

Southern California Bridge News

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A New Year in District 23

by Mike Marcucci, District 23 President



What does the year 2016 hold in store for our bridge playing group? While we all worry about the politics that surround our city, state, and nation, and are sometimes amazed and transfixed by political antics and behavior, there is also a change coming at ACBL that we should be aware and watchful of. While I was in Palm Springs last week, we had the pleasure of seeing Suzi Subeck, ACBL President for 2015, turn over her gavels to the new President, Ken Monzingo, from District 22.

So we again have a West Coast President for the next year who will guide our management group of 25 District Directors and try to address all the important issues in our bridge world. We will also be sending a new District Director to that group, Kevin Lane, to represent all our District 23 needs and preferences. We should all wish them well in their efforts and I look forward to reading the reports after those week-long marathon meetings that they hold at each NABC to conduct business.

The induction ceremony, hosted by District 22 President David Lodge, was held in front of 100's of players, Unit and District Reps, Officers, and guests, who were all there to show their support for Ken. It was not without emotion when Ken accepted his new gavels. I have admired the work that Ken has done for his District over the past several years, not knowing that he has been serving for a mere 45 years in total! His columns in the District 22 Forum magazine are filled with all the happenings around his district and at ACBL and what his perceptions are of the future. His own future was dim for a while last year, in losing a close election for his present post to Suzi. From his speech last week, we found out that he was very discouraged about future participation. As events unfolded in recent months,

PRESIDENT *continued on page 2*

Fun, Members, and Money

by Kevin Lane, District Director



As new District Director, I have duties to both the national ACBL organization and our local district. In these monthly columns, I will discuss very serious problems confronting the national ACBL organization. This month I simply emphasize that our local district needs more fun, members, and money.

We play bridge for enjoyment. Playing bridge in our district - whether at a district, unit, or club event - should be a positive experience. All members of our district - whether players, club owners, or district or unit volunteers - must assist in making bridge fun and rewarding.

We need more members. Our district is relatively small. We are currently the 23rd largest district out of 25 districts. But this need not be so. The average ACBL District has 500 ACBL members for every 1 million people in the general population. District 23 coincides with the 10 million people in Los Angeles County. If our district improves to average in promoting bridge we will rise from our current 3400 members to 5000 members. Not easy to do, but several clubs in our district have enjoyed strong growth recently, so optimism and energy are called for.

Our district also needs money. Mike Marcucci is the president of District 23. He's working hard to understand and improve chronic financial challenges confronting District 23. Please support Mike's efforts.

Reach me at klaned23@gmail.com

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however, a determined group of his friends from all over the country, including Suzi, rallied behind him for a second shot and were successful when the ballots were counted. To say that Ken was very happy is an understatement. He now looks with eagerness to start his term and dive into the tasks ahead with the support of all the Directors who supported him and now welcome him as the new President. In his own words, bridge is a 24/7 activity for him and that will probably not change. Look for some interesting articles from him in upcoming issues of the Bridge Bulletin.

Speaking of articles and keeping up to date with activities, I hope to hear that more players read our own District 23 Bridge News each month. Even though it is online and

sort of "out of mind", please remember to check each month. Our editor, Jennifer, works hard to issue it by the first of the month, so it is right there for you to catch your Unit's news and check on upcoming tournaments in our area. I will have more to say about our tournament planning next month. We are working with all the area Units to space out our sectionals next year, though present agreements may interfere with that. It may take a while to coordinate our scheduling thoroughly. The other good news is that your tournament committee is indeed investigating the Pasadena Convention Center as a Regional site. No promises.

Look for results of our North American Pairs competition next month. Our players will be fighting it out at the Finals in January. Cookies will be served.

District 23 Top 30

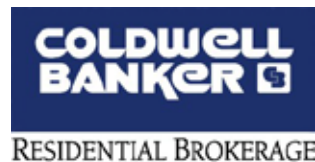
Each year in November, the ACBL publishes a list of the Top 100 Lifetime MasterPoint Holders. This year, Jeff Meckstroth was at the top with 80,288! Here's how our District 23 members also place in that lifetime category. The players toward the top made the ACBL list, as the numbers show, and our whole Top 30 is then filled in after that. Congrats to all these great players.

1. Jeff Meckstroth - 80,288
51. Steve Gross - 25,308
56. Mary Jane Farrell - 24,974
99. Ellen Anten - 20,655
110. Jill Meyers - 19,848
164. Mitch Dunitz - 17,158
190. Rebecca Clough - 16,415
7. Steve Mager - 15,855
8. Gerry Bare - 14,929
9. Roger Clough - 14,795
10. Ed Davis - 14,671
11. Pam Wittes - 12,322
12. John Swanson - 11,321
13. Eddie Kantar - 10,892
14. Jeff Goldsmith - 10,210
15. Mike Savage - 10,058
16. John Jones - 9,843
17. Peter Benjamin - 9,582
18. Bruce Horiguchi - 9,247
19. Aram Bedros - 8,941
20. Gil Stinebaugh - 8,661
21. Alex Kolesnik - 8,583
22. Andy Vinock - 8,255
23. Bill Sides - 8,034
24. Sid Brownstein - 7,906
25. Ellen Kent - 7,712
26. Rhonda Himmell - 7,705
27. Steve Onderwyzer - 6,899
28. Phil Schaefer - 6,592
29. Peter Szecsi - 6,463
30. Phyllis Parker - 6,396

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--by Mike Marcucci



Los Angeles Regional at LAX

Los Angeles, CA February 15th-21st 2016



Free 299'er
Workshop & Lunch

Free two-hour bridge workshop and lesson on Monday Feb 15th from 10:30am to 12:30, followed by lite lunch.
Game at 1:15

Registration required
Please call Jeff Grotenhuis
310.600.4275
JeffGro@gmail.com

Four Points by Sheraton at LAX
9750 Airport Blvd., LA 90045

Reserve early, rooms will sell out!
1-800-529-4683

- ♥ Room rate \$126 (please refer to ALACBU ATTENDEES)
- ♥ Reserve before Monday, February 1st 2016
- ♥ Complimentary WiFi, access to 24 hour fitness center and swimming pool, and free airport shuttle
- ♥ Convenient transportation to Manhattan Beach shopping and restaurants
- ♥ Self parking \$10.00 per day
- ♥ Card fees \$14 for paid members, \$18 for others.




Need partner or team mates?

