

Lake Norman Bridge Center January 2023 Newsletter



Happy New Year - No game on Monday, January 2
Martin Luther King Day - Monday, January 16 (no game)

Congratulations on Reaching the Next Plateau

Calvin Manship: Silver Life Master

Vit Patel: Silver Life Master

Ella Rice: Gold Life Master

January Games

All January games will be Junior Fund Games.

January Schedule

The new January schedule for Mondays and Thursdays will be a NOON start time (NOT 12:30). Tuesday games will continue to start at 12:30 until further notice (when the beginner's class ends).

We expect Tuesday games to begin at 10 am sometime in mid-February. Stay tuned...

Note from Toni Lambert

It's been quite a ride ... pre-Covid when things were semi-normal ... Covid when Ella held the Lake Norman Bridge Club together ... and then the ban was lifted, and we faced "Board" issues ... BUT we persevered and for that I am grateful.

I cannot end my term without thanking Board members Bill Brunk, Kathy Marazzi, and Nora Oliver for their unending support ... and Ken Fittz whose help was invaluable. A heartfelt thank you to Ella Rice and Vicki Cornwell who made the work of running our games look effortless. Thank you one and all.

I leave my post in the very capable hands of a fine new Board of Directors ... Bob Allen, Joan Bischoff, Barbara Caputo, Nora Oliver, and Mary Singleton. I wish you much success ... your success is the success of the Lake Norman Bridge Club.

Wishing you all health and happiness ... Happy 2023!

Toni

Upcoming Sectionals and Regionals in January

<https://tournaments.acbl.org>

Click on the link and then on the highlighted "info" to view the tournament flyer and information.

Member News

Our heartfelt condolences go to Montyne Winokur and her family on the passing of her husband and our fellow bridge player, Paul Winokur.

Larry Nichols was taken to Novant ER and then admitted to the hospital this past Thursday with a UTI turned septic. He's been on IV since then. His prognosis is good. Please send your prayers and greetings to Larry for a speedy recovery.

70% Club

Congratulations to:

JoAnn Massey and Alice Gray - 71.76% on December 8

Partnership Desk

Call **Marlene Smith**, our Partnership Director, when you want to play but need a partner. Her phone number is 704-992-1260 and her email address is crzy4brdg@yahoo.com. She can charm anyone to come in and play, and she will always try to get the best match for you!!

Thanks for the Goodies!

Thanks to Nora, Marlene, Merle and Joan for the candy and baked goods.

Visit our Web Page at <http://Inbridgecenter.org/>



In the Spotlight

Ted Jarrell

I was born and raised in rural Rockingham County, NC, between Reidsville and Eden. I attended the same school 1st through 12th grade. When I graduated high school, the total enrollment of the entire school (K-12) was about 1100 students. I attended Lenoir Community College in Kinston, NC and then transferred to UNC Charlotte, earning a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology. I worked in industry for about 8.5 years, while also working on my master's degree. I left industry in 1986 to complete my master's degree. In 1990 I began teaching at Central Piedmont Community College, and three years later I was promoted to chair of our curriculum program. I left Central Piedmont in 2006 for UNC Charlotte where I finished my career in 2016.

Janice, my wife, is a hospital pharmacist. She began her career working for Presbyterian Hospital in downtown Charlotte shortly after we married. She has worked at the main hospital, Presbyterian (Novant) Matthews, Orthopedic Hospital, and is due to retire from the Novant Huntersville Hospital in late December after 41.5 years total.

We have two daughters. We adopted our older daughter (Sarah) from Romania after seeing on ABC's "20/20" how so many children had been placed in orphanages following the coup which deposed Nicolae Ceausescu. She and her husband are the parents of two of our grandchildren: Bryson and Aspen. Our second daughter (Rachel) was born 3 years later. Her husband is from Costa Rica. They have a new baby son: Oliver.

I first learned the basics of bidding from my late father-in-law before my wife and I married. One of Jerry Helms's earlier partners (Mark Lewis) came out to UNC Charlotte and taught an extracurricular class on matchpoints bidding and bridge while I was in graduate school, significantly advancing my interest in the game. I had the good fortune to have several mentors while I was an advancing player.

Most people know how serious I tend to be. Something that people may not know is that my favorite and regular partner during that time is the person that the Charlotte Bridge Center is named for: Gene Manion.

