, Kiawah Island, 251

Regional Master 100-200 points

1. Donald Clayton, Seneca, 303
2. Maurice Cordray, HHI, 186
3. Jack Faries, Surfside Beach, 170

NABC Master 200-300 Points

1. Paul Wright,Jr*, Mt. Pleasant, 745
2. Kenneth Dye, Morrisville, NC, 186
3. Robert Sikes, Bluffton, 157

Life Master

1. Linda Luther*, N. Charleston, 559
2. Steven Gajdalo, HHI, 261
3. Jack Webb, Charleston, 260

Bronze LM 500-1500 points

1. Gideon Kochmann, Mt Pleasant, 453
2. Anita Knaysi, Clemson, 355
3. Jim Calahan, Black Mtn, NC, 272

Silver LM 1500-2500

1. Tina Radding, Charleston, 460
2. James Hawkes, Charleston, 396
3. Rich Regan, Lyman, 358

Gold LM 2500-5000

1. Greg Roberts, Aiken, 421
2. Jeff Ziemer, Taylors, 354
3. Nannell Burford, Naples, Fl, 265

Diamond LM 5,000 – 10,000

1. John Hurd, NY, NY, 832
2. Hugh Brown, McCormick, 544
3. Hap Neuffer, Columbia, 383

Emerald Life Master 10,000 –

- ½. Mark McLaughlin, Charleston, 728
- ½. Susanne McLaughlin, Charleston, 728
3. Richard Brown, Easley, 495

Platinum LM

1. Tom Rutledge, Charleston. 646
2. Larry Allen, Summerville, 295
3. Ellen Allen, Summerville, 283

* = First In nation

Ace of Clubs, con't.

Life Master of the Year

1. Stevel Gajdala, HHI, 132
2. Jack Webb, Charleston, 87
3. Elinor Harre;;, Anderson, 81

Bronze Life Master of the Year

1. Anita Knaysi, Clemson, 157
2. Gideon Kochman, Mt. Pleasant, 125
3. Bill Bauknight, Anderson, 124

Silver Life Master of the Year

1. Brenda Klinker, Salem, 197
2. Rosalyn Silverstein, Anderson, 186
3. William kelly, Anderson, 179

Gold Life Master of the Year

1. Robert Benbrook, Belton, 190,
2. Anil Bose, Clemson, 170
3. Leroy Christeson, Anderson, 164

Diamond Life Master of the Year

1. Bobbie Scott, Clemson, 192
2. Hap Neuffer, Columbia, 70
3. John Hurd, NY, NY 27

Emerald Life Master of the Year

1. Richard Brown, Easley, 107
2. Mark McLaughlin, Charleston, 59
3. Susanne McLaughlin, Charleston, 57

Platinum Life Master of the Year

1. Tom Rutledge, Charleston, 86
 2. Ellen Allen, Summerville, 65
 3. Larry Allen, Summerville, 40
-

John Hurd Wins Chester Ward Trophy

For probably the last time, John Hurd won the Chester Ward Trophy, given to the Unit 160 player who scored the most points for

the year. John has moved to New York City and is out of the Unit 160 territory.

Of special note is the fact that two non-life masters (Hampton and Wright) and one new life master (Luther) are in the top ten in total points in the state.

The top scorers for 2005 are:

1. 832 John Hurd, NY, NY
 2. 790 Robert Hampton, Blythewood
 3. 745 Paul Wright, Mt. Pleasant
 3. 728 Mark McLaughlin, Charleston
 4. 728 Susanne McLaughlin, Charleston
 5. 646 Tom Rutledge, Charleston
 6. 559 Linda Luther, N. Charleston
 7. 544 Hugh Brown, McCormick
 8. 496 Richard Brown, Easley
 9. 469 Tina Radding, Charleston
 - 10 453 Gideon Kochmann, Mt. Pleasant
 - 11 421 Greg Roberts, Aiken
 - 12 412 Richard Guarneri, Charleston
-

Monday Night At The Club

By Spencer Hurd

In the featured hand, Charleston Ace had to deal with a bad trump split, making an otherwise easy hand into a briefly worrisome experience. (See p.1)

		North	
		♠ AK93	
		♥ 95	
		♦ T865	
		♣ 984	
West			East
♠ --			♠ JT765
♥ KQJ6432			♥ T87
♦ 974			♦ K2
♣ 732			♣ Q65
		South (You)	
		♠ Q842	
		♥ A	
		♦ AQJ3	
		♣ AKJT	

The auction went

Ace	West	North	East
1D	2H	Dbl	3H
4S	P	P	P

In the auction, it is noteworthy that Ace and his partner have the absolute understanding that the negative double promises, in addition to at least 7-9 points, at least four spades as well.