Diane Sachs 562-981-4884 or
dianesachs@yahoo.com

Tournament manager Peter Benjamin

310-720-6050, ahoneydo@aol.com

Director-in-Charge McKenzie Meyers

Sanction #1602047



Los Angeles Regional at LAX

Los Angeles, CA February 15th-21st 2016

Revised

<p>Monday Feb 15th</p> <p>10:30 AM Free 299er Workshop & Lunch (reservation required)</p> <p>1:15 PM Afternoon Side Game Series 1 of 6 Stratified Charity Pairs 1 of 2 (0-1500/3000/3000+) 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>7:00 PM PM Side Game Series 1 of 5 Stratified Charity Pairs 2 of 2 (0-1500/3000/3000+)</p> <p>Thursday Feb 18th</p> <p>10:30 AM AM Side Game Series 3 of 5 Flight A/X Swiss (0-5000/5000+) 1 of 2 Abe Lincoln KO 3 of 4 Bracketed Flight B Swiss Teams (no player over 3000) 1 of 2 Pat Banks Memorial Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 1 of 2 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>2:30 PM Guest Lecture</p> <p>3:15 PM Abe Lincoln KO 4 of 4 Afternoon Side Game Series 4 of 6 Flight A/X Swiss (0-5000/5000+) 2 of 2 Bracketed Flight B Swiss Teams (no player over 3000) 2 of 2 Pat Banks Memorial Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 2 of 2 Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session) 299er Swiss Team</p> <p>7:30 PM PM Side Game Series 4 of 5 299er Pairs Game</p>	<p>Tuesday Feb 16th</p> <p>10:30 AM AM Side Game Series 1 of 5 George Washington KO 1 of 4 Rita Corwin Memorial Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 1 of 2 GOLD RUSH PAIRS (100/300/750) 1 OF 2 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>2:30 PM Guest Lecture</p> <p>3:15 PM George Washington KO 2 of 4 Afternoon Side Game Series 2 of 6 Rita Corwin Memorial Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 1 of 2 GOLD RUSH PAIRS (100/300/750) 2 OF 2 Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session)</p> <p>7:30 PM PM Side Game Series 2 of 5 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>Friday Feb 19</p> <p>10:30 AM AM Side Game Series 4 of 5 Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 1 of 2 GOLD RUSH PAIRS (100/300/750) 1 OF 2 Teddy Roosevelt KO 1 of 4 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>2:30 PM Guest Lecture</p> <p>3:15 PM Afternoon Side Game Series 5 of 6 Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 2 of 2 GOLD RUSH PAIRS (100/300/750) 2 OF 2 Teddy Roosevelt KO 2 of 4 Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session) 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>7:30 PM PM Side Game Series 5 of 5</p>	<p>Wednesday Feb 17th</p> <p>10:30 AM AM Side Game Series 2 of 5 George Washington KO 3 of 4 Abe Lincoln KO 1 of 4 Wednesday Compact KO 1 & 2 Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 1 of 2 GOLD RUSH PAIRS (100/300/750) 1 OF 2 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>2:30 PM Guest Lecture</p> <p>3:15 PM George Washington KO 4 of 4 Abe Lincoln KO 2 of 4 Wednesday Compact KO 3 & 4 Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 2 of 2 GOLD RUSH PAIRS (100/300/750) 2 OF 2 Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session) 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>7:30 PM PM Side Game Series 3 of 5</p> <p>Saturday Feb 20</p> <p>10:30 AM AM Side Game Series 5 of 5 Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 1 of 2 GOLD RUSH PAIRS (100/300/750) 1 OF 2 Teddy Roosevelt KO 3 of 4 Saturday Compact KO 1 & 2 299er Pairs Game</p> <p>2:30 PM Guest Lecture</p> <p>3:15 PM Afternoon Side Game Series 6 of 6 Open Pairs (0-1500/3000/3000+) 2 of 2 GOLD RUSH PAIRS (100/300/750) 2 OF 2 Teddy Roosevelt KO 4 of 4 Saturday Compact KO 3 & 4 299er Pairs game Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session)</p>
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♥ Strats determined by MP averages, but no player can exceed the event limit.

♥ Open Events and side series are stratified 0-1500/3000/3000+

♥ Gold Rush Pairs award gold points to overall winners and 0 – 750 section tops; red points to 0 – 300.

♥ All KO's are bracketed, random draw and may be handicapped.

Sunday Feb 21st
10:00 AM & TBA, 7 seven-board matches with short lunch break:

A/X Swiss Teams (0-5000/5000+)

Bracketed Flight B Swiss Teams (0 – 3000), 8 teams per bracket; 3 in each bracket win gold

Stratified Fast Pairs - 2 sessions (0-750/750-3000/3000+)

Bridge Stories

This recurring series in the Southern California Bridge News includes bridge stories from District 23 players who recently earned a new rank as collected by Rand Pinsky.

As much as I'd like to pretend otherwise, there was a degree of delight and satisfaction at the accomplishment of my Sectional Master status. I give all the credit to my Tuesday bridge partner, who enabled us to come in high enough at a STaC game to earn us the fraction of a silver point that I needed.

I learned bridge from my parents. I first encountered duplicate at the TRW Bridge Club in the mid-1980s. If I recall correctly, the zero tolerance policy had not been instituted and there were some insufferably horrid scenes there. I quit that club when my job location changed in 1989. I missed bridge and tried to teach my wife and another couple the rudiments of the game with mixed results. Neither wife cared a hoot about bridge competition and the other husband played as if he were playing poker!

In 2010 I read the Christmas letter of some friends, who reported they were involved in a bridge club. I immediately wanted to be involved. The next opportunity, I asked them where they played. I showed up, met Jeff Grotenhuis, and the rest is history.

*Fred Roach
Sectional Master*

Not sure my story is too newsworthy. I started playing bridge at while attending college at UCLA years ago. I played enough then to earn about 30 MP. Back then, it was smoked-filled rooms and my memory was of coming home and having to shower and wash my hair just to get the stench off me. I largely gave up competitive bridge for my working career because I couldn't see balancing the demands of both. Now that I'm retired, I thought I'd resume playing competitive bridge. This required two things-- brushing up on bridge theory and finding a committed partner that would be willing to work together together to build a strong partnership.

For the former, I re-read two books from my library: Sheinwold's "5 Weeks to Winning Bridge" and Hardy's 1989 edition of "Two Over One Game Force."

I also learned a new standard (SAYC) was introduced and found and read the very-nicely-written little 8-page booklet provided by the ACBL. I now encourage

others to read this booklet, and to keep going back to it regularly until everything there is second-nature.

For the latter, I found two friends, Deb and Bruce, that also had retired recently and decided to take up or resume playing bridge. For me, bridge is only fun when you and your partner are in sync in the bidding and play. If you don't know what your partner's bid or play means, the game loses all interest to me. For that reason, I cannot stand playing with a pick-up partner where you never know which bids are forcing or invitational, which doubles are penalty and which are for takeout or convey some other special meaning, and which cards played have special meaning. Both of these friends agreed to work with me on building a real partnership-- and I am grateful to them for that. This involves both playing together and reviewing hand records afterwards to try to clear up any misunderstandings that arose during the game. With these two partners I played about once a week for 70 weeks and that apparently was enough to accumulate the additional 70 MPs needed for me to reach the Regional Master status.

I don't really take too much stock in titles, though. To me, getting points in any bridge match indicates some level of success. But reaching various totals is often more about how often (or how long) you play than how good you are. I think it would be good if someone were to invent an alternative ranking system that somehow ranked (at the club level, say) all the players based on something like MP-per-game for the past year. That, to me, would be a better way to judge talent and a better way to seed games than the current total-MP method used today.

And I also want to call out that I noticed right away various differences in the game from my early days, including these: bidding boxes, scoring computers, and using the internet to look up bidding conventions or view results, 1430 instead of RKCB, and double meaning "stolen bid."

So, that's my story.

*Steve Kiser
Regional Master*

Despite my new status of Regional Master, I actually feel I am just finally getting my feet on the ground to learn this game and one of most appealing factors to the game is that the challenges never end.

I started playing bridge in Graduate school in →



the late '50's when we couldn't afford to go to a movie and continued playing party bridge until just a few years ago. I thought I was playing an OK game, but actually I was playing flat bridge for about 45 years. Then I became acquainted with Mary Stauf from a party

bridge game. She asked me to sub for her absent partner in a duplicate game at our Lancaster club. I had the impression that she was sort of the backbone of our club and one could never ask for a more gracious advocate of the game. She was kind enough to mentor me through the early phases of learning and followed up with regular support and encouragement. It was a severe loss when she passed away almost three years ago.

Mary was really outstanding but I have been impressed by almost universal understanding and support of other players most of whom play a the better game than I. I have also been blessed with a supportive wife as a regular partner. So far, we have managed to mostly quell dissention which we sometimes see in married partners.

My greatest challenge has been my poor attitude about mistakes. Blunders really get me down and occasionally after a bad game, the distress lingers well into the next day. There have been times when I seriously felt like giving up the game, but that has always healed before the next game. I think the mentoring program is really valuable. A good mentor is skillful at gauging the desired frequency of intervention. Correcting every error can be overwhelming.

*Hal Underwood
Regional Master*

Looking for a Club?

Did you know how easy it is to find a bridge game in LA? This url brings you to a great ACBL page: <https://web3.acbl.org/findalist/club>

All 34 Clubs in Los Angeles are listed (including one new one that I didn't know about) and you can look up all the game times, locations, and contact info. Some of them even offer cookies - the good kind!

Go out and try them all. Wonder who holds the record for most club games in a week? Any claims?

