



The star of this edition of Shark's Pointers is no stranger to EMBA players. Having amassed over 20,000 masterpoints, Sheila Gabay of Newton, MA has been a perennial ACE of Clubs winner, chalking up both sectional and regional victories. Despite playing only one national tournament a year, Sheila's national record has also been outstanding. In 2007, her team finished second in the Mixed Board-A-Match Teams. In the summer of 2008, she was on the District 25 team that placed second in the Open Flight of the Grand National Teams to the District 9 team from Florida, led by international stars Jeff Meckstroth and Eric Rodwell. In 2010, Sheila gained another NABC second place showing in the Senior Swiss Teams. This year, Sheila added another NABC to her schedule as she set her sights on becoming a Grand Life Master. Attending the Spring NABC in Memphis, she could only play in two events over a four-day period, but she made the most of it. Sheila and Lloyd Arvedon (a Grand Life Master) placed second in the Silver Ribbon Pairs. Two days later, Sheila and Patrick McDevitt (a Grand Life Master and World Champion) won the Rockwell Mixed Pairs! Today's hand showcases Sheila's playing skill in the final session of the event that secured her place in that elite circle of duplicate bridge players — Grand Life Master!

After a one heart opening bid by partner, Sheila became declarer in 3NT on the diagrammed deal. The opening lead was a friendly J of spades into Sheila's A Q. Sheila now took a losing diamond finesse and back came a spade to Sheila's blank A. She only had eight tricks: two spades, five diamonds and one heart. She couldn't try to drive out the Club A, because her opponents would snatch it and at least three spades to set

Rockwell Mixed Pairs--Final Session

2012 Spring NABC Memphis, TN

Vul: None Dealer: West

Contract: 3NT Opening lead: J of ♠

NORTH

♠ 98632
♥ 3
♦ K 65
♣ A 1032

MCDEVITT

♠ 4
♥ A Q 962
♦ A 73
♣ K 975

GABAY

♠ A Q
♥ J
♦ Q J 10984
♣ Q J64

SOUTH

♠ K J 1075
♥ K 109854
♦ 2
♣ 8

her. Taking the heart finesse would get her to nine but it would also risk going down an extra trick. Sheila ran her diamonds, watching her opponents' discards carefully. South seemed uncomfortable. He quickly pitched three small hearts and then made the curious discard of a small spade. On the last diamond, he pitched another heart, to reach this position:

	NORTH	
	♠ 862	
	♥ 3	
	♦ --	
	♣ A	
MCDEVITT		GABAY
♠ --		♠ --
♥ A Q 96		♥ J
♦ --		♦ --
♣ K		♣ Q J64
	SOUTH	
	♠ K 10	
	♥ K 10	
	♦ --	
	♣ 8	

As Sheila played the J of hearts, she noticed the slightest twitch as South followed with the 10. After thinking for quite a while, she played the Queen— and made five! The 88 of 90 possible matchpoints were the winning margin of victory for the pair.

Today's Shark's Pointers: 1) Pay attention to discards. If your opponent pitches an obvious winner, he is protecting another card. 2) Be willing to take a reasonable risk when the score really matters. Congrats to Sheila, EMBA's newest Grand Life Master, who did both.