



THE DUMMY



Quarterly Publication of the Delaware State Bridge Association ----- November 2021

UPCOMING EVENTS

King of Prussia

I/N Tourney

December 4

**The Dave Treadwell
Sectional**

December 10 – 12

**REHOBOTH BEACH
REGIONAL**

May 2 – 6, 2022

*My friend has a magic dog.
It's a labracadabrador.*

DSBA PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings! It is a pleasure to be the President of The DSBA Board of Directors, especially given the people who are members of the Board. All are enthusiastic about the game, the direction we are taking, and the return of our beloved face-to-face (mask-to-mask?) club games and sectionals. The September Sectional in Wilmington was well-attended given the parameters from the ACBL and the difficult task of assuring safety for our players. The Southern Sectional in Rehoboth holds promise for another successful tournament. The Treadwell Tournament, traditionally held in late December, has been moved to December 10-12, 2021, as we try to get attendance up and make it convenient for the greatest number of players.

The future looks bright as we begin to say goodbye to 2021! At our annual meeting in September, we said farewell to several Board members: Mark Henderson, Caroline Hughes, Eli Solomon, Brenda Vogel, Judy Cronin, and Scott Freber. Thank you from the DSBA for your valuable work on the Board. We elected new Board members: Mark Nehra, Trina Williams, Rick Rowland, Richard Popper, and Don Adams. Paula Varrassi was appointed to fill the term of Mark Henderson. Continuing on the Board are Kim Holm, Sally Humphrey, Harold Jordan, Soley Kristjansdottir, Ala Hamilton-Day, William Herdle, Tom Tully, and Rohan Mandayam. Check our DSBA website for minutes from our September 23, 2021, organizational meeting.

[continued...]

[President's letter cont'd] This is the last Dummy that Ala-Hamilton Day will be doing as editor. I am sorry to see her go, even though I hated the emails, "Hey Trina: do you have anything from downstate for the Dummy?" Ala, you will be missed. Make sure you say thanks to her when you get a chance; it was a tough job done very well! Thank you, Ala!

The DSBA website has a wealth of information on it. Check it out! The email addresses of all our Board members are listed on the site. You are invited to email us if you have any suggestions, questions, or complaints. Be assured however, that if you complain, you will be asked by me to help fix the problem. The Board is only as strong as the members who support us.

Support our clubs, support our tournaments, and support each other! We have survived the pandemic, now we need to work together to support the return of the game! I look forward to seeing you at a game very soon.



DSBA President Trina Williams



The *BRIDGE AT THE BEACH* Sectional

Where the Gang got back together!

The Rehoboth Sectional was a success in many ways! First of all, the turnout was exceptional considering the scenario we are in and the restrictions imposed. We had players from Minnesota, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Washington DC, upper Delaware, middle Delaware (Dover) and, of course, local southern Delaware. Secondly, the fellowship, the behavior, the laughter, and just pure joy, was obvious throughout the three days. Finally, the room was full of people that not only love the game but love and miss the actual interaction of live Bridge.

A considerable amount of labor was involved for this tournament. The tables had to be set up and taken down then delivered back to the club in Ocean View. The chairs were loaded onto the racks in the church setting and nearly everyone present contributed to that effort. Special thanks to Mike Vogel who transported the tables both ways; to Dini Romito who supplied tables, bidding boxes and boards from her club; and to Kim Holm who made arrangements for all of this. We need live Bridge to make a comeback and the Rehoboth Sectional was another great step in that direction. Don't miss the upcoming Dave Treadwell Sectional coming to the Wilmington Bridge Studio December 10-12 or the Rehoboth Beach **REGIONAL** May 2-6, 2022. Let's keep supporting the return of live Bridge!

Thanks for the following pics from the event!