Bill Johnson

I was born in 1946 in Cincinnati, Ohio and lived two blocks from Crosley Field (Home of the Cincinnati Reds) from 1946 to 1952 in an old brick row-house with an alley behind it. We had running water, but the toilet was behind the house. Water had to be heated on the stove for baths in a large, galvanized steel tub. Our maiden aunts lived upstairs. They had a gas stove used to heat water. Any serious cooking or baking was done on their old cast-iron, coal-fired stove.

Our parking racket: Since the only parking for events at the Ball Park was on the street, the local kids offered to watch the cars for a dollar. "Free admission" to all events: The "ticket taker" was distracted while the other kids sneaked behind.

I moved to Norwood, (a suburb of Cincinnati) in 1952 and met my future wife, Margie, in 1963. We married July 22, 1967, fulfilling my mother's admonition not to marry until I was 21 (that occurred the day before the wedding). Our son, Michael, was born May 4, 1968, two weeks after moving into our first house. Our daughter, Patricia, was born March 21, 1971.

I started an apprenticeship at Cincinnati Milling Machine Company in 1964 and graduated as a Tool & Die Maker in 1967. I attended the University of Cincinnati (evenings) until 1974 and graduated with Electrical, Mechanical, and Hydraulics Engineering Degrees. I did Machine Tool and Computer electronics design from 1970-1977 and automation Design and Control at Ford Motor Company from 1977 - 1980. I moved to Louisville, KY in 1980 to continue Automation design at GE from 1980 - 1990. I moved to Galesburg, IL in 1990 to work at Admiral Corporation from 1990 - 1993, and then on to Asheville, NC in 1993, and finally to Mooresville, NC in 1995.

I learned to play bridge in 1963 from my wife's parents. I joined ACBL and began playing duplicate in 1980. Margie and I played until 1995 at which time she decided not to participate in any more tournaments, due to the disgusting behavior of a number of the players. I'm still trying to get her to come back to ACBL with little success.

Dave's Faves

New Minor Forcing – An Important Convention

Bidding systems, conventions, and treatments seem to have gotten more sophisticated and complex with each passing year. And yet, one thing has remained basic throughout the changes and modifications . . . the search for the **Golden Fit**, particularly in a major suit. The **Golden Fit** is defined as an 8-card (or better) fit between the two partnership hands. This can be a **4-4** fit or any combination that includes at least 8 cards or more (i.e.: **6-2**, **5-3**). Bidding 6-card suits is often easier to understand and

generally requires fewer HCPs since, with a 6-card suit, the hand is often highly distributional. However, bidding may be a little more complex with only a 5-card suit. *Does partner have 3-card support completing the **Golden Fit**? Is the hand better played in notrump with a **5-2** or **5-1** fit? Can the hand be played safely in a suit contract with a **5-2** or **4-3** fit?* These questions are common and, depending on your style of play and system conventions, may be difficult to answer.

Enter . . . **New Minor Forcing** . . . a way to establish game while potentially defining the presence of the **Golden Fit** in a major suit.

➤ **What is the definition of “New Minor Forcing?”**

This is a bid by responder in either of two very specific auctions:

| Opener | | | Responder | |
|-------------------|---|--|-------------------------|--|
| 1 of a minor suit | - | | 1 of major suit | |
| 1 NT | - | | 2 of other minor suit * | |

| Opener | | | Responder | |
|-------------------|---|--|-------------------------|--|
| 1 of a minor suit | - | | 1 of major suit | |
| 2 NT | - | | 3 of other minor suit * | |

* The bid of the other minor suit is “**New Minor Forcing**” and does not show a second suit. It is an artificial bid and responder could actually be void in that other minor. It specifically shows a 5-card suit in the major that was bid on the first round and at least an invitational hand (i.e.: 11+ or 12 HCPs or better). *[Note: Following a 2 NT rebid by opener, the bid is often game-forcing.]*

Several aspects of this bid should be noted:

- The bid shows exactly a 5-card major suit. With a 6-card or longer suit and game values, a bid of the major at the three-level is likely.
- In the first bidding sequence, the bid is **not** forcing to game, but **is** forcing for one round.
- If responder has shown a 5-card spade suit, the bid does not eliminate the possibility of also holding a 4-card heart suit. With **5-5** in the majors, a rebid of 2 ♥ rather than two of the other minor is a better bid in a game-going auction.

