

Bridge News

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John Jones

Supplies, Sectionals, and Volunteers



The reports on our July Long Beach Regional are beginning to come in. Our tournament manager, Peter Benjamin, and treasurer, Stan Holzberg, have been valiantly dealing with issues with the Hilton Hotel. We are trying to schedule a meeting to settle the account next week. I'll report more on this when I have the details.

I have dealt with getting the supplies (tables, stanchions, bidding boxes, paper supplies, etc.) moved to the Long Bridge Club. We owe a huge thank you to several people with regard to the supplies. Kevin and Lynn Lane stored the supplies in their house (the guest bedroom and Kevin's workshop) for over a year without charging us! Chuck Laine and the Long Beach Bridge Board agreed to have the supplies stored in their back room for a small fee. This is where the supplies are now. Peter Benjamin went to Long Beach to recover some supplies that were missed when we transported the bulk of the items the day after the regional.

Do you need silver points? Last year no D23 Unit held an open sectional. The Glendale Unit is holding an open sectional later this month. It will be on Saturday September 9, and Sunday September 10. It will be held at the Pasadena Bridge Club. All events will be pair events (no teams) and space is limited. Thus, reservations are required. Here is the link:

<https://web2.acbl.org/Tournaments/Ads/2023/09/2309379.pdf>

It's not in our district, but it's close, so I will mention this sectional also. Riverside is having an open sectional Friday September 22 through Sunday September 24. See the [link](#):

PRESIDENT continued on page2

Regional Director's Report

by David Lodge



For the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, it appears as if we will have a profitable NABC. Chicago was budgeted for 7,606 tables and a loss of \$64,000 (this loss is after absorbing \$133,000 of Direct Allocated Administrative expenses such as editorial, meeting services, marketing, etc.) Attendance, however, exceeded the budgeted number of tables and produced about \$75,000 of additional revenue. So it looks like we'll have a small profit. Hopefully, the trend will continue with Atlanta and on into the next several tournaments.

Bronia Jenkins, ACBL Executive Director, held a virtual meeting with the BOD last week to bring us up to date on some happenings at HQ. Most of the meeting was updating us on various IT issues. Entry Express is the name of the software that's been created to allow players to buy entries to events at national and regional tournaments. It was started in 2022. The purpose was to enhance players' experiences by allowing them to avoid lines and getting entries sold more timely so that events could commence closer to the announced start time. There were also potential perceived benefits to the league. There has not been widespread acceptance at

DIRECTOR continued on page 2

Inside This Issue	
D23 in the GNT	page 2
NAP Update	page 4
Better Bridge Accreditation	page 6
Puzzle Page	page 7
Rank Changes	page 5
Around the Units	page 9
Problem Solvers' Panel	page 13

PRESIDENT continued from page 1

<https://web2.acbl.org/Tournaments/Ads/2023/09/2309352.pdf> Get your silver points!!!

I will be dealing with committees and volunteer positions soon. So, if you wish to volunteer for something please let me know. My email is johndjones44@yahoo.com

DIRECTOR continued from page 1

regionals and the utilization at NABC's has been better but not significantly. We've already invested several hundred thousand dollars in the development and there is still a bit to go to correct some of the initial design flaws. IF we go forward and continue to use the program, there will be ongoing maintenance costs. A show of hands indicated that the BOD favors investing a small amount of additional development funds and then rolling out the improved product at upcoming regionals and see if we can get the utilization rate up to an acceptable level. Another major IT issue which you may have heard about over the years is what is lovingly referred to as the "AS400" project. The AS400 is an IBM computer on which runs most of the ACBL's applications. For at least ten years there has been an effort to get us off that machine. There is nothing wrong with the hardware. There are thousands of these computers still running throughout the world. The problem is that the language is archaic and that the ACBL has only one employee who really knows the ins and outs of the machine, the coding and all the little fixes that have been improvised over the years. So, today, when we're talking about the AS400 project, we're talking about analyzing each major activity such as dues processing and membership so that we can ultimately move to a different platform. It's a very arduous process and is going slower than earlier predicted. Bronia has promised a complete and updated IT budget for presentation in Atlanta to include dollars and timelines for milestone completions. For years, there has been a thought that it might be desirable to modify masterpoint awards at tournaments based on among other factors, Strength of Field (SOF). There exists a Masterpoint Committee which is separate from the BOD. They determined a method to invoke SOF a few years ago, but nothing has happened because any programming had to take a back seat to more pressing issues. The roadblock has now been overcome and SOF appears to be a reality. It's being tested in the field now. It will apply to pairs, Swiss Teams, Board-a Match Teams, but exclude KO's, STACs and events that pay an arbitrary pre-determined award such as GNT.

Finally, meet AL. He's someone who has volunteered at the local hospital for over 10 years. I met him a few weeks ago at a cardio program I'm participating in. His volunteering again made me conscious of how important our volunteers are to our organization and that we really couldn't exist without them. Every unit should have a Volunteer Appreciation Chair, the importance of which should be second to none of the other unit positions. Thanks to all of you in D23 that volunteer at the club, unit or district level to keep our great game going.

Ventura is coming up on the 23rd of October. I hope to see you there.