Barbara Rhoades, Kelley Wilson, Harold Jordan, Kurt Engelman and Soley Kristjansdottir



Thursday Flight A Winners Jane Myers and Nancy Steele



Kurt Engelman, Kelley Wilson, Anne Taylor, Barbara Rhoades, Harold Jordan and Soley Kristjansdottir



Friday Flight A Winners
Harold Jordan and Soley Kristjansdottir



Anne Taylor and Barbara Rhoades



Andy Stayton and Terry Patton



Terry Patton, Andy Stayton, Tammy Holm



Jim and Mike Holm with brother,
Tournament Chair Kim Holm



Edward Levy and Paul Cassidy



Flight A Swiss Team Winners
Peter Filandro and Harold Jordan



Soley Kristjansdottir, Lynn Chapin and
Director Rob Maier



With confidence, you have
won before you have
started.

~
Marcus Garvey

Southern Delaware Bridge Results

Rehoboth Beach Oct 21-23, 2021

Thu AM Open Pairs - 9.5 Tables

| MPs | A | B | C | Names | Score |
|------|---|---|---|--|--------|
| 4.58 | 1 | | | Peter Filandro - Marie Filandro, Wilmington DE | 63.65% |
| 3.44 | 2 | 1 | 1 | Lisa Chubb, Fort Myers FL; Jeffrey Herschman, Earleville MD | 62.60% |
| 2.58 | 3 | 2 | | Rusty Vilck, Long Neck DE; Gail Petren, Rehoboth Beach DE | 56.56% |
| 1.93 | 4 | 3 | | Judy Harrington, Rehoboth Beach DE; Barbara H Saulsbury, Lewes DE | 55.59% |
| 1.45 | 5 | 4 | | Jane Myers, Naples FL; Nancy Steele, Rehoboth Beach DE | 54.77% |
| 1.15 | 6 | | | Paula Varrassi - Peter Harris, Milton DE | 53.45% |
| 0.85 | 5 | | | Kim Holm, Millsboro DE; Tamara Holm, Millsboro DE | 52.03% |
| 1.26 | 2 | | | Rita Gilbert, Lewes DE; Jacqueline Keen, Milton DE | 50.60% |
| 0.95 | 3 | | | James Holm, Minneapolis MN; Michael Holm, Minnetonka MN | 49.67% |

Thursday PM Open Pairs - 10.0 Tables

| MPs | A | B | C | Names | Score |
|------|-----|-----|---|---|--------|
| 4.58 | 1 | 1 | | Nancy Steele, Rehoboth Beach DE; Jane Myers, Naples FL | 72.02% |
| 3.44 | 2 | 2 | | Kim Holm, Millsboro DE; Tamara Holm, Millsboro DE | 61.90% |
| 2.58 | 3 | | | Andrew Stayton, Rehoboth Beach DE; Terry Patton, Aventura FL | 58.93% |
| 1.93 | 4 | 3 | 1 | Mark Nehra, Felton DE; Donald Pyne, Harrington DE | 56.25% |
| 1.45 | 5 | | | Paula Varrassi - Peter Harris, Milton DE | 55.95% |
| 1.13 | 6 | 4 | | Rusty Vilck, Long Neck DE; Gail Petren, Rehoboth Beach DE | 51.79% |
| 1.18 | 5/6 | 2/3 | | Donald Hill, Rehoboth Beach DE; Francis Rode, Milton DE | 51.49% |
| 1.18 | 5/6 | 2/3 | | James Holm, Minneapolis MN; Michael Holm, Minnetonka MN | 51.49% |
| 0.76 | | 4 | | Rex Saffer, Broomall PA; Edna Bosworth, Bethany Beach DE | 48.81% |