- by Mike Marcucci

District 23 Rank Changes November 2015

Junior Master

Susan Alverson, Sherrill Blumberg
Gretchen Fuelling, Karen Harms
Carol Mann, Donna Marovich
Daisy Mehta, Susan Morse-Lebow
Jon Pack, Rami Razouk

Club Master

Lina Ashar, Robert Filkoff
Joan Fox, Ellen Glaser
Don Hopf, Donetta Serafini
Kersten Truelson, Gregory Tsien
Donald Vallens, Bob Weingarten

Sectional Master

Brenda Berland
Coral Goldsmith
Thomas Grove
Terry Hane
Kathleen Keller
Linda Mackenzie
H Frank Neiman
Fred Roach

Regional Master

Sylvia Kaprelyan
Stephen Kiser
Nancy Koss
Alan Olschwang
Harold Underwood
Herbert Wolas

NABC Master

Lawrence Newman

Life Master

Chihwen Chen
Gerry Gastelum
Jerome Smith

Bronze Life Master

Thomas Lill

Silver Life Master

Douglas Kushner

Around the Units in District 23

Glendale Verdugo by Sharon Wolf

Unit Game, January 9, 2016
Lunch at 11:15, game at noon

Happy New Year to all. Hope everyone is looking forward to another year of bridge.

Results of the December Unit game/holiday party were as follows:

N/S

A1	B1	Adam Barron & Phil Dessert
A2		Caroline Cohen & Tim Lolli
A3		John Villalobos & David Rozzell
A4	B2 C1	Fay Chu & Barbara Leider

E/W

A1		Jack Futrell & Rae Murbach
A2		Bill Brodek & Paula Olivares
A3	B1	Art Chacanas & Gerry Belcher
A4		Kathy Cresto & Roshen Hadulla
	B2 C1	Sandy Rucker & Adair Paul
	C2	Sharon Wolf & Steve Shanker

Our next Unit game is on January 9. Please join us.

Long Beach by Jon Yinger

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com

November 22 Unit Game: Overall results: 1st in A: Lowell Andrews/Allen Golbert, 2nd Verna Baccus/Marilyn Christy, 3rd Joseph Chaikin/Xiaoxue Walker, 4th Steve Mager/Gerry Carlson, 5th Steve Sturm/Phil Hiestand, 6th Marcie Evans/Mary Kiechle. In the B flight overalls: 1st Pat and Bob Adam, 2nd Betti and

Warren Harris, 3rd Usha Bansal/Rob Preece, 4th Ed-die Gruber/Diane Starbuck, 5th Joyce Roberts/Ralph Brunson, 6th Baum Harris/Nancy Schultz. Congratulations to all!

70+% Games: November 16 through December 15: In the NLM game Nov 21 Barbara and Alan Olschwang had a 70.54% game. Congratulations to you two!

Big Masterpoint Awards November 16 through December 15: In the Unit Game Nov 22 Lowell Andrews/Allen Golbert won 5.06mp for 1st, Verna Baccus/Marilyn Christy 3.80mp for 2nd. Nov 27 Sean Lui/Earl VanDerVord won 4.38mp for 1st, Steve skinner/Jackie Hess 3.29mp for 2nd. And Dec 9 Cecil Cook/Eugene White won 4.50mp for 1st, Sherry Troeger/Lavonne McQuilkin 3.38mp for 2nd. Congratulations to all 6 pairs!!

Condolences to the family and friends of Shirely Tavlin and Charlotte Sturm both of whom passed away earlier this month.

Get Well Wishes to Lois Perovich, Bob Mault and Larry Slutsky.

New Member: William Cray. Welcome to the Club!

Status Changes: New Junior Master: Barbara Olschwang. New Club Masters: John Hagman, Vincent Vilker. New Regional Master: Kathleen Pecarovich. New NABC Master: William Dilks. Congratulations to you all!

Upcoming Events at the Club: Jan 1 through 10 is Junior Fund Week. The game on the 10th will be a team game.

All games pay extra points. Card fees: \$12.

Jan 16 North American Pairs finals. Check for more info at LBBC.

Jan 24 Unit Game. Game begins at 1pm. Dessert served during the game. Card fees \$8.

Jan 25 through 31 District 22/23 STaC. Silver points. Card fees \$12.

News From Leisure World Bridge Clubs
by Judy Carter-Johnson

Club Championship Game Nov 21 - Clubhouse #1: John Brailier/Baum Harris 1 in A. Simone Chottin/Jaye Woodington 2 in A, 1 in B. Lavonne McQuilkin/Sherry Troeger 3 in A. Jack Dampman/George Koehm 4 in A, 2 in B, 1 in C. Joyce Basch/Judith Jones 5 in A, 3 in B. Jean Byer /Bud Parish 6 in A, 4 in B. Betty Scharf/Bill Robinson 5 in B, 2 in C. Louise Seifert/Stam Johnson 3 in C.

Get Well Wishes: Bob Mault and Ruth Kaller – Hope you are both recovering so you can join us again soon!

Congratulations: 70% games: Nov 21 Baum Harris/John Brailier had a 70.45% game. Nov 23 Gary Paugh/Bud Parish had a 71.25% game.

Congratulations to the participants at the Long Beach Sectional: Sylvia Kaprelyan, Betty Jackson, Joan Tschirki and Jean Byer plus many of our guest players.

Upcoming Games: Club Championship Games: Clubhouse #3 December 21 Clubhouse #1 January 15 and January 23. Unit-rated games: Clubhouse #3 February 11. Clubhouse #1 April 15.

Phone number for Clubhouse #3 - Late arrivals, last minute reservations, last minute cancellations, need a partner--After 12:00 noon: (562) 481 7368. Games are held on Mondays/ Thursdays at Clubhouse #3 and Friday/Saturday at Clubhouse #1 at 12:15. Advanced reservations are requested as Leisure World is a gated community. Please call: Mon. - Midge Dunagan (562) 594 9698 Thurs - Cookie Pham (562) 431 6453 Fri and Sat - Jaye Woodington (562) 799 1089. Any news for next month's column, please e mail me @ jcy90740@gmail.com Results of all Leisure World games are posted on www.acblunit557.org

Pasadena-San Gabriel Valley by Marty Weiss

Upcoming Events

559 Unit Game: Sunday, January 3, 1:00
559 Unit Game: Sunday, January 31, 1:00
San Marino Community Center
1800 Huntington Drive, San Marino

Arcadia Bridge Center

Beat the House Night, Friday, January 22 7:15
Winners and Losers, Sunday, January 24 1:00

Beginning Bridge Lessons

For beginners, no bridge knowledge necessary

Courses begin:

Tues January 12, 11:30 or Thurs, January 14 7:30
Brush-up Pre-Game Lectures: Week of January 11

Holiday Party - December 2015

We would like to thank the board members for their hard work, and hard work it surely is, as I now know, having recently joined the board:

Mary Falvey, Unit President
Karen Arase, Holiday Party Chair
Peter Szcesi
Bernie Mateer
Miriam Harrington
Richard Halverstadt
Mary Downey
Linda Stuart
Sandra Franciscus
Marie Nimmrich
Ann Raymond
Beverly Weiss
Patrick Cardullo – emcee.
Jimmy Rogers – Bartender

In addition, the great evening would not have been possible without the contributions of appetizers, raffle prizes and silent auction items made by our members.

And thank you all for supporting our charities, by purchasing raffle tickets and bidding on the silent auction items.

We would like to thank these local businesses for their generous contribution of gift certificates and if you choose to dine at one of them, please mention that you chose them because of their generosity.

Malbec, Argentinian cuisine, Pasadena
Del Frisco Grille, more than steaks, Pasadena
Roy's Restaurant, Pasadena
Domenico's Italian, Monrovia
Celestino's Ristorante, Pasadena
Cafe Santorini, Pasadena
Le Grande Orange, Pasadena
Café Bizou, Pasadena

Christmas Party/Unit Game Winners

Pairs

Flight A Kevin Lane- Robert Shore
Flight B/C Steve Shanker- Sharon Wolf

Swiss

Flight A: Robert C.F. Wang - William Ng - Amr El-ghamry - Shiu-Ming Huang
Flight B: Xingping Kang - Chihwen Chen - Edward Hsi - Zu Ming Cheng
Flight C: Gregory Tsien - Connie Wang - Hanna Zhuang - Gregory Tapia

Making Friends at Bridge

For me, the usual pattern has always been: I meet a new bridge partner or other people at bridge, we get along well, we go out to dinner, and then we become friends. That has certainly been the pattern since Bev and I moved out to Pasadena. In fact, Beverly and I first met each other at bridge, although it took me four or five years before I took a shot, with the typical bridge players' come-on. We were at a tournament in White Plains, NY. During a break I suggested that 'we might play together sometime'. Her reply: "We did." Dumb me. I'd forgotten that we'd played together some years earlier in a Swiss event. All's well that ends well, however, as all of you can plainly see. Within three or four weeks we were an acknowledged couple, and we've been together now for 15 years, and married for nine.

