

Southern California Bridge News

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Convention Savvy

by Becky Clough, ALACBU President



How many bridge conventions do you play? Are you the vanilla type or the crepe suzette type? Do you try to learn every new gadget someone tells you about or do you say KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid). Me, I'm somewhere in between. My friend Ellen loves gadgets and she's always encouraging me to try something new. Some I do, some I don't. Most I forget at least once. My husband is far more cautious and says, "I've played for 50 some odd years and have gotten along just fine without such and such."

Why are there so many conventions? Quite honestly, I believe they all are the result of one hand someone couldn't bid, so they devised a systematic way or convention to handle it the next time. The conventions that have lasted and have found themselves part of the mainstream are those whose situations arise again and again such as take out doubles or Stayman. Each of these conventions were first somebody's brainchild, which explains why most conventions are named for someone.

Sometimes there is controversy over who invented a particular convention. One example is Hamilton/Capelletti. This convention is usually known as Hamilton in the west and as Capelletti in the east. I once asked Freddie Hamilton what he called it. He told

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Field Awards and MPs

by Rand Pinsky, District Director



When attending a tournament have you ever wondered when looking at the recap sheet what it means when it says the masterpoint awards for a 25-table event (the one you are playing in) are based upon 60 tables or maybe 40 tables? Or what if on two consecutive days you are playing in a stratified open pairs and on both days it is an 18 table game yet on one day the event pays more masterpoints than the other. Do you wonder why? Masterpoint awards are based upon the number of tables in an event. However, the answer can be found by the way the "tables" in your event are counted and whether or not you are playing in a restricted or unrestricted event. Currently, an unrestricted event can count the number of tables in that event and then can get credit for the tables being played in a different event and even at different times. To me that does not make sense.

Simply stated, the ACBL Handbook provides for an "unrestricted event," one which is "completely open" at a regional or sectional to be credited with all tables in play in totally concurrent events (pairs, teams, or individual) for the purposes of computing overall awards. The Handbook further states that for flighted, stratified, or stratflighted events all tables are counted to determine the number of tables in the unrestricted event. Additionally, the guidelines further state that for the purpose of awarding masterpoints, a restricted event that is a two-session morning and afternoon, is deemed to be totally concurrent with a two session event that is afternoon and evening. This again does not make sense to me.

With these inconsistencies that I see, the innovation of awarding masterpoints based upon strength of field makes sense. The ACBL committee on Strength of Field (SOF) has developed a formula for awarding

DIRECTOR *continued on page 2*

DIRECTOR *continued from page 1*

masterpoints that is more consistent in evaluating the competition that you are playing against rather than the number of tables in play in a different event or a different time.

The main argument that I have heard about not adopting SOF is that the masterpoint awards will be less than currently awarded or that the system is not broke, why fix it. I think that with mastepoint awards being determined by the number of tables in other events or being played at different times, this system is not fair and it needs to be corrected. I believe that if the tables from other events and different play times were to be eliminated from the unrestricted event, the masterpoint awards for SOF would be greater than with the elimination of these "ghost" tables. I have asked the SOF Committee to run some test results comparing the SOF masterpoint awards to a restricted event without the ghost tables and to report back prior to the Board voting on this issue in Memphis.

I am sure many of our players have questions about this matter. Please contact me soon, as I leave for Memphis on March 11 with our board meetings beginning on the 12th. Again, my email address is pinsky4bridge@earthlink.net.

Send letters to the editor to: bridgenews@acbldistrict23.org

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**Beverly Rosenberg
1932-2012**

Beverly Rosenberg, beloved mother, grandmother, sister and bridge partner, passed away on January 31 2012 after a long illness.

Beverly was an ACBL Grand Life Master with over 16,000 masterpoints. Her bridge career spanned six decades. She won four National Championships, had eight second-place finishes, and garnered over a hundred regional titles. She also represented the United States six times in International competition. Bridge was her life-long love, second only to her family.

Beverly was a District 23 member from 1971 through 2011. The Barrington Bridge Club was her favorite local club and where she spent most of her time in her later years. Among her many partners were Hermine Baron, Steve Cohen, Carol Pincus, Marcia Masterson, and Stelios Touchtidis. She is survived by her daughters Karla and Stephie and grandchildren Andrew, Evan and Alena.