Friday AM Open Pairs - 13.5 Tables

| MPs A B C | Names | Score |
|------------|--|--------|
| 5.50 1 | Harold Jordan - Sigridur Kristjansdottir, Wilmington DE | 69.93% |
| 4.13 2 | Trina Williams, Bethany Beach DE; Susan Derrickson, Lewes DE | 65.87% |
| 3.09 3 | Andrew Stayton, Rehoboth Beach DE; Terry Patton, Aventura FL | 62.42% |
| 2.98 4 1 1 | Edward Levy, Aventura FL; Paul Cassedy, Baltimore MD | 61.31% |
| 1.74 5 | David Ruderman, Burtonsville MD; Elisa Donohoe, Fulton MD | 59.54% |
| 1.38 6 | Peter Filandro - Marie Filandro, Wilmington DE | 55.18% |
| 2.24 2 2 | Lisa Chubb, Fort Myers FL; Jeffrey Herschman, Earleville MD | 55.17% |
| 1.68 3 3 | Randall Stephens - Hilary Stephens, Columbia MD | 53.27% |
| 1.26 4 4 | Marilyn Haskins, Rehoboth Beach DE; Cindy Hoadley, Lewes DE | 50.83% |
| 1.49 5 5 | Michael Holm, Minnetonka MN; James Holm, Minneapolis MN | 50.68% |
| 1.04 6 | Rex Saffer, Broomall PA; Edna Bosworth, Bethany Beach DE | 50.53% |

Fri Aft Open Pairs - 12.5 Tables

| MPs A B C | Names | Score |
|------------|---|--------|
| 5.27 1 | Harold Jordan - Sigridur Kristjansdottir, Wilmington DE | 62.67% |
| 3.95 2 1 | Tamara Holm, Millsboro DE; Kim Holm, Millsboro DE | 59.97% |
| 2.96 3 | Trina Williams, Bethany Beach DE; Susan Derrickson, Lewes DE | 59.89% |
| 2.22 4 | Peter Filandro - Marie Filandro, Wilmington DE | 59.84% |
| 1.67 5 | David Ruderman, Burtonsville MD; Elisa Donohoe, Fulton MD | 59.33% |
| 2.12 6 2 1 | Rex Saffer, Broomall PA; Edna Bosworth, Bethany Beach DE | 57.84% |
| 1.59 3 2 | Terry Coates, Wheaton MD; Barbara Brisentine, Pasadena MD | 56.27% |
| 1.19 4 | Silicia Debellis, Rehoboth Beach DE; Janelle Gmitter, Lewes DE | 53.65% |
| 1.09 5 3 | Marilyn Haskins, Rehoboth Beach DE; Cindy Hoadley, Lewes DE | 52.48% |
| 0.81 4 | Edward Levy, Aventura FL; Paul Cassedy, Baltimore MD | 50.23% |

Sat A/X Swiss Teams - 7 Tables / Based on 12 Tables

| MPs | A | X | Names | Score |
|------|---|---|---|-------|
| 6.05 | 1 | | Sigrður Kristjansdóttir - Harold Jordan - Peter Filandro - Marie Filandro, Wilmington DE | 98.00 |
| 4.54 | 2 | 1 | Kurt Engleman - Kelley Wilson, Avondale PA; Anne Taylor, Newark DE; Barbara Rhoades, Wilmington DE | 80.00 |
| 3.40 | 3 | | Trina Williams, Bethany Beach DE; Andrew Stayton, Rehoboth Beach DE; Paula Varrassi, Milton DE; Terry Patton, Aventura FL | 71.00 |
| 2.32 | 2 | | Mark Nehra, Felton DE; Donald Pyne, Harrington DE; Susan Derrickson, Lewes DE; Patricia Brown, Dover DE | 70.00 |

Sat BCD Swiss Teams - 5 Tables

| MPs | B | C | D | Names | Score |
|------|---|---|---|---|--------|
| 2.48 | 1 | | | Tamara Holm, Millsboro DE; Kim Holm, Millsboro DE; James Holm, Minneapolis MN; Michael Holm, Minnetonka MN | 114.00 |
| 1.88 | 2 | 1 | | Edward Ty Larson, Gaithersburg MD; Robert O Connor, Silver Spring MD; Edna Bosworth, Bethany Beach DE; Rex Saffer, Broomall PA | 83.00 |



