

The Minor ALT Invitational I

AUGUST 31 – SEPTEMBER 4 2020



WORLD CLASS ONLINE BRIDGE EVENTS

A Field of Life

The past 6 months have been a long nightmare for bridge players. Not only have we not been able to meet each other at the table, we have also been hit by one tragedy after another. We have lost some of the most wonderful personalities, the most recent being Catherine D'Ovidio, who we remember in this bulletin.

In light of the sadness, it makes us happy to present a field in this Minor Alt that makes you wish it were a live tournament. Who does not long to hear Brad Moss laugh at Frederic Volcker's accent? Or see Zach Grossack yelling at Adam with his calm composure? To be subtly insulted by Bas Drijver and have a dance and a drink with Boye Brogeland? We have a dream that one day we will have a live ALTogether.

All players should enter BBO 10 minutes before the beginning of a match. TD Denis Dobrin will instruct you where to sit. All players must have their name in their BBO-profile. Private isn't allowed for the sake of opponents and kibitzers.

Today's Schedule

Monday August 31

10:00 EDT/16:00 CET RR 1 (24 boards)

14:00 EDT/20:00 CET RR 2 (24 boards)

Link to results

[Minor Alt Results](#)

Link to previous and future Alts &
bulletins

Alt.bridgeresults.org



Welcome to the 1st Minor Alt Invitational



by Christina Lund Madsen

Summer has passed and we are looking at a fall and winter with online bridge only. As long as there is no live bridge, the Alt will continue to organise online world class events.

Before the summer we introduced our Major Alt - an event open to up to 32 teams. The first edition was a huge success with a field including all the greatest stars.

We held our second Major, the MontreAlt in August, this time also with a qualification. We will continue with qualifications for our Major Alts also in the future to give more teams a chance to compete in our events.

We will have approximately 4 Major Alt tournaments a year.

The third Alt Mixed Teams took place last week. During the fall, a little less than every second Alt event will be mixed.

And now we are back with the event it Alt began with; eight top teams competing in a Round Robin, followed by knockouts for the top 4 teams. We renamed it Minor Alt to distinguish from our Major Alt-events.

We are excited to welcome new and familiar players and look forward to five days of world class bridge.

Tbl	Home Team	Visiting Team
1	<u>GUPTA</u>	<u>POTTER</u>
2	<u>DONNER</u>	<u>LEBOWITZ</u>
3	<u>DE MICHELIS</u>	<u>GILLIS</u>
4	<u>FREDIN</u>	<u>BLACK</u>

Tbl	Home Team	Visiting Team
1	<u>DONNER</u>	<u>GUPTA</u>
2	<u>LEBOWITZ</u>	<u>POTTER</u>
3	<u>FREDIN</u>	<u>DE MICHELIS</u>
4	<u>BLACK</u>	<u>GILLIS</u>

Round
1 & 2

See our full calendar at

Alt.bridgeresults.org

A Case for Zoom

by Adam Grossack



This article was also brought in the pre-bulletin for last week's Alt Mixed teams.

These last months have been an adventure for the bridge world and its players. We have seen tragedies (deaths and cheating) which many of us have not processed. But what has held strong through this pandemic has been our love for bridge. This game has an intoxicating power and we yearn for its complexities. Thanks to BBO, we have been able to emulate bridge competitions whereby we can stay sharp, grow, and keep our passion alive. The best players in the world, the professionals, can continue to earn a living online which in turn attracts all the players at the next level who are hungry to improve their games and compete against the best.

The purpose of the ALT tournaments is, and has always been, to create the highest possible level of competition. The ALT team is committed to its participants and also its fans, which is part of the reason why they are the only major tournament left which still has live kibitzing. This double-edged virtue is great for the everyday fans who love to watch their favorite players. We know the risks - self-kibitzing - but we can keep trying to design new ways to prevent that.

Let's move to Zoom with the ALTs. Zoom will heighten the players' competitive experience by providing virtual screenmates. We can ask more questions to our opponents, get more physical tells,

eliminate some "online-hesitations" and feel more connected to the game.

This is a great step that the ALT events can take with virtually no drawbacks. Zoom is very easy to use and if people are uncomfortable setting it up, it's very easy for one person to just send another person a link to their Zoom meeting and the prompts are very self-explanatory. The computer does the work for you.

I have participated in two events this summer which used Zoom meetings in conjunction with play and they both significantly heightened my experience in the tournament. These two tournaments were the online NAOBC and the USBF Invitational. Being able to have a Zoom session with your screenmate makes online bridge even closer to live bridge. We add back a social element.

Zoom is highly encouraged for all Alt events. At the start of the rounds, North can send a zoom link to East and West will send a zoom link to South. Or if a player is unfamiliar with Zoom, let the player with experience send the links.

Email addresses aren't needed - you can just send a private message to your screenmate with a link. It's very easy. Nothing can replace live bridge, but let's strive for the best bridge we can until we are back at the tables.

[Link to Zoom](#)

Catherine the Great

Catherine D'Ovidio

1959-2020



by Christina Lund Madsen

Last Friday Catherine D'Ovidio lost a battle to pancreatic cancer she could never win. She passed away only 61 years old. Until the end she worried mostly about what would happen to her loved ones after she was gone. She leaves behind her daughter Elodie and her granddaughter, the light of her life, and her husband through 23 years.

Catherine D'Ovidio was a friend, teammate, opponent and world star. I recall John Carroll from Ireland once told me: "She is the only woman who scares the s... out of me at the table."

Others have mentioned that she was the only woman Paul Chemla could stand playing with. She was an institution especially in the bridge environment in France. She was raised there, and in return she brought her country glory and pride.

She was a full time bridge professional for almost her entire life. Before forever devoting herself to the bridge world, she worked one year for a company in France. "They were very proud of me because of the bridge, but to improve your level within this firm you had to be a man. That is why I stopped."

She has won more World and European titles in Mixed and Womens events than she could remember herself. Yet she never achieved her goal of competing for France in the open team.

Perhaps - as with her job - it would have been different had she been a man.

For many younger female players she was an idol. It is but a year ago she won both the womens teams and the mixed teams at the Open European Championships.

For me it was a dream come true to play on a team with Catherine the Great in the latter. Catherine could be a tough partner, which she was the first to admit, but she was a great teammate.

I have so many happy memories from that event. She played with Marc Bompis, I with Bas Drijver. Bas' real name is Sebastiaan, which is a well-kept secret. He is only known as Bas, but Catherine immediately named him "Seb". In our team that summer it became his only name.

Seb and Catherine did not know each other much more than by name before that event, but they immediately developed a special connection. Catherine had a disarming warmth and humour as a contrast to her pokerface at the table.

So many of her friends have memories of her and stories to tell, but there is no better way of remembering Catherine than by her own words. Here is an interview with her from 2013. I can still hear her lovely accent.

Catherine D'Ovidio **– the Heart behind the Golden Medal**

I had never really talked to her and as most female bridge players I was a little intimidated by Catherine D'Ovidio.

At the bridge table she plays quickly and without mercy, not a smile climbs by, her eyebrows raised in constant impatience with her opponents' slow play.

This summer I met her in Atlanta at the American nationals. Early one morning I saw her sitting on the balcony outside, enjoying her morning breakfast consisting of a cigarette and an espresso. I plucked up the courage to join her, and this was the first of many mornings with common jetlag and intimate conversations. One of the first things that struck me was how positive and obliging she is. No matter who came by for a small chit chat, they left escorted by a remark from her part such as 'He is so nice' or 'She is such a sweet girl.'

However getting to know her better I also heard her speak less agreeably about one or two characters. Catherine has a passionate temper and describes her feelings for others either with the word love or hate. Not a lot in between.

The second part was her passionate way of talking about bridge. As a contrast to her self-confident air at the bridge table, she is humble and grateful of the privilege to live her life as a bridge professional.

Do you ever get nervous having won so many championships?

"Yes. Every time before the first board of a match, I have to take my hands with the cards under the table to hide that they are shaking."



Catherine conveys that she did not win her first World Championship until Istanbul 2004, when she won the trans-national mixed teams with Paul Chemla and Sabine-Zia. Since then she has added the Venice Cup in 2005 and 2011, not to mention a countless number of European Championships. She is currently ranked as number 1 on the WBF world ranking and in Bali to defend her World title with the French women.

Bridge to heal the heart

How did you start to play bridge?

"I was heartbroken at 19 years old and my parents tried to make me forget and told me: 'Come to the bridge club and try to play bridge.' So I took my first lesson and we went back home and during the dinner I told my parents 'One day I will be world champion'. They were laughing at me: 'Are you crazy?' 'I will be, for sure I will be,' I said."

Catherine was married to a good bridge player. He taught her a lot, however after having a daughter together he wanted her to give up bridge. That was impossible for Catherine, who decided to give up her husband instead.

At 38 Catherine got remarried to Pierre, 23 years older than herself. Although this is now 16 years ago, he still occupies her heart entirely. After ten intense days in Atlanta she told me how she missed him and wanted to see if she could catch an earlier flight. She did not manage to change her flight, but with radiant eyes she conveyed that he was coming with her to Bali.

What is your best bridge experience?

"The first time I made the trials in France. Me and my partner were both 25 and we knew we had to make the top 2 to qualify for the team. The level was not as high as now, but it was very difficult for us and we finished second. For one week I felt like on a cloud, dreaming. We won the European Championships that year, but it was not as exciting for me as making the trials."

What vexes you most about your bridge life?

"I am obliged to be compared with women but I would like to be compared with men. I would like to stop playing bridge in the ladies and start to play for the open, but it is not so easy to find a partner. I know I will never be European or World Champion in the open, but I would like to play."

Is there any person who had a significant influence on you?

"Do you know Arsène Wenger? I love this guy and I met him in Paris in 2001 when we played the World Championship. My captain knew I loved him and introduced me to him and told him I was playing the World Championship final."

Although Wenger is a legendary football coach for Arsenal and not a bridge player, Catherine's captain asked him to give her a piece of good advice.

"He told me: 'You are playing the final now. Don't put the pressure on you. Put it on the opponents.' Even though we lost this championship, I thought a lot about this sentence."

However Catherine is not only known for putting pressure on her opponents. She has a reputation for doing the same to her partners; a fact that she acknowledges.

How would you describe yourself in three words?

"Emotional." Without hesitation. "Difficult partner, lovely teammate."

And not bridge related?

"Hm, maybe you should ask my husband." She laughs. "I don't know the word in English. You know when you shout and I can speak rudely when I don't like something."

Temperamental?

"Yes." She laughs. "And a silly grandmother."

What is the favourite part about your bridge life?

"It is not just the game. The thing I love about playing bridge at this level is to travel and to meet people I only see every six months or two years and hearing about their lives. I am very curious and I love to meet a lot of people and hear about their lives outside bridge. I think for this reason I would never want to stop playing bridge."

We hope you play where you are now. Au Revoir, Catherine the Great. ♥

Teams / Players / Nicknames

BLACK

Andrew Black	Boggis
David Gold	Dagold
Gunnar Hallberg	Rerack
Simon Hult	Hultahult
Andrew McIntosh	Mcintosh
Tom Paske	Thomas1000

DE MICHELIS

Luca De Michelis	lucadm
Massimiliano Di Franco	M_DiFranco
Giuseppe Failla	gioffi
Michal Klukowski	skrzat96
Andrea Manno	Maqeda
Piotr Zatorski	Dzeronimo

DONNER

Brad Moss	Brad
Joe Grue	Joegrue
Sandra Rimstedt	Sandria
Cecilia Rimstedt	Cillar
Marion Michielsen	Lady007
Per-Ola Cullin	pocken
Gary Donner	Gdonnersc1

FREDIN

Gary Gottlieb	Garybrook
Peter Fredin	P_Fredin
Niklas Warne	Nikwar2
Krister Ahlesved	Kruska
Alon Apteker	Alonap

GILLIS

Sjoert Brink	sjoertBr
Boye Brogeland	boye
Bas Drijver	BasDr
Simon Gillis	rayas78
Espen Lindquist	stevieg
Erik Saelensminde	skaal1

GUPTA

Thomas Bessis	malpaluche
Simon de Wijs	sm1
Naren Gupta	nareng
Zia Mahmood	Zia
Bauke Muller	beukertje
Frederic Volcker	fred92130

LEBOWITZ

Christian Bakke	Chrien
Adam Grossack	nevereast
Zachary Grossack	germs345
Tor Eivind Grude	TEG91
Laurence Lebowitz	O lhl12
Fredrik Nystrom	F_Nystrom
Frederic Wrang	fly21

POTTER

Kevin Bathurst	kmb24
Vince Demuy	okvince
Kevin Dwyer	kdwyer
Shan Huang	precisebri
John Hurd	johnhurd
Cookie Potter	ohceep

How to kibitz the Minor Alt Invitational on BBO

As in the previous editions of the Alt Invitational, we expect thousands of spectators on BBO. Even though the Alt is not broadcasted via the BBO Vugraph, you can still watch any of your favourites. You simply search for your favorite player's nickname and join his or her table.

If you wish to watch the players whenever they are online, you search for your chosen one (fx Cecilia Rimstedt "Cillar", click on the name and choose 'follow' instead of neutral. Any time you see her online, you can click on her and take a seat at her table. See you on BBO!

Conditions of Contest • Minor Alt I

1. The Minor Alt Invitational I will be hosted in Bridge Base Online from 31st of August to 4th of September, 2020.

2. All participants are bound by the regulations contained within this document.

The Alt Organization emphasizes that all its events are by invitation. Teams who are interested in receiving an invitation and believe they meet the standard of Alt's various events can apply.

Invitations for this event will be issued to teams of 4 – 10 players.

Alt reserves the right not to invite any team/player without giving a reason.

At the moment teams and/or players (also who have played in the Alt before) are applying, they agree on the reserved rights as mentioned.

3. Schedule of play:

Monday August 31 - Wednesday September 2 two matches of 24 boards/day will be played at the following starting times:

10:00 EDT / 16:00 CET

14:00 EDT / 20:00 CET

Thursday September 3:

10:00 EDT / 16:00 CET – RR7 (last round)

14:00 EDT / 20:00 CET – Semifinal (28 brds)

Friday September 4:

10:00 EDT / 16:00 CET – Final (36 boards)

4. Qualifying Stage

The qualifying stage will be played in the form of a "Round Robin" and will consist of 168 boards played in 7 matches of 24 boards each. The results of each match shall be converted into Victory Points in accordance with the appropriate WBF IMP/VP scales (see p. 10).

A team will receive 12 VP for any match that is a BYE.

In order to determine the grouping for the knockout stage, a tie between two teams will be broken by the result of the match between those two teams. If there should still be a tie, then the IMP quotient of all matches will be taken into consideration to break the tie.

The top 4 teams from the qualifying stage will advance to the knockout stage.

5. Knockout Stage

The team placed 1st in the Round Robin gets to choose the opponent for the semifinal from the teams placed 3th – 4th in the Round Robin.

Semifinal will be played over 1 segment of 24 boards with possible change of the line-up after 12 boards (see p. 6 below). Final will be played over 36 boards, 3 separate segments of 12 boards each.

There will be the following carry over:
In the semifinal no. 1 – 2 get a carry over of 10.1 – 6.1 IMP respectively.
In the final the higher ranked teams in the Round Robin get a carry over of 0.1 IMP as a tiebreaker.

6. Line-Up

In the Round Robin and semifinal change of the line-up is possible after 12 boards provided that no player can change the compass direction (so East will stay East and so on).

The final will consist of 3 separate segments, so there are no restrictions on the line-up.

The teams are expected to submit their line-up as soon as possible, but no later than 30 minutes before the start of the round, which is also the deadline for changing the submitted line-up.

Teams who infringe this regulation will be subject to VP penalties according to this scale:

1st occasion – warning;
2nd and any subsequent occasion – 0.5 VP penalty.

The line-up must be submitted through the line-up web utility. All captains will be provided with the respective link and the password.

The line-up is completely blind and will not be published before the start of the round.

7. Running the matches

All players involved must be online and logged in to Bridge Base Online 10 minutes before the start of the round at the latest.

Players should have their official name on BBO profile. Private isn't allowed. Teams who infringe this regulation will be subject to VP penalties according to this scale:

1st occasion – warning;
2nd and any subsequent occasion – 0.5 VP penalty for each match for each player without official name on BBO profile.

The Tournament Director will create the tables and send invitations to the players in accordance with the submitted line-ups. Players are requested to accept the invitation immediately upon receipt.

All tables will play duplicated boards (same boards for every team).

The table settings will allow kibitzers but forbid communication between players and kibitzers.

Barometer scoring will be OFF. The scores are only visible (for the players) after the last board has been played. Kibitzers can see the scores during the match.

Undo and claiming: ALT encourages players to accept the opponents' undo in obvious misclick-situations during the bidding as well as play. In case an undo is refused, a player gets one "challenge" where the TD can be summoned to the table. Play is put on hold till the TD arrives. The TD can assess the situation, and if he believes the undo is justified by an obvious misclick that no reasonable player should refuse, the undo has to be accepted by the opponents.

Players alert their own bids. If players explain bids via chat they should chat to Opponents, not Table, so only opponents see the explanation, not partner. But the best way is to explain the bids is via the BBO alert mechanism.

Conditions of Contest • Minor Alt I

Players may not consult their own system card or use any aids to their memory, calculation or technique between the commencement of the auction period and the end of play.

The gravest possible offence is for a partnership to exchange information through prearranged methods of communication other than those sanctioned by the Laws of Bridge or self-kibitzing.

Players are expected to finish 14 boards within 2 hours. The Tournament Director may remove unplayed boards if in his opinion a delay in finishing the match in the allotted time would interfere with the smooth running of the competition.

8. Request of the TD ruling

This tournament will of course be played in the most respectful way possible. Fun and good bridge are paramount. Netbridge relies on reluctance and restraint to call the Director. Should a team find a serious cause for demanding a ruling, then this will only be dealt with if the captain of the team announces this via email within 45 minutes after the last board played (with an explanation and a request for a specific adjustment of the score). Netbridge will inform the other team and give that team the opportunity (through its captain) to respond via an email within 45 minutes after being informed. The protest will be decided by a qualified director; or world class player; no further appeal will be possible after his/her decision.

To submit protests, you should send email to: info@netbridge.online

9. These Regulations may be amended and augmented at the discretion of the organizing committee if circumstances so warrant so as to ensure the smooth, efficient and enjoyable running of the tournament.

Although this tournament isn't aligned with any bridge federation we will cooperate and provide them with all the information necessary to detect and prevent cheating.

10. WBF Victory Points scale for 24 boards:

IMP	VP		IMP	VP	
0	10.00	10.00	38	16.89	3.11
1	10.25	9.75	39	17.01	2.99
2	10.50	9.50	40	17.13	2.87
3	10.75	9.25	41	17.25	2.75
4	10.99	9.01	42	17.36	2.64
5	11.23	8.77	43	17.47	2.53
6	11.46	8.54	44	17.58	2.42
7	11.68	8.32	45	17.69	2.31
8	11.90	8.10	46	17.79	2.21
9	12.12	7.88	47	17.89	2.11
10	12.33	7.67	48	17.99	2.01
11	12.54	7.46	49	18.09	1.91
12	12.75	7.25	50	18.19	1.81
13	12.95	7.05	51	18.29	1.71
14	13.15	6.85	52	18.38	1.62
15	13.34	6.66	53	18.47	1.53
16	13.53	6.47	54	18.56	1.44
17	13.72	6.28	55	18.65	1.35
18	13.90	6.10	56	18.74	1.26
19	14.08	5.92	57	18.82	1.18
20	14.26	5.74	58	18.90	1.10
21	14.43	5.57	59	18.98	1.02
22	14.60	5.40	60	19.06	0.94
23	14.76	5.24	61	19.14	0.86
24	14.92	5.08	62	19.22	0.78
25	15.08	4.92	63	19.30	0.70
26	15.24	4.76	64	19.37	0.63
27	15.39	4.61	65	19.44	0.56
28	15.54	4.46	66	19.51	0.49
29	15.69	4.31	67	19.58	0.42
30	15.83	4.17	68	19.65	0.35
31	15.97	4.03	69	19.72	0.28
32	16.11	3.89	70	19.79	0.21
33	16.25	3.75	71	19.85	0.15
34	16.38	3.62	72	19.91	0.09
35	16.51	3.49	73	19.97	0.03
36	16.64	3.36	74	20.00	0.00
37	16.77	3.23			



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How to kibitz the Alt Mixed teams on BBO

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dealer South vulnerability None

West	East
♠ Q 10	♠ A K 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ 3	♥ Q 10
♦ A Q 9 6 2	♦ -
♣ J 9 6 4 2	♣ A K Q

10 6♠	7 6♣	5 5♠ 5♣ 4♣	3 7♠ 7♣
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West Tobias	North	East Marina72	South
—	—	—	2♥
Pass	4♥	5♠	Pass
6♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

5♠ = asking for heart control

6♠ = got it

dealer South vulnerability East-West

West	East
♠ J 9 6	♠ Q 10 5 3
♥ K Q J 10	♥ A 6
♦ A 2	♦ K 9
♣ A 6 5 2	♣ Q J 10 4 3

10 4NT 3NT	6 5NT 4♠ 4♥	5 4♣ 3♠ 3♥
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West Tobias	North	East Marina72	South
—	—	—	2♦
X	3♦	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

'In stead of 4♠ East should double and bid 3NT over the expected 3♥.'

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- Two-way Checkback Stayman; 2. Responding with both Majors after 1NT; 3. (Non) Leaping Michaels;
- Gazzilli; 5. Gambling 3NT; 6. Lebensohl after a Weak Two; 7. Rubensohl and Transfer-Lebensohl;
- 1♥/1♠ - 2NT (fit); 9. 4♣: Fit and slamgoing

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