A memorial ceremony will be held on March 11, 2012 around noon in the West Los Angeles area. Those interested in attending, please write to stelios_t@yahoo.com

- Stelios Touchtidis

Around the Units in District 23

Antelope Valley by Brad Ward

A great deal of affection flows from this bridge community to Rita Vanatter as she copes with the recent loss of her husband. Rita is a super lady and a tireless worker within our community and can count on our support as she moves forward. It seems that our community ages so quickly that keeping up with poor health announcements gets harder each day. Mr. Glenn Eddy is now in hospice care and Ms. Lou Ann Vandemore is slated for some serious care at Cedar's before month end. We wish these friends a speedy recovery.

A bright note on the health horizon is that our superb unit treasurer, Ms. Mary Stauf, recovered from her recent surgery enough to go home early from her hospital stay. All of us wish Mary an overall perfect outcome from her surgery. Mr. Kelly Lightner was released from the hospital after a four day stay and is hoping to return to bridge soon. Ms. Gloria Robinson has returned to the bridge table after her long battle with cancer and it is such a delight to talk with her in person again. I am certain that I have missed a lot more news on the health and family fronts, so the contact database your unit is developing will certainly facilitate a closer bridge community throughout this widespread region. Our objective in this effort is that awareness of issues within our group will be easier and faster to offer and to obtain for all members and close followers of this unit. The power of human relationships is remarkable and has only been enhanced by technology. Through decades past, bridge has been a common interest to bring people together and help to form great relationships. As we age, the power of those relationships needs to be harnessed and focused. We hope to do that and more!

Our unit had a significant number of participants chasing gold points at the Riverside Regional. The biggest winners were Tom and Barbara Jones, those 50th wedding anniversary gems that not only recently

hosted a truly awesome anniversary party, but days later invaded Riverside and walked off with 10.89 points. We salute the Jones team on their many achievements in life.

The **2011 Ace of Clubs** award certificates will be presented at the Unit Game and subsequently at future club activities for those unable to attend the monthly unit game. The Mini-McKenney winners for each masterpoint category are listed below. Keep in mind that the ACBL does an excellent job of tracking masterpoints won during the year and the winner in each category listed below started the year with a sum total of lifetime masterpoints that fell somewhere within the totals listed for each bracket. The winner of the bracket accrued the most masterpoints of any unit 556 member during the 2011 year. Hearty congratulations go out to each winner for an exemplary year of performance. Keep it up in 2012! As one garners masterpoints and rises from one bracket to the next, the competing dynamics are different and more challenging, truly an exciting aspect of our great game.

| | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 0 to 5 | Carol Provost with 9.29 |
| 5 to 20 | Albert Stock 30.18 |
| 20 to 50 | Sharry Vida 30.18 |
| 50 to 100 | Roy Ladd 73.19 |
| 100 to 200 | Elizabeth Morrin 78.49 |
| 200 to 300 | Elaine Moore 125.81 |
| 300 to 500 | John Langer 61.70 |
| 500 to 1000 | Tom Shudic 101.17 |
| 1000 to 2500 | Dave Gasper 186.44 |
| 2500 to 5000 | Malene Warren-Gasper 191.95 |
| Over 10,000 | John Swanson 136.19 |

Your unit board has the obligation to maintain the financial viability of the unit and all options are constantly reviewed and examined. Toward that end , as your new president, I recently I talked with Kathy Swaine and Rita Vanatter about the development and success of their clubs and both of these outstanding women credited many,many folks with helping →

them to forge success. Kathy wanted me to particularly thank George MacDonald and Rita not only singled out Carol Ashbacher, for great praise but wanted me to remind everyone of the wonderful contributions to her efforts made by Dan Axtell before his passing. I mention this because I have been reminded that this column has not cited the start-up last year of the for-profit club in Palmdale. So many have asked for details about the ACBL new club sanction requests tendered to the Unit Board in August of last year. Yes, the unit is structured as a not-for-profit venture and the location in Lancaster was stunned by the move to take control of duplicate bridge "over the hill." Anyone curious about the details should ask our district representative, Mr. Rand Pinsky and/or Mr. Ron Oest, unit president at the time of the issue. The urge to strike out on your own is endemic to our country and Beth Morrin is a nice, hard-working lady who has two fantastic role models in Kathy Swaine and Rita Vanatter. As always in America, the market will decide success. The Lancaster location is still alive and members there thank all those within this widespread unit who continue to support its activities.