Flight X Winners Kelley Wilson, Barbara Rhoades, Kurt Engelman and Anne Taylor

ADVANCEMENT IN RANK

CLUB MASTER

Brian Ault
Lois B. Grieshober
Kathy Rodammer

REGIONAL MASTER

Tom Bason
Kathy M. Baxter
Pamela P. Morrison
Kathleen R. Sullivan

NABC MASTER

Ann H. Biehn

ADVANCED NABC MASTER

Sugi Hayes

LIFE MASTER

Debbie Schenkel

SILVER LIFE MASTER

Tina C. Brinsfield
Robert L. Gray

RUBY LIFE MASTER

Janelle L. Gmitter

I don't think that women should be allowed to have kids after 40.

Forty kids is way too many, by any standard.

BEGINNER REVIEW & PRACTICE

FALL 2021

Debbie Schenkel **Mondays 9:00 to 11:45**

| Lesson # | Date | Topic |
|----------|-------------|--------------------|
| 1 | November 22 | Scoring |
| 2 | November 29 | Opening leads |
| 3 | December 6 | Opener rebids |
| 4 | December 13 | Responses to Minor |
| 5 | December 20 | Bidding Basics |

There will be notes for this course along with sample hands or practice exercises.

The classes will be held on Monday mornings at 1403 Foulkstone Plaza, Suite 203. The cost is \$75 for the series.

The format will be instruction followed by topic specific exercises and boards. We will go over each board after it is played.

In case of *inclement weather* please go to our website for cancellation information, www.bridge-studio.org.

Please register in advance by contacting Debbie Schenkel at deborahschenkel@msn.com.

Fighting over Crumbs with Flustered Flo

By Pieter VanBenekom

No doubt the COVID pandemic has decimated the game of bridge. Many clubs have permanently folded and others merged. Slowly, the surviving clubs are trying to reopen for live play, but even the most successful clubs expect significantly decreased attendance. Bridge players, on average, are well over 70 and many have died in the last 20 months, whether of COVID or age-related causes. With clubs being closed, lessons were mostly suspended, too, so little was done to attract new or inexperienced players.

When in-person tournaments resume, the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) tentatively – and some would say optimistically – plans on 40% to 50% of attendance from pre-COVID days.

To be sure, much bridge has shifted online and it will survive there, but in total it'll be a smaller game. Half of all ACBL members when the pandemic started have never tried playing online because they just don't like it, they think they're too old to learn new computer tricks or they're just not that into it.

Meanwhile, the various bridge constituencies are fighting fiercely over the few remaining crumbs left on the table. They're even fighting over which club can claim any new members who signed up online.

The biggest club in the country, New York's Honors, merged its online games, All for One in combination with other area clubs, with the Alliance, another combination centered around a Long Island club, but including others farther afield. Attendance at both their online games had been slipping, and they hope to prop it up by getting bigger numbers from the merger – they also cut card fees from \$6 to \$5.

Meanwhile, another online alliance, the Southeast Bridge Club Consortium (SEBCC) of dozens of clubs in Georgia and the Carolinas, stretching into Virginia, Florida and Eastern Tennessee, is trying to protect its turf. Henceforth the ACBL will strictly enforce limits on guests in their combined games, and SEBCC is telling its occasional players to go play at a face-to-face club at least once to protect their guest status. The ACBL is getting tough on guests in order to protect smaller clubs and to prevent the bigger ones from stealing members.

If the ACBL is trying on the one hand to protect clubs, especially the smaller ones, on the other it is actively and successfully competing against clubs, virtual as well as in-person. Its' own one-hour Speedball tournaments are extremely popular and cost only \$2.50 per pair, and the Open Pairs games, every hour at 10 minutes after the hour, also attract thousands daily.