Holding values for a 2NT opening, Ace opted to go with 1D. It causes a lot of problems to your partner if he/she worries about the propriety of your notrump bids. A school of thought says that, since you have a singleton ace (or king), it is okay to open 2NT since 3NT or four of the other major are the likely contracts. Your singleton will not be in dummy and maybe no one will even notice!

This is not allowed without an alert.

Actually, a 2C opening makes sense, but then what is opener's rebid? Ace's choice is based on the practical thought that, when you have a singleton in a major, an opening of 1C or 1D will not be passed out. Somebody will bid!

The play of the hand was simple. A heart opening lead to the ace was followed by a trump to dummy's ace. With the bad news in spades revealed, Ace temporarily assumed West's red cards were (somewhat) evenly split between heart and diamonds. So, if West is 0-7-3-3, say, Ace should finesse in diamonds. Clubs can be worried about later. When a diamond was led to the queen, it won the trick. It would be shrewd of West to duck, but here East had the king.

Notice that the diamond ten is now a potential entry to dummy. After winning the first diamond in hand, Ace returned to the dummy with a high spade in order to lead another diamond. The king fell, and when Ace cashed the diamond jack, east ruffed.

East exited the spade jack, a good move. Ace won his queen and led the 4th diamond to dummy's ten. Now East had an impossible choice.

Say East ruffs the 4th diamond with his last trump. He is endplayed since on a club return, Ace can finesse, and on a heart return, Ace can ruff, cash two high clubs, give up a club and ruff in dummy for his tenth trick, losing only 2 trumps and a club.

If, on the other hand, East discards a club on the 4th diamond, as the lead is now in dummy, Ace could just finesse in clubs (if it loses, he still makes ten tricks since East can't lead his last trump), cash clubs until east gives up – on this line South scores 11 tricks.

"I really only followed suit," said Ace later, "the end-play on East happened sort of automatically." But East was heard later to complain about how unlucky he was to play such a hard hand against one of the club's strongest declarers. It's annoying that Ace gets credit for average plays seen as brilliancies, but in fairness, many of his brilliancies are seen as average by opponents who missed the point.

The important lesson on the hand is not to panic even when the trumps are 5-0.!

After the round, we found out that several players were in 3H (doubled) or 4H (doubled). The best EW result was after a 3H pre-empt and a passed double. After a spade lead, West led a high trump to South's ace. South returned a spade which was trumped high. The heart spots allowed dummy (East) to win the second heart trick, and declarer led a third spade and ruffed high. Now West had a sure heart entry to dummy. West led the diamond seven and North carelessly played low. This was ducked to South who had to win. Awkwardly placed, he could cash the diamond ace and one high club. Not happy with leading a third diamond, which would have been okay here, he led a 4th spade. Now when West won, the 5th spade in dummy became a winner, and provided a club discard. He lost only two diamonds, two clubs, and a heart, -100. Someone in 4H doubled was down only 300 with a similar defense. North should play the diamond eight so that, if declarer plays low in dummy, he can shift to a club. Then the defense gets all its tricks.

A Lesson At The Table:

In a swiss match we know about, NS bid to 6D.

South, the declarer, opened 1H, and had shown a massive red two-suiter, and had bid on to 6D after the opponents competed to 5S.

West (holding 3 aces!) doubled and cashed the heart ace. Declarer, with only red cards left was about to claim. He leaned forward making his intentions clear.

West, realizing declarer expected to lose no more tricks, decided not to lead a black suit and led another heart. Sure enough, partner had only one heart and could ruff.

The lesson: as declarer, show no emotion or excitement, and hold yourself still, even on very exciting hands. Part of ethical bridge is not revealing to partner anything about your hand or expectations by your mannerisms or tone of voice or tempo in bidding or play. Part of practical bridge applies the same rules to one's opponents. Body language is for dating, not bridge.

What Is "New Minor Forcing" ?

The convention "New Minor Forcing" is very popular nowadays, and it is a part of The Two-Over-One System and the Standard American Yellow Card (SAYC) System. The bid usually is an effort to reach a close game contract with a mild game try.