Last month Basant Shah and Lamonte Johnson tallied two wins at the Castaic Club and the partnerships of Hugh Bartlett and Bill Brodek and Nell Shantz and Hansford Rowe also chalked up wins.. Ms. Marguerite Pinkers and Albert Stock also posted a win with a 70.5% game.

The Valencia Club hosted wins posted by Hansford Rowe and Adam Ellfeldt, Lamonte Johnson and Markle Vandervort as well as the partnerships of George MacDonald and Rand Pinsky and Bill Brodek and Brad Ward. Rand also tallied a win partnered with Bert Stock and Bill Brodek also got another win partnered with Marguerite Pinkers.

The Lancaster Club saw Ron Oest and his wife Sandy post three wins...wow. The partnerships of Lola Messiha and Doris Thompson, Brad Ward and Sylvia Feiman, and Russ Buker and Barb Shuping also posted wins. Russ won again partnered with Ron Oest **and also** with Linda Young! Brad Ward won again partnered with Marlene-Warren Gasper and Lola Messiha. Henry Roediger and Mary Stauf, Dave Gasper and Linda Young and May Abagi and Lea Levitt also joined the winners circle last month. A special congratulations must go out to Gale and Stephen Guzy for posting a fine win in their return to competitive bridge after a long absence. A big **welcome back** to the wonderful Guzy partnership.

The February unit game was won by Kathy Swaine and Rand Pinsky with a **huge** 72% game. Congratulations.

Glendale Verdugo

By Ron Lifshutz

The results of the February 11 Unit Game are listed below.

N/S

| | | |
|----|----|------------------------------------|
| A1 | B1 | Michael Doll and Patrick Cardullo |
| A2 | | Herman Helber and Jacob Frenkel |
| A3 | | John Villalobos and Carolyn Cohen |
| A4 | | Bernardine Mateer and Peter Szecsi |

E/W

| | |
|----|-------------------------------|
| A1 | Martin Blain and Rick Weiss |
| A2 | Daniel Oakes and Tim Lolli |
| A3 | Dan Botoaca and Amr Elghamry |
| A4 | Nell Schanz and Hugh Bartlett |
| A5 | Sharon Wolf and Temo Arjani |
| A6 | Brad Beland and Gerry Belcher |

The lasagna and rolls were supplied by Merry Besvold. Nancy Lyons and Betsy Josias made the salads. Eva Seri supplied the dressings. Gloria Balfour and Margaret Mataga supplied the desserts.

Our next unit game will be held on March 10, 2012. In honor of St. Patrick's day, we will be serving corned beef and cabbage. Please join us then.

The winners (listed below) of the Unit Ace of Clubs and Mini McKenney races as listed below will be honored at the April 14 Unit game.

Ace of Clubs

| | |
|-------------|------------------|
| 0-5 | Arlene Aschmeyer |
| 5 - 20 | Donald Zachary |
| 20 - 50 | Kathleen Tejada |
| 50-100 | Kathryn Riedel |
| 100-200 | Temo Arjani |
| 200-300 | Lyle Wiedeman |
| 300-500 | Joe Hasencamp |
| 500-1000 | Arthur Chacanias |
| 1000-2500 | Michael Doll |
| 2500-5000 | Carolyn Cohen |
| 5000-7500 | Tim Lolli |
| Over 10,000 | Jim Looby |