It's no surprise that clubs are fighting back. Honors and the Alliance have started their own Speedball games, and one of the bigger clubs in the country, our own home club, the Vero Beach Bridge Center, immediately followed suit. Everyone seems to want a (smaller) slice of an already smaller pie.

My partner Christine and I like the convenience of ACBL Speedballs – you can play whenever you want, in an hour, and you don't have to go anywhere. But all in all, we still prefer face-to-face bridge, and we try to play at least once a week at one of the smaller open clubs in our area. Somehow it's more fun to steal contracts when you don't have the cards, our favorite ploy, when you can do it in people's faces.

We had such a fun "steal" recently at the Vero Beach Community Center, when we had a total of only 14 high card points to our opponents' 26, but we stole the contract in **3♥** and gave up only 100 points for going Down One. That -100 score was an absolute top because all other pairs playing in the opposite direction had scored at least 110 points. Our miffed East opponent, who had the best hand at the table, will become my column's anti-hero, Flustered Flo, in this Bridge Burglar adventure, while I'll be her nemesis, Smug Sam, with the South

Declarer hand. Christine is my (Sam's) North partner, Shy Shem, while Flo is playing with her usual West partner, Loyal Larry.

North Dealer; North-South vulnerable

North – Shy Shem

♠ **A Q 9 5 2**
♥ **J 10 8**
♦ **9 4 3**
♣ **10 5**

West - Loyal Larry

♠ **K 8 6**
♥ **Q 6**
♦ **K Q J 7 6**
♣ **J 6 3**

East – Flustered Flo

♠ **J 4**
♥ **K 7 3**
♦ **A 8 5 2**
♣ **A Q 8 4**

South – Smug Sam

♠ **10 7 3**
♥ **A 9 5 4 2**
♦ **10**
♣ **K 9 7 2**

The bidding:

| <u>North</u> (Shy Shem) | <u>East</u> (Flustered Flo) | <u>South</u> (Smug Sam) | <u>West</u> (Loyal Larry) |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pass | 1 ♦ | 1 ♥ | 2 ♦ |
| Pass | Pass | 2 ♥ | 3 ♦ |
| 3 ♥ | All pass | | |

Opening lead: **♦K**

When Flustered Flo returned to in-person bridge at a small club near her home, she was glad to actually see all of her friends that she hadn't seen for almost two years while the club was closed due to COVID. After her first game back, however, she wasn't so sure about the reunion with her nemesis, Smug Sam.

Sam always steals contracts from her, and he was up to his old tricks again on the diagrammed hand. His Smugness sat South and Flo, who had the best hand around the table, was East.

The **♦K** led from the hand of Flo's West partner, Loyal Larry, and held the trick, but Sam ruffed the second Diamond and took a successful finesse on the **♠K** with dummy's **♠AQ**. He then led a **♣** off dummy and put Flo back on lead with her **♣A**. Yet another **♦** put Sam, who ruffed, back in his hand.

Sam took the ♣K and ruffed a ♣ in dummy. He next cashed the ♠A and led the ♥J from dummy. Flo covered with her ♥K King, Sam took the ♥A, and ruffed another ♣ in dummy for his eighth trick. He had taken two ♣ ruffs in dummy, two ♦ ruffs in his hand, the ♠AQ, the ♣K and the ♥A, his Ace of trumps.

Sam didn't take any further tricks and happily conceded Down One for a -100 score that turned out to be an absolute top on the board. All other East-West pairs had scored at least +110 points by making 3♦ while no other North-South pair had even entered the auction.

"Can I see your hand?" Flo asked Sam after the hand-held computer informed her that she and her partner had scored a zero on the board.

"Be my guest," said Sam.

"I don't believe this," said Flo after she had sorted Sam's hand. "You had only seven high-card points! How did you dare overcall with such a puny hand? Don't you need at least eight points for an overcall? And then you had the nerve to bid twice!"