That definitely was not how it was with my partner Sylvester. We first met some 30 years ago, when we were both members of a self help group. We hit it off at once, then began meeting regularly for dinner once a week, and eventually we took two trips through Italy together, discovering wonderful places to eat since both of us were/are 'foodies.'

Sylvester had arrived in the US at the age of 22, from his homeland, Greece, with little money, limited education, but an enquiring mind and a driving ambition. He began working in a gas station, but by the time we first met, he was the owner of two restaurants. There came a time, when, having sold one of them, he was contemplating getting rid of the other. I urged him to do so.

"What'll I do with myself?", he asked. "You'll be my partner," I replied. "Doing what?" he asked. "Playing bridge, with me," I said.

I convinced him, and within a few months. Sylvester joined me in retirement.

He was a relatively new player at that time, but he brought to the game a keen intellect, the desire to improve, and the same drive that had carried him to success in business. He really worked at it, taking lessons from a pro - not from me. We played every Thursday, for more than 10 years, alternating one week in Westchester, NY, where he lived, and where we would usually have dinner together after the game, and brunch before bridge, in New Jersey the other week.

His game improved dramatically, and our friendship has continued to grow. He and his wife have been out here twice and, I am happy to say, they are coming again in January,

I am also happy to report that he was mentioned in the September Bridge Bulletin on page 45 having scored a 75.87 game at the Hartes Club, in White Plains, N.Y.

Playing with Mr. Roy Wilson at a recent game in Arcadia, I picked up the following hand: ♠Xxx ♥xxx ♦Kxxxx ♣xx.

Mr. Wilson, in first seat opened 1♣. RHO passed, and I stared with loathing at my dreadful hand. I briefly, very briefly, considered 1♦, then pondered over a possible 2♦ preemptive bid, before gritting my teeth, passed, with a silent prayer that LHO would enter the fray. He did not, and so Mr. Wilson, with his 19 points which included ♣A10xx, played one club. And, as it happened, he made 1♣, which turned out to be a good result.

We have since had some discussions about the situation. Mr. Wilson felt, and feels, I should have made a bid, any bid, rather than leave him in a possible 3-2 trump fit. My feeling was, and is, that if he had a standard 12-14 point opener, any bid by me was as likely to leave us in a non-fit, and possibly at a higher level, and with his 19-point hand, almost certainly at too high a level. And, of course, passing left the door open to some kind of balancing entry by LHO.

What would you have done?

Pomona Covina
by Tom Lill

Unit Game – Saturday, January 16, 11:00 a.m.
Individual – Saturday, January 2, 9:30 a.m., Chino Site

That's right, the first Individual of the year will be at my place in Chino. No problem with Lois, I just want to display my Christmas Village. 18 years in the →

making...

In November's Unit Clinton Lew - Patricia Radamaker narrowly beat out David and Susan Ruoff. Joseph Viola - Amr Elghamry were third, Richard Patterson - Roger Boyar fourth, and Thomas Lill - Ann McClelland rounded out the top five.

No luck finding fresh meat for our Board of Directors. So it will be the same cast of characters (and you may take that last word however you like) for 2016.

In the December Individual, Don Logsdon took the top spot. Pat Radamaker was second, followed by Your Correspondent, Jeddud Cartagena, and Linda Tessier.

The top game this month was "only" 68.2%, turned in by Fredy and Lulu Minter. Other winners: Claudia Cochran, Roger Boyar, Clint Lew, Hanan Mogharbel, Kurt Trieselmann, Walt Otto, Ken Bloomfield, and Paul Chrisney. The list is shorter this month, because La Fetra was closed for nearly two weeks for the Holiday Boutique.

Two promotions this month: Karen Olin got the coveted Gold Card (i.e., she's now a Life Master), and Vic Sartor has reached the rarefied atmosphere breathed by Gold Life Masters. Wow!

This month we have a triple-header for you. The first two were both dealt in the same club session. The first is a truly awesome rock crusher: ♠AK7 ♥AKJ ♦AKQ ♣AK98.

What do you do with a monster like that? At one table, the hand was opened 2♣, getting a 2♦ response (waiting). No kidding. The next call was 6NT, a popular contract. Too bad, dummy turned up worthless: ♠J632 ♥T ♦8543 ♣J643 with both major suit Queens are over the Jacks, and clubs are 4-1 meaning dummy will be hard to reach. No one came out with more than the 11 tricks he started with.

Impressed by that 3-loser hand? Second up is a rare 1-loser hand, albeit with slightly less high card strength: ♠--- ♥AQT96 ♦A ♣AKQ8543.

After two passes, you open 1♥. Yes, you could open this thing 2♣ if you wish, but let's go with 1♥. Partner raises to 2♥. Somewhat unexpectedly, RHO calls 2♠! Now what?

It's going to be tough to explore this thing scientifically, especially since you are playing a fairly simple convention card. So, 6♥ it is.

Now it gets fun! The enterprising soul on your right doubles! Ah, heck, let's have some fun and pull the blue card. (When was the last time you played a redoubled contract? C'mon, be honest!) The opening lead

is a spade, of course, which you ruff. Dummy doesn't really have much, but it's enough: ♠54 ♥K32 ♦KQ982 ♣976.

You ruff, cash the ♥A, the 9 dropping on your left, cross to the ♥K, LHO showing out, lead back through RHO's Jx, draw the last trump and claim 13 tricks. Evidently RHO doubled on a potential spade trick and Jxxx of trumps. Somewhere, both S. J. Simon and Victor Mollo are smiling...

And finally, we present this gem. You are the dealer, your side is vulnerable, and you find yourself looking at the second worst hand I've ever seen actually dealt: ♠6543 ♥64 ♦87643 ♣52 and you are treated to the following auction:

You	LHO	Par	RHO
pass	1♦	1♠	2♥
pass	pass	3♣	3♦
pass	3♥	all pass	

Now, we have given you this hand not merely for its sheer beauty, but to ask: what is your opening lead? Think... think... think... ready?

OK. Partner must be pretty shapely at these colors to be bidding gaily at the 3-level all by his lonesome. Most likely, he has the ace of both black suits. A club looks safer (less likely to be ruffed), but there's not much to choose from. Or is there?

The only... repeat only... correct lead has to be... a diamond! Why? Consider: the opening bid was 1♦, showing at least 3, most likely 4 diamonds. Responder later supported diamonds, showing at least 4 (one would hope). You have five yourself. How many does partner have? About 95% of the time, he will have none. Give the poor oaf his ruff while you can. That holds declarer to 10 tricks. Partner turned out to be 5=2=0=6 and did indeed hold both black Aces. But without the ruff, those aces are the only tricks for the defense.

Our Quote for the Month is appropriate for the New Year: "The problem with the future is that it keeps turning into the present." (Hobbes, speaking to Calvin)

Until next month ...

San Fernando Valley by Linda Silvey

Unit 561 Holiday Bridge/Dinner Party Report

A highly successful Unit 561 Holiday Bridge and Dinner Party was held on Saturday, December 5, at the 750 Club in Woodland Hills. An afternoon bridge game was followed by an outstanding dinner catered by Stonefire Grill. Special thanks are due to the Party Committee, chaired by Rochelle Lotto, with assistance from members Audrey Hill, Dennis Hill, Phil Jones, M.J. Jubelirer, Nancy Klemens, Bill Morton, Terry Morton, Frank Nordyke, Marge Romans, Linda Silvey, and Jan Toppel.

A business meeting was held before the afternoon bridge game. Unit 561 Board members elected for 2016 were Larry Abramson, Ellen Anten, Dennis Forst, Dennis Hill, Phil Jones, M.J. Jubelirer, Harold Kahn, Elaine Keyes, Nancy Klemens, and Rochelle Lotto.