Mini McKenney

| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 0-5 | Glenn Silcott |
| 5-20 | Donald Zachary |
| 20-50 | Kathleen Tejada |
| 50-100 | Kathryn Riedel |
| 100-200 | Temo Arjani |
| 200-300 | Lyle Wiedeman |
| 300-500 | Joe Hasencamp |
| 500-1000 | Gloria Balfour |
| 1000-2500 | Dan Botoaca |
| 2500-5000 | William Ng |
| 5000-7500 | Tim Lolli |
| Over 10,000 | Jim Looby |

Long Beach

by Jon Yinger

unit website:
www.acblunit557.org
 club website:
www.LongBeachBridge.com

February 2 Unit-rated
Groundhog Day game: Overall results: 1st in A: Al and Sharon Appel, 2nd John Petrie/Judith Jones, 3rd Doris James/Jo Daigle, 4th Steve Rowe/John Crabtree, 5th

Ernie Frank/Audrey Ellis, 6th Baum Harris/Jackie Hess. In the B flight overall John Melis/Kay Tseng were 5th. And in the C flight overall Dick and Linda Stein were 2nd, Christine Frumen/Fern Dunbar were 3rd. Congratulations to all!

February 12 Unit Game:

Overall results: 1st in A: Phyllis Parker/Bob Mault, 2nd Jo and John Melis, 3rd Steve Skinner/Baum Harris, 4th Usha Bansal/Steven Alt, 5th Susan and Keith Hafen, 6th Steve Robinson/Bob Stoldt. In the B flight overall: 4th Kim Wang/Tony Zee, 5th Lavonne McQuilken/Janet Wagner, 6th Hanefi Erten/John Chiang. And in the C flight overall: 4th Paul Pettler/Mary Thomas, 5th Fay Beckerman/Sherry Troeger. Congratulations to all!

70+% Games in the club Jan 16 through Feb 15: In open games: Jan 24 Cecil Cook/Doris James had 73.68%, Feb 3 John Petrie/Judith Jones had 69.87%, Feb 8 Irwin Bender/Steve Skinner had 70.03%, and in the evening game Feb 14 Bob Mault/Cory Hand had 70.42%. In NLM games Miriam Kelley/Gayle Knapp had 72.16% Feb 7 and Roy Tomooka/Ernie Ross had 69.94% Feb 10. And in the 99er game Feb 15 Audrey and Bud Linden had a 75% game. Congratulations to you all!

Big Matsterpoint Awards:

Big point awards for 1st over-all in club games Jan 16 through Feb 15: Jan 16 Bruce Horiguchi/Charlotte Sturm won 5.24mp. Jan 23 Gary King/Ted Gibbs won 3.58mp. Jan 24 Doris James/Cecil Cook won 3.79mp. Jan 25 Phil Schuster/Jon Yinger won 3.79mp. Jan 27 Lois Abramson/Irwin Bender won 4.77mp. Jan 28 Charlotte Sturm/Bruce Horiguchi won 3.03mp. Feb 2 Sharon and Al Appel won 3.12mp. Feb 5 Sean Lui/Michael Daley →

It's time for the 2012
GRAND NATIONAL TEAMS EVENT

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Open Flight | March 3-4 | 0-unlimited MPs |
| Flight A | April 28-29 | 0-5000 MPs |
| Flight B | March 3-4 | 0-2000 MPs |
| Flight C | April 28-29 | Non LMs < 500 MPs |

The district-wide sectional on April 14-15 will raise funds for our teams.



Do you want to play in a FUN Team Event?
Do you want play in events with large Master Point Awards?
Do you want to win Gold MPs without leaving Los Angeles?

Never played in the Grand National Teams before?

Want to know more? Read here!

- The format is the same as any sectional Swiss Teams and/or Knockout event
- The Master Points Awards are bigger and include Gold Points
- The event is Stratified so you only compete against people with similar MPs
- Feel the prestige and earn the recognition on both the local and national level when you win!