"After you had opened 1♦," said Sam, smug as always, "the value of my hand actually rose because I had a singleton in that suit. Now my hand was worth at least nine points. After your partner also bid ♦, I liked my hand even better, so I rebid my ♥ to tell my partner I had at least five of them. That gave him the courage to go to the three level."

"This is ridiculous!" said Flo. "My partner and I had twenty-six high-card points and you guys had only fourteen between the two of you. There's got to be a way to get a good score out of this for us!"

"The only thing you could have done is double us," said Sam. "Then you get +200 points, instead of being +100, and that would be a good board."

"But doubling a part-score is too risky," said Flo. "Did we misplay it? Could we have set you more?"

"No, even against the best defense we make 2♥ Hearts," said Sam, "and you can't make more than 3♦, so even though it was risky, a double was the only way for you to get a good score."

"Apart from you keeping your mouth shut and not bidding, of course, as you should have done," said Flo.

"You know me, Flo," said Sam. "If I have anything I can bid, I will, to put the pressure on you. And I don't often do what people say I should do."

"And I thought I was glad to get back to face-to-face bridge," said Flo. "That is, until I saw your face here again."

How many men were born in 2020?

None. Only babies were born.

The 2021 *DAVE TREADWELL* Sectional

We're getting the Gang back together again!

December 10 -12

New Earlier Date!

At the "NEW" Bridge Studio

Suite 203 in Building 1403 of Foulkstone Plaza in Wilmington Delaware

Proof of Covid-19 Vaccination Required

Face masks Required

Current Covid-19 precautions will be in effect
Due to Covid-19 precautions we will not be able to serve lunch
Check our website <http://www.unit190.org> for updates

Friday, December 10, 2021

10:00 am Stratified Open Pairs (2500+/750-2500/0-750)
Stratified 299er Pairs (100-300/50-100/0-50)

2:30 pm Flight A/X Pairs (4000+/0-4000)
Flight B/C/D Pairs (1250-3000/500-1250/0-500)

Saturday, December 11, 2021

10:00 am Stratified Open Pairs (2500+/750-2500/0-750)
Stratified 299er Pairs (100-300/50-100/0-50)

2:30 pm Flight A/X Pairs (4000+/0-4000)
Flight B/C/D Pairs (1250-3000/500-1250/0-500)

Sunday, September 12, 2021

10:00 am A/X Teams (4000+/0-4000)
Bracketed B/C/D Teams (0-3000)

Brackets and Stratifications (by average masterpoints) may be changed at the discretion of the director to accommodate the participants, as necessary.

Free for ACBL members with fewer than 5 masterpoints.

An ominous news note

The Arts section of *The New York Times* on October 27 contained an article entitled, “Cheating Scandal Roils Genteel World of Bridge.” It is subtitled, “After a Year of ‘Rampant’ Cheating, Elite Bridge Tries to Clean Up.” After touching on the recent cheating scandals in bridge, the article ended on a somber note:

“We can’t let cheating get so out of control it drives everyone away,” Mr. Stephani said. “We’ve got to do something to rebrand the game, reinvigorate it, and we need to keep it clean along the way.”

The average age of league members is about 74, and membership is declining. Mr. Stephani, who is 54, said it was “not uncommon” to be the youngest person in a club.

“If we don’t do something for the survival of the game,” he said, “it’s going to die with us.”

***My bridge partner has the heart of a lion
and a lifetime ban from the Philadelphia Zoo.***

Farewell to Flustered Flo

By Pieter VanBenekom

It’s time to say goodbye to Flustered Flo. For the past seven years, Ala Hamilton-Day has edited *The Dummy* for Delaware’s bridge players, and she has seen fit to share the misadventures of Flustered Flo.

Ala was very good at bridge edu-tainment, but she has earned a well-deserved rest. The new editor who will take over *The Dummy* needs a free hand to determine the best possible content in this new, challenging era, as we bridge players emerge from the pandemic. Flustered Flo will retire as well.