Winners in the Open bridge game were: NS – Rochelle Lotto – Steve Lotto (A1, B1), Estelle Baron – Joan Grossblatt (A2), Sue Bernstein – Carla Spinner (A3, B2, C1), Dennis Hill – Mel Lerner (B3), Frank Nordyke – Deedy Nordyke (C2), and Leona Frisch – Corky Gore (C3); EW – Charles Sarture – Ellen Sue Sarture (A1, B1), Sandy Hunt – Dwight Hunt (A2), Phil Jones – Gloria Feerst (A3), Joyce Hart – April Adams (B2), Carol Levin – Donna Bauer (B3, C1), Ruth Pash – Mark Pash (C2), and Beverly McLeod – Bernard Seal (C3).

March 5: Unit 561 Awards Lunch/Games

A Unit 561 Game will be held on Saturday, March 5, at the 750 Club. A catered lunch will be served beginning at 12noon followed by the presentation of awards to winners of the 2015 unit-wide “Mini-McKenney” and “Ace of Clubs” competitions. Both an Intermediate and an Open game will begin at 1:00 p.m.

Special Congratulations

New Life Master Achievements by Unit 561 players are: Dwight Hunt (Silver – 1,000) and Om Chokriwala (Gold – 2,500).

November Top Ten Masterpoints at the 750 Club were Fuad Khuri 11.19, Dwight Hunt 9.15, Susan Raphael 8.03, Linda Silvey 7.84, Martin Hurwitz 7.71, Ray

Primus 7.71, Carol Bell 7.28, Ravnesh Amar 6.16, Dan Strauss 5.74, and Ron Malkin 5.65. 70% Games were achieved by Dwight Hunt - Claude Le Feuvre 75.10% and Ruth Fleisher – Marilyn Gaims 70.24%.

Braemar Dinner/Bridge Night

The next Braemar Dinner/Bridge Night will be held Tuesday, January 19. Dinner is \$18 per person and starts at 6 p.m. and the bridge is \$5 per person and begins at 7 p.m. This is an ACBL sanctioned game and the first place NS and EW winners will receive coupons for Braemar’s Wednesday night “Pastabilities” dinner. For reservations and/or partnerships contact Nancy Klemens at nrklemens@aol.com or (818) 609-1071.

January Special Events at the 750 Club

“Fifty-Two Shades of Play” will be celebrated at the 750 Club during the week of January 11-15. This is in recognition of the Club’s listing in ACBL’s “2015 Top Fifty Clubs for North America” (based on the total number of tables played for 52 weeks with 52 cards in each deck!). A big thank you to all the players, helpers, and directors who made this possible for a December ranking (not final) of number 36 out of 50 with 5,985 tables of bridge played through November 30.

Special treats provided during the “Fifty-Two Shades of Play” celebration will be as follows: Monday, Jan 11 – Pizza (morning), Ice Cream and Cake (evening); Tuesday, Jan 12 – Coffee Cakes and Cookies (morning); Wednesday, Jan 13 – Submarine Sandwiches (morning); Thursday, Jan 14 – Stonefire Grill Salads (morning), Pies (evening); and Friday, Jan 15 – Bagels (morning).

Calendar

Monday, January 11 – Friday, January 15, “Fifty-Two Shades of Play” celebration, at the 750 Club. See details above.

Tuesday, January 19, Braemar Dinner/Bridge Night. See details above.

Saturday, March 5, Unit 561 Awards Lunch/Games, at the 750 Club.

Friday, April 1 – Saturday, April 2, San Fernando Valley Sectional, at the 750 Club in Woodland Hills. →

Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

For the next few months, we are going to profile some of our Inspirational Players in Unit 556. This month we will feature Alene Friedman:

Alene Friedman has played in Rand's Tuesday night game for 13 years and is a valuable member of our bridge community. Alene started playing bridge when she was ten years old and still remembers many things her mother taught her. She graduated from Ohio State University in 1940 and was elected a member of Phi Beta Kappa. She continued playing bridge through the years became a certified ACBL director and currently holds the rank of Bronze Life Master. Alene has managed games at the Senior Centers in Sherman Oaks and Burbank for over twenty years. These were not small games, they were 26-30 tables. Today every week she directs two games, plays in five games and bowls in a scratch league. We hope we all have half the energy she has, when we are 93.

Unit Game Results December 7 in Santa Clarita

- 1 Paula Olivares – Bill Brodek, 61%
- 2 Lamonte Johnson – Mira Rowe, 60%
- 3 Hansford Rowe – George MacDonald, 57%
- 4 Carol Trendera – Gary Trendera, 56%
- 5/6 Shirley Ramspeck – Anita Walker, 53%
- 5/6 Roy Ladd – Bert Stock, 53%

Unit Game Results December 10 in Castaic

- 1 Bert Stock – Arif Shah, 60.5%
- 2 Rita Vannatter – Lamonte Johnson, 57%
- 3 Russ Buker – Kathy Swaine, 53.6%

Unit Game Results December 22 in Santa Clarita:

- 1 Bert Stock – Rita Vannatter, 63.5%
- 2 Hansford Rowe – Lamonte Johnson, 62.3%
- 3 Tracy Boys – Ruth Baker, 54.9%
- 4 Arif Shah – Kathy Swaine, 53.6%
- 5 Nell Shanz – Betty Pavey, 53.2%

Congratulations to Paula Olivares and Shari Elias who were first overall in the Friday morning StaC, 1499er Pair game with 61.65% on December 11. In the Wednesday morning StaC, Alene Friedman and Helen Malzer came in first with 63.7% and Paula Olivares and Vibeke Gilbreath came in second with 61.3%

Upcoming Events

Unit 556's Annual Meeting and "After the Holidays – Holiday Party." Tuesday, January 12 at the Senior Center in Santa Clarita.

This will be a Unit game and general membership meeting. The event will start at 5:30 p.m. The game will start at 6:45. A new board for 2016 will be selected. Anyone interested in serving on the board should contact Paula Olivares.

Torrance-South Bay by Steve Mager

Unit: www.freewebs.com/bridgeatunit568
SBBC: www.bridgeclubs.org/index.php?id=sbbc

Upcoming Events at the South Bay Bridge Club

Club Championship: Wednesday, January 6, 11:30 a.m.
Club Championship: Monday, January 11, 7:00 p.m.
Club Championship: Saturday, January 23, 2:00 p.m.
Friday Night game on January 15

Club Championships

The Club Championship on November 18 saw Fran Israel/Mark Raggio on top in Flight A and Lina Ashar/Janice Scholler winning Flights B and C. At the TSB unit Christmas party

Gerri Carlson/John J. McDermott came out on top in Flight A with Laura Gastelum/Mark Raggio leading both Flights B & C in the top Bracketed game. In the lower Bracketed game Pat Berg/Jeanette Betts led the way in Flight A with Virginia Brewer/Carl Muchnick taking Flight B and Marilyn and Andrew Limbach ahead in Flight C.

Team Winners

November 17: Sharon Biederman, John Jones, →

Steve Ramos, John Brailliar

November 24: Mary Ann Coyle, Gerri Carlson,
Wayne Otsuki, John J. McDermottDecember 8: Fran Israel, Luis Gamio, Jim Dutton, 2A 1B
Bronek Felczer 3A 2B
4A 3B**Great Western STAC Results**

The list below shows pairs who placed in the overalls of the recent Great Western STAC in games played at the South Bay Bridge Club. This a gigantic STAC covering 6 Districts and overalls are listed down to about 100th.