All Events:

- Take place at the Barrington Bridge Club, 11500 Santa Monica Blvd, Los Angeles
- Swiss Qualifying on Saturday for Sunday Knockout
- Teams must have 4,5,or 6 players
- Game Times 10:00am and TBA
- Players can enter more than 1 event (on separate weekends)
- Winning teams can represent District 23 in Philadelphia this summer at the Nationals
- Winning teams receive partial refund of expenses for the trip to the finals
- For complete Conditions of Contest see the ALACBU website at www.acbldistrict23.org
- Questions? Call Howard Einberg (310 475-9784) or Bill Wickham (310 234-3238)

won 3.17mp. Feb 6 Larry Topper/Janet Logan won 4.67mp. Feb 7 Ted Gibbs/Brandon Sheumaker won 6.00mp in the afternoon game and Christine Frumen/Ruth Kaller won 3.00mp in the evening game. Feb 8 Steve Skinner/Irwin Bender won 5.17mp. Feb 9 Marcie Evans/Steve Skinner won 4.33mp. Feb 10 Jackie Hess/Mary Ann Coyle won 6.00mp in the afternoon game and John Crabtree/John Petrie won 3.17mp in the evening game. Feb 11 Earl VanDerVord/Sean Lui won 4.50mp. And Feb 12 Phyllis Parker/Bob Mault won 3.98mp. Big awards for second and third place: Jan 16 Jo Daigle/Chiye Horiguchi won 3.94mp for 2nd. Jan 27 Verna Baccus/Betty McClellan won 3.58mp for 2nd. Feb 6 Bernie Hadeler/Fred Willbanks won 3.50mp for 2nd. Feb 7 Steve Skinner/Wei Pei won 4.50mp for 2nd and Linda Cheng/Lois Abramson won 3.38mp for 3rd. Feb 8 Rich Wasser/Ralph Beazley won 3.88mp for 2nd. Feb 9 John Mohan/Leo Bell won 3.25mp for 2nd. Feb 10 Jean Towgood/Fred Dyle won 4.50mp for 2nd and Randy Hamlin/Mark Fraser won 3.38mp for 3rd. Feb 11 Janet Logan/Irwin Bender won 3.38mp for 2nd. And Feb 12 Jo and John Melis won 2.98mp for 2nd. Congratulations to all!

New Members: William Dilks, Janice Fischer, Beverly Friedman, Philip Friedman, Warren Harris, Janice Olson. Welcome to the club!

Status Changes: Club Master: Sylvia Kaprelyan; Regional Master: Sharon Biederman; NABC Master: Jane Reid; Life Master: Phyllis Greenstein; Silver Life Master: Susan Hafen. Congratulations to all of you!

Upcoming Events at the Club: March 5 thru 11 Great Western Holiday STaC week: Hand Records, overall awards, card fees \$11. March 17 St. Patrick's Day unit-rated game: Extra points, regular prices. Tuesday March 18 through March 24: Club membership week—extra points, regular prices. March 25: Unit Game--lunch 12:30, game at 1pm.

Get Well Wishes to Mark Teaford and Peggy Waite.

News From Leisure World from Gene Yaffee

Big games: Bill Linskey & Eileen Nelson with a 70.83% on January 30; Bee Kinman & Verna Burns with a 68.75% game on January 28; and Bill Linskey & Gloria Sedore with a 67.13% game on January 23.

Winners in the Club Championship game on Saturday, February 4 were: A Strat, 1st-Verna Burns &

Joan Tschirki; 2nd-Julia Cunningham & Howard Smith (1st in Strat B); 3rd-Bob Lofstrom & Dolores Svigals (2nd in Strat B).

Pro-Am Game Thursday, March 15. Free luncheon at 11:30 a.m. followed by a special Pro-Am game at 12:30 p.m. in Clubhouse #3. Sign-up with Howard Smith, treasurer, no later than Monday, March 12, paying bridge fees at time of sign-up. The field will be divided by master points— top 50% and bottom 50%— the pairings will be a random match. Standard American Yellow Convention Card will be used by all players. This is not a “teaching” event: no should'a, could'a, would'as allowed. For more information, call Larry Slutsky at 562/431-8954

New ACBL Members: welcome to Beverly and Phil Friedman as new ACBL members!

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

Get the Unit 557 Newsletter via Email: Send me your e-mail address and I'll put you on the list. My email is jyinger1@gmail.com.

Pasadena San Gabriel Valley by Marie Nimmrich

Unit Election Party March 4 at 12:00 p.m.

