

# Northwest Arkansas Bridge Newsletter

ACBL Unit 247

January 2012

Issue Ten



Dear Bridge Players,

We have completed two full years of publishing this Newsletter. It is time for changes to be made.

First of all, the coverage has just expanded to cover all of the area in our Unit. So we have become the Bridge Newsletter for all of NW Arkansas. [Area-Map](#)

Next on our agenda, is a redesign of our web site.



## Opening Bids By Jim Diebel

At Matchpoints, it is a losing strategy to defend when holding the balance of power. I define balance of power as 22 or more of the 40 high card points in the deck. With this much strength, you should rarely fear bidding to the level equal to your side's combined trump length. (e.g. with a combined 9 card heart suit bidding to at least 3 Hearts).

Of course your opponents will be just as willing to compete to the level of *their* combined trump holding as well. We recognize this principle (loosely) as the **Law of Total Tricks**.

At some point, one of the two sides will usually make a bid which exceeds the **LAW** number suggested for a particular hand. (e.g. bidding to the 3 level when each side has only 8 total trumps. Believers in the LAW (count me in) know that it is seldom correct to bid higher if the opponents have already exceeded their combined trump total.

If the opponents have the balance of power, bidding further may result in a costly penalty double.

If you have the balance of power, doubling the opponents at this point will often prove more profitable than bidding further, even if you can make your contract one level higher.

If... If what? If your partner has his bid. How frustrating to chalk up yet another -730 or -810 after discovering that your partner opened "a player". The trouble with these types of hands is that while they do indeed take several tricks on offense, they frequently don't pull their weight on defense. More and more, I find players (even quite talented ones), that only size up the offensive potential of their hand when deciding whether or not it qualifies for an opening bid.

Probably half of the players I know would open 1 Diamond holding ♠Q ♥J4 ♦KJT73 ♣KQ852 and claim it qualifies as an opening bid using one of the many evaluation methods popular today. Reverse the majors and minors and probably 80% would find some excuse to open the hand.

The problem with this practice is not how many tricks you will take if you get to play the hand, but how few tricks you can expect to

collect if the opponents outbid you. Holding the original hand, how confident do you feel when you open 1D and partner eventually doubles 3H? Do you think you are beating it? I sure don't. You can be quite certain that if you pull to 4C, 3H would have been down at least two, and if you sit for it they are going to make an overtrick.

Of course you could have avoided all this agony had you simply passed initially. Quite often, you will get a chance to show both suits later, while simultaneously alerting partner that your hand may not be too powerful defensively.

New players are taught how to count their high card points and open 13 point hands. After some experience, most begin to open the hands with 12. Many eventually begin to feel that 11 is sufficient. Let me say this as clearly as I can: **High card points alone are poor indicators of the value of a hand.** I evaluate hands considerably differently.

Before deciding whether or not to open the auction with one of a suit, I consider 3 things: The point count, the Quick Tricks, and the intangibles. We already know how to count points. If you don't know (and appreciate the value of) the Quick Trick table, you haven't scratched the surface of this game.

**The Quick Trick Table:**

**AK = 2 QT    AQ = 1.5 QT    KQ = 1 QT**  
**A = 1 QT        K(x) = .5 QT**

There are a maximum of **eight** Quick Tricks on any deal. Generally, there is a minimum of **six** Quick Tricks on any deal (because Queens without Aces or Kings count as zero). **There are NEVER more than 2 Quick Tricks in any suit.**

**Intangibles:**

Hands with 14+ high card points or 3+ Quick Tricks should be opened **always. (A)**

Any hand with a 5 card suit or a singleton is worth an **excuse. (E)**

A good 5 card major, a good 6 card minor, or a combination of a good 5 card suit and a good 4 card suit merits a **reason. (R)**

A good 6 card major, or two good 5 card suits is considered a **bonus. (B)**

All hands 4-3-3-3 and 4-4-3-2 have **no excuse. (N)**

These three criteria defined, I use the following method in determining whether or not to open marginal hands:

		Quick Tricks				
		3	2.5	2	1.5	1
High Card Points	10		B	N	N	N
	11	A	E	R	B	N
	12	A	A	E	R	B
	13	A	A	A	E	R
	14	A	A	A	A	A

The chart is easily mastered. For example, a hand with 11 HCP and 1.5 Quick Tricks should only be opened if the hand qualifies as a bonus (B). Note the example hand qualifies under these specifications, but I can't bring myself to count ♠Q ♥J4 as a full 3 points, so I would downgrade it to unacceptable. If these guidelines seem too simplistic, be aware that I personally open **fewer** hands

than this method would allow. Unlike other card games, like Pinochle, you can pass early in the auction and bid later if it seems right. Not enough players take advantage of that.

