

# MINNESOTA GOPHER REGIONAL

Units 103 and 178

May 20-25, 2024

Patti Stuhlman & Warren Nelson, Co-Chairs ♠♠ Matt Koltnow, DIC ♠♠ Mike Cassel, Editor

## Gopher Wrap [Saturday's Results](#)

[Regional Results-ACBL Live](#)

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ACBL LIVE

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Region 5 Gopher Reports with links to GopherNews daily pdfs at

Bloomington, MN  
Gopher Regional  
May 20, 2024 - May 25, 2024

[Minnesota Bridge Blog](#) If you haven't done so yet please bookmark Matt Belau's Region 5 MN blog

minnesota bridge blog

### Saturday Bracketed Swiss I Winners



.Eric Hendrickson, Paul Gutterman, Richard Lawson  
Andy Caranicas

### Saturday Gold Rush



Lynn Vettel Vicky Slomiany

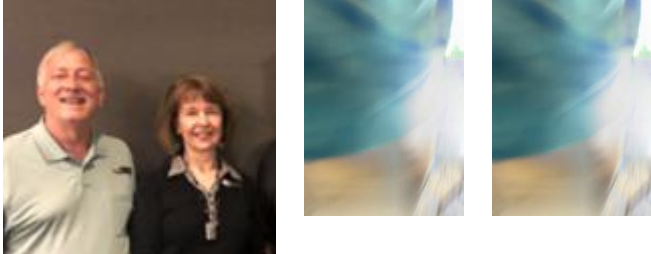
### Bd 1 Fri aft.

♠ 10  
♥ KQ8  
♦ AJ7653  
♣ 942

A K Q J T 9 8  
7 6 5 4 3 2

Have you ever had  
A 13 card straight?  
'Eagle Eye Koltnow'  
spotted it

### Saturday Bracketed Swiss II Winners



Scott & Shirley Richardson Greg Nastrom Daniel Finn

### Saturday Bracketed Swiss III Winners



Sarah & Jackson Wahl Nancy Meeden Tim Bina

Partnerships

Annie Schaeffer, Partnerships



Sandy Nelson  
Pics  
Candy  
Gal Friday

Has anyone been to the Cirque du Soleil show? Email me at [mc2mikec@aol.com](mailto:mc2mikec@aol.com)



Jade Barrett, Mike 'Lefty' Curran Donna Lombardini, Kathy Kimmerling, Al LaTendresse



Re-renewed partners: Jay Olson Rosie Vanek



**Aquatennial  
Sectional**  
Jul 10-13, 2024

Bridge Center of St. Paul  
1751 W. Cty Rd. B. Suite 220,  
Roseville, MN 55113



Tom Grue Margie Michelin



Dennis and Sue Carmen

*D14 Reception for Dennis Carmen, Region 5 ACBL Board Rep*



Annie Schaeffer, Peg Waller  
Peg Mitchell, Cindy Balderson  
Sandy Nelson. Reception Committee



**End of OUR Gopher Daily Bulletin**

The Minneapolis Grand Slam Club has stepped up to sponsor the daily bulletin for the last three years. In the post-Covid environment. allocating funds for more personal reportage risked tournament profitability. Most of what you see happens in the weeks before the tournament begins. Formatting is time intensive. I believe the time invested IS worthwhile because both advancing and experienced players benefit from the many extras a human-created document provides.

I've edited the Gopher Daily Bulletin for 17 years. As well, for close to the same length of time I have written a weekly bulletin for the Grand Slam Club analyzing auctions, nice plays, and links to relevant treatments. This year the Gopher Daily News highlighted swing hands from the D14 GNT Championship Flight Finals and deals from the excellent book: **Dormer on Deduction Inferential Reasoning in the Play of the Cards at Bridge**'. Other added benefits: Lunch & Learn handouts, a page of links to other bridge sources, interesting deals from our regional and links to upcoming tournaments.

Attaining lifemasterhood without a concomitant interest in mastering the subtler aspects of the game has been a recipe for Gold Rush graduates to disappear from competitive play for some number of years. It's also much nicer to see pics of winning pairs rather than head shots of players who have uploaded them to the CommonGame.

[Type text]



The FastResults team, affiliated with theCommonGame, has become the easy route to produce daily bulletins at an extremely favorable price point. The big advantage to using Fast Results: no need to format results. The FastResultsDailyBulletin, without stories, is useful, but lacks color.

Economics may no longer support our/my homegrown compositions, but can we afford not to offer players a value added product. What can we do about it? Taking advantage of the many resources available to enrich the players' experience is the best way to incentivize the 'interested' but less experienced player to become more accomplished and committed tournament attendees.