Here it is in a nutshell. North opens one of a minor and South bids one of a major. North rebids 1NT (11 to a good 14 points). Except on rare hands, North usually waits for four cards in South's major suit to give an immediate raise.

The bidding goes:

North	South
1C	1S
1NT	2D
?	

Here it is: the 2D bid is New Minor Forcing. It says nothing about diamonds and is forcing one round (without promising a rebid).

After 2D, North's rebids mean the following;

2H = min hand with a 4-card heart suit, doesn't deny a 3-card spade holding (This can be passed)

2S = a 3-card spade suit, 11-13 points, denies 4 hearts (This can be passed)

2NT = 11-13 points, 2 spades and 3 hearts; opener should have a diamond stopper because South hasn't promised one. (This can be passed)

3C = unusual but shows 5 clubs, not forcing,

3H = 4-cards in hearts, 14 points (By inference, this is forcing to game. You expect the 2D bidder to bid 3NT or raise hearts.)

3S = 3 cards in spades, 14 points, forcing to game (You expect the 2D bidder to bid 4S, but on rare occasions he will now make a slam try – so he would have bid game even if you had bid weakly.)

3NT = 14 points, denies 3 spades or 4 hearts, promises a diamond stopper.

The 2D bid promises at least 10 points and a hand worthy of a game try. Usually South will have at least 5 cards in his major suit. Over 1NT, South's rebids of 2H and 2S are not forcing and guarantee less than 10 points!

Suppose the auction goes:

Pard	You
1C	1S
1NT	?

What do you bid with each of the following hands?

- a) ♠AQ765, ♥Q543, ♦J7 ♣86
- b) ♠AQ765, ♥A543, ♦T7 ♣86
- c) ♠AQ765, ♥QT742, ♦7 ♣86
- d) ♠AK765, ♥JT7, ♦AJ7 ♣86
- e) ♠AQ7652, ♥T974, ♦7 ♣86
- f) ♠AK765, ♥K8, ♦KJ7 ♣862
- g) ♠KQJ65, ♥K52, ♦9742 ♣6
- h) ♠KQJ65, ♥T, ♦K52 ♣9864
- i) ♠KJ965, ♥Q52, ♦AT6 ♣92
- j) ♠KT965, ♥A52 ♦KQ2 ♣T5
- k) ♠KT965, ♥A543, ♦K2 ♣Q4

The auction goes

1C	1S
1NT	2D
?	

What do you (opener) bid now:

- l) ♠KJ, ♥AQT, ♦AT52 ♣9864
- m) ♠KQJ, ♥KT, ♦KQ2 ♣T9864

- n) ♠65, ♥KJT, ♦KT9 ♣AJT64
- o) ♠QJ6, ♥AT, ♦AJ2 ♣Q9864
- p) ♠65, ♥AT8, ♦J52 ♣AK864

New Minor Quiz: the answers.

Suppose the auction goes:

Pard	You
1C	1S
1NT	?

What do you bid with each of the following hands?

- a) ♠AQ765, ♥Q543, ♦J7 ♣86 Bid 2H; you are not good enough to bid 2D.
- b) ♠AQ765, ♥A543, ♦T7 ♣86 Bid 2D. You will pass 2H, 2S or 2NT, and will carry on to game over 3H, or 3S.
- c) ♠AQ765, ♥QT742, ♦7 ♣86 Bid 2H, not forcing. Improve the hand to ♠AQ765, ♥KQT42, ♦7 ♣86 and you should bid 3H (forcing). Some play the jump to 3H to show an invitational 5-5 hand.
- d) ♠AK765, ♥JT7, ♦AJ7 ♣86 Bid 2D and raise 2S or 3S to game; otherwise jump to 3NT. A bid of 3S over 1NT means something else and is not appropriate here.
- e) ♠AQ7652, ♥T974, ♦7 ♣86 Bid 2S. Signoff.
- f) ♠AK765, ♥K8, ♦KJ7 ♣862 Bid 2D and bid to 4S or 3NT depending on Pard's bid.
- g) ♠KQJ65, ♥K52, ♦9742 ♣6 Pass 1NT. Had partner opened 1D instead of 1C you would now bid either 2D or 2S, neither forcing or encouraging.
- h) ♠KQJ65, ♥T, ♦K52 ♣9864 I bid 2C. I dislike playing in 1NT with a singleton. 2S is too one sided. If partner has 3 spades and only 4 clubs, he may choose to return to 2S. (Axx, KQxx, Tx, Kxxx) If he is 3-4-3-3 he will definitely bid 2S. You must note that his 2S bid is not showing extra points.
- i) ♠KJ965, ♥Q52, ♦AT6 ♣92 About minimum for a 2D bid.
- j) ♠KT965, ♥A52 ♦KQ2 ♣T5 Bid 2D and go to game in spades or NT. You are just looking for a 5-3 spade fit on the way to 3NT.
- k) ♠KT965, ♥A543, ♦K2 ♣Q4 Bid 2D and go to game next.