Monday Morning, December 7
8A 3B 3C Kiyoko Ohtomo/Jean Futami
37B Mike Welsh/Robert Rothman

Monday Evening, Aux Pairs
6A 6B Stan Greengard/Mark Raggio

6C Roberta Gottfried/James Alstad

Tuesday Morning, Aux Pairs

Gerri Carlson/Arlene Greengard

Ed Srenco/Harry Wessells

Dolores Nawa/Nancy Collinge

3C Pat Burg/Roberta Brown

Wednesday Morning

Gerri Carlson/John J. McDermott

Ray Mack/Robert Rothman

Carol McCully/Ed Barad

Stan Greengard/Cal Waller

Carole King/Beverly Narahara

Wednesday Evening

22A 13B 3C Lina Asher/Janice Scholler

9C Chris Freeland/Joan Crishal

Friday Morning →

Beach Cities Sectional (299r)

January 15-17, 2016

Hermosa Beach Kiwanis Club - 2515 Valley Drive, Hermosa Beach CA 90254 - 310.600.4275

EVENT	FRIDAY 1/15	SATURDAY 1/16	SUNDAY 1/17
299r / 49r Pairs 3 Strat Sections: 0-50, 50-100, 100-300	10:00 AM* 2:30 PM**	10:00 AM* 2:30 PM	10:00 AM*
Swiss Teams 5 boards / 4 rounds			2:30 PM

* Lessons held at 9:30 AM on Friday, Saturday and Sunday

** New players with 0-5 master points play free on Friday at 2:30 pm!

♠ FUN ♥ FOOD ♦ SILVER POINTS ♣

Pre-order \$7 lunch before 10:00 AM

Coffee - Variety of snacks

Tournament Chair:Jeff Grotenhuis (310) 600-4275
jeffgro@gmail.com**Partnerships:**Jan Drayer (707) 478-6654
drayerji@gmail.com "Bridge" in subject**Unit 568****Sanction S1601084****Card Fees:**Pair Games - \$14 per player
Sunday Swiss - \$56/4 person team

\$4 surcharge per session for unpaid or non-ACBL members

Pre-dealt hands for all pair games

Results: www.agilebridgeclub.com

2A 1B Robert Rothman/
Stan Greengard
17A 9B Dick Jones/Ernie
Frank

Saturday Afternoon

16A 6B Dolores Nawa/
Tom Barna
21A 8B Arlene Greengard/
Stan Greengard
34A Betsey Amador/
Gabriela Jackson

high number table). We receiver our boards each round from Lucy's table although for some reason it was located on the other side of the room. Three straight rounds on one of the boards I pulled out a hand where the cards were boxed. It all of a sudden hit me... Lucy is here. And I looked around and there Lucy was sitting in my seat at Table 1.

Hope you had nice holidays
Na Zdrowie

GUV Award

We are all happy to see Lucy Gellner back from her recent surgery. I found out she was back in a most unusual way. At the unit Christmas party she was at Table 1 NS and I was at Table 10 NS (The

West LA by Robert Shore

Unit Game:

January 18, 2016, 12:30 p.m.

Swan Song

I hope you attended and enjoyed the annual Holiday Party, which was held at the Griffin Club (formerly the Beverly Hills Country Club) for the last time for the foreseeable future, due to a change of ownership and remodeling. Chuck Fonarow and Alan Wollman won the open game and Nicholene Costanti and Lynn Speyer won the 299er game. A well deserved Volunteer of the Year award went to Stephanie Young. Your Humble Scribe was, well, humbled to accept the Player of the Year award.

Stacking the Deck

The last month saw both a District 23 STAC and the Fall version of the Great Western STAC. We had some two-timers in the District 23 STAC. Peter Benjamin won the Monday afternoon event. Myrna Blaufarb doubled up, winning on Monday evening with Anna Benatar and again on Tuesday evening with your Humble Scribe. Your Humble Scribe also revisited Victory Lane, taking top honors again on Saturday afternoon. Nelly Gordon and Lidia Epelbaum won the Monday afternoon event in the Great Western STAC. In Denver, Howard Einberg came away with a win in the first Sunday afternoon Flight A Swiss teams event.

The Natives Are Revolting

As many of the Unit's members may know by now, a groundswell of opposition has arisen to management at one of our local bridge clubs. This reporter has spoken directly to some of the principals involved. There appears to be a misperception that the complaints have arisen from a small group of people →

District 23
Grand National Team Trials
Representing Units
551,553,556,557,559,561,562,564,568
Teams must be a member of a unit in District 23.

**SAVE
THE
DATE
2016**

**Flight
A and C
April 16, 17th**

**Flight
B and Open
April 30th &
May 1**

Represent District 23 at Washington DC Nationals in August.

Flight & GOLD POINTS

OPEN	0 - unlimited	36 Gold
Flight A	0 - 6000	30 Gold
Flight B	0 - 2500	15 Gold
Flight C	0 - 500 non life master	15 25% Gold 75% Red

GNT rated event with gold points for over all winners

Only master points earned prior to August 6, 2015 are considered.

The teams flight is determined by the player on the team who has the most points.

Players may play in more than one flight.

All teams must register 15 minutes before game time. Games will begin at 10:00 AM.

Location: Long Beach Bridge Center . 4782 Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach . Ca

For more information contact Grand National Team Coordinators:

Howard Einberg
Janet Logan

howardeinberg@yahoo.com
janlogan99@gmail.com

complaining about disciplinary measures taken against them at the club level. In fact, based on the material this reporter has reviewed, the discomfort is widespread and arises from very weighty perceived concerns.

It is not the Unit's place to intervene in the internal management of the club, nor to judge whether the substance of the complaints is justified. However, in the personal opinion of this reporter, a long-time player at the local clubs, there comes a time when perception is more important than reality. In particular, when a substantial fraction of a club's clientele expresses such

clear discomfort with the in-place management team, a prudent regard for the long-term health of the Club strongly counsels that the Club's governing body take these concerns seriously, whether the underlying concerns are provable facts or merely a strong difference of opinion.

Welcome Mat

New ACBL members who joined our Unit in the last month were Wendy Aisley, Hugh Peddy, and Laurel Resnick. Transferring from other Units are Burt Eskow, Brettney Hardy, Doris Levinson, Mickie Love, Barbara Simpson, and

Linda and Stephan Tow. As always, please give them a warm welcome when you see them at the table.

Around the Clubs

Sherie Schneider and Viktor Anikovich won a club championship at Beverly Hills, as did Homa Nasserli and Rahim Israel. Topping 70% were Sandy Satlin and Ludweg Uri as well as Robert Bass and Steve Gross.

Picking up 70% games at Barrington were Gerry Bare and Peter Benjamin, Danny Kleinman and Beverly Goldstein, Nelly Gordon and Lidia Epelbaum (see above), and Sheri Rivera and Aram Bedros. Barrington will launch a Thursday night game on January 14. The inaugural game will feature pizza.

As always, the Marina City Club holds its games Tuesday evenings at 7:15 p.m. at 4333 Admiralty Way. Call Robin Thayer at (310) 713-8647 for information or for a partner.

Climbing the Ladder

Our Unit's newest Junior Masters are Ronald Bloom, Richard Coulter, Helene Eisenberg, Larry Feldman, Joanne Millius, Madeleine Rongey, Joseph Sessa, and Alex Wiles. Majorie Frank, Lawrence Mann, and Judy Savitsky have become Club Masters. Michael Schiff is now a Sectional Master, while Nathan Gittleman has become an NABC Master.

Valerie Aron, Rose Boot, and Robert Carroll all have become Gold Life Masters. Congratulations to all on your accomplishments.

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



**Disorderly
Keno - HERE WE COME**




North American Pairs

Flt C Finals	Flt A & B Finals
Sun. 10 Jan 2016, 11:00 AM	Sat. 16 Jan 2016, 11:00 AM
South Bay Bridge Club	South Bay Bridge Club
24100 Narbonne Ave, Lomita	24100 Narbonne Ave, Lomita

2 Sessions with a break

Snacks • Sodas • Coffee • Gold/Red Points

Mike Marcucci - 818 903-2471

Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

Panelists: Roger Lee, Tim Lolli, Mister Mealy-mouth, John Swanson,
Michael Shuster, Bill Wickham, and Jon Wittes

This column is dedicated to the memory of three of my former partners and teammates: Don Krause, Mary Jane Farrell, and Charlotte Sturm. Mary Jane and Charlotte both died since I wrote my last column. Don died a few months ago, but I did not find out about it until recently.