My rule of thumb is 12 pts **and** 2.5 Quick Tricks = opening hand. If either requirement falls short I look for factors which might upgrade (or downgrade) the hand. I estimate that I open hands weaker than this chart would allow less than 1% of the time. Try it and see if your results don't improve.

This bridge article was written by Jim Diebel and is reprinted by permission of the author.

How should I have played that hand?

Under an assumed name.

+++

A doctor, concerned about the physical condition of one of his bridge-playing patients, during a regular check-up asked, Do you get much exercise?

Only when I sit East-West, was the reply.

### Tournament Schedule – 2012

Lawrence Sectional - February 10 – 12

Bartlesville Sectional - February 17 – 19

Emporia Sectional -February 24 – 26

Springfield, Mo Sectional - March 2-4

Oklahoma City Regional - March 5 – 11

Spring National - Memphis - Mar 15 - 25

March 26 - April 1 - District 15 STaC

Lee's Summit (KC) Sectional - April 27 -29

On our web site we have a longer-range tournament schedule.

Please be sure to put our own Sectional on your calendar! It will be Sept. 21 – 23, in Bella Vista. Tentative information is available on our web site:

<http://www.acbl-unit-247.org>



Climbing the Ladder

### Recent ACBL Rank Advancements

#### **New Club Masters – 20+ MP's**

William Garner – Mt. Home  
Cheryl McConkey – Norfolk

#### **New Sectional Masters – 50+ MP's**

Corrine Johnson – Mt. Home  
William Ward – Fayetteville  
George Breslau – Garfield  
Arleen Donelson – Van Buren

**New NABC Masters – 200+ MP’s**

Pauline Longstaff – Bella Vista  
Becky Mincke - Rogers

**New Life Masters – 300+ MP’s**

Larry Greathouse

**New Diamond Life Masters – 5000+**

Joe Scott

Way to go players!

A bridge player accidentally got a girl pregnant. When he visited her and saw her condition, he offered to marry her. She said she will consult her family and get back to him. When he showed up the next day she said “Well after some discussion, we decided it was better to have a bastard than a bridge player in the family”

The 2011 Master Point Races

The final totals are in and the following players earned the most master points for the year; an outstanding effort by all!

<b>0 to 5 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race</b>			
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Points</b>
1	William Garner	Mountain Home AR	33.43
2	Lea Chodacki	Moutain Home AR	7.18

3	Paula Youens	Belle Vista AR	4.58
4	Billy Youens	Belle Vista AR	4.58
5	Linda Bordeaux	Ft Smith AR	4.39
6	Ruthie Sinor	Harrison AR	3.42
7	Cole Spencer	Fayetteville AR	3.11
8	Millie Heyne	Bella Vista AR	1.86
9	Lynda Mixon	Rogers AR	1.42
10	John Eitenmiller	Mountain Home AR	1.28

**5 to 20 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Points</b>
1	Connie Davis	Cotter AR	41.93
2	David McConkey	Norfolk AR	32.66
3	Cheryl McConkey	Norfolk AR	29.03
4	Sally Gardner	Mountain Home AR	26.65
5	Harry Sher	Van Buren	17.55
6	Jackie Nelson	Bella Vista AR	10.98
7	Pamela Wilcox	Garfield AR	6.46
8	Jay Lacy	Bella Vista AR	5.54
9	Faye Miller	Ft Smith AR	4.82
10	Ida Howell	Fort Smith	4.62

**20 to 50 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Points</b>
-------------	---------------	-----------------	---------------

1	Warren Matz	Mountain Home AR	110.97
2	Judy Bappe	Bella Vista AR	29.7
3	Brian Gibbs	Alpena AR	26.16
4	George Breslau	Garfield AR	25.04
5	Sharon Lawhon	Mountain Home AR	24.53
6	William Ward	Fayetteville AR	23.89
7	Barbara McPhee	Rogers AR	22.34
8	Donna Kohnen	Mountain Home AR	21.21
9	Corrine Johnson	Mountain Home AR	18.84
10	Suzanne Krutsinger	Rogers AR	16.65

**50 to 100 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race**

Rank	Player	Location	Points
1	Ronald Rolfe	Rogers AR	41.93
2	Sue Rolfe	Rogers AR	41.93
3	Jack Scharoun	Lakeview AR	36.01
4	H Roma Scharoun	Lakeview AR	36.01
5	Clyde McPhee	Rogers AR	35.76
6	Barbara Francis	Bella Vista AR	25.25
7	Joe Patton	Bella Vista	19.07
8	Brenda Hirsch	Holiday Island AR	18.92
9	David Hirsch	Holiday Island AR	16.77
10	Lana Ellibee	Mountain Home AR	15.53

**100 to 200 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race**

Rank	Player	Location	Points
1	Pauline Longstaff	Bella Vista AR	81.47
2	Delma Lucas	Mountain Home AR	63.35
3	William Lucas	Mountain Home AR	60.63
4	Becky Mincke	Rogers AR	53.61
5	Alice Reger	Jordan AR	48.97
6	Diana Turner	Mountain Home AR	48.3
7	Donald Reger	Jordan AR	47.47
8	Kay Hutchison	Mountain Home AR	34.59
9	Suzanne Ledbetter	Harrison AR	33.52
10	Mary Goebel	Ft Smith AR	32.1

**200 to 300 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race**

Rank	Player	Location	Points
1	George Illian	Mountain Home AR	100.25
2	Carol Stansbury	Mountain Home AR	90.08
3	Judith Nevsimal	Lakeview AR	81.09
4	Robert Dray	Holiday Island AR	76.84
5	Thomas Graff	Fayetteville AR	70.94
6	Eva Estes	Mountain Home AR	44.71
7	Michael Smith	Bentonville AR	40.45

8	Loretta Rizer	Lakeview AR	40.42
9	Mary Lu Butler	Rogers AR	32.03
10	Ron Nativi	Bella Vista	28.24

### 300 to 500 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race

Rank	Player	Location	Points
1	Jeff La Caze	Bella Vista AR	105.56
2	Larry Greathouse	Mountain Home AR	88.77
3	Karen Tipton	Gassville AR	80.8
4	Roger Koeppe II	Fayetteville AR	49.98
5	Charles Orvis	Cotter AR	49.73
6	Shelba Crawford	Bull Shoals AR	47.43
7	Julia Farrar	Lavaca AR	44.11
8	Jeanette Laney Briggs	Bella Vista AR	29
9	Betty Adams	Holiday Island AR	25.78
10	Jean Razer	Holiday Island AR	25.74

### 500 to 1000 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race

Rank	Player	Location	Points
1	Stanley Stankus	Mountain Home AR	206.47
2	Albert Cookson	Mountain Home AR	196.26
3	Lois Smith	Mountain Home AR	129.2
4	Brian Simet	Rogers AR	95.02
5	Nancy Luttrell	Mountain Home AR	91.13

6	Linda Jirka	Mountain Home AR	89.57
7	Michael Foley	Springdale AR	84.84
8	Dick Baltz	Mountain Home AR	84.69
9	Carolyn Hooper	Lakeview AR	81.58
10	Robert Gromatka	Bella Vista AR	66.62

### 1000 to 2500 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race

Rank	Player	Location	Points
1	Pierre Hoover	Mountain Home AR	156.03
2	W Dale Wagar	Mountain Home AR	140.18
3	Mrs. M. Peterson	Gassville AR	130.68
4	Marina Scott	Rogers AR	106.98
5	Blaine Ferrell	Lakeview AR	99.39
6	Billye Hart	Mountain Home AR	95.89
7	Raymond Lynch	Bella Vista AR	88.4
8	Jackie Barker	Harrison AR	83.98
9	Bob Dungan	Bella Vista AR	79.55
10	Sally Dungan	Bella Vista AR	78.78

### 2500 to 5000 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race

Rank	Player	Location	Points
1	Judy Worden	Fort Smith AR	122.75
2	Carolyn Thomas	Fort Smith AR	122.21
3	Joe Scott	Rogers AR	116.92

4	Linda McRay	Fort Smith AR	112.61
5	Darlene Ray	Fort Smith AR	92.85
6	Margaret Rodman	Fayetteville AR	55.05
<b>7500 to 10,000 Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race</b>			
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Points</b>
1	Ron Ashbacher	Lead Hill AR	434.71

### Bridge Classes

A class on the Two-Over-One bidding system will begin on Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at the Rogers Adult Wellness Center.

The classes will be on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9-11 am and run for four weeks.

These classes are for players who already play Standard American or Goren bridge and who want to learn the two-over-one system.

The Two-over-one system has become very popular. Shouldn't you find out why?

Suzanne Krutsinger, and ACBL Accredited Bridge Teacher, will be teaching this class at AWC.

### Editorial Policy

We plan to make mistakes in the content of this newsletter. If we have omitted someone or misstated information, please let us know. We will cheerfully announce corrections in the following issue. Information has been collected from a variety of sources that we feel are reliable and whose content we believe to be Public Domain.

Contact us at:  
Nwa.bridge@gmail.com

Purpose:: To promote contract bridge play in Northwest Arkansas.

Our aim is to build a sense of community among all of the bridge players – young, old, new, veterans, party bridge or competitive – Let's work together to promote bridge play at all opportunities. If you feel that playing bridge has been good for you, then accept the challenge to give something back to the world of bridge play.

### Web Site

Several new pages have been added to our web site; including a Club Manager Section.

There is a wealth of information there. If you have not yet checked out the site, please do.

<http://www.acbl-unit-247.org>

