

Southern California Bridge News

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October 2011

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Regional this Month

by Becky Clough
ALACBU President



Hi everyone. I'm looking forward to talking with and competing against you at the Marina Regional Tournament coming up soon. Make your plans, schedule your games, and join us at the Marina del Rey Hotel Tuesday, October 11 – Sunday, October 16, 2011 for a fun week of bridge. While you're there, be sure to come to listen to our speakers scheduled between the morning and afternoon sessions. There will be some new speakers and some your favorites will be returning.

On another note, I need your help. We have a well-endowed scholarship fund that is for the most part unused. Do you have a child, grandchild or friend who has graduated from high school and has been accepted to a college or university and resides within District 23 - basically Los Angeles County? If so, can you help us get the word out that scholarships of \$1,000, renewable yearly, are available. The normal deadline is August 30, but with no new applicants this year we are extending that deadline to November 1, 2011 if deserving candidates apply. Interested parties can check out the application on our website at acbldistrict23.org or call Peter Szecsi at 626-304-9535 for more information.

For possible scholarship candidates for 2012, applications will be due on or before May 1, 2012. Awards will be presented at our July Regional in Pasadena.

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CEO Visits District 23

by Rand Pinsky, District Director



It is finally official; Robert Hartman has been selected as the new CEO of the ACBL. The announcement was made earlier this month as all of the final details of his contract were worked out. Robert begins his job on November 7. An introduction to Robert can be found on the ACBL website. On a personal note, I was on the CEO Selection Committee and Robert was one of my top choices. He is "bridge young," has an extensive marketing background, and integrates his marketing skills with his intellectual technology knowledge. I look forward to having him as our CEO for a long period of time.

As reported last month, Craig and his wife Elaine came to Los Angeles as part of his 100 clubs in 100 days tour. Our clubs were numbers 85, 86, and 87 on his tour. At Long Beach, Craig played with Kevin Lane, our District 23 webmaster. If I remember correctly, they placed third. Preceding the game there was a lunch and during the break ice cream and cake was served. Thanks to the Long Beach Club and the unit for the hospitality.

DIRECTOR *continued on page 2*

Attention New Bridge Players

If you have never ventured to a bridge tournament before, now is the time! The District 23 Fall Regional is hosting a New Player's Reception at the Marina del Rey Hotel, Tuesday morning, October 11, 2011, at 8:45 a.m.

There will be free coffee, tea and Danish, as well as a short Bridge lesson given by Ellen Kent, our tournament chair. Also included is a special gift prepared especially for **you**.

If you would like to join for an educationally fun time, please make your reservation by calling Penny Barbieri at 909-599-4818, or email her at onecentb@aol.com.

DIRECTOR continued from page 1

The next day, Craig and Elaine played at the Castaic Sports Center of the Valencia Bridge Studio. Craig played with the club manager, Rita Vannatter and I got to play with Elaine. Craig was presented a vintage Phillies t-shirt and Elaine was given the book "The History of Santa Clarita." During the lunch break, Craig and Elaine were entertained by Kristie Kubo who sang opera. Craig remarked that this was the only opera performing bridge club he has visited.

Craig's final stop was at the Beverly Hills Bridge Club. The game was a team game and Craig played with my wife Kathy and I played with Elaine. After a bad first

round, our team came back strong to finish tied for second. (Yes, there were more than three teams playing.) Before that game, club manager Rick Turner provided a light supper for the players.

I want to thank each club and all of our players who participated in these games to make Craig's visit to Los Angeles a memorable one. I expect within the next few days on the ACBL web site will be Craig's blog highlighting his Los Angeles visit.

It's a Different View from Dummy

There were two local events I wish to report. The first was the MS Charity game held at the Barrington

Letter to the Editor

I'd like to thank John Jones for what he wrote about Vic. I didn't know Vic that well but he was such a colorful personality he was hard to miss and I always felt that Vic was a very honest person and that John captured that in his writing. I'd like to add that Vic was always very kind to myself and other junior players.

Tony Scott
San Fernando Valley

Bridge Club. Prior to the game, there was a lecture by Eddie Kantar and an auction for trips, fur coats, and hotel accommodations. I was able to secure a \$5,000 donation from the ACBL Charity Foundation which I presented to Fern Seizer, one of the organizers of the event. With an anonymous donor who pledged to match all of the money raised, the event raised \$32,500.00. I have submitted an article to the ACBL Bulletin and I hope an article about the event will be published.

The last event was celebrating the 101st birthday of Dorrie Deston who is an active member of the Antelope Valley / Santa Clarita Unit. A party was held in her honor at the AV Bridge Center. The local newspaper was there to interview her and bridge was given a great write up in the newspaper. Last year I had the privilege to present her with a certificate recognizing her as a Centurial Bridge Master. If any other units or clubs have a centurion, please let me know so I can make a presentation to them.

That is all for now, but do not forget about our October Regional at the Marina this month.

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Around the Units in District 23

Antelope Valley by Brad Ward

I had an opportunity to chat with our new ACBL president when he attended a recent Castaic club game. What a great guy! His "100 clubs in 100 days" project is an ambitious and tough endeavor, but seems so very worthwhile. This venture into the trenches by our new president should yield some wonderful longterm results for players everywhere. Subsequent to the completion of the Castaic game at 2:30, our wonderful district director, Rand Pinsky, was preparing to wisk our ACBL president off to dinner and the evening game in Beverly Hills! A lot of fact-finding, pressing of flesh, and seven hours of club bridge is a demanding effort for one day, but very much appreciated. Thank you Mr. President for caring so much about the clubs and local units!

I have had countless phone calls and emails about why the Thousand Oaks sectional was allowed to run at the same time as our sectional. Well, we in Unit 556 did everything right, everything we were told to do. We cooperated in every way when establishing our Sectional dates. We even gave up our preferred weekend dates because we were told it "would be a conflict with the Bakersfield sectional dates." Months ago we then selected a weekend that we were told was OK, and we find ourselves in this mess now. All I can say is that District 23, which was once a powerhouse in the Western Bridge community, has again proven to be just a stepchild, just a rag in the gutter, to the District 22 power machine. Let this situation be a warning to all other District 23 units... Thoroughly document, and voice record if possible, future event scheduling and important details so that you can protect yourself. The units and clubs are still the true life blood of organized bridge. Let us all work even closer together to make our bridge experiences better!

We have hope that despite the conflict in schedule, a lot of the District 23 players will support our sectional and come to Newhall and enjoy the comfortable playing environment, very friendly locals and extra appreciation

shown to those that traveled a long way. Events are Saturday at 10:30 and 3:30 and a double session Swiss starting at 10:30 Sunday. Our location is only about three miles past the familiar cascading water site on the hill in the Newhall Pass. Our sectional location is just beyond the intersection of the 5 and 14 freeways, 2 blocks off of the 5. Take the 5 North, past the intersection with the 14 and exit the 5 at LYON ave. Go right on LYON and go to AVENIDA DORENA, go right on AVENIDA DORENA and go to LA GOLITA and go left on LA GOLITA. Then turn right into the parking lot or you can park across the street. The address of the site is The Del Prado Condominiums at 24360 LA GOLITA CIRCLE, Newhall, 91213. For more information and/or partnership help, please call Ms. Barbara Jones at 661-298-9553 or Ms. Maelene-Warren Gasper at 661-943-5712 or email me at crucpart2@aol.com.

Winners this past month at Castaic were Carol Ashbacher-Mira Rowe along with Neil Schanz-Hansford Rowe. Joining them were Rita Vanatter-Vibeke Gilbreath, Lola Messhia-Brad Ward and Basant Shah-Lamonte Johnson.

Winners at the Valencia club this past month were Betty Pavey-Everett Dehn, Don & his great wife LouAnn Vandemore, Paula Oliveras-John Langer, Rita Vanatter-Alene Friedman, Marlene Warren Gasper & her husband Dave, Hugh Bartlett-Marguerite Pinkers and Arif Shah-Gary Grey. The NAP game was won by Bill Brodek-Brad Ward and Arif Shah-Basant Shah.

The Lancaster Club games saw the usual suspects win again, but we must bid goodbye for a little while to our guest, Linda Young, who always seems to do so well, but is going back to Nevada for a spell. I am so pleased to end this column with an enthusiastic "Welcome Back" to Dr. Rananathpur Murthy.



Glendale Verdugo

By Ron Lifshutz

On Saturday, September 10 the Unit 553 game was held at the Regency Bridge club. Prior to the game, the players were treated to a fine luncheon compliments of the unit board and hosted by President Merry Besvold.

N/S

- A1 John Villalobos & Carolyn Cohen
- A2 Robert Gish & Stephen Licker
- A3 Pat Abbey & Merry Besvold
- A4 B1 Sharon Wolf & Michael Doll
- B2 Susan Rhoades & Rufus Rhoades

E/W

- A1 Bob Tayrien & Jack Futrell
- A2 Herman Helber & Jacob Frenkel
- A3 B1 Carol Frank & James Bergland
- A4 William Dessert & Steve Shanker
- B2 Robert Hogan & Esther Tapelband

The next unit game on October 8 will be a memorial for Dorothy Le Maie who passed away late in August. Please join us then.

On our regular Tuesday afternoon game of September 13th, Carolyn

Cohen and Bob Tayrien turned in a 70.42% game. Congratulations.

We are considering bringing back a guest speaker program that was successful some time ago.

We have many fine players at the Regency and I hope they will like a chance to impart some of their knowledge that we can all benefit from.

Long Beach

by Jon Yinger

unit website: www.acblunit557.org

club website: www.LongBeachBridge.com

September 5 Labor Day Unit-Rated Game: Overall results: 1st in A: Marcie Evans/Bev Shafer, 2nd Doris James, Lois Abramson, 3rd Cayce Blanchard/John Melis, 4th Earl VanDerVord/Mike Daley, 5th Janet Logan/Larry Topper, 6th Verna Baccus/Marcus Evans. In the B flight overall Aaron Jones/Sean Lui were 4th, Lavonne McQuilkin/Bill Brooks 5th, and Keith and Susan Hafen 6th. And in the C flight overall Martha Schuster/Gayle Harris were 5th. In the NLM game John Krafft/Laurie Norman were 1st, Sally and Alan Gordy 2nd, and Marilyn Landau/Juanita Smith 3rd. Congratulations to all!

70+% Games in the club August 16 through September 15: In the afternoon game August 17 John Jones/James Nicola had 70.03% in the open game and Sharon Biederman/Darlene Harrison had 73.13% in the 99er game. And on Sept 5 Marcie Evans/Bev Shafer had a 70.16% game. Congratulations to all three pairs!

Big Masterpoint Awards: In-club overall big point awards

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August 16 through Sept 15: 5: Sept 5 Marcie Evans/Bev Shafer won 4.05mp for 1st over-all and Doris James/Lois Abramson won 3.19mp for 2nd. And in the instant match-point game Wednesday evening, Sept 14, Aaron Jones/Bruch Horiguci won 2.67 gold points for 1st over-all. Congratulations to all!

Status Changes: Junior Master: Joseph Ramos; Club Master: Jane Okimoto; Sectional Master: Alan Gordy; Regional Master: Kiyo Nagaishi; Life Master: April Berg; Life Master and Bronze Life Master: Aaron Jones; Silver Life Master: Judith Jones. Congratulations to you all!

Upcoming Events at the Club: Oct 2-8 Club Appreciation week: Extra points, regular prices. Oct 9: Unit Game: Lunch at 12:30, game at 1pm. Oct 10 Columbus Day unit-rated game: Extra points, regular prices. Oct 17-23 Club Championship week: Extra points, regular prices. Oct 31 through Nov 6 STaC week: Hand Records, overall awards, card fees \$11.

Condolences to the family and friends of Sandra Pickering, Steve Sulzby and Susan Varga who passed away last month.

Get Well Wishes to Fay Beckerman and Doris Drew.

News from Leisure World from Gene Yaffee: Big games were on August 29 with Sue Fardette & Vince Remedios scoring a 68.29% game to be first in Strat A and Connie & Jay Young scoring a 67.82% game to be first in Strat B.

The winners in the Club Championship game on September 8 were Bill Linskey & Howard Smith with a 67.5% game. First in Strat B were Jean Byers & Betty Sichel.

We welcomed new players Leayn Johnson and Geraldine Landes on September 12.

Gene Yaffee, ACBL accredited teacher, will hold a 6-week course for Intermediate Players beginning on October 10, in Clubhouse #3 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. before the Monday games. For more information, please call Gene Yaffe at 562/430-7040.

Get well wishes to Jaye Woodington who is recovering from knee-replacement surgery.

Results of all Leisure World games are posted on www.acblunit557.org

Get the Unit 77 Newsletter via Email: Send me your e-mail address and I'll put you on the list. My email is jjyinger1@gmail.com.

Pasadena San Gabriel Valley by Chuck Cordaro

Johnny, We Hardly Knew Ye

One of the first conventions we learn is Gerber; however, one of our number, Frank Jones, can put a face to the name. Back in the 70s, when Frank was living in Houston, he would play against John Gerber— often twice a week.

Gerber was a bridge luminary back then. In fact, he mentored experts Bobby Wolff and Sidney Lazard early in their careers. He also represented the U.S. in several world competitions such as the Bermuda Bowl and Spingold during the 60s and 70s. Nevertheless, Frank would call him “Johnny” and get away with it. I asked Frank what it was like to hear Gerber bid Gerber: “He never used it, at least not while I was playing against him,” said Frank.

Upcoming Events

Art Gulbrandsen asked me to remind you that beat-the-house-night falls on Friday, October 21, followed by winners-and-losers Sunday 2 days later.

Our Sympathies

Roy Wilson told me that Ann Banta recently lost her son, Jim, for which we are very sorry. Ted Sirene, a long-time member of the Bridge Center, maybe 40 years according to Roy, also passed away. We send our condolences to his family, too. We also are thinking of May Batterson, who lost her son, Rod, last month. Bill Farmer, May's good friend (and ours) also passed away. We will miss you Bill.

Congratulations

These go to Diana Borgatti and Cathy Martin for finishing first in our unit game this month.

Bridge, Fishing, and Bears

A few years ago I went fishing in Alaska with Nick Alex and his sons. Nick loved to win at bridge and he wanted us to go up there and “find us some pigeons.” Well, the only pigeons we found were the ones staring

back at us when we looked in the mirror.

Sadly, a couple camping by the river were killed by a grizzly while we were up there. Another couple, who were drift-fishing past the ransacked camp, barely escaped when the bear jumped in and swam after them.

My son Ken also had a close call while fishing last month. This time he got to be “the one that got away.” On his way back from Virginia, where he spent a year working in the army’s Wounded Warrior program, Ken and his family stopped in Yellowstone. He loves to go fly fishing, but his wife asked him not to go because: a) a man had been killed by a grizzly just about a month earlier, and b) he has four young children. “Well, what are the odds that two guys from Torrance would get eaten by a grizzly in the same month,” he said as he drove off to a large nearby stream and waded out to a shoal to fish. But it wasn’t long before a grizzly came out of the forest about 50 yards upstream and peered into the water looking for trout. Lucky it was young and only about half grown. Unlucky that full-grown males weigh about 1250 lb. The big ones will charge, and about all you can do is lie still, play dead, and hope it isn’t a case of life imitating art.

“I did everything wrong—everything they tell you not to do. Instead of trying to slink away quietly, I screamed at the top of my lungs and waved my arms.” This confused the bear, and it ran around in a circle. “Then I picked up two rocks and banged them together, so hard that one of them broke. He just put his ears down and sprinted back into the forest.”

It’s nice to have you back home, Ken. Hope you will stop scaring bears, and your wife, and your father.

Pomona Covina by Vic Sartor

Unit Game Saturday, October 22
1st session - 11:00, dinner - 3:00ish

If the column heading looks a little confusing, it’s because we’ll be on a slightly different schedule this month. Because of a conflict with the Fall Regional at Marina Del Rey, the unit game will be held on October 22- the **fourth** Saturday of the month. If you show up at the Knights Of Columbus building on the usual third Saturday, you’ll find a whole lot of empty. We will also be holding **two** sessions, not one. We will be holding

our annual election of unit officers between sessions(if anyone would be willing to serve on the board, please contact Clint Lew or Roger Boyar). A pizza dinner will be served after the first session, and voting for next year’s officers will be held. We estimate we will eat shortly after 3:00. The second session will start some time after 4:00. Each session will cost \$6.00 and dinner will be a bargain at \$3.00. Players may play either or both sessions and dinner is optional.

The August unit game was won by Dan Botoaca and Amr Elghamy, followed by Genise Hasan and Denise Morgan, who were first in B and first in opposite direction. The September unit game was won by Hans Hehnke and Vic Sartor, with Botoaca and Elghamy second overall and first N/S. Ron Purkis and Ned Sissel were first in B, followed by Kerry Sartor and Margaret Merritt.

In club results, Walt Otto, Clint Lew, Michael Horn, Milt Kalikmam, Dwight Blackwell, and Richard Patterson all posted 70% + games. Other winners included Susan Ruoff, Kathy Helber, Herman Helber, Ann McClelland, Ron Purkis, Tom Lill, Albert Lax, Kurt Trieselmann, Roger Boyar, Genise Hasan, Ken Bloomfield, Ken Lowenthal, Joe Unis, Penny Barbieri, Sandy Jones, Cordell Goode, Bill Papa, and Vic Sartor.

Special congratulations go out to Genise Hasan, who made Silver Life Master. She went over the top at the recent Orange County Regional when she and Denise Morgan finished second in a KO event. Bill Papa and Lulu Minter had a second in an open pairs at the same tourney.

Our hand of the month comes from the same regional via Lary Alba, who tells this story on himself. He opened 1♥ on: ♠-- ♥KQxxx ♦Qx ♣AKxxxx

LHO overcalled 2♦, pard made a negative double, and RHO had the effrontery to bid 2♥. Lary, taking umbrage at this lack of respect for his opening bid, doubled. He didn’t necessarily expect 2♥ to be the final contract, but he wanted to show decent hearts and a willingness to defend. Unfortunately RHO held:

♠KQxx ♥AJT98xxx ♦♣x

Passed out and making 3! Some days are like that. Til next time.



San Fernando Valley by Fran Kern

Bridge is alive and thriving in the San Fernando Valley as evidenced by the large attendance at the recent sectional as well as the regular day and evening games. Introductions between new and regular players have been assisted by player name pins now available at the 750 Club. More than a 100 pins have been ordered and they are a big success.

The board recently welcomed new member Marge Romans. She has already proven to be a valuable and hard working member with her efforts at the August Sectional and her liaison to the monthly Bridge News.

In the good news department, congratulations to Doug Beagle who is the most recent player to pass the Director's Test.

Also in the good news department, congratulations to Moe Mansour, who will receive the 2011 Kaiser Award at the upcoming Unit Game. This award was established by Roz Kaiser to honor her husband. The award is presented to the player with fewer than 500 points who earns the most points at the Unit 561 Sectional. The trophy honoring recipients of the Kaiser Award is housed at the San Fernando Valley Bridge Academy and Moe's name will be added to the trophy. In addition, Moe will receive a personal trophy as a memento of his achievement. Moe is a member of the board and is affectionately known as "The Ice Man" as he has the ongoing responsibility to supply ice for the annual sectional and Unit Games.

Upcoming Unit Events:

In the board's efforts to have more unit games during the year, the next unit game will be on Sunday, October 16, at the Bridge Academy, located at 6733 Variel Ave., Canoga Park. Lunch will be provided at noon with award presentation at 12:45 p.m. and one session of bridge for stratified and intermediate pairs beginning at 1:00 p.m. The fee is \$10.00 for ACBL members and \$11:00 for non-members. As always, reservations are not required but are helpful and can be made by telephone to the Bridge Academy at 818-999-9131 or by using signup sheets at the Bridge Academy and the 750 Club.

Also, keep your calendars marked for the Holiday Party at the Woodland Hills Marriott on Sunday,

December 4. Details are still being finalized as of this writing.

The Top Ten Masterpoint Winners for August 2011

750 Bridge Club: Phyllis Seeder 9.19, Ron Malkin 8.17, Bob Glasser 7.62, Ed Berliner 6.89, Vera Mandell 6.57, Larry Kussin 6.09, Margie Bulmer 5.95, Lenny Popowitz 5.45, Shelly Popowitz 5.45, Jim Gardner 5.28.

Bridge Academy Under 750 Game: Jerry Goodman 7.71, Marjorie Romans 3.63, Arlene Newman 3.17, Harold Perla 3.17, Ruth Fleisher 2.95, Marilyn Gaims 2.95, John Van Egmond 2.93, Lamonte Johnson 2.93, Carol Stein 2.56, Phillip Calloway 2.51.

Bridge Academy Open Game

Ellen Anten 12.38, Andrew Vinock 12.20, Gilbert Stinebaugh 11.97, Armand Szulc 11.84, Marta Monheim 11.31, Tom Wylie 10.92, Gary Frans 9.28, Catharina Hassig 9.19, Sheila Bozin 9.06, Leda Danzig 8.68.

70% Games for August:

Deedy Nordyke & Frank Nordyke 72.50%, Marion Weis & Russell Weis 70.00% Cudos to these pairs who play in Sheila's novice game at the Bridge Academy.

Column News: Make sure that your news will appear in the next edition of Bridge News by sending it to Fran Kern at fkern818@aol.com by the 10th of the month.

Torrance-South Bay by Steve Mager

Unit website:

<http://www.freewebs.com/bridgeatunit568>

SBBC website:

<http://www.bridgeclubs.org/index.php?id=sbbc>

Upcoming Events at the South Bay Bridge Club

Club Championship: Monday, October 3, 7:00
Club Championship: Wednesday, October 19, 11:30
Club Championship: Tuesday, October 25, 11:30
District 22/23 STAC, October 31 thru November 5

Handicapped Swiss Teams Every Tuesday Evening

Club Championships

The North American pairs qualifier on August 17 was led by Gerri Carlson/John J. McDermott in Flight A with a Flight B tie between Carole Mason/Masae Kato and JoAnne and Cal Waller plus Joan and Robert Stillwell leading Flight C. The NLM Club Championship on August 18 was led by Elaine Godin/Richard DeSantis in Flights A and B with Barbara and Paul Green ahead in Flight C. The North American Pairs qualifier on August 18 saw Bruce Horiguchi/Jeff Strutzel winning Flight A and Lorna Wallace/Sharon Biederman on top in Flight B. The Club Championship on August 19 was won by Lucy Gellner/Jeff Strutzel in Flight A and Lorna Wallace/Ed Srenco in Flight B. The Club Championship on August 29 was led by Gerri Carlson/John J. McDermott in Flight A followed by Chris Freeland/Patricia Westenhaver in Flight B and Joan Chrishal/Gene McKay in Flight C. The NLM Club Championship on September 1 saw George Stinson/Setsuko/Mayazaka taking Flights A and B with Nancy Reynolds/Gerald Ketz ahead in Flight C.

The September 7 Club Championship at Veterans Park saw Anne Andres/Jeanette Betts sweeping the board winning Flights A, B and C. The September 9 afternoon Club Championship at Anderson Park was captured by Bill McLean/David Cheshire. The September 9 evening Club Championship was won by Fran Israel/Jack Tsu. The Veterans Park Club Championship on September 12 resulted in a tie for Flight A honors between Alain Fleurot/Freddie Spradlin and Clara Trummer/Joan Chrishal who also took Flights B and C honors.

Team Winners

Following are the winning quartets in recent Tuesday night handicapped Swiss games at the South Bay Bridge Club.

August 16: Tie Bea and John Brailiar, Bruce Horiguchi, Kunio Okui, CVal Gamio, Cecil Cook, Jeff Strutzel, Andy Anderson
 August 23: Carol McCully, Ed Barad, Jeff Strutzel, Andy Anderson
 August 30: Gabriela Jackson, Mark Raggio, Marie Willis, Harry Wessells



November 14-18, 2011
Monday to Friday

Las Vegas

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GLITTER GULCH SECTIONAL

Monday, November 14

1:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Bracketed Mon-Tue KO Teams Rd 1 of 3

7:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams
Bracketed Mon-Tue KO Teams Rd 2 of 3

Tuesday, November 15

9:00 a.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams
Bracketed Mon-Tue KO Teams Final Rd

1:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Bracketed Tue-Wed KO Teams Rd 1 of 3

7:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams
Bracketed Tue-Wed KO Teams Rd 2 of 3

*Non-smoking Tournament
with Hospitality Breaks*

Wednesday, November 16

9:00 a.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams
Bracketed Tue-Wed KO Teams Final Rd

1:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Bracketed Wed-Thu KO Teams Rd 1 of 3

7:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams
Bracketed Wed-Thu KO Teams Rd 2 of 3

Thursday, November 17

9:00 a.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams
Bracketed Wed-Thu KO Teams Final Rd

1:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Stratified Swiss Teams

7:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
Stratified 0-300 Pairs
Stratified Board-A-Match Teams

Friday, November 18

10:00 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. Stratified Fast Pairs
(finish by 4:15 p.m.) (This is a 2-session event, but single session entries may be sold at the Director's discretion.)

10:00 a.m. & TBD Stratified Swiss Teams
(2-sessions)
Swiss Teams will finish by 5:30 p.m.

All stratified events are stratified by the average masterpoints of the team or pair.

Strats: A: 2000+ B: 750-2000 C: 0-750
I/N: 0-20/50/100/200/300

**CARD FEES: \$10.00 per session/per player for dues paying ACBL members
\$11.00 per session/per player for all others**

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LVsectional.com

September 6: Arlene and Stanley Greengard,
Bernie Weinstein (!), Ernie Frank
September 13: Linda and Bill Lama, Karen and
Mike McKittrick

Western Conference STAC

Following are pairs that placed in the overalls in
games played at the South Bay Bridge Club during the
recent Western Conference STAC.

Monday Morning, August 22

20A Kiyoko Ohtomo/Ray Mack

Monday Evening, August 22

11B 4C Linda and Bill Lama

Wednesday Morning, August 24

7A 2B Hank Sheehan/Harry Wessells
9/9A Mary Ann Coyle/Lorraine Hohn

Thursday Morning, August 25, NLM Pairs

5A Nancy Collinge/Betsy Miller

Friday Morning, August 26 99er Pairs

1A 1B Donetta Seratini/Sue Morgan
2/3A Joyce Field/Julie Tan
2/3A 2B Carolyn Woo/Edward Bucklin
4A Marlyse Linder/Valerie Turner
5A Bobbie and Myron Mitzenmacher

Irvine Regional Heroes

There were a few triumphs by TSB unit members
(Both actual and honorary) at the recent well attended
Irvine Regional .

Neal Kleiner and David Peim were on the team that
won the Dana Harbor Bracket 3 KO. Gary King, Ted
Gibbs and

John J. McDermott were on the team that won the
Tuesday Losers Swiss. Bruce Horiguchi was on the
team that won the

California Swiss. John Jones was on the team that
won the A/X Swiss on the final day. Lutrell Long, Neil
Kleiner and

Steve Ramos were on the team that won the BCD Swiss
on the final day.

GUV Memorial Award

A team that I was on suffered the embarrassment of
losing to a team with Cecil Cook on it in a compact KO
final at the Irvine Regional. Cecil effectively won the
match for his team when he bid a slam despite holding
a worthless doubleton in the spade suit overcalled by
the opponents. After using Blackwood and finding
his partner with **zero** controls he boldly bid the slam.
Partner, of course, came down with the Spade King and
the slam rolled. Timid me couldn't get pard to show the
King and wound up playing a quiet 3NT. My teammate,
Gary King, who was playing against Cecil can't stand
it when the opponents come out smelling like a rose
after what he considers bad bidding. After the loss he
bemoaned Cecil's luck much to Cecil's pleasure who
overheard Gary.

Revenge is sweet. In a pairs game the next day
against Cecil I held ♠Qxxx ♥AKJxxx ♦KQ ♣A. After
3 passes, I opened 1♥ and Cecil bid 2♣. My partner
showed something resembling a heart limit raise by
bidding 3♣ and my RHO tried 4♣. Others might make a
different form of slam try but despite holding no control
in spades I was playing against Cecil and couldn't resist
trying Blackwood. Partner had one control and I bid 6♣.
After the opening lead partner first laid down a bunch
of low cards in the minors and I started celebrating
since she almost had to have both top spades to justify
her bid. And she did plus the ♥Q, claiming 6 for an 80%
board. Gary King really enjoyed it when I told him the
story the next day.

Na Zdrowie

West LA by Robert Shore

Every Man (or Woman) for Himself (or Herself)

Don't understand your partner? Move on to the
next one. That's how we'll handle the Unit's next event,
the annual Halloween Individual. Taking place at 6:30
p.m. on Sunday, October 30, at Beverly Hills, the bridge
is free and every hand, an adventure. We hope to see
you there.

We Didn't Say Which Holiday

And watch your mailboxes for your invitation to the
Unit's annual Holiday Party. We tried a new venue last

year, the Beverly Hills Country Club. It was a smashing success, so we're going back for more. Great food, a nonpareil musical talent, and an afternoon of bridge, all for a very reasonable price. Save the date, November 20, for an event you'll remember with a smile for a very long time.

A Piece of the Action

Sign-up lists have been up at the clubs, seeking potential candidates for the Unit Board. By the time you read this column, the deadline will have passed, so we'll learn whether we have more volunteers than available slots. If so, your Holiday Party invitation also will come with a mail-in ballot. Please vote. It's your chance to have a say in who makes decisions such as how many sectionals to hold, what other events to hold, and when, and the many other behind-the-scenes decisions that make our Unit a great place to play bridge.

Mama Taught Me My Manners

I wanted to use a little space for a couple of thank yous. First, thank you to the Beverly Hills Club for the kind invitation to offer one of the Wednesday evening lectures, and thank you also to the attendees who had such kind words to say about my presentation. I had a blast, and I look forward to my next opportunity.

Second, I dipped my toe into the waters of chairing an event for the first time by taking on the Ice Cream Social. An enormous thank you to all the other Board members who pitched in with time, effort, and expertise, thereby saving my maiden effort from a spectacular pratfall. None of the Unit's events happen by themselves, and none are a solo effort. The next time you attend one, please take a moment to thank the members of the Unit Board who donate their time to making the event a reality.

Quiz Result

In my last column, I posed the question: How many possible legal auctions are there? Danny Kleinman was the only person to propose the correct answer (or any answer, for that matter). The correct answer, which requires an application of the binomial theorem to express in this form, is: $4(2235-1)/3$, a number which has 48 digits.

Owning the Home Court

Our annual Labor Day Sectional was held (when else?) over the Labor Day weekend, and many of our unit's members found themselves atop the leader boards. Roberto Scaramuzzi and Fred Zhang started things off by winning the Friday night pairs game. On Saturday morning, Marsha Kerns and Lee Axelrod won the 299er game, while Marsha Bocan tied for first in the Saturday afternoon 299er game. The Saturday compact knockout saw Steven and Donna Massman somehow drag Guy Green and Viktor Anikovich to victory. Sunday's compact knockout winners included Gerald Bare and Pete Benjamin, and the winning B/C/D team on Labor Day was Garth Green, Peter Menotti, Richard Vincent, and Berry Wilkinson. A fine showing indeed. Keep up the good work.

Peter Benjamin entered the year as a five-time winner of the Jill Meyers Trophy, awarded to the player who wins the most master points combined at our two sectionals. He pulled off the trick again this year, leading the field at the fall sectional to win the honors for the sixth time. This year's Mary Jane Farrell Trophy, given to the 299er winning the most master points, went to up-and-coming player Ryan Wessels.

For those who haven't met him yet, Ryan is a recent college graduate who has picked up more than 160 points so far this year. Here's an example of his fine play, taken from the Orange County Regional. He was playing 4♠ with the following collection:

Dummy: ♠J94 ♥AQ76 ♦T875 ♣Q4

Declarer: ♠AK852 ♥J83 ♦A ♣KJT6

The opening lead was the king of diamonds, which he won perforce with the ace. He took the heart finesse, losing, and a second diamond came back, Ryan ruffing as LHO dropped the queen. Ryan then cashed 1 high spade before making the key play of leading a club to the queen and ace. A third diamond tapped Ryan down to three trumps (the jack falling from LHO), and a second high spade revealed the LHO started life with QTxx of trump. Thanks to his foresight, though, in handling the side suits first, Ryan was still in control. He cashed the heart ace, then crossed to his hand with a club and continued running good clubs, discarding hearts from dummy. He was guaranteed to score the trump jack in passing (declarer's equivalent of a defensive uppercut) for his tenth trick, and an 11 IMP gain when his much

more experienced counterpart failed at the same contract.

Excused Absences

A bit of news from the regional circuit. Although one of our sectional trophies has been named after Jill Meyers, she wasn't able to attend the tournament this year. She was busy practicing with her Venice Cup team at the Santa Clara Regional, where her team's results included a knockout team victory. Adam Meyerson, recently of our Unit, picked up a victory in the premier four-session pair event at the same regional. Moving south to Orange County, we fared well in the various compact knockouts. Charles and Jo Anne Kelley won their bracket in the Dana Harbor Compact Knockout, and Gary King won his bracket in the Santa Ana Compact Knockout. Gene White and Cecil Cook won the Anaheim Compact Knockout.

Around the Clubs

Many of you have probably heard that Marshall Cherkas finally lost a long battle with illness. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Club champions are Barrington last month were Eddie Gruber-Leslie Rawit and Aram Bedros-Art Zail. Scoring 70% games were Aram Bedros, Art Zail, Marty Blain, Mike Mikyska, Adrienne Green, Mim Spertus, George Wagner, Stephen Yaffe, Steve Goldstein, and Michael Shaw. Club champions at Beverly Hills were Dovid Crum-William Carlson and Jeri Berger-David Raphel. Notching 70%ers were Lou Papp and Rahim (3NT) Israel, Rhoda and Lew Himmel, Dovid Crum and Danny Kleinman, Rahim (3NT) Israel and Huguette Galante, and Fran Malina and Michael Billow. Congratulations to all on your accomplishments.

Climbing the Ladder

Much to report here this month. Ann Turner is our newest Junior Master and Betty Feliciano is now a Club Master. Achieving the rank of Sectional Master are Edwin Bernstein, Dorothy Lank, and Teri Ponchick, while Lee Axelrod and Neal Johnson are now Regional Masters. Boosted by reaching the national semifinals in the Flight B Grand National Teams, Ryan Wessels is now an NABC Master.

The Grand National Teams result also gave Zalman Perelman the last colored points he needed to reach Life Master, so he skips immediately to Bronze Life Master Status. Marcia Lauffer-Rosner also has reached Bronze Life Master, while Alan and Sherie Schneider are now Silver Life Masters. Congratulations to all.

Got news? Send it to me at Bob78164@yahoo.com.

District 23 Rank Changes August, 2011

Junior Master (5 MPs)

Richard Bakovic, Dianne Bougher
Barrie Fisher, Judy Freeman
Kathleen Keller, Mary Landroth
Madge London, Savita Rajwani
James Robinson, Samuel Thieme

Club Master (20 MPs)

Marilyn Blank, Gerry Cogan
David Hwang, Gayle Knapp
Amy Macklin, Dwight McCormick
Adriane Morrison, Larry Weinstein
Marion Weis, Stephanie Young

Sectional master (50 MPs)

Richard Dickens
Ilene Feinstein
Mary Gillett
Eleanor Goldman
Kitty Keck
Albert Lax
Mahin Marjani
Marjorie Romans

Regional Master (100 MPs)

Norma Friedman, Lynn Heckler
Roy Ladd, Sherry Newman

Adv NABC Master (200 MPs)

Frederick Upton

Bronze Life Master (500 MPs)

Edward Victor

Silver Life Master (1000 MPs)

Brana Hall
Bill Malcolm
Michael Marcucci

Gold Life Master (2500 MPs)

Harvey Katz
John Ramos

Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: Leo Bell

This month's panelists: Gerry Bare, Mark Bartusek, David Chechelashvili, John Jones, Roger Lee, Jill Meyers, Marshall Miles, David Sacks, Walt Schafer, Mike Shuster, and Bill Wickham

1

IMPs
both vul

South	West	North	East
			1♦
dbl	pass	1♥	4♦
?			

You, South, hold: ♠AK843 ♥AQ3 ♦-- ♣AKQT7
What call do you make?

BARE: 4♥. This is an impossible problem. I don't think 4♥ is likely to be the best spot, but it's impossible to investigate other strains. 5♦ shows great interest in hearts, rather than the other suits. Partner rates to have few high cards, so suit fit is the key.

BARTUSEK: Double. Seems clear. Another takeout double with a strong hand, denying four-card heart support. We might miss a 5-3 spade fit, but bidding 4♠ seems a little extreme with such a poor suit. No one would consider this a problem if a small spade were a small diamond.

CHECHELASHVILI: 5NT. Pick a slam. It's a tough choice between 4♥ and 5NT. I don't see any other calls making things easier. You either have to decide to bid slam and investigate strain or to stop in 4♥.

JONES: 4NT. What this means is certainly open to debate. Is it RKC for hearts, vanilla Blackwood, natural, or unusual for the unbid suits? I believe unusual is the best usage when the opponents jam the auction to the four-level, and our side has bid only one suit and not supported it. 4NT is more commonly used as unusual when our unbid suits are lower than their suit (we have the minors or they have spades), but even though 4NT bypasses spades, I believe it should still be for the unbid suits. My follow-up's to partner's responses to my 4NT bid are: raise 5♣ to 6♣;

raise 5♥ to 7♥ (if he can bid hearts after I ask him to bid a black suit, the odds that he has the ♥K are fairly good); and bid 6♥ over 5♠, hopefully offering a choice between 6♥ and 6♠. The 4♦ bidder is likely to have some values (such as the ♥K) outside of diamonds because he opened 1♦ rather than a preempt.

LEE: Double. I don't think just forcing to slam is percentage with bad breaks expected and holes in my hand, so I'll just show extras without four hearts and pray partner can find a bid. If partner pulls to 4♥, I have another serious problem. I think I'm going to pass, but it's not hard to see how bidding could work out. Slam may come down to the location of the ♣J.

MEYERS: Double. This has to be a moose with short diamonds.

MILES: Double. The worst that is likely to happen is that we score 500 versus our vulnerable game. But which game can we make? It's also extremely unlikely that we can have an intelligent slam auction. Even if partner has five hearts, they don't figure to break well. Partner may have ♦Qxx, and East can't get to the dummy to take a finesse.

SACKS: Double. Suits aren't breaking well and we haven't found a guaranteed eight-card fit. This



South	West	North	East
	pass	pass	1♣
pass	1♠	pass	pass
2♣	pass	2♥	2♠
?			

You, South, hold: ♠K ♥AK ♦KQJ8 ♣KJT976
What call do you make?

BARE: 2NT. This should be for the minors. If I had really good clubs and a good hand, I would have bid 3♣ originally.

BARTUSEK: Double. Takeout of 2♠ without three-card heart support, but having 6+ clubs. *[Doesn't 2NT show that?]* Partner should realize this because he is looking at three or four spades. I briefly considered an unusual 2NT, but this could be very wrong if partner has spade length and would have passed a takeout double. Note that we might be cold for a game, because partner freely bid 2♥.

CHECHELASHVILI: 3♣. At matchpoints, I'll go for what I think I can make.

JONES: 2NT. Double or 3♦ are possible depending on partnership agreements. I object mildly to the previous bidding. The original pass was fine, but 2♣ was woefully inadequate. 3♣ would have been much better. Now, I would double in some partnerships such as with my friend Valerie Gamio or with the moderator, since we play all low level doubles for takeout. If partner converts, they're going for a number. If partner wouldn't play 2NT here as unusual, then I would bid 3♦.

LEE: 3♠. In order to rightside 3NT. I hate my 2♣ bid. Why didn't I double, planning on bidding clubs over hearts, or just bid 3♣?

MEYERS: 3♠. No one held a gun to partner's head to bid 2♥. This should ask partner to bid 4♥ with six hearts, to bid 3NT with spades stopped, or otherwise to return to 4♣.

MILES: 3♣. I might have bid 3♣ the previous

round.

SACKS: 2NT. That was a big pass over 1♠! I have no problem with it, but I bet you can't find a field where that would be the majority action. (I like 1♦.) I suspect that North's 2♥ isn't a plurality choice, either. 4-6 in the majors makes the most sense, but would he bid 2♥ with that distribution and a Yarborough? My guess is yes, but even then 2♥ rates to play badly. 2NT must show diamonds, not strength, as I would have doubled originally with power. Pass might be better (by my partner over 2♣ or me over 2♥).

SCHAFER: 4♥. I object to the earlier bidding but now it's OK!

SHUSTER: 3♦. I don't like my previous two rounds of bidding. (3NT is better than pass, and either 3♣ or 3NT is better than 2♣.) I guess I've decided to be scientific and give partner an out in some other contract. Maybe we even belong in hearts.

WICKHAM: 2NT. My partner can't really think 2NT is natural here, so I bid it. If I get dumped there, I may make it. If I get stuffed in 3NT, it should score. I'm passing three of a minor and pushing 3♥ into four.

An amazing number of different responses from the panelists. Most of us would have bid differently on the previous round, but in the here- and-now, it seems to me that hearts will prove to be our optimum strain, and we just need to find the right level. I think that partner may well be void in clubs, however, and that slows me down.

3

MPs
no vul

South	West	North	East
1♠	pass	3♠*	4♦
?			

* limit raise

You, South, hold: ♠JT9754 ♥AKQ74 ♦-- ♣A7
What call do you make?

BARE: 6♠. We might not make it, but it is very hard to investigate, and diamonds could be a good save.

BARTUSEK: 5♣. If partner doesn't cuebid 5♦, I'll continue with 5NT. (With the ♦A, partner must have at least one high spade honor.) *[It could be the queen.]* If partner cuebids 5♦, I'll bid 5♥, placing emphasis on trumps. I considered the unusual action of bidding 4NT with a void, since I can realistically expect that if partner shows one, it will be a spade honor rather than the ♦A. However, I won't know what to do after a two keycard response.

CHECHELASHVILI: 5♦.

JONES: 5♣. It's easy to visualize some hands for partner that make a grand and some hands with diamond wastage that are held to 10 tricks. Partner's round-suit holdings will be critical, and he won't know which are good and which are not. ♠AKQx ♥Jx ♦xxx ♣xxxxx is an excellent grand, ♠AKQx ♥xx ♦xxx ♣Jxxx is a mediocre grand (needing 3-3 hearts or a heart-club squeeze), and ♠AKQx ♥Jxx ♦xx ♣xxxx has no play. 6♦ at any point in the auction will ask partner to bid 7♠ with excellent trumps, but will he know that ♠KQxx is not sufficient? The only auction on which I'll invite partner to bid a grand is when he raises 5♣ to 6♣ showing a club honor and excellent trumps. I then will bid 6♦ to check if the trumps really are excellent and hope that he bids a grand with no less than ♠AKxx. I wouldn't be at all surprised if West gets into the act and supports diamonds.

LEE: 5♣. My primary objective is to buy it in 6♠. Describing my hand as having club length with weak hearts seems like a good start.

MEYERS: 6♦. Exclusion key card Blackwood.

MILES: 6♦. If partner has ♠AKxx or even ♠AQxx, I think he will bid 7♠. *[Probably so, but won't he also bid seven with Axxx?]*

SACKS: 6♠. Assuming the limit raise guaranteed four trumps, I bid six. I could bid keycard hoping partner does not have the ♦A and that a 1430 response of 5♣ doesn't get doubled (potentially putting 5♠ in jeopardy). Or, I can go for the gusto and bid what I think we're likely to make, assuming that partner is likely to have his values outside of diamonds.

SCHAFER: 5♦. I can't imagine not bidding 6♠, so letting partner know I have no diamonds must be the best step toward 7♠.

SHUSTER: 4NT. Very few, if any, partnerships allow you to find out specifically about the AK of trumps via the grand slam force *[The problem is that partner will bid 7♠ or 7♣ (depending on agreements) over 5NT with any of AK, AQ or KQ]*, so I assume I can't do that here, either. So, I'll risk RKCB and hope that partner doesn't hold the ♦A. Maybe we'll make a grand slam on a finesse opposite AQxx xxx Axx xxx.

WICKHAM: 5♦. Seems that 5♦ must be exclusion keycard. If I fetch a 5NT response showing two, I can bid 6♣ to look for the ♣K. 4♥ is also reasonable, but 4♠, 4NT, and 5♣ are ridiculous.

Bell: There is obviously some disagreement as to which bid is exclusion keycard. Some panelists also seem to disregard the likelihood of the opponents' further diamond bids. I like the jump to 6♠, hoping to elicit either a phantom sacrifice or to find partner with ♠AKxx and have him bid 7♠.