I frequently played with Don in Eli Borok's money IMP games. Don was also my teammate in a regional where my team accomplished something I had never done before nor since: we didn't lose a single IMP the entire event. Don was playing with Betty Ann Kennedy and I was playing with Peter Benjamin. Don and Betty Ann were solid throughout. Peter and I nearly created an IMP loss when we bid a 7% slam, but the cards were favorable. Don was an excellent technician; I remember the last hand he played against me. Don was in an easy to bid 4♥ game. I got off to the best lead, but he went after setting up dummy's long suit. First he took an unblocking finesse in dummy's suit. Later, he took an entry finesse in another suit (it wouldn't have cost if it lost). Bingo! Don had 12 tricks on a hand most declarers made only 10. Only one other declarer made 12 tricks.

Mary Jane was at one time widely considered the best woman player in the world. Her technique was incredible, but Mary Jane was also interested in bidding theory. I played against her in a club game in the 70s. Forcing No Trumps were in their infancy. I picked up a 4=5=2=2 minimum opening bid. I opened 1♥ and my partner, Art Zail, bid 1NT. I had never heard or read of any discussion of how to handle this problem. My choices were: pass, even though it was forcing, bid 2♣, bid 2♥, reverse into spades or overbid significantly with 2NT. I had thought about the problem previously and

rebid 2♣ in tempo. Art raised to 3♣, all pass. Art, bless him, put down six clubs in the dummy. After I finished playing the hand, Mary Jane asked me "Did you bid 2♣ on a two card suit?" Oh, no, I thought! That must not be the right bid. "Yes, ma'am" I stammered. "What should I bid?" I asked, spreading my hand for everyone to see. Mary Jane took about two minutes to think before saying "Yes, I think 2♣ is the best bid." Whew! A year or so later I thought I had died and gone to bridge heaven when Mary Jane asked my partner and me to play on a team with her and Randi Montin.

Charlotte really, really loved bridge. Her most frequent partner was her son Steve, but I remember playing with her during the 70's and 80's. I remember quite well a hand Charlotte played against my team a few months ago. I was in a major game, got a soft opening lead, and played the hand well enough that I thought it was likely we had picked up a game swing. Imagine my chagrin when, during the comparison, I proudly announced "Plus 620", only to hear "Lose one". I asked about the play at the other table. Charlotte received the same favorable lead I got, and the play was card-for-card identical until the point I ensured my tenth trick. At that point I grabbed my tenth trick, thinking that doing otherwise was risking the contract. Charlotte realized that what she knew about the opponents' hands allowed for a safe way of trying for an overtrick. She got it!

My condolences to: Steve Sturm, James Kauder (Mary Jane's son), and all of the relatives, friends and fans of Don's, Mary Jane's, and Charlotte's. We lost some great bridge players who were also great human beings.

1

MPs
NS vul

South	West	North	East
2♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
?		3♣	Pass

You, South, hold: ♠J54 ♥2 ♦AK543 ♣KQT2
What call do you make?

What does 3♣ show? Is it patterning out with 5=4=1=3 shape? If so, how does it differ from 4♦? Is it a cuebid? If partner has patterned and holds ♠AKQxx ♥Axxx ♦x ♣Axx, then 7♠ looks pretty good. If he or she holds ♠Qxxxx ♥KQJx ♦x ♣AJx then 4♠ will need some luck. So what bid gets us to the correct level? I'll start with the lone cuebidder.

Mealymouth: 3♦. As I don't think partner's 3♣ is an effort to reach a club contract following even tepid agreement on spades, I won't raise to 4♣. The time to seek a 4-4 club fit was at my second turn, when I would have bid 3♣ rather than 2♠, intending to support spades at my third turn to show tertiary support. As partner may have a strong hand and be seeking slam, I'll cooperate with 3♦, and bid 4♣ next if he continues with 3♥ or 3♠. ♠KQT87 ♥AQ54 ♦9 ♣AJ8 opposite will provide good play for slam and ♠KQT87 ♥AK54 ♦96 ♣A8 opposite will make slam (6NT!) a lock.

The rest of the panel goes for a 4♣ bid. I like that bid because partner now knows that I have short hearts and can evaluate his/her heart holding.

Shuster: 4♣. Partner will typically be 5=4=1=3 with slam interest here. This hand is very control-rich and slam-positive, despite the devalued ♦K. Note that

the ♦K still will provide extra flexibility, as it means partner will probably only need to trump one heart in dummy: one goes on a club and one on the ♦K. If partner happens to be 5=4=0=4, then 6♣ is a live possibility, and 4♣ caters to this as well.

Wittes: 4♣. Although I have somewhat of a minimum, I have reasonable controls, and it seems right to cooperate below game level by completing my pattern. Partner can continue on if appropriate.

Lee: 4♣. I have some good coverage in clubs and weak spades, so this seems like a reasonable description.

Lolli: 4♣. Partner is certainly looking for something, so I'll show him what I have with a 4♣ bid. This should show three spades, one heart, five diamonds, four clubs and an opening hand, which is coincidentally what I have.

Wickham: 4♣. Bidding what you have will provide partner with the most help.

Swanson: 4♣. I'm looking for something else because this is presented as a problem, but I can't find anything.

D23 Set for NAP Finals

by Mike Marcucci

The South Bay will be hosting our North American Pairs Finals this year. See the flyer for details. All the qualifiers are on our website, so check for your name if not sure. With only 5 tables in Flight A, 7 tables in Flight B, and 3 tables in

Flight C, the fields are small and the chance of winning those spots to Reno are the best in several years.

Note that the Finals are split this year - the first time that has happened. Since the Flight C players have their own sectional in Torrance on January 16-17 and folks can't be in two places at once, their NAP Final is on January 10. Flights A & B should note that

their date is a Saturday this year - again a departure from all previous tradition!

For those lucky players who are going to the Hawaii Regional the following week, we wanted to allow you that travel day on Sunday.

Hope to see **all** qualifiers on their respective game dates with cards reviewed and ready for cookies.

2

MPs
all vul

South

Pass
?

West

1♠

North

Pass
Dbl

East

Pass
2♠

You, South, hold: ♠Q ♥7654 ♦Q765 ♣A654
What call do you make?

Partner's passed hand double is frequently based on a singleton in the opponent's suit. That gives the opponents 11 spades. They have at least half the deck in high cards. It is extremely likely that the opponents will be in 4♠ by the next time I get to bid. We aren't buying the contract under any circumstances. Thus, this bid should be used to direct the desired lead, if we feel we have a preference. 2NT here should be either scramble or both minors, probably not Lebensohl because we are both passed hands and don't need to invite game ever. Is a responsive double for all three suits, or just the minors? I think it is mostly for the minors. Note that the panel doesn't completely agree, but there are no 3♥ bidders.

Wittes: Pass. Partner is a passed hand, we're vulnerable, and although I surely have fits with partner somewhere, I have no texture in any of my suits. -200 or worse is a distinct possibility at the 3 level, especially if suits are not breaking well. If my ♠Q were elsewhere, I'd be a little more tempted to compete.

Lolli: Dbl. Responsive. I may be a little light, but if partner wants to butt in, I'm going to co-operate. Does my double deny four hearts? Perhaps, but they're lousy, and I don't want the lead if we defend. Also, if partner has a five card minor, I'd rather play it there, or at least in his stronger suit. I admit it's unlikely partner has a five card minor.

Wickham: Dbl. 2NT should definitely not be used as natural, so it should show 2 places to play. Some partnerships use a Lebensohl or Good/Bad variant for 2NT here, in which case their choice is limited to double or pass. Some partnerships use double to show

four hearts, and others use it deny four hearts. Having a solid agreement is irreplaceable. We should show some values, and double is the most flexible action, even if it denies four hearts.

Lee: 2NT. Obviously it's not our hand but I refuse to defend a ten-card trump fit at the 2 level, and I don't need to get a particular lead director in so 2NT seems fine.

Shuster: Dbl. All strains are equivalent when competing for a part-score or finding a save a level above spades so we should make the call that will find our longest fit. Mirrored shortness isn't good for our side though. If I had a strong preference for a lead in a suit, I'd bid it instead in preparation for defense.

Swanson: Dbl. I will rarely hold four hearts for a responsive double of a major, but it appears that we will be outbid, and I don't want to encourage a heart lead.