Election Party: The annual Unit 559 Election Party, held to elect new Unit Board Members and to honor players of our unit, will be held Sunday March 4. This event will take place at the Arcadia Elks Lodge located at 27 West Huntington Drive, in Arcadia. The afternoon pairs game will begin promptly at noon, followed by a dinner of prime rib or salmon; the evening will feature a swiss team game. Lots of bridge, good food and congenial companionship will be yours for \$35.00. You can purchase a ticket from any current board member. If you need a partner for the pairs game or the swiss, please call Amr Elghamry at 626-482-1327 or 626-301-0660.

The unit Board of Directors is filling two positions, with four returning members for 2012-2014. The returning members are Sandra Franciscus, Mary Falvey, Miriam Harrington and Karen Arase; the two vacant positions will be filled by Nancy Nakanishi and Roland Pineda. This slate will be elected (hopefully) →

at the Election Party. Thank you to Mike Marcucci and Joanne Sasaki who are leaving the board after contributing much of their time and efforts. Mike was our tournament manager and esteemed statistician; Joanne was in charge of supplies and kept the closet full. Those who have another year to serve are Jan Wickersham, Peter Szesci, Amr Elghamry, Bernie Mateer, T J Wang and Marie Nimmrich.

In addition to the election, we will be honoring our unit members who achieved Life Master status in 2011 (Connie Kang, Peter Jager, Mary Falvey and Kim Horn), plus the players who won the Ace of Clubs (hint: Richard Gero's name comes to mind) and the Mini-McKinney (hint: Jack Chang's name is omnipresent) awards. The John Waken Trophy (given to the player who won the most points at our 2011 sectional) and the Unit Game Trophy (given to the player who won the most points at our 2011 Unit Games) will also be awarded. So get your ticket and don't miss the enjoyment.

February Unit Game: Our February Unit Game (held 29 January) was won by Diana Borgatti and Cathy Martin (a formidable partnership); second were Madhu Sudan and Stan Majcher; third were Shiu-Ming Huang and Robert Wang. Amr provided the food (pizza), and 19 tables of bridge players had a nice afternoon's entertainment. One of the features of this unit game was the presentation to a representative from Elizabeth House of a check for \$2,000.00, which was raised at our Holiday Charity Party in December. Elizabeth House in Pasadena has been our designated charity for several years. They help women who are pregnant and homeless, plus giving aid to the children of these mothers.

Sick List: Sad to say that Harry Brener died this past month. His widow, Mara, wrote a lovely note to the players expressing her appreciation to all who were Harry's friends and partners.

Please pray for: Miriam Collup (coming along well; due to get the cast off in a couple of weeks), Rita Corwin (says she will be back to bridge in about a month), Harold Knowles, Anne Campbell, Frank Jones (who has been moved to a home out near Riverside). We miss our friends who are not able to be with us.

Special Honors: Jan Wickersham has been appointed to the National Charity Committee for all her contributions at the unit and district levels toward charitable activities. Quite an honor, Jan. The North American Pairs held its final qualifying event and the following are going to Memphis!: Lulu Minter and Bill Papa (Open Flight), Zheng Zhang and His-Chun Liu (0

to 2000 Flight), T J Wang and Sandra Rucker (Non-Life Master Flight). Congratulations to all of you. We are counting on you to honor our unit at the Nationals.

Arcadia Bridge Center: The Bridge Center will hold STaC Games (silver points!!!) on Thursday March 8 at 11:00 a.m., on Friday night March 9 at 7:30 p.m., and on Saturday afternoon March 10 at 1:00 p.m.

Beat The House night will be Friday March 23 at 7:30. Anyone who beats the score of Diane and Art will get a **free play** to the Bridge Center. And the monthly Winner/Loser Game will be on Sunday March 25 at 1:00 p.m. Dianna Borgatti and Rae Murbach recently had a 77% game at the Bridge Center.

San Marino Bridge Club: STaC games will be held on Monday March 5 at 12:00 p.m. and on Wednesday evening March 7 at 7:15 p.m. More silver points - it will be a silver point week.