The auction goes

1C	1S
1NT	2D
?	

What do you (opener) bid now:

- l) ♠KJ, ♥AQT, ♦AT52 ♣9864 Bid 3NT
- m) ♠KQJ, ♥KT, ♦KQ2 ♣T9864 Bid 3S. You expect pard to just bid 4S, but on certain rare hands he will bid 3NT. You will pass whatever game he bids.

- n) ♠65, ♥KJT, ♦KT9 ♣AJT64 Bid 2NT, and expect to play it there.
 o) ♠QJ6, ♥AT, ♦AJ2 ♣Q9864 Bid 3S.
 p) ♠65, ♥AT8, ♦J52 ♣AK864 Bid 2NT. Yes, the clubs are rather nice but 2NT is the bid.

Tough Leads

Sometimes the lead decision is very hard. Here is a recent hand mailed to us.

“Dear Spencer,
 You hold the following hand:

♠Q5 ♥AQ876 ♦A765 ♣Q2

The auction goes:

RHO	YOU	LHO	Pard
1S	Dbl	2S	P
4S	P	P	P

What would be your opening lead? I chose the Queen of clubs which was a loser when dummy turned out to have the AKxx and opener the Jxx. Would you have considered the Spade Queen?”

Reply: This is a tough hand. The lead of a doubleton honor is a desperation lead and has a low percentage of success. Here it is KNOWN to be an especially bad lead! Why known, because partner is known to have very few points.

The opponents bid to game. Assume they have 25 points between them. The partner, one suspects, has about 1/2 points. Why should they be in useful and in clubs?

It is usually better to play safe on opening leads, not to be aggressive. The stronger the opponents, the more this is true.

Suppose you passed and the opponents bid to 4S (with no slam tries). Say you hold:

♠T5 ♥T8762 ♦J765 ♣Q2

Now partner is presumed to hold 10/12 points. He may well have a little in clubs and the club queen (not particularly attractive) at least here has five times the likelihood of being successful compared to your actual hand.

In the hand you asked about: Note your RHO jumped to game. Maybe he doesn't have a worrisome holding in hearts (your double would worry him if he held say Kx or Kxx in hearts. Maybe the heart ace is okay as a lead. It might give away a trick, but the club queen could give away the kitchen sink.

There are other leads. The spade queen is awful, but a low spade has some merit. As a (good) rule, one

does not generally lead from Qxx in trumps, and less often from Qx. If declarer has a choice, he will not play you for the spade queen if you lead low away from it.

Also, a low diamond has the merit of being almost safe, even if it does not gain. You are likely to get the trick later and maybe a low diamond lead won't cost anything.

Declarer's contracts are often surprisingly hard to play when you don't give away much on defense.

Tournament Calender:

Mar 31-Apr 2	Savannah (Pooler)
Apr 28-30	Camden
May 5-7	Morganton (& GNT FINALS)
May 19-21	Augusta
Jun 8-11	Charlotte
Jun 12-18	District 7 STAC
Jun 23-25	Hendersonville
Jun30-Jul 4	Atlanta Sectional
Jul 14-16	Greenville
Aug 3-6	Columbia

Grand National Teams Semi-Finals Set For April 15

The GNTs for 2006 are underway now. Qualification is based on your master point holdings as of Sep 1, 2005. The local and state playoffs culminate in a playoff for the District 7 title (and National qualification) at Morganton, NC, May 5-7.

Flight A players need only qualify at the local level and may then enter the District 7 playoff. Flight B (0-2000) and Flight C (non LM up to 500 pts) are in separate events with 3 levels of qualification: local, Unit and then District.

The B/C Semi-Finals for our Unit 160 are in Columbia, Saturday April 15, at 2725 Cypress St (803-771-4988), starting at 10:30 AM. Email Alan Brooks at aibrsb@hacom.net for any questions.

There are five locations for our district's various semi-finals, see mabcbridge.org for further details.