D23 Flight C Team in the GNT

By: Yongkang Huang (Jeffrey)



D23 Flight C Team (from left: Yongkang Huang, Melanie Smothers, Nina Huang, Ming Hu)

The Flight C team for District 23 attended the Summer 2023 Chicago NABC with three of the four players having their first experience at the NABC. Despite our team's best efforts, we, unfortunately, fell short due to a lack of experience and bad luck, and regrettably finished in 17th place, just outside the Round of 16.

Before the national final, our team was no doubt a winning team. After winning the GNT Qualifier (with Hanna Zhuang and Sherry Warmuth) without even losing a single match, and having Melanie join us from the 2nd Place team, we continued winning in the club games and the Long Beach Regional (See Ming's Winners Hat!). Melanie and I took the 5th in Tuesday's Gold Rush pairs. I joined Connie on Saturday and took a 3rd in Bracketed Teams 3, and my teammates won in Bracketed Teams 5 (with Sherry). Ming and Nina got

another win (so Ming actually has 2 hats!) in 0-2500 Bracketed Teams 4 on Sunday with Sherry and Hanna.

However, the players in the national GNT were much stronger than we expected. My former Berkeley teammate was on the New York team, and another New York team had players who won Flight B in their qualifier, yet decided to stay in Flight C. Lots of other teams' players also had extensive experiences in both GNT and NABC.

In the 1st Round we encountered an Illinois team, who was the quarter-finalist in last year's GNT. Melanie and I successfully secured the upper hand for this round. In Nina's direction, both sides made some mistakes. Eventually, we won by 4 IMPs, and had a good start. Melanie and I also led the game in Round 2. However, by winning 18 imps in the 2nd round, I had the feeling that we would run into some sharks in the 3rd round.

And the sharks did come. In the 3rd round, we encountered the New York "Flight B" team, who was eventually the winner of the qualifier and the 2nd overall. Melanie and I could not get any momentum in the game and it came to Board 4:

Board 4, Vul: Both

North Jeffrey	East	South Melanie	West
	Pass	1♦	X
3♦	Pass	Pass	4♥!
?			

I have: ♠ Kxx ♥ J ♦ QT9xxx ♣ xxx

My understandings were: (1) Having only ♠K in my hand, the West's all other finesse plays would be good, thus, West can make 4♥; (2) If I bid to the 5 level there may still be a chance that the East will bid 5♥; (3) Since E-W do not have enough points, Ming and Nina will not bid 4♥.

Therefore, I made my decision: 5♦! East put down the red X without any hesitation. The entire hand was:

There is no way to avoid the two ♣ losers, the ♦A, the ♥A, and the ♠A. 5♦X-3 = -800. I was correct in assuming that West can make 4♥ (he will lose only ♠K, ♥A, and ♣A), and Ming-Nina did not bid 4♥. However, I failed to count the losers in my hand. As a result, while Ming and Nina did not find 4♥, my 5♦X-3 made it even worse. We lost the entire match by -17 imps.

♠ AQ			♠ xxxx
♥ KQT9xxx		N	♥ xx
♦ x		W	♦ Axx
♣ KQx		S	♣ Jxxx
			♠ Jxxx
			♥ Axx
			♦ KJx
			♣ Axx

While I reviewed this hand and realized that I should not have bid 5♦, one thing I overlooked during that time was the opponent's game-bidding skill. Despite having only 16 HCP, he understood that he had only four losers. So, as long as his partner could offer some help, the 4♥ would be good. This failure in calculating the hand led me to my second mistake in Round 4, which we played against D25:

Board 3, Vul: NS

North Jeffrey	East	South Melanie	West
		1♣	Pass
1♥	1♠	X	2♠
?			

I have: ♠ — ♥ Kxxxxx ♦ Axx ♣ Jxxx

Throughout this GNT game, I was highly bothered by the "7 boards a round" because it means a single mistake such as 4♥-1 (-100) vs. 3♥= (-140) could kill our game. During this calculation, my mind was completely stuck at "Melanie has spade points/I will lose three clubs/I still have to lose a heart or a diamond", and I eventually stopped at 3♥.

Melanie actually has:

♠ QT9x ♥ QT9 ♦ Kx ♣ Axxx

During the play, I desperately tried to find any bad distributions. I played hearts first and found single ♥J, which was not helpful. Then I played clubs and found that the club distribution was 3-2, therefore bid 3 made 4.

The opponents at the other table successfully found 4♥ and made it, and we lost Round 4 by -12 imps.

Despite already placing in the lower half of the teams, the second half of the qualifier was just as tough.

In Rounds 5 and 6, we ran into Round Robins. We played a team who was actually a very strong team, but got 30 VPs in the first half “by accident”. The opponents at our table did correctly find every game and slam, and crushed us by 21imps (they eventually placed 7th). However, when it was our turn to bid slams in Round 7, we often could not find them for different reasons.

Placing 17th before the last round, I calculated that we needed to win at least 18imps to qualify. Unfortunately, while the opponent gave us the chance to come back to the game, Ming and Nina failed to double their crazy 4♠ contract. As a result, we won the last round by a mere +9imps, which left us 0.61 VPs short of qualification.

The NABC games were on quite a different level compared to the regional and club games. Nevertheless, we gradually found our way to play the game and we had our winning moments. In Friday’s Young 0-2500 pairs game qualifier, Nina and Ming got 53.39% in the afternoon session, earning 1.19 red MPs. On Sunday’s Open Pairs, Melanie and I finished the afternoon session with 52.13% and earned 0.92 gold MPs.