Our Wednesday night jackpot is rising and no one seems able to get that elusive 70% game. It would be interesting to know the probabilities of attaining a 70% game. The jackpot has not been won since March 31 2010! It was won at that time by Joe Viola and Rae Murbach.

Around the Globe: Besides our Hawaii travelers who were mentioned last month, Wayne Dockery returned from a week of golf in New Zealand.

Bridge Regulations: It might be helpful for players to know the Laws of Duplicate Bridge as published by the ACBL. So the first installment of this educational feature of the column is the question: When Is It Legal To Ask? (I am quoting from Director's Quick Reference Companion by Larry Harris.)

Calls which were not heard or auction reviews are virtually eliminated thanks to the use of bidding boxes. However, after the final pass when the bidding cards are returned to the box, a player may ask for a review at his first turn to play. After a player's first turn to play, a player can only ask what the contract is, but not who may have doubled it. This can be done at the player's subsequent turns to play.

Any time it is declarer's or either defender's turn to play, he may ask for an explanation of the opponents' calls (for example, the meaning of an alertable bid which was used during the auction) or he may ask for an explanation of the opponents' carding.

So, quick review, I can ask for a review of the auction at my first turn to play. At my later turns to play, I can ask what the contract is. At any turn to play, I can →

ask for an explanation of the opponents' conventions, systems, agreements regarding bidding or carding.

Until we meet again, pax vobiscum

Pomona Covina by Vic Sartor

Unit Game Saturday March 24, 11:00 a.m.
Refreshment Contributions Welcome

As a glance at the column heading will confirm, this month's unit game falls on the fourth Saturday of the month, not on the usual third. The reason for the change is that the Knights Of Columbus have to have their clubhouse to stage their annual Saint Patrick's Day festivities. As you know, he's a famous Italian hero. We also want to honor the good saint, even if a little belatedly. To celebrate the occasion, this month's refreshment table will feature green beer and corned beef and cabbage, and unit president Clint Lew will perform a jig on a card table (after five or six beers, of course). Still pending are plans to have Tom Lill and Roger Boyar do a clog

dance and sing a rousing rendition of "Who Threw The Overalls In Mrs. Murphy's Chowder." We'll keep you posted on other proposed entertainment.

Congratulations are in order for Joe Unis, who got his Life Master classification by way of a second place finish in a KO Teams event at the Riverside regional. His teammates were Clint Lew, Richard Patterson, and Walt Otto. Lew was the top local point winner for the tournament, followed by Milt Kalikman, Patterson, Unis, Otto, Hanan Mogharbel, Donald Naf, and Tom Lill.

Last month's unit game was won by Ann McClelland and Domique Moore, followed by Richard Patterson and Roger Boyar (1st in B), Helen Wang and Bill Papa (also 1st E/W), Dave and Susan Ruoff, and Denise Morgan and Genise Hasan. Margaret Merritt and Kerry Sartor were the top "C" pair. The February individual game was won by Roger Boyar, followed by Sid Monroe, Hanan Mogharbel, Dolores Kelley, Albert Lax, Carroll Robinson and Charlotte Capelle.

Top game of the month was a 71.69% posted by by Lary Alba and Dave Ruoff, edging out a 71.51% by Mary Miller and Karen Olin. Other club winners →

LAS VEGAS

March 26-30, 2012

Monday to Friday

Bally's Las Vegas Hotel & Casino
Phone: 800 634-3434

GLITTER GULCH SECTIONAL

Monday, March 26

- 9:00 a.m. Stratified Pairs
- 1:15 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, March 27

- 9:00 a.m. Stratified Pairs
- Stratified 0-300 Pairs
- Stratified Swiss Teams
- Bracketed Mon-Tue KO Teams Final Rd
- 1:15 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, March 28

- 9:00 a.m. Stratified Pairs
- Stratified 0-300 Pairs
- Stratified Swiss Teams
- Bracketed Tue-Wed KO Teams Final Rd
- 1:15 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, March 29