## WHERE ARE WE NOW? UNFAVORABLE DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic cliff is winnowing expertise as witnessed by a 10 year comparison in bracket 1 KO's :

JIM HALL MEMORIAL KO 1 2014  
10 Tables  
Peg Waller, Ronald DeHarpporte,  
Judy Schwarz - Phil Schwarz,  
Roger Anderson – Sharon Anderson  
vs  
Jim Stepnes, William Voedisch  
Larry Uttley, Dennis Cerkenik,  
vs  
Bill Kent, Peggy Kaplan,  
Vernon Evans - Monte Evans  
-----

Terry Lijewski, John Lijewski  
Paolo Ranaldi, John Koch,  
vs  
Rob Schachter, Paul Meerschaer  
Cindy Balderson, Carole Miner  
vs  
Jacob Morgan, Jackie Evans  
Carol Cummings, William Cummings

Peg Kaplan KO 2024, bracket 1 of 2  
7 Tables

Kurt Schaeffer	Kerry Holloway	Carole Miner	Cynthia Balderson	Bob Balderson Jr
Sandy Casey	Grant Duffrin	Jerry Johnson	Rick Mattson	
Gerald Houlder	Ronald Smith	Michele Grindal	Keith Thompson	
Karen Land	Martha Peterson	Gerry Tetrault	Jan Kleinschmidt	
Garry Hoden	Eric Swanlund	Shelly Husebo	Sandy Nelson	
G S Jade Barrett	Donna Lombardini	Kathryn Kimmerling	Michael Curran	Al LaTendresse
Michael Kiernan	Maureen Kiernan	Douglas Vene	Leslie Nelson	

Having 4 brackets and mid-30s teams entered this year was GREAT. Brackets 2-4 were highly competitive. But you can look at the top bracket and see that there was a wide variance in experience. Not so great for the less experienced team in the top bracket.

A suggestion to stratiflight the top bracket would give the lower ranked squads in the top bracket a bite of overalls in a second tier. This makes sense to me. No one enjoys being the 'prey' to much more accomplished and experienced teams. Increase the top bracket size and pay out A/X masterpoints.



Matt Koltnow, DIC



Kim Hayward, director



Patti Stuhlman



Warren Nelson



Sandy Nelson, various Including CANDY person



Keith Thompson Multiple hats



Annie Schaeffer, Partnerships



Brian Crossley, Information Desk

Brian said he is retiring from decades as the information desk coordinator. Thank him next time you see him

# Gopher Hands of the Week

♠ 10  
♥ KQ8  
♦ AJ7653  
♣ 942

Citizen Mitten Pairs,  
[Bd 1 Afternoon](#) session  $\frac{4^{13}}{(52 C 13)}$   
What are the odds of a  
13 card straight hand

[What are the odds?](#) About  
0.000105681,  
slightly more than one hand  
in 10,000 about 1 in 9,462.



[Lunch&learn:falcons](#)

This deal is from the first session of the Jill & Mike Flader pairs on Tuesday May 21

High Level Bidding Decisions 10 card fits each direction Tuesday Morning	Mike & Jill Flader Pairs Top = 21 NS scores	Michaels Cuebid: WideRanging or Weak/Strong
Dir: E Vul: None 5 11 13 11 ♠ Q74 ♥ 983 ♦ AQ92 ♣ K74 ♠ K1092 ♥ 64 ♦ 764 ♣ Q862 ♠ - ♥ A72 ♦ KJ10853 ♣ AJ95 ♠ AJ8653 ♥ KQJ105 ♦ - ♣ 103 Double Dummy Makes NS: 3/2♥4♣2♦1NT2 EW: 4/3♣6♦1NT♥4♠3 Par Score -300 6♠*-N♣-2 9/22 plus NS in the Open 9/24 plus NS in the Gold Rush 4 part scores, 1 dbl into game	650 21 1 590 18x 4 420 16 1 100 14x 2 50 12x 2 -100 11 1 -150 10 1 -300 7x 4 -400 2x 6 Gold Rush Top = 23 f: 590 22x 2 450 21 1 420 19x 2 100 17x 2 50 15.5 2 -50 12x 4 -100 9x 2 -150 7x 2 -170 6 1 -300 5 1 -400 3 3 -490 1 1 -570 0 1	Sometimes as a bulletin editor you wish everyone was playing with tablets so the bidding can be viewed across the 50 tables in play. Tuesday morning's 'wild one' caught my attention. There were a couple of 6D contracts that failed. Careful play will bring the contract home, but you have to be in dummy to finesse the C8 in the North hand so you can discard a heart in dummy. 7D. at one table in the Gold Rush. It didn't need to be doubled, but why wouldn't you? If it makes you are getting a zero for sure. West can rightfully be accused of having fully shown their values with 5D Our winners, Keith Connolly and Brad Peterson scored 18x on a 21 top when they were allowed to play 5D. It rarely hurts to have less experienced opponents on hands with difficult bidding decisions. You need luck to win and event. Keith & Brad had a monster first set: ~71% & backed it up with 58% to win by nearly 2 boards