The December STaC

We congratulate the SC players who scored well in the December District-wide Sectional Tournament At Clubs. This event generated more than \$10,000 for Katrina relief.

Our top results:

1. 29.23 Richard Guarneri, Charleston
2. 25.02 Tom Rutledge, Charleston
3. 23.74 Greg Roberts, Aiken
4. 22.74 Larry Allen, Summerville
5. 21.30 Hugh Brown, McCormick
6. 18.81 Ellen Allen, Summerville

District 7 Champs From SC In the Mini-Mckinney

We reported on page 1 that several players from SC scored first in the USA in their categories. We are pleased to report that many SC players were tops or nearly so in the district (SC, NC, GA, E TENN).

Carolyn and George Boltz of Greer were (equally) rookie of the Year for the District with 116 points. In the same category, **Daniel Schmidt** of Anderson came in fifth.

In the Junior Master category, **Happy Porter Gregg** of Florence came in tied for second. Congratulations.

In the Club master category, **Darrell Elder** of Surfside Beach was second with 168 points.

Since **Robert Hampton** was first nationally in the Sectional Master category, he is first in the District as well – but wife **Joyce Hampton** was second in the district with 281 points. **Shirly Salvo** of Kiawah island scored 4th with 251 points, a high total that would be first in most years.

Seneca's **Donald Clayton** scored 303 points and was first in the district in the Regional master category.

Paul Wright (NABC Master) and **Linda Luther** (Life Master) of Charleston and North Charleston were national firsts and so win the district too. We mention **Steven**

Gajdalo (HHI), Jack Webb (Charleston), and Jaime Villaneuva (Greer) were 3rd to 5th in the district in the LM category.

Godeon Kochman of Mt Pleasant was first in the district in the Bronze LM category with 453 points.

Hugh Brown of McCormick was second in the district in the Diamond LM category with 544 points.

Mark and Susanne McLaughlin were equal first and secon in the Emerald LM category with 728 points. **Richard Brown** of Easley was 4th in that category with 495 points. Congratulations!

“Why I don’t like Bracket 2 in Gatlinburg.” By Rich Regan

Reanette Frobouck,, Dennis and Linda McGarry were to play in Gatlinburg. They asked Jim Hawkes, Rob Meckstroth and me to play with them, primarily to keep them out of the top bracket. Instead of 3 partnerships of 2 each, we were 2 partnerships of 3 each.

Jim, Rob and I were playing a mini-meckwell type precision. We made the finals of Bracket 2 (out of 29 brackets) for the Tue-Wed K.O. In the finals we had close match. On one of the last boards is the play problem from p. 2.

North
♠ 864
♥ A6
♦ AK8
♣ K8643

South (You)
♠ AK95
♥ K7
♦ 53
♣ AT752

Here is a possible auction, beginning with a 14-16 1NT.

North	South
1NT	2C
2D	3C
3D	3S
4C	4D
4S	6C

After Stayman, South bids 3C, game forcing as we play showing at least five cards in clubs. The 3D bid is a clever response, partner's cheapest bid, and it shows where his points are. I bid 3S, not yet willing to sign off with 3NT. Partner might bid 3NT with a strong holding in the red suits. However, he now bids 4C. Now we are in a slam auction for sure.

I bid 4D (Redwood, see following article) and his response of 4S showed 0 or 3 key cards. I gave 6C a shot.

The play figured to be easy, only one spade loser if clubs were not 3-0. I did not see a safety play in clubs so after winning the heart lead in hand I led low to the club king, and of course rightie showed out. Now I had to think. I could not find any way to get rid of a spade loser. So, after some more thought... and a nervous partner, I cashed my club ace, played the ace, king, and another diamond and ruffed it. I cashed the ace of hearts and the ace and king of spades leaving:

♠ 8
♥
♦
♣ 864
South (me)
♠ 95
♥
♦
♣ T7

I then exited a club and my LHO who was dealt only 2 spades with his 3 clubs was forced to give me a ruff-sluff and the contract.

Now, why I don't like the 2nd bracket.... On a board that I figured to pick up imps, we pushed and lost the match by a mere 7 imps. I like this game better in bracket 7 or so where I belong.

Rich Regan

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Palmetto Pre-Empts is the quarterly magazine of the South Carolina Bridge Association (Unit 160 of the American Contract Bridge League). Send comments, news, bridge hands and related matter to the editor, Spencer Hurd at hurds@citadel.edu.

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