As I reflect on these GNT games, one thing for improvement is that we should practice and play matches against much stronger teams before heading to the national final. At the national final, even the NLM players performed at a level comparable to top-flight players. Moreover, since many NLM teams recruited international students and young players for the tournament, it becomes challenging to assess these players’ talent and potential solely based on masterpoints. Therefore, I strongly suggest that even the Flight B and Flight C players undergo some top-flight training or gain similar experience before participating in the national final.

I want to express my gratitude to all my teammates for their tremendous effort. As the team’s captain, Nina was instrumental in organizing this team and handling the team registration. Her assistance in connecting us with professional players and regional managers was invaluable. Melanie, who initially used a different system, quickly adapted my system and played exceptionally well. Despite the busy weekday work, Ming managed to arrive in Chicago only 7 hours before the game began and had to rush back to LA on Saturday afternoon to return to his work. I would also like to acknowledge and give appreciation to Hanna and

Sherry’s contributions; the team’s qualification would not have been possible without them.

Finally, a big thank you to the D23 GNT organizer this year and the Pasadena Bridge Club. I believe we will play better next time. I look forward to seeing everyone at next year’s GNT qualifier.



North American Pairs 2023/24 by “Mojo” (Morris Jones)

Now that the club qualifying stage is complete, it's time to make your plans for the district final!

The final will be a one-day, two-session tournament, held on Sunday, October 1, at the Pasadena Bridge Club, 649 N Fair Oaks Ave. #201, Pasadena CA 91103.

Doors will open at 9:30, and the games will begin at 10:00 AM. The start of the second session will be announced, but most likely around 2:30 PM, with a finish by 6:30 PM.

Reservations are required for the game. Before making a reservation, be sure to have you and your partner’s ACBL player numbers and email addresses on hand.

You can find all of the information about the North American Pairs at this link: <https://nap.bridgemojo.com>. You’ll find links to the list of qualifiers from District 23, the Conditions of Contest, and how to make reservations.

Card fees for the game will be \$18 per player per session, or \$72 for the full day for the partnership. Cash and credit cards will be accepted.

In the district final, you may partner with any other player who meets the following requirements: both players must be members of District 23 (Los Angeles County), and both must have qualified at the club level and eligible for the flight they are entering. Note that partnerships qualify to the national North American Pairs *as a partnership*. If you advance, you must play in the national event with your partner from the District Final.

Winning pairs will receive some travel reimbursement to compete in Louisville at the Spring NABC. If a qualified pair declines to participate at the national level, the next eligible finisher will be invited to take their place.

The Pasadena Bridge Club has lots of free parking, and many great options for lunch between sessions. Visit <https://pasadenabridgeclub.com> and click on "Location" for details about finding the club.

District 23 Rank Changes July 2023

Junior Master

Robert C Boada
Suzanne Gati
Michael L. Goldberg
Sue A. Jones
Lawrence D. Morse
Colleen Quinn
Libby Tigner
James Y. Zhang

Club Master

Derald E. Brackmann
Roaling Chang
Joanne Freed
Herb A. Glicksman
Lynda M. Montgomery
Daniel Robinson
Edda Roessler

Sectional Master

Glenn T. Barry
Larry Cheung
Juliet Green
Michael Lam
Arthur Weinstein

Regional Master

Robert M. Hall
Heather S. Ho
John W. Krafft
Jan Van Lierop
Kiohisa Wakabayashi
Judy L. Webb

NABC Master

Teresa Dubernet
Monica Fastovsky
Carolyn Hannas
Freda Main
Jeanne D. Sinsheimer

Advanced NABC Master

Mikie Alpert
Debbie Hamilton
Barbara A. Kaye
Paul W. Poareo

Life Master

Susan K. Cohen
Mary K. Gillet
Prasad Upasani
Jennifer Wellman
Hanna Z. Zhuang

Bronze Life Master

Susan K. Cohen
Mary K. Gillet
Ramani Ravikandan

Silver Life Master

Roger Boyar

Ruby Life Master

Albert G. Lum

Gold Life Master

Jo Ann M. Kelley
Kevin Lane

Emerald Life Master

John E. Ramos

Grand Life Master

Aaron J. Jones

AUDREY GRANT'S LATEST METHODS FOR TEACHING
IN PERSON OR ONLINE!

Better Bridge Teacher Accreditation



December 21-22, 2023



Morris "Mojo" Jones, Managing Director
<https://pasadenabridgeclub.com>
(626) 247-4457



ABA and ACBL
Teacher
Certification
Program

The Puzzle Page

Bridge Jeopardy
by John Jones

Category: Starting with I (each term begins with the letter I)

And the answer is ...

\$100 - A bid that is not higher than the immediately preceding bid, and is therefore illegal (director please!).

\$200 - The typical scoring system for team games. Scores of both pairs are added and a lookup chart is then consulted.

\$300 - A conventional agreement that treats the single raise of a minor suit as strong, and a double raise as preemptive.