➤ **What are the rebids by opener once partner has responded with a New Minor Forcing bid?**

Since the bid is not forcing to game, it becomes important to now define if a **Golden Fit** exists and if the values are there for game. This is where partnership agreement is of utmost importance. This convention is one that many beginning partnerships adopt early in their game plan. However, most pairs never go beyond the actual **NMF** bid with respect to meaning.

I am a big fan of Larry Cohen’s books and websites when it comes to reference material. His suggestion on how opener should respond to a **New Minor Forcing** bid is as follows:

| Auction | Opener | Responder |
|---------|--------|-----------|
| | 1 ♦ | 1 ♥ |
| | 1 NT | 2 ♣ * |
| | ? | |

* New Minor Forcing

| | | |
|---------------------------|------|--|
| Response by Opener | 2 ♥ | 3-card heart support (minimum values) |
| | 3 ♥ | 3-card heart support (maximum values) |
| | 2 ♦ | No 3-card heart support (minimum values) |
| | 2 NT | No 3-card heart support (maximum values) |

| Auction | Opener | Responder |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| | 1 ♣ | 1 ♠ |
| | 1 NT | 2 ♦ * |
| | ? | |

* New Minor Forcing

| | | |
|---------------------------|------|---|
| Response by Opener | 2 ♠ | 3-card spade support (minimum values) |
| | 3 ♠ | 3-card spade support (maximum values) |
| | 2 ♥ | No 3-card spade support (4-card heart suit) |
| | 2 NT | No 3-card spade support (minimum values) |
| | 3 NT | No 3-card spade support (maximum values) |

Responses following a 2 NT rebid by opener (i.e.: 18-19 HCPs) are similar, but without the need to define maximum/minimum. The use of **New Minor Forcing** following a 2 NT sequence usually commits the partnership to game regardless of maximum/minimum.

Use of the charts above for response to **New Minor Forcing** is a partnership agreement and should be discussed with regular partners at length.

I have only one change that I would make to the meanings above. Following the indication of a 5-card spade suit in responder's hand, I feel that the number one rebid by opener should be to show a 4-card heart suit, **regardless** of whether or not opener has 3-card spade support. The reason for this is quite simple. If the partnership has a **5-3** spade fit and a **4-4** heart fit, it is often advantageous to play the contract in the **4-4** fit. This gives Declarer the benefit of perhaps pitching losers on the long spades after trump have been drawn. The table above would look like this with my change:

| | | |
|---------------------------|------|---|
| Response by Opener | 2 ♠ | 3-card spade support (minimum values) |
| | 3 ♠ | 3-card spade support (maximum values) |
| | 2 ♥ | 4-card heart suit (maximum values) [May have 3-card spade support.] |
| | 2 NT | No 3-card spade support (minimum values) |
| | 3 NT | No 3-card spade support (maximum values) |

An obvious question: Won't the partnership miss the potential 5-3 spade fit? No. Responder is going to bid 4 ♥ with a 4-card heart suit, agreeing to play the 4-4 fit, or bid 3 NT if no 4-4 fit exists in hearts. With 3-card spade support, opener can then correct to game at 4 ♠, playing the 5-3 fit.

Let's see how this plays out with some actual hands.

Dealer: W
 Vul: E-W

N

♠ K Q 4 2
 ♥ 6 3
 ♦ 10 9 6 2
 ♣ J 8 4

E

♠ A 8 6
 ♥ A J 7 4 2
 ♦ J
 ♣ 9 7 6 2

W

♠ 10 9 7
 ♥ K 8
 ♦ A 8 7 5 3
 ♣ A K 3

S

♠ J 5 3
 ♥ Q 10 9 5
 ♦ K Q 4
 ♣ Q 10 5

Bidding:

| W | N | E | S |
|------|------|-----|------|
| 1 ♦ | Pass | 1 ♥ | Pass |
| 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

East has a 5-card heart suit and a minimal hand (10 HCPs or less). At least two of the tables in play on this day, decided to use **New Minor Forcing** to show the 5-card suit. The results were not good. It is important when using this convention to stick to the criteria for use. The hand does not have the minimum strength requirement of a good 11 or 12 HCP hand. East probably gave more weight to the singleton diamond **J**. Do not count distribution points on the initial bid. Distribution points cannot be counted until a fit is found.