- 9:00 a.m. Stratified Pairs
- Stratified 0-300 Pairs
- Stratified Swiss Teams
- Bracketed Wed-Thu KO Teams Final Rd
- 1:15 p.m. Stratified Pairs
 - Stratified 0-300 Pairs
 - Compact KO Teams (Rounds 1 & 2)
- 7:00 p.m. Stratified Pairs
 - Stratified 0-300 Pairs
 - Compact KO Teams (Rounds 3 & Final)
 - Stratified Board-A-Match Teams

Friday, March 30

- 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 5:15 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

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were Walt Otto, Clint Lew, Ron Purkis, Joe Unis, Herb Stampfl, Susan Ruoff, Roger Boyar, Donald Naf, Lulu Minter, Fred Minter, Richard Patterson, George Altinus, Helen Wang, and Vic Sartor.

Our hand of the month disproves the old adage that "lightning never strikes twice in the same place." You may remember that last month's honors were taken by a sweet innocent lady who could never be convinced she had made a brilliant psych of a 1♠ opening. Well, the very next week she sat down at my table and opened 1♥. She caught her partner with the following rock:

♦AKQ ♥QJT9xxx ♦Kx ♣A

As you can imagine, a RKCB 4NT makes it fairly simple to locate 13 cold top tricks. Nothing special here, you say. Except when she took out trump we found that I had two and my partner had one, too! We were apparently playing with a 15 card heart suit! It turns out the lady had done it again. She had opened 1♥ on:

♠xxxxx ♥AKx ♦AQxxx ♣x

Maybe you and your favorite partner would still reach 7NT after a 1♦ opening, but you have to admit it's a little harder. I have a new theory. She's not really a nice innocent lady. She's really a spy working for an Italian cartel , trying out a super-sophisticated Canape' bidding system which they'll spring on the world at the next Bermuda Bowl. Til next time...

San Fernando Valley by Fran Kern

Upcoming Events:

Spring is on the way and so is our first 2012 Unit Game scheduled for Saturday, March 24 at the 750 Club which is located at 5700 Rudnick Avenue, Woodland Hills, CA 91367. A catered lunch will be provided at 12:00 noon and one session of bridge for stratified open and intermediate pairs will begin at 1:00 p.m. The cost is \$10.00 and convenient parking is available. Reservations are appreciated and can be made at the Bridge Academy, the 750 Club or by e-mail to Mike Fierman at mandhent@sbcglobal.net. Each club will help you to find a partner up until March 22.

Planning ahead, mark your calendar for our Sectional which is scheduled for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday May 18-20 at the 750 Club location. Details will be included in the next issue of the Bridge News.

Ace of Clubs

Congratulations to 2011 Ace of Clubs masterpoint race leaders, as shown below.

| | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| 0-5 | Shoshana Blumenfeld, |
| 5-20 | Fred Kleinzweig |
| 20-50 | Daniel Strauss |
| 50-100 | Larry Kussin |
| 100-200 | Paul Endler, |
| 200-300 | Elaine Roth |
| 300-500 | Samy Antoun |
| 500-1000 | Ron Malkin |
| 1000-2500 | Bill Carlson |
| 2500-5000 | Martin Blain |
| 5000-7500 | Gilbert Stinebaugh |
| 7500-10,000 | Bill Sides |
| over 10,000 | Ellen Anten |

The Top Ten Masterpoint Winners for January 2012

750 Bridge Club: Ron Malkin 13.26, Larry Kussin 9.47, Gloria Malkin 9.05, Jim Lechner 8.38, Paul Endler 7.97, Jim Gardner 7.83, Joan Marks 7.80, Sue Sarture 7.50, Jody Lombardo 6.72, Bunnie Roth 6.72, Linda Silvey 6.13.

Bridge Academy Under 750 Masterpoints: Gregory Bozin 4.97, Jerry Goodman 3.30, Carol Stein 2.94, Ron Stewart 2.59, Sheila Singer 2.45, Elaine Moore 2.35, Richard Ruby 2.26, Marjorie Romans 1.81, Jerry Shapiro 1.77, Barnard Davidorf 1.70.

Bridge Academy Open Masterpoints: Joan Rubin 12.63, Tammy Purkin 11.16, Sara Wilson 10.45, Armand Szulc 10.06, