

The Connecticut Bridge Association (CBA) invites you to its first event of the year, a three-day sectional tournament on March 28-30. The site is the Social Hall of St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange, CT, a very short drive from either I-95 or the Parkway. For at least three reasons this gathering will be a wonderful opportunity for less experienced players.

The primary attraction is the fact that sectional tournaments are the best places to earn **SILVER MASTERPOINTS**. Two sessions on three consecutive days will award successful players with pure silver, and the number of points distributed will be significantly greater than the amount available at club games. How important are silver points? Players who want to advance in the world of competitive bridge focus on silver points.

- The rank of Sectional Master requires 5.
- Regional Master requires 15.
- NABC Master requires 25.
- Advanced NABC Master requires 50.
- **Life Master requires 75** of them.

The second opportunity derives from the fact that half of the games at this tournament will be **limited to "499ers"**, players with less than 500 masterpoints. Your competitors will have a similar level of experience. Don't scoff at your chances. One session in 2024 was won by a pair who had been playing bridge for only a few months, had never attended a tournament, and had only a handful of masterpoints when they sat down at the first table.

The **player-friendly** nature of CBA sectionals is the third attraction. The Social Hall at the church is unquestionably one of the best places in the Northeast for bridge the way it was designed to be played—four people interacting at a table. There is plenty of free parking, and the playing area is spacious, handicapped-accessible, and extremely well-lit.

The games themselves are serious but friendly. Free coffee and snacks are provided. Sandwiches or salads can be purchased for lunch. The entire experience might be described as "comfortable", but you might well use the words "fun" and "exciting" as well.

Sundays are special in many ways:

- The main attraction is the Open Swiss game.
- Players with less than 500 masterpoints can play in a concurrent one-session pairs game.
- Both of these events pay **extra points**. Part of the entry fees goes to support participation by New England's representatives in the Grand National Teams and the North American Pairs events at national tournaments.
- Before the games bagels and coffee are provided. **Free pizza is brought in for lunch.**

**You might even win a trophy!** The Barbara Shaw trophy will be awarded to the player with less than 750 masterpoints who wins the most points over the three days of the tournament.

More details are included in the attached flyer. As always, the most complete and up-to-date source of information about competitive bridge in the Nutmeg State can be found at [CTBridge.org](http://CTBridge.org).

If you can, please join us in Orange in March. Tournament bridge is a spectacular game. Not only do you experience all the dimensions of the greatest card game ever in the format for which it was designed; you also have a **great opportunity to make lasting connections with others who share your interests**.

One last note: Driving at night should not be a factor for most people. In Orange the sun sets at around 7:14 that weekend.