I’ve been thinking about how best to end her stint. It occurred to me to find a bit part for her on the set of “Rust.” Then she could be accidentally shot to death by a famous actor, but that might be a little too fantastic, even for Flustered Flo fans. Also, she may not be the best bridge player in the world, but her offenses against the laws of bridge hardly deserve capital punishment.

I also thought that maybe Flo would finally retire from bridge after being upstaged by her nemesis, Smug Sam, one time too many. She could say “No mas!” like that famous Panamanian boxer, and never pick up a bridge hand again. But us bridge players never quit. We get taken to the woodshed and come back for more the next day. We’re masochists like that, and I would never encourage anyone to quit.

A better idea occurred to me, about how to retire Flustered Flo, when my partner Christine and I recently made a long-delayed classic tour of Italy. There we heard that some of the charming hilltop towns in Umbria and

Tuscany were rapidly being de-populated as the old folks die off and the young ones move down to the cities with their motor-scooters. So desperate are these towns to attract new residents that some mayors have offered apartments for sale for 1 Euro. And Flustered Flo has bought herself a condo in one of these charming historic gems!

There's a bridge game in the nearest town. Italy, (along with Holland and Sweden), boasts the largest number of bridge players per capita in the world. Along with her tiny toy poodle doggie, Flustered Flo believes she can be happy here for the rest of her days.

While she was waiting for her apartment to be fixed up, she was staying in a hotel in Perugia. Perugia is the nearby capital of the Umbria province made infamous by the Amanda Knox drama recently brought to the big screen by Matt Damon in the movie "Stillwater." Flo checked with her partner Loyal Larry back in the States to see if he was available for a Speedball game via BBO. After working out the time difference, they got online so Flo could get her bridge fix one more time.

Unfortunately for Flo, her nemesis Smug Sam was also online and had registered for that very same Speedball game. Even though Flo had traveled thousands of miles to get away from Sam, here she was up against him yet again. It didn't end well for Flo.

Flo unwisely doubled Sam in a 3♠ part-score contract, letting him make it and giving him a good board with +730 points. That helped propel Smug Sam and his North partner Shy Shem (me and Christine) to a top-9 finish and first place in our section with a score of +28.2 Imps. Flo and Larry finished near the bottom of the standings.

West Dealer; North-South vulnerable

North

♠ 8 7 3
♥ 8 7 2
♦ A K Q 8 4
♣ A 8

West

♠ - - -
♥ 10 9 6 4 3
♦ 6 2
♣ K 10 7 6 4 3

East - Flo

♠ K Q 10 4
♥ A Q J
♦ J 9 7 3
♣ Q 5

South - Sam

♠ A J 9 6 5 2
♥ K 5
♦ 10 5
♣ J 9 2

The bidding:

| <u>West</u> (Loyal Larry) | <u>North</u> (Shy Shem) | <u>East</u> (Flustered Flo) | <u>South</u> (Smug Sam) |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Pass | 1♦ | 1NT | 2♠ |
| Double* | Pass | 2NT | 3♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Double | All pass |

* alerted as negative, showing length in unbid major

Opening lead: 6♦

It's frustrating to know you have the best hand around the table, and to see the bid taken away from you – in your best suit no less.

Flustered Flo sat East on the diagrammed hand played in a recent BBO Speedball tournament. As she had a full **1NT** opener, she suspected correctly that she had the best hand around the table. She could not believe her eyes when her South opponent, her nemesis Smug Sam, calmly proceeded to take the bid away from her, and in ♠, which happened to be her best suit!

That was too much gall for Flo, so she slapped the double card down.

Sam took the opening trick in dummy with the ♦A and pondered how to attack the trump suit. For her double, Flo obviously had to hold both the ♠K and the ♠Q, but would she have all four of the missing trumps, allowing him to score a really deep finesse by letting dummy's ♠8 ride?

In the end, Sam decided that, since he was only in 3♠ and could lose 4 tricks, he could afford to lose two tricks in the trump suit, plus a Club and a ♥, and still make his contract, so he led a low ♠ off the dummy to his ♠J, followed by a ♣ to dummy's ♣A and the ♠8 to his ♠A.

Sam then crossed to the board with the ♦K and led a low ♥ off dummy to Flo's ♥A. Flo had no better continuation than the ♥Q to Sam's ♥K. Sam next led a small ♣ and crashed Larry's ♣K and Flo's ♣Q. Sam eventually gave up two tricks to Flo's ♠KQ of the trump suit, but he had the rest of the tricks with the remaining trumps and the ♠J, making his doubled contract.

The +730 was close to a top for Sam and Shem, earning them almost 10 Imps, and thus close to a bottom for Flo and Larry. On an unbalanced hand like that, the scores were all over the place. Some South Declarers had actually made 4♠ doubled – once they assumed that East held all four missing trumps, they could limit the losses in the trump suit to just one trick.

Another East went Down Three doubled in **1NT**, while yet another East went Down Five undoubled in **3NT**. Five ♥ doubled by West went down by two tricks as well.

"I can't believe I flew thousands of miles to get away from you," Flustered Flo later messaged Smug Sam, "and the first opponent I come up against when I log on to BBO for my bridge fix is you."

"Nice to see you, too, Flo," said Sam. "How's Italy?"

"Italy is wonderful," said Flo, "but I thought I would be able to enjoy it without having to bump into you right away. How did you steal that contract away from me? I had the best hand around the table."

"It's a partnership game, Flo," said Sam, smug as always. "If your partner has nothing, that means it's our hand, even if you have No-Trump openers. You've got to recognize when you're licked and let us play. Your double was just a spite double – and those are rarely good doubles."

"I'm scouting out the bridge clubs here in Italy," said Flo. "Soon I hope to be able to play with a lot of elegant new friends, and I won't have to worry about ever running into you again."

"Won't you miss me just a little bit, Flo?"

"Maybe like a cup of bad, watery Americano," said Flo.

I've done it before. It won't be the last time. You're going to go years where you just don't win. That's OK, as long as you keep trying to improve. – Tiger Woods, golfer

A last note from the DUMMY Editor . . .

Sing the Cheers theme song with me: "Sometimes you wanna go where everybody knows your name and they're always glad you came." We're getting the old gang together and playing face-to-face bridge. Come and see your friends at the clubs and at the Dave Treadwell tournament and catch up with them about what is happening in their lives. I've been playing in the Thursday team game at 11:30 AM at the Bridge Studio. Afterwards the Tramps and Blades teams have gone to celebrate victory, or to drown their sorrows, while they party at Two Stones or Stanley's. There was talk of going to The Hideaway (and whether or not it was a dive bar) after the game on October 28th. Hands are discussed, such as the one when my pd Mooch Taylor made a brilliant underlead of **♠AKQx**, leading the **♠5** in order to get a ruff. When I played low, from **♠10432**, a shocked declarer won the trick with his singleton **♠8**.

DSBA President Williams spilled the beans. I am retiring. I have edited the *Dummy* for seven years. When I took it over, it was usually a two-page handout which was mailed, if requested. I also had agreed to prepare the quarterly Unit 190 submission to the *District4Spot*. During my tenure, the *Dummy* was converted into an online newsletter and grew significantly in length while the *District4Spot* turned into a monthly. Some things have changed, but some have not. After seven years, my formatting abilities remain abysmal. Let me give a shout out of grateful thanks to Melody Henderson, as well as Barbara Rhoades and Debbie Purbrick, for helping me over these years. It takes me an inordinate amount of time to get these newsletters out and my hubby demands that I take lessons. Now is the time for someone else to assume the reins of these publications. See you at the bridge table, as **ahd** on BBO, or on email at alabridge@gmail.com.