An auction is a conversation where each side assesses their potential to take tricks while simultaneously trying to determine the number of tricks their opponents are claiming to take. The two auctions above lend themselves to a closer analysis:

1♦ X South has the perfect shape for a Michaels cuebid promising 5-5 or better major suit length. Is there an argument in favor of doubling? Maybe, if South is even stronger and has a self sufficient suit. Double hides your shape. XX 1♠ 3♦ 4♣. West doesn't have either the shape or strength for a redouble. You won't have enough major suit length to double a NS major suit contract. Support with support. I'm a fan of "flip-flop" over the double. Flip/flop employs 2N for the preemptive raise and 3D for the limit raise. Why? The most likely game contract when responder has no major is 3N and you want the lead coming into partner's tenaces. Ed Manfield wrote an article: *I've Got a Secret* that won an award from the IBPA in 1982. You can find a [summary online](#) as the original is now behind a paywall.

West has completely shown their values with 5D. To bid again with a square hand is not winning bridge. Keith and Brad took full advantage of inexperienced opponents. 2S must have been alerted as showing a limit raise or better in diamonds. Invisible cuebids are part of a valuable defense vs two-suited overcalls known as [Unusual vs Unusual](#). Presumably, 2H by West would have shown something in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit (clubs). North **must absolutely double 2S** to let South know there is a spade fit. When South competed with 3H the spade suit was lost.

Kurt Schaeffer shared the following deal from the Friday Bracketed Swiss: **New Partnership**

1. Don't invent bids that can confuse
2. Have solid values
3. Strive for plus scores
4. Take pressure off as partner might be nervous

Violating at least 3 of the above rules, you pick up this hand in the first match of the day, first board of the match

LHO Partner RHO You  
 1C 1N 2D ?

1C = 8+ could be short (4=4=3=2)

2D= Diamonds and a major

- ♠ QJTxx
- ♥ Kxx
- ♦ Qxx
- ♣ AKx

- ♠ AKx
- ♥ Q
- ♦ xxx
- ♣ QJxxxxx

- ♠ xxx
- ♥ A97xx
- ♦ Kxx
- ♣ xx

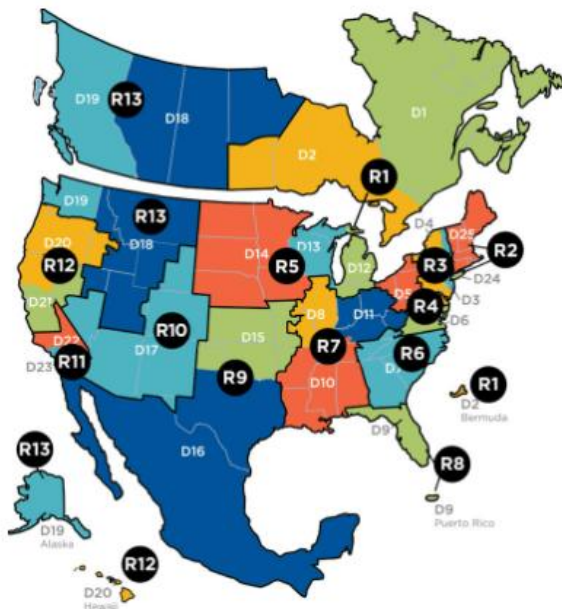
- ♠ xxx
- ♥ JTxx
- ♦ AJxx
- ♣ xx

### First deal of the Friday Bracketed Swiss New Partnership

Stolen bid was undiscussed (double to show hearts); system is on, so 2 hearts might be construed as transfer to spades; 2NT is possible (playing lebensohl) as a follow up 3 hearts would be showing what? Natural? Cue bid? Avoiding confusion & using the famous Hamman logic, I bid the practical 3NT! Everyone passed!

Partner, Joe Koester, won the diamond Q at trick one, divined the 4-1 heart break at tricks two and three (cashed the K, dropping the singleton Q on the right and ducked the second round when LHO split from JTxx) After a spade switch by the opps, ducked to the Q, Joe hooked the heart nine and soon claimed +400 for a 7 IMP gain Well done Joe K. and the KurtJoe new partnership anchored the team the rest of the day to a nice win in Bracket 1 Swiss on Friday.

### Lunch With Our Region 5 Director



Currently, there [are 25 geographically defined districts](#) as shown on the map on the left. The 25 districts have been combined into 13 regions (district boundaries remain unchanged). By 2024, the 13 regions will have one representative on the ACBL Board of Directors, and the districts will no longer be individually represented.

[Ed. Each unit used to receive a share of the annual membership fee based on unit population with no restrictions (11%). Starting this year, units will have ability to earn up to 15% by reaching performance objectives in new member recruitment and member retention. Failure to make an effort earns you just 5% instead of 11%]

Each unit will receive a share of ACBL membership fees via the [5/5/5 Program](#). We encourage units to use these fees for programs to increase membership and enhance the enjoyment of the game for all members. [5/5/5 Success Scale](#).

D13 & D14 have lost their own director seat on the BOD. D12, D13, & D14 are now Region 5. The former D12 BOD rep, [Dennis Carmen](#), now represents Region 5. Dennis, an Emerald LM, has represented D12 on the ACBL BOD since 1986! He and his wife, Susan, came to the Gopher this year and I had the opportunity to share time between sessions on Friday. I'd previously emailed him asking about recent Grass Roots Fund history (see next page).

His first comment was the importance of getting with the 5-5-5 program that [incentivizes units](#).

I wanted to discuss why, if the league could employ a complicated formula to distribute Grass Roots Fund dollars to districts doing the best in reaching the 'grass roots', they couldn't they retain a 'tithe' from online play entry fees that would allow players to play anytime, anywhere, with a portion of their entry fee returned back to the player's home unit. The gravitation of VACB play to the large consortia strangles small clubs.

I also discussed the need/value for an online portal where players could find partners, clubs could advertise their VACB game characteristics, members could give testimonials about bridge, and best practices could be promulgated. We are losing the most experienced, knowledgeable volunteers to age, and aren't banking their wisdom.



The ACBL should be utilizing the GNTs and NAPs as onramps to NABCs for less experienced players. Compensating pro teams in the championship flight of the GNTs? Why? These players are coming to the NABCs with or without district support. I resigned after a decade as GNT coordinator when the BOD legislated against my GNT conditions of contest for D4. We would give a Flight B GNT squad, all of whom with less than 1,000MPs competing against squads with over 2,000MPs a trip to the summer NABC if they reached the second day KO semifinal? Of course, this was preCovid when double digit B teams competed in a Swiss on the first day.

Dennis said that the ACBL was contemplating taking over the VACB sanction. I've no idea what that would look like.

I asked if the league is exploring the potential for hybrid play where online and face/face play could be integrated by employing low cost tablets with limited functionality that all players would use..