The auction here is a classic bidding sequence.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|---------|-----------------|
| 1 minor | 1 major |
| 1 NT | 1 of same major |
| ? | |

The rebid by responder of the original major suit is always to **PLAY**. Opener should **PASS**. Responder is saying clearly, "I do not have game values. I have at least a 5-card suit and am willing, if necessary, to play a **5-2** or **5-1** fit." This is a beginning bridge concept that Jerry Helms, our Charlotte pro, teaches as one of his first lessons to novice players.

Lesson: Know when to use **New Minor Forcing** and when to settle for the minimal contract!
 Let's look at yet another hand.

Dealer: S
 Vul: E-W

N

♠ K J 8 3
 ♥ 6
 ♦ 9 7 6 4 3
 ♣ 9 8 6

E

♠ A 9
 ♥ A K 9 4 3
 ♦ Q 5
 ♣ K Q J 5

W

♠ 7 6 2
 ♥ Q 10 8
 ♦ A K 10
 ♣ A 10 7 2

S

♠ Q 10 5 4
 ♥ J 7 5 2
 ♦ J 8 2
 ♣ 4 3

Bidding:

| | W | N | E | S |
|--|------|------|-------|------|
| | | | | Pass |
| | 1 ♣ | Pass | 1 ♥ | Pass |
| | 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♦ * | Pass |
| | 2 ♥ | Pass | 4 NT | Pass |
| | 5 ♠ | Pass | 6 ♥ | Pass |
| | Pass | Pass | | |

* New Minor Forcing

This hand is a perfect example of **NMF** at its best. It is important to note that this convention is not designed to find potential slams. It is designed to *not* miss a **5-3** major suit fit. Extra values are an added bonus. Six of thirteen tables played this contract in some number of notrump. These tables likely did not play **New Minor Forcing**. Unless you can divine the bad heart break, a spade lead will defeat a slam in notrump. The heart slam will likely lose only one heart trick. (*Note: The losing spade can be tossed on the third diamond trick.*)

Let's look at a third hand where the partnership has a **Golden Fit** in both major suits.

Dealer: N
 Vul: None

N

♠ A 10 8
 ♥ K J 9 2
 ♦ A 8 7 5
 ♣ Q 3

E

♠ J 9 2
 ♥ 10 7
 ♦ J 6
 ♣ J 9 8 7 4 2

W

♠ 5 3
 ♥ 6 5 4
 ♦ K Q 10 9 3
 ♣ K 6 5

S

♠ K Q 7 6 4
 ♥ A Q 8 3
 ♦ 4 2
 ♣ A 10

| | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Bidding: | W | N | E | S |
| | | 1 ♦ | Pass | 1 ♠ |
| | Pass | 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♣ * |
| | Pass | 2 ♥ | Pass | 4 ♥ |
| | Pass | Pass | Pass | |

* New Minor Forcing

With good values, the first obligation of North following a **New Minor Forcing** bid showing a 5-card spade suit in responder's hand is to bid the other 4-card major suit (hearts). Note that North does have 3-card spade support, but with maximum values for a minimal opener (i.e.: 14 HCPs), my preference would be to show the 4-card heart suit. South has a game-going hand opposite partner's opener and easily bids the heart game with a **4-4** fit. (**Note:** *Regardless of lead, the hand scores 12 tricks in the heart game, but only eleven tricks in the spade game. This example allows you to see the potential advantage in playing a 4-4 fit over a 5-3 fit. The losing club and a losing diamond can be pitched on the fourth and fifth spade tricks!*) Hopefully, this will clarify why I prefer the slight change in the meaning of opener's rebids following a **NMF** bid.

An obvious question may arise at this point. *Can the same treatment be applied if responder has a 5-card heart suit and opener has a 4-card spade suit?* The simple answer is, **No**. With a 4-card spade suit, the bidding sequence is more likely to proceed as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|------------------|
| Opener | | Responder |
| 1 of a minor suit | - | 1 ♥ |
| 1 ♠ | - | ? |

This changes the entire path of the auction.

I hope this lesson will help clarify the "rest of the story" regarding **New Minor Forcing** and will lead you to good contracts and good results. Seldom will you find all opinions the same when doing research on bidding styles and convention treatment. As always, it is important to develop a strong partnership understanding of all bids.

This kicks off a new year for the Lake Norman Bridge Club. So . . .

HAPPY NEW YEAR

I enjoy having the opportunity to write these articles, but I want to make them meaningful to the largest number of players. Please do not hesitate to direct questions to me via e-mail and, by all means, if you have a "deep" topic you wish me to discuss, drop me a line.

Dave Smith

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