4

IMPs
both vul

South	West	North	East
1♣	3♦	pass	pass
?			

You, South, hold: ♠A7 ♥AKQ5 ♦J96 ♣A863
What call do you make?

BARE: 3♥. Another tough hand---double will probably cause partner to bid spades. If I don't bid hearts now, we may miss a heart game. Pass may be the only plus and is a close second choice.

BARTUSEK: Double. Double is risky but warranted, since I believe we could easily miss a game. Obviously, I won't be happy if partner bids 3♠. I might follow up with 3NT. *[If partner has a good enough hand to make 3NT, he might bid more, thinking you have a better hand.]*

CHECHELASHVILI: Pass. I can construct a hand for partner that might make game with long spades and short diamonds, but odds are that he has a normal hand without diamond shortage, so I'll just pass.

JONES: Pass. I consulted some Jersey Boys on this hand and Frankie Valli told me, "Let's hang on to what we've got." Seriously, doesn't any bid here rate to turn a plus score into a minus? If I bid 3♥ looking for gold, I'll want to vomit if partner retreats to 4♣. 3NT is a big shot-in-the-dark; it's not guaranteed to succeed even if partner has a diamond honor.

LEE: Pass. I'm just going to stay fixed. Bidding anything seems very dangerous, and I have a lot of losers for an 18-count. *[Good point. It seems overly*

optimistic to think we can make game.]

MEYERS: Pass. I choose to defend.

MILES: 3♥. This may not work well if partner has a weak hand and takes me back to clubs, but I think 4♥ is a likely contract, so I'll hope for it.

SACKS: Pass. Too much length in diamonds to reopen.

SCHAFER: Pass. 3NT could be right, but it's way too brazen and risky. All the doublers deserve zero points, and it will probably be the most common answer. *[Be thankful we aren't scoring on your forecast.]*

SHUSTER: Pass. Our best chance for a plus score is right here. Even though we rate to have diamonds stopped in notrump, I don't see nine tricks.

WICKHAM: Double. I'm hoping to hear hearts or both majors. I'll bid a heart game, if possible. I plan to pass 3♠, 3NT, or 4♣. 3♥ might be the winning bid, but that could lead to some painful club contracts.

As several panelists observed, this hand is really a poor 18-count. I don't expect to make a game, so I'll defend.

PSP#1 *continued from page 12*

double is still takeout, though the likelihood of its being converted is uncomfortably high. *[I would be very surprised if partner's diamonds are enough to convert.]*

SCHAFER: Double. Automatic.

SHUSTER: 5♦. I'm forcing to

slam and hoping to make it. The real question is whether to bid 6♣ or 5NT over partner's 5♥. My vote is for 5NT, as 6♥ is the only decent slam opposite ♠xxx ♥JTxxx ♦xx ♣xxx or the like. The play problem on a diamond lead is complicated, but I make out declarer to be a favorite.

WICKHAM: 5♦. My plan is to bid 6♣ over 5♥, to raise 5♠ to 6♠, and to

pass any bid (except 6♦) over 6♣.

Finding our best fit is the first goal since partner doesn't rate to have many high cards. RHO didn't open preemptively, so he rates to have most, if not all, of the missing honors. Double provides maximum flexibility for partner, and he may interpret anything else as confirming heart support.



South	West	North	East
?		pass	2♥

You, South, hold: ♠KQT9 ♥QJ7 ♦A8653 ♣A
What call do you make?

BARE: Double. Seems clear, especially as most partnerships can bid 3♦ over 3♣ without showing a great hand. *[Known as equal level conversion, some pairs only play this at the two level.]* I will have a problem over 2NT, Lebensohl, because then 3♦ shows more than I have.

BARTUSEK: 2NT. Seems like the normal bid with the hand. (It allows Stayman and transfers by partner.) I don't like 3♦ with such a poor suit, especially since I won't know whether to bid 3♣ or 3NT if partner temporizes with 3♥. I considered 2♠, but it seems a little extreme with such heart length/honors and a poor spade suit. Double could work unless partner jumps in clubs, making a correction to diamonds very dangerous.

CHECHELASHVILI: 2NT.

JONES: Pass. 2♥ tempts me into some silly bid, and I certainly have a smorgasbord of those available. I have a nice defensive hand, partner is a passed hand, and I have a good spade lead ready. That's three points in favor of passing. Marshall Miles has long been a proponent of canapé overcalls with a shorter major and a longer minor, but this could also work out very badly. ♥QJx is a very poor holding for offense. Pass is my best chance for plus. If I had to bid, I would rate the choices as 2♠, 2NT, 3♦, and double (doubling and then bidding diamonds is a monstrous overbid). If partner balances with a double, I'll "hang him high," and bid 4♠.

LEE: 2NT. Our heart stopper is flimsy because we can't hold up any rounds if the suit is xx opposite AKxxxx. Partner is limited. That's two arguments against 2NT. 2♠ is an option, but it's not hard to imagine spades playing very poorly in a 4-3 (or worse) fit. On this auction, I seldom overcall a four-card suit.

MEYERS: 2NT. Oops, is that a diamond in with my clubs? *[I always find "oops" a good explanation for my bids!]*

MILES: Double. I'll bid 3♦ if partner bids 3♣. This gives partner room to bid 3♥, asking me to bid 3NT with a heart stopper.

SACKS: Pass. I don't have a problem with 2NT. 2♠ and 3♦ seem too flawed to me.

SCHAFER: 2NT.

SHUSTER: Double. I don't object to bidding NT with this shape, but since I can't hold up on the heart stopper, I'll need a lot of help to make nine tricks. Our most likely game is in spades and double (sorry Marshall *[Shuster expected Marshall to overcall 2♠.]*) is the way to accomplish this. If partner advances 3♣, I'll risk 3♦ and hope to buy well.

WICKHAM: 2♠. A voice in my head is saying "Spades is the most likely game." I think that voice belongs to Marshall Miles. *[Not even Marshall is listening to that voice!]* This time I think he is correct. 3♦ is just sick. 2NT, showing 15-18 balanced and a heart stopper might work, but a QJx stopper is always tenuous because you cannot choose when to win your trick. I am going for 2♠, which I believe gives our side its best chance.

Bell: Once again, we're faced with several choices that don't quite fit the hand. I'm betting that 2NT is the choice that works best since it allows for a wide range of partner's actions. Pass could be our best chance for a plus, but I wouldn't expect that to be the field action. [Jones: It is worth repeating Bare's point that if double elicits a Lebensohl 2NT, then we are seriously hosed.]