ACBL Grass Roots												
District	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2023	
	Members	Funding	Members	Funding	Members	Funding	Members	Funding	Members	Funding	Members	Funding
1	5,698	\$5,027	5,601	\$5,927	5,377	\$451	5,013	\$864	4,650	\$1,281	4,487	\$2,816
2	7,951	\$1,523	7,987	\$1,264	8,104	\$0	7,792	\$1,681	7,378	\$707	7,012	\$3,100
3	6,439	\$13,157	6,305	\$5,563	6,221	\$1,203	5,565	\$270	5,128	\$979	4,751	\$2,594
4	6,562	\$5,568	6,371	\$8,185	6,255	\$150	5,679	\$985	5,392	\$2,251	5,176	\$2,962
5	3,310	\$3,838	3,189	\$5,069	3,095	\$437	2,807	\$558	2,611	\$740	2,453	\$1,815
6	7,190	\$8,126	7,055	\$8,510	6,891	\$3,457	6,316	\$916	5,987	\$1,161	5,684	\$4,333
7	13,866	\$43,391	13,702	\$43,153	13,610	\$6,568	12,256	\$7,343	11,615	\$13,153	11,200	\$24,735
8	2,814	\$3,256	2,723	\$3,276	2,567	\$337	2,315	\$930	2,154	\$1,274	2,066	\$2,202
9	18,384	\$32,403	18,109	\$34,467	18,230	\$2,763	16,505	\$6,083	15,635	\$13,847	14,916	\$22,471
10	6,523	\$13,750	6,387	\$14,535	6,247	\$3,657	5,575	\$2,111	5,187	\$7,226	5,151	\$10,950
11	4,450	\$6,023	4,338	\$7,994	4,211	\$1,892	3,788	\$2,226	3,614	\$2,398	3,458	\$3,106
12	4,300	\$4,290	4,223	\$6,942	4,026	\$985	3,646	\$791	3,394	\$1,672	3,208	\$3,546
13	5,023	\$6,610	4,923	\$6,814	4,763	\$721	4,381	\$750	4,153	\$1,875	3,962	\$2,466
14	4,033	\$7,802	3,961	\$7,607	3,844	\$2,201	3,457	\$312	3,262	\$847	3,165	\$3,388
15	3,189	\$1,606	3,094	\$973	3,016	\$125	2,689	\$1,183	2,606	\$1,837	2,523	\$2,120
16	8,683	\$20,576	8,598	\$24,664	8,396	\$2,158	7,640	\$4,530	7,265	\$10,396	6,942	\$11,443
17	9,076	\$9,062	9,012	\$8,254	9,016	\$1,795	8,224	\$2,548	7,812	\$2,099	7,462	\$3,416
18	4,070	\$4,269	4,058	\$4,121	3,976	\$2,339	3,617	\$1,078	3,389	\$1,269	3,246	\$1,095
19	6,794	\$1,860	6,767	\$2,798	6,585	\$673	6,015	\$1,048	5,683	\$750	5,347	\$1,426
20	3,862	\$3,681	3,776	\$3,856	3,636	\$1,899	3,237	\$961	2,986	\$1,188	2,866	\$1,813
21	8,493	\$1,491	8,362	\$2,820	8,449	\$848	7,671	\$1,064	7,206	(\$107)	6,836	\$1,486
22	6,701	\$7,939	6,547	\$8,833	6,329	\$1,388	5,646	\$1,430	5,305	\$2,159	5,036	\$4,509
23	3,315	\$770	3,237	\$525	3,159	\$88	2,853	\$246	2,625	\$1,018	2,520	\$2,013
24	5,603	\$986	5,440	\$908	5,282	\$70	4,761	\$133	4,343	\$404	3,990	\$1,202
25	8,496	\$15,598	8,379	\$18,433	8,263	\$3,888	7,717	\$643	7,351	\$2,848	7,059	\$4,331
<b>Totals</b>	<b>164,825</b>	<b>\$222,605</b>	<b>162,144</b>	<b>\$235,493</b>	<b>159,548</b>	<b>\$40,094</b>	<b>145,165</b>	<b>\$40,682</b>	<b>136,731</b>	<b>\$73,273</b>	<b>130,516</b>	<b>\$125,337</b>

Items of note: Effect of Covid f/f halt, Membership declines (bottom row), Rebounds in Grass Roots Fund raises recently by district: D16, D10, D9, D7 (big) and D14,D12 (small) raise more the \$1/ member.

## MPLS Grand Slam Club Our 87th Year 1937 - 2024

Dwindling online participation on Fridays now see the club playing on Tuesday evenings at 630pm. One of the benefits of the online game is the [weekly bulletin](#) emailed to all club members and previous VACB participants. A [Zoom session follows the game](#) where interesting and/or challenging deals are shared.

Giving players tools, tips, and tactics to help advancing players is the MGSC's unstated mission. The future of high level, competitive bridge won't happen unless the wisdom of older experienced players is paid forward. This is why the MGSC sponsors the Gopher bulletin. Please Join us on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 and help your bridge game progress.

### Omaha Regional

August 5-11, 2024  
Omaha Marriott in Regency

**Intermediate/Newcomer Events**

- Special Intermediate/Newcomer Room & Director
- Trophies, Pictures, Section-Top Pins
- Daily Expert Speakers Mon-Sat at 2:15 pm
- 0-49ers Buy your first entry, get second entry FREE

**Tournament Highlights**

- Events starting Monday at 10 am
- Daily Morning Pastry & Coffee
- Daily Afternoon Treats & Coffee
- Gold Rush 750 Pairs Mon-Sat
- Daily 299er & 49er Events
- Welcome Bags
- Convention Card Stickers
- Three 2-Day Mini-Soloway Team Events
- Three Side-Game Series, AM/PM/EVE
- \$16 Entry Fee per Person per Session
- Sunday AX Swiss and Bracketed Teams
- Free Buffet Lunch on Sunday for All

**Omaha Marriott in Regency**  
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Rate of \$122 expires on July 21, 2024  
[Book your group rate for Omaha Bridge](#)