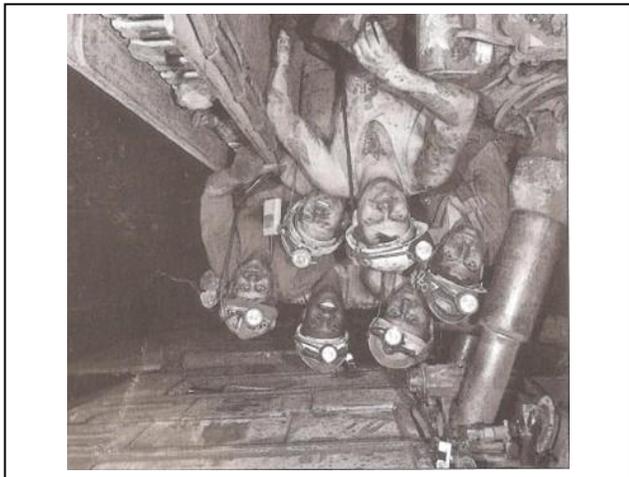
\$400 - A tournament in which each player is paired with a different partner on each round (Tom Lill runs these once a month).

\$500 - A West LA expert named Paul who contributed to modern 2/1 GF theory. He moved to Las Vegas before his death.

(Solutions to these puzzles are on page 8. No peeking!)

September Rebus

Well, can you figure out what this says?



Play or Defend?
by John Jones

North

♠ 10
♥ 9
♦ A K 10 9 8 3
♣ K 8 6 4 2

West

♠ Q 9 7 4 3 2
♥ K 6 3
♦ Q 4
♣ 7 5

East

♠ 8 5
♥ A Q 8 2
♦ J 6 5 2
♣ Q 10 3

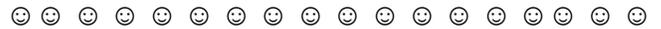
South

♠ A K J 6
♥ J 10 7 5 4
♦ 7
♣ A J 9

Contract = 6♣

Opening Lead = ♥3

All players can see all the cards. Do you play or defend?



Submitted by John Jones



My name is Ronald and I'm here because my wife says it's time I learned to play two over one, and I don't want to!



Solution to “Play or Defend?”

Answer: Play. This is a real hand. It was played at South Bay Bridge Club in a Monday night “Eight is Enough” game directed by Janice Scholler. The hand was actually played by Carolyn Hannas. I was the North player (dummy). Carolyn and I had a bit of a misunderstanding and my exuberance got us a tad too high. The auction wasn’t terribly helpful to the opponents and the opening leader Joan Crishal tried the ♦Q opening lead. Carolyn made 6. The East player, my high school friend Tom Cox (Let’s go Seahawks!), opined that a heart lead would beat the contract. I thought he was right until I thought about the hand more.

6♣ makes on any lead. If the defense wins the opening lead and returns a heart (as good as anything), declarer survives on the following line:

T1 – lose heart

T2 – ruff small in dummy

T3 – lead a club and take the finesse

T4 – Cash the ace of trumps

T5 – lead a diamond to dummy

T6 – cash the second round of diamonds

T7 – lead the ♦10 from dummy for a ruffing finesse, ruffing if covered

T8 – ruff the last diamond if the previous round wasn’t covered

T9 – ruff another heart in dummy

T10 – Play dummy’s last trump (this pulls East’s last trump also).

T11 – Cash a winning diamond

T12 & T13 – Play winning diamonds or spades.

How do you get to such “cold” contracts? Well, my friends, first you have to learn to bid as poorly as I do. Ask some of my regular partners: Roberto Scaramuzzi, Mark Bartusek, Lynne Feldman, Valerie Gamio or Rick Roeder; they’ve all had to rescue incredible contracts because of my lousy bidding!

“Rebus”

“Inverted Minors”

Have a good bridge rebus? Send it to johndjones44@yahoo.com

Bridge Jeopardy Questions

\$100 – What is an insufficient bid?

\$200 – What are IMPs?

\$300 – What are inverted minor raises?

\$400 – What is an Individual?

\$500 – Who is Ivaska?

Southern California Bridge News

Published monthly by ALACBU, Inc.

1800 Avenue of the Stars, 12th Floor,

Los Angeles, CA 90067

Phone: 310-440-4100

email newsletter@acblunit551.org

Editor/Designer. Tom Lill

Managing Editor. Bob Shore

Contributing Editor. John Jones

Copy deadlines: the 23rd of the preceding month. Opinions expressed in the Southern California Bridge News are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of ALACBU, Inc., The Bridge News or the Editor. The Bridge News reserves the right to reject material it considers to be in poor taste or deems otherwise unsuitable for publication.

Around the Units in District 23



Pomona – Covina by Tom Lill www.acblunit551.org

Individual: September 9, 10 a.m., Ontario
October 7, 10 a.m., TBD

Unit Game: September 16, 11:00 a.m., Ontario

Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

Club Championships: September 12, 15

Yes! The Friendship center is *finally* available! We will be moving our monthly Unit game there on a monthly basis. Hopefully!

The August Individual was captured by – ahem – Your Correspondent, with 59.03%. Art Weinstein tied for second with Tom Cusack, Susie Emminger came next, then Linda Tessier, and Rose Roberts tied for sixth with Steve Andersen.

And yes, the September Individual is delayed by one week. It's a holiday weekend ... and the Director isn't available on the normal day. Sigh!

In the August Unit Game, Tim and Eileen Finlay again took top honors, this time with a 62.86% game. They again edged out Fredy and Lulu Minter. In third place we find Caryn Mason – Richard Parker, followed by Mary Ann Wotring – Rosalie Roberts, then Peter Kavounas – Daniel Robinson. Kitty Moon – Kathleen Malovos took top honors in Flight C

Amazingly enough, this month we have not one, not two, not three, but *four* promotions to announce. Can't remember the last time we had *that* many. Anyway, here they are: James Zhang has begun the upward climb, and is now a Junior Master. Dan Robinson is now a Club Master, Art Weinstein is a Sectional Master, and Roger Boyar has reach Silver Life Master rank. Congratulations, all!

The top game this month was a whopper turned in by Vic Sartor – Mary Ann Wotring, 74.40%. Next in line we find that same duo at 70.32%, followed by Art Weinstein – Nancy Stebbins at 68.75%. Fourth best were Vic Sartor – Bill Papa, 67.41%, then Hanan

Mogharbel – Yours Truly at 67.06%. This effort was turned in during STaC week, which earned us second overall and an impressive 7.88 silver points. The final pair topping 65% was Bill Papa – Lulu Minter at 66.67%. One other pair topped the leader board: Fredy and Lulu Minter scored 57.65%. In a cruel twist of fate, in that same game they beat out Clint Lew – Linda Tessier ... by 0.01 matchpoint. That's the absolute minimum difference, by the way. Anything less is considered a tie.

Unfortunately, I ran off for my vacation without taking my file of interesting hands with me. So I gotta improvise a bit. Here's one recent hand that turned out to be an exercise in frustration for me. I was South, with West dealing. The auction was pass-pass-pass to me. I held these cards:

♠ A42 ♥ A8 ♦ AJ10964 ♣ 103.

A perfectly respectable 1♦ opening, right? Even a die-hard Roth-Stoner would open it. BUT – I'm in fourth seat so the opponents should have some cards, since partner did not open. I will definitely not welcome competition in the majors, especially hearts. There's a special treatment available in fourth seat, and I used it. I opened 2♦. This is *supposed* to show a *good* 6-card suit, and a non-minimum opening hand. Well, my hand is only 6 losers, so 2♦ it is.

The auction went pass-pass pass. OK.

But against all expectations, partner put down this dummy:

♠ 763 ♥ K543 ♦ Q ♣ AKJ97.

I dunno about you, but I would open that 14 point, 7 loser hand in any seat. 10 tricks rolled home in diamonds ... but 9 tricks are there in 3NT, so we got the zero we deserved. I asked partner why the hand wasn't opened? "Didn't like it." *De gustibus non disputatum est*, I guess.

I'll have something better for you next time. It is to be hoped!

Quote for the month: "I'm going to stop asking "How dumb can you get?" People seem to be taking it as a challenge." (seen on a T-shirt)



Santa Clarita- Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

Our face-to-face game at the Newhall Community Center is back to being held on Friday at 10:00 am. The Community Center is next to the Newhall Metro Station and there is plenty of free parking. Players still need to register with Ruth Baker (rbaker1243@sbcglobal.net) if they are not on the preliminary list that is sent out on Sunday before the game. There is no fee for this game.

Winners of the Saturday F2F game:

July 29

N/S Carol Trenda – Gary Trenda 56.85%
E/W Harry Randhawa – Alan Nueman 57.74%

Aug. 8

N/S Jola Poniatowska – Christie Khalieque 58.32%
E/W Harry Randhawa – Alan Nueman 57.60%

Winners of the Friday F2F game:

Aug. 18

N/S Aggi Oschin – Anita Walker 57.17%
E/W Carole Provost – George MacDonald 60.00%

*Aug 25

N/S David Khalieque – Jerrod Mason 61.67%
E/W Carol Ashbacher – Kristi Kubo 65.00%

* STaC game

Upcoming Special Events:

The Unit will have a special “4 is Enough” game specifically for our newer players to play with a more experienced player on Friday, September 15th.

It works like this. We take the names of everyone who is registered to play in the game and rank them according to their masterpoint holding. The top 1/3 is designated a “3”. The middle group is designated a “2” and the lower 1/3 is designated a “1.” A pair cannot have more than a “4” ranking for the game.

All the names will be put into three bags. Each “1” ranked player will draw a name from the “3” bag to find out who their partner will be. The “2” will pick another “2” to play with.

Keep track of the hands you played and if there is a hand you want to further discuss, let Rand know.

On Friday, September 22, he will lead a discussion for about 3 or 4 hands 30 minutes prior to the start of the game.

Virtual Game Schedule

Monday:	12:15 PM	Open game
Tuesday:	6:15 PM	Open game
Thursday:	10:15 AM	Open game
Sunday:	12:30 PM	Open game

Contact our club manager at virtualclub@bridgemojo.com for reservations. Our regular games cost \$4 (unless it is a special game series).

Big Virtual Club Games (65+%):

Sun. July 30

Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	68.75%
Helen Wang – Lulu Minter	66.67%

Mon. July 31

Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	68.85%
----------------------------	--------

Thurs. Aug. 3

Carol Ashbacher – Robot	70.06%
-------------------------	--------

Sun. Aug. 6

Kathy Flynn – Bob McBroom	66.32%
Avice Osmundson – Kiran Kumar	65.62%

Tues. Aug. 8

Amr Elghamry – Dominique Moore	69.44%
--------------------------------	--------

Mon. Aug. 14

Carolyn Cohen – Diana Borgatti	67.50%
--------------------------------	--------

Tues. Aug. 22

Amr Elghamry – Dominique Moore	67.71%
--------------------------------	--------

Director Course:

The director course is offered online (through the ACBL website) at various times of the year for a fee of \$50. The board decided on May 2nd that anyone who successfully completes the online course will be reimbursed their \$50 fee by the Unit. The course is also offered at most National tournaments for a fee as well. For more information, send an email to Paula (paula@pacbell.net).

Downey – Whittier

by Liz Burrell

Liz Burrell, 562-972-2913
lizburrell7@gmail.com
Downey-Whittier BC

Seems like August has gone by in a blur and here we are, knocking on September's door. Unfortunately, we couldn't manage five tables during the month, but we'll keep trying.

Some of our members had good games during the month despite the small table count. John Dobson and Barbara Horn had a 69.05% game on August 2, earning 1.31 black and 1.32 red points. They topped that impressive score with a 69.79% game on August 9, earning 2.94 black points. Not to be outdone, Terry Binns and John Jones scored 69.79% on August 9, earning 1.05 black points. We played a STaC game last Wednesday which involved the usual impossible hands. It didn't seem to bother John Petrie and Sankar Reddy however, since they took top honors with a 61.31% game and 1.69 silver points. Kent and Liz Burrell were second with a 58.33% game and 1.18 silver points.

Not sure I understand this, but after checking the overalls, it turns out that John and Sankar were first in the Side Pairs with 3.94 silver points; Ken and Liz were third with 2.36 silver points. Is that in addition to points earned at the club level, or is that the total? Whatever the ruling, we extend our congratulations to our club winners for August and to the STaC game winners. Too bad we couldn't qualify for the Open Pairs awards for the STaC game, since we only had four tables. Next time for sure!

On an encouraging note, we have had a "new" pair join us as often as they can for the last several weeks. We are happy to welcome Kitty Moon and Robert Davis who are very nice people and excellent players. We hope they will continue to play at Downey as we strive to rebuild after the devastation of that darned pandemic.

As always, you have an open invitation to join us any Wednesday for our 10 a.m. game in La Habra. Please call, text, or email if you have questions or comments.

Pasadena – San Gabriel

by Morris "Mojo" Jones

bridgemojo.com



August is usually a quiet month at the bridge clubs, but it's been busy for me! We had three special games at the Pasadena Bridge Club on Wednesday mornings: two NAP Qualifiers, and one STaC game. Classes are going great, and a new session of Bridge Basics 1 - Introduction started on August 31.

When tropical storm Hilary passed through, we decided to postpone the August 20 Unit Game to August 27. The delay allowed us to turn the game into a Western Conference STaC game. That was truly a silver lining!

While I was in Florida for my dad's 90th birthday, Paula Olivares was kind enough to cover the Unit Game on August 6. We had eight tables, with winners:

N/S Jeanette Deverian, Joan Mesias
E/W Karen Arase, Gitta Earll

For the delayed August 27 STaC game at the Arcadia Bridge Center we had 11 tables. Winners were:

N/S Joan Mesias, Jeanette Deverian (again!)
E/W Amr Elghamry, Dominique Moore (72.81% game!)

Normally you would think a 72% game would be enough to win the event conference wide, but no! It was only good enough for 2nd place, losing to a well-known pair from the Beverly Hills Bridge Club. Still Amr and Dominique added 10.38 silver points to their considerable stash.

Unit Games for September will be held at the Pasadena Bridge Club on September 3, and the Arcadia Bridge Center on September 17. For reservations contact me or Miriam Harrington at (626) 232-0558, miratpf@aol.com.

The October Unit Games may need a shift in schedule, since the first Sunday, October 1, the Pasadena Bridge Club will be taken over by the District 23 North American Pairs Final tournament. Check the unit website <http://www.acblunit559.com/> or the

September 2023

page 12

Pasadena Bridge Club site
<https://pasadenabridgeclub.com/> for updates.

Congratulations to our members reaching new ranks!

New Junior Master Suzanne Gati

New Club Master Derald Brackman

And special congratulations to newly minted Life Masters Prasad Upasani and Hanna Zhuang.



Long Beach by Lillian Slater

www.acblunit557.org

www.LongBeachBridge.com

Sorry, nothing from Long Beach this month.

Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

John Jones is moderator. Wafik Abdou, Mark Bartusek, David Chechelashvili, Kitty Cooper, Lynne Feldman, Alex Kolesnik, Rick Roeder, Mike Shuster, and Jon Wittes are panelists.

As always, panelists are playing 5-card majors, 15 - 17 NT, and 2/1 GF. Beyond that, except where indicated, panelists may use any reasonable methods.

Alex Kolesnik is new to the panel, but will be familiar to most Southern California players. He is an expert who is a math professor in Ventura. He comes from a bridge playing family. His wife also plays and both his son and daughter are world champions.

<h1 style="font-size: 2em;">1</h1> <p>Matchpoints Neither Vul</p>		<u>East</u> 2♦* pass * weak	<u>South</u> pass ???	<u>West</u> pass	<u>North</u> 3♠
You, South, hold: ♠ AK8 ♥ 93 ♦ KJ82 ♣ 10932 What call do you make?					

Partner has balanced with 2♣ and we have good spade support. If partner has two or three diamonds, this hand may play better in NT. Both level and strain are in question. Let's see how the panel handles this tricky problem.

I'll start with the conservative bidders, who makes sure partner doesn't get punished for balancing.

Roeder: Pass. I want partner to balance aggressively. The only alternative action would be 2NT. Bidding 3♠ would be excellent if you want to show beginners how to turn a plus score into a minus score.

Abdou: Pass. Partner is playing me for some values and my well-placed diamond values are dubious. Partner didn't double (no extras or diamond shortness).

Kolesnik: 3♠. I would raise to 3♠. I don't like my lower diamond honors with no raise, but I have too much to pass.

Some panelists like starting with a limit raise.

Wittes: 3♦. 3NT could be the right spot, but with AKx of trumps, I prefer showing a limit raise or better in spades.

Shuster: 3♦. I have a good spade raise, so that is what I'll show. Sure, I have diamonds stopped... but if LHO has the sort of hand to make a sneak attack in NT, that would be bad for our side. I can still try to back into NT if partner tries 3♥.

Cooper: 3♦. I don't think my diamonds are working but still it's too good a hand for spades not to show values.

Next is a panelist who tries the bid I like.

Chechelashvili: 2NT. I trust partner with extras and singleton diamond is likely to bid a second suit, or 3♣ and my next bid will be 4♣. But with a 5=3=2=3 hand, we will have more chances to get to the right contract (3NT versus 4♣). And yes, there is a risk of missing 3NT, but we are white and it's matchpoints.

Finally, we have those that love the diamond cards and spade fit and hope that nine tricks are available.

Feldman: 3NT. Partner's spades aren't very robust so partner should have cards in hearts and clubs.

Bartusek: 3NT. Basically I have an opening bid with the diamond honors in RHO's hand. I strongly considered 3♦ first, intending to bid 3NT over 3♥. Perhaps nine tricks in No Trump will be easier to take than ten tricks in spades. Obviously, I'm also worried about a diamond ruff at trick two playing in spades.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em; margin: 0;">2</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">Matchpoints N-S Vul</p>	West	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	1♥	???
<p>You, South, hold: ♠ KQ98 ♥ AKQ8 ♦ AQ86 ♣ 7</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

The white versus red opponents have opened and responded, and we have a 20 HCP collection. The normal meaning of double is showing an opening bid (or close) and 4-card support for both the unbid suits. If we select double partner might bid spades, but it is far more likely that 2♣ is coming. If we double, we must be ready for that. What are the other possibilities? A heavy 1NT, 2NT, 1♠ and pass are all possibilities.

I'll start with a panelist who hopes he knows the opponents well enough to know their style. This is an important question.

Bartusek: Double/1NT. My call depends upon RHO's bidding tendencies. My having such good hearts opens up the possibility that RHO is messing around at this vulnerability. Thus, I must double to allow for the possibility of game. If I knew that my opponents were solid citizens and that partner was broke, I'd just bid 1NT trying to ensure a plus score (and make a takeout double of opener's 2♣ if it comes back around to me). Note that I'd rather play the hand making a small plus score rather than getting only +50 or +100 defending at MPs.

Roeder: 1NT. 1NT is as heavy as a sumo wrestler, but if the opponents are to be believed, you have no hope of game unless partner can show five spades.

The next panelist gets spades into the picture immediately.

Chechelashvili: 1♠. Later I will act based on the further auction. In my opinion this is better than doubling and then rebidding NT.

Should we postpone the decision?

Abdour: Pass. I will double 1NT in pass out seat, postponing the guess until I get more info on the next round.

Several panelists double now, intending on rebidding 2NT over the likely 2♣ advance.

Shuster: Double. I'm normally hesitant to double with shortness in one of the promised suits, but here it is so incredibly unlikely the auction will get out of hand, I'll do it. If partner can't bid spades, I'll bid 2NT next.

Feldman: Double. I will correct clubs to NT.

Wittes: Double. Over spades, I'll cue bid. Over clubs, I'll bid no trump.

Kolesnik: Double. I would double and over 2♣ bid 2NT. The stiff club is bad, but I have too much to bid 1NT.

Cooper: Double. I'll convert clubs to NT.

No panelist (maybe Wafik) explored the possibility of passing throughout and defending. The vulnerability is not great for defending with the opponents non-vulnerable, but it isn't guaranteed that partner will have any values at all. I would pass now with defending as a possibility.

3

IMPs
N-S Vul

South	West	North	East
1♥	pass	2♦	pass
???			

You, South, hold: ♠ 3 ♥ AKQ32 ♦ 974 ♣ K983

What call do you make?

2♦ is game forcing. What rebid is best? Did 2♦ show a 5-card suit? Would a 2♥ rebid show a 6-card suit? Is a splinter in the picture? Does trying 3♣ make sense? How important is it to support diamonds on this round? The experts will try to unlock these mysteries!

First, the 2♥ bidders.

Feldman: 2♥. I like to play this is just five hearts and 2NT is 6+ hearts. This treatment is growing in popularity. I'm sure we will hear more about this exchange treatment in the near future. If I'm not playing that I still might bid 2♥ to keep the auction low.

Bartusek: 2♥. I must keep the auction low to allow partner to describe their hand. It's often impossible to stop in 3NT when there is a possibility of slam after quickly getting to three of a minor. I believe you should have some extras and / or extra trump length to raise partner's minor. It also matters what the partnership system says to bid holding AKQx xxx in the minors. Not to mention holdings like ♦QJxx if the hand is ♠AQxx ♥Jxx ♦QJxx ♣Ax if the partnership plays Flannery (so that a 1♠ response would imply five spades) and 2/1 in clubs would show three. Maybe this is why many expert partnerships are changing to making a 2/1 in clubs as semi-artificial.

Chechelashvili: 2♥. If this shows six hearts, I am willing to bend my shape, as 3♦ just takes too much space.

Shuster: 2♥. Not 3♦ on xxx and not 3♣ as it will make it hard to show diamond support later. I'm not ashamed to rebid ♥AKQxx.

Roeder: 2♥. This is a matter of system. Does the partnership allow you to pattern out on such minimums? Regardless, your hearts are good enough to conserve space.

Next the 3♣ bidder. When I got this problem, the clubs were weaker. I beefed up the club spots to see if that would attract club bidders.

Cooper: 3♣. Raising diamonds shows extra high cards or shape, and I have neither. In my regular partnership I can rebid 2♥ showing only five and leaving partner lots of room. That might be a better bid anyway.

Finally, the 3♦ bidders.

Abdou: 3♦. Most experts play that 3♦ shows five diamonds. My diamonds are not strong enough for a splinter. 2♥ is a possibility, it works well if partner bids 2NT, but what if he bids 3NT? Wouldn't 4♦ be a reasonable follow-up over 3NT?

Wittes: 3♦. I do have a minimum, but with three trumps and a singleton for partner, I prefer raising partner's suit. If partner rebids 3♠, I'll bid 3NT.

Kolesnik: 3♦. I would raise to 3♦. I feel if I don't raise now, partner will not play me for three diamonds. I don't feel it necessary to get to 3NT.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">4</h1> <p>IMPs Both Vul</p>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>
	1♠	double	pass	4♥
	Pass	???		

You, South, hold: ♠ A2 ♥ K3 ♦ AK1095 ♣ AK85

What call do you make?

We have a nice hand with 21 HCP in aces and kings. Partner has shown some values with 4♥. What now?

Was double on the last round the best call?

Cooper: Pass. This was the problem with saying double. Hopefully my high cards will compensate for my lack of hearts. If I were to bid, 5NT choice of slam could be the winner.

Abdou: Pass/4NT. I would have bid 3NT on the previous round. I hate the double, especially with the ♠A which I can holdup once, and having methods to explore slam over 3NT. Now, I can pass and take a likely plus or sail into 4NT (we play 4♠ as Kickback). It is illogical for 4NT to be used a spade cuebid in the context of the takeout double since it would imply an uncontrolled side suit). Is 4NT natural or minors? Likely undiscussed.

Wafik wasn't the only panelist who addressed the issue of whether Kickback was being used and what 4NT means if Kickback is in play.

Feldman: 4♠ or 4NT depending on which is the 4♠ cue bid.

Wittes: 4♠ or 4NT, whichever is a spade cue bid. If partner has five or six good hearts, there's no problem. If partner has values and five bad hearts, we probably belong in diamonds or no trump, or maybe even clubs.

Chechelashvili: 4♠. We need to be able to reach 6♥ when partner has a stiff spade, but lacks a keycard.

Other panelists get diamonds into play.

Shuster: 5♦. This hand has too much slam potential to pass 4♥, so I'll mention my longest suit.

Kolesnik: 5♦. Tough hand to proceed with. I think 5♦ is right for now. If partner bids 5♥, I'll try 5NT.

Bartusek: 5NT. Pick a slam (clearly not Grand Slam Force). The only bid that describes the flexible nature of my hand. Minor suit bids are natural since my initial 4♣ and 4♦ bids would have been Roman jumps (*Leaping Michaels*), and partner will assume hearts are trumps if I cuebid spades. Obviously, I won't know what suit to play in if I bid RKC. By far the easiest problem of this extremely tough set of problems.

Roeder: 5NT. Pick a slam partner! In ancient times, this was the Grand Slam Force. Like nature, bridge has evolved.

5

Matchpoints
Neither Vul.

North	East	South	West
1♥	1♠	???	

You, South, hold: ♠ AKQ4 ♥ 1086 ♦ 932 ♣ Q83

What call do you make?

Again, we have a problem where we have support for partner's major and both strain and level are in doubt.

For the NTers:

Cooper: 2NT. Natural!

Roeder: 2NT. Is there a second choice? *Read them and weep!*

Kolesnik: 1NT. At MPs I would just bid a constructive 1NT.

Shuster: 1NT. It's matchpoints, so I'll go low to protect the plus. I do have spades well stopped and nothing to ruff.

For the raisers, is a simple raise enough without a high honor, or is a limit raise best?

Abdou: 2♠. Unimaginative! I'll support with support. Everything is flawed. NT suppresses the fit and pass is unilateral (going for a penalty).

Wittes: 2♠. If I had secondary cards in spades, I'd be more inclined to look for 3NT, but with primary cards in spades and 10xx in partner's opening suit, I'm more inclined to show heart support.

Bartusek: 2♠. Pitches on the spades are still valuable holding something like Axxx in a side suit. I'd like slower spade tricks before severely prioritizing NT and hiding my trump support. I can still bid 3NT on the next round if given a chance. Despite a very balanced 8-loser hand this is a limit raise since it has a lot of quick tricks.

Chechelashvili: 2♥. It's matchpoints, worth underbidding with this tricky hand. My RHO should have some shape to compensate for the bad suit. Maybe 1NT is better, but with fit in a major I always prefer to show it as soon as I can.

Feldman: 2♥.

I'm with the 1NT bidders. I have suppressed trump support and maybe underbid slightly. Nothing is perfect on this hand. If I was raising, I would content myself with a simple raise.