Mealymouth: 3♣. This problem isn't about competing for a partscore. It is about maximizing our chances of beating 4♠ or minimizing West's overtricks, as the opponents have the balance of power and the boss suit. They'll buy the contract. Though hearts is the suit in which we are most certain to have a fit, it's the last suit I want to encourage partner to lead against the inevitable spade contract, so I reject 3♥. That leaves pass, a responsive double, 3♣ and 3♦ as my only plausible choices. I'd go for double if I were confident that partner would read it as both minors. However, I'm not confident that partner will read it as excluding hearts, so I'll go for 3♣, the suit in which I expect partner's opening lead to be most effective.

3

IMPs
all vul

South	West	North	East
1♠ ?	Pass	1♦ 2♣	Pass Pass

You, South, hold: ♠KT9732 ♥7654 ♦AQ ♣Q
What call do you make?

This interesting problem has some panelists conservatively taking a diamond preference with 2♦, some bidding a constructive but conservative 2♠, some inviting with a below normal quality 3♠ call, one inviting in 3♦ with only two trumps, and some forcing to game with 2♥. No panelist suggested 2NT but that bid is in play too.

We will start with the most conservative panelist. 2♦ is an almost certain plus score, but he gets the “Brother John Birch” award for this conservative bid.

Wittes: 2♦. It’s very conservative, but partner is likely to have spade shortness, and although I have great cards in partner’s suits, I don’t have much of a fit. If partner bids again, I will cooperate fully. Give partner a minimum like ♠x ♥Axx ♦KJxxx ♣Axxx, and 2♦ is probably our last plus score.

A tiny bit more aggressive are the 2♠ bidders. 2♠ doesn’t show much, and leaves them underbid by at least a jack.

Lolli: 2♠. I’m allowed to have full values for my bid once in a while. If partner bids on, I think we’re in a good place to make an intelligent decision.

Lee: 2♠. I’m not sure what the alternative is supposed to be.

Mealymouth: 2♠. I’m cursed with the same foul heart holding as in the previous problem, ♥7654, and I fear a 1=3=5=4 minimum opening opposite. This hand would be worth an invitational 3♠ jump except for the substantial chance of a misfit. However, as it is, the

three-level looks too dangerous, so I’ll content myself with 2♠ and hope partner can bid again. I thank the problem-setter for not giving me the ♠8, else I’d succumb to the temptation to bid 3♠.

The jump to 3♦ is invitational, but we are a trump shy.

Shuster: 3♦. Trying to reach 3NT at IMPs from partner’s side. I prefer widening the scope of 1NT rebids to include 1=3=5=4 hands, which would make the 2♣ call either 15+ or at least 10 cards in the minors, but that is not standard.

3♠ is invitational and includes hands with this shape. What’s wrong? The quality of the spade suit is quite a bit less than desired.

Wickham: 3♠. Anything above the 2 level could be a disaster. Missing a vulnerable game would be a disaster. If the minor suit queens are working and partner has more than a dead minimum, some game should have a decent play, and spades won’t be reached without rebidding them.

The bid I like most is a definite overbid. However, it allows for exploring all strains and doesn’t take up much room. Vulnerable at IMPs, the it’s worth the overbid to get to the best game. Some partnerships play that fourth suit in this situation is completely game forcing, but other partnerships play that 2NT is a possible escape spot. Either way, I like the aggressive bid to find the best strain.

Swanson: 2♥. Again, I can’t find anything else to bid.

4

IMPs
NS vul

South

West

North

East

?

Pass

Pass

1♣

You, South, hold: ♠AKJ ♥4 ♦AQJ3 ♣KJ654

What call do you make?

Lolli: 1♦. I overcall four card suits about once a year, so I guess this is the day. I'm just too good to pass vulnerable in IMPs when partner may have a few fillers to make a comfortable 3NT or 4♠. If I'm the only one to bid 1♦, tear up this answer.

Mealymouth: 1♦. It's a "What's the problem?" problem. 1♦. No other intervention is sane; a "trap pass" would tempt me on favorable, but not adverse, vulnerability. However, if I were playing with my bridge teacher, who forbids me to make a simple overcall with 17 or more high-card points, I would slip the ♠A into my shirt pocket surreptitiously before calling.

Wickham: 1♦. No flaws here. The hand is too heavy to pass and too heavy to overcall. The hearts are too short for either an immediate double or an immediate very heavy NT overcall. The best chance for survival is the space preserving overcall. And if passed out, a plus is likely.

I have no problem with overcalling on a four card suit, but overcalling four card suits on good hands doesn't lead to easy further descriptions of the hand. And this hand has plenty of extras and will be difficult to describe after you get the 1♦ overcall.

Wittes: Dbl. Over partner's expected 1♥ bid, I will bid 1NT. Over anything else by partner, I will cue bid.

Lee: Dbl. Passing seems okay at other vulnerabilities, but I don't like it here since the most important thing in this situation (where we are unfavorable and the opponents are possibly messing around) is to show values. Passing just makes it much harder to come back in effectively. 1♦ has no appeal to me.

Shuster: Dbl. I'd have some reservations about this with the majors reversed.

I don't like passing, but I have the feeling it is the least of evils in this difficult collection. It may not lead to the optimum score, but it is more likely to lead to a plus than either 1♦ or double.

Swanson: Pass. There is some danger that we will be collecting a puny number defending 1♣ when there is a game available our way. But I have no descriptive call and there is a good chance that the auction will develop favorably after a pass.

Los Angeles Regional at LAX
Los Angeles, CA February 15th-21st 2016

5

MPs
no vul

S	W	N	E
	P	P	1♠
?			

You, South, hold:
 ♠A43 ♥AQ ♦KQ3 ♣AT976
 What call do you make?

First we'll hear from the answer I like best. 1NT isn't perfect, but the lack of any semblance of a second stopper means that a heavy 1NT might be best.

Lee: 1NT, a little heavy but we can't handle 2♦ or 2♥ by partner if we double.

Swanson: 1NT. There is no good bid available here either, but I can't see how things will get better if I pass. Double, then 2NT over an unwanted 2♥ advance from partner is particularly unappealing.

Lolli: Dbl. I may have some problems in the subsequent auction, but double seems clear for starters. Maybe I can steer partner to 3NT with his ♠Qx and a few other dull values.

Wittes: Dbl. My next bid will be 2NT. It's tempting to just bid 1NT, since my hand doesn't look that great with a spade lead through partner. However, everyone seems to bid on so little these days, especially opening a major in third seat, that I better just show my values in case partner has more than might be expected.

Wickham: Dbl. Does any reasonable second choice exist?

Shuster: Dbl. Like problem 4, double is occasionally used a bit off-shape with very strong hands. I assume our readers are better versed with this approach than is our panel editor.

Double and then bid to show a really good hand! Why didn't I think of that? That's why I have all these great panelists!

Mealymouth: 2♣. Even if playing with my bridge teacher. I need a peep from partner for game. When I play with my bridge teacher, I always wear a shirt with a pocket large enough to accommodate a second ♠A. [Have you ever considered firing your bridge teacher? If he or she is going to makeup a bunch of bidding rules, rules that work would be greatly appreciated! You could put other things in your pocket then!]

Next Month's Problems

1. MPs NS vul

South	West	North	East
		1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
?			

You hold: ♠72 ♥AJ852 ♦86 ♣KJ94
 What call do you make?

2. IMPs NS vul

South	West	North	East
	1♦	Dbl	1♥
Pass	1NT	2♥	Pass
?			

You hold: ♠J54 ♥A65 ♦QJT65 ♣76
 What call do you make?

3. MPs no vul

South	West	North	East
1♥	2♣	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♦	Pass
?			

You hold: ♠-- ♥AJT943 ♦T76 ♣A543
 What call do you make?

4. IMPs NS vul

South	West	North	East
		1♥	Pass
?			

You hold: ♠KJ96543 ♥AJ54 ♦--- ♣65
 What call do you make?

5. MPs all vul

South	West	North	East
	1♠	Pass	2♠
?			

You hold: ♠2 ♥AK543 ♦AJ543 ♣65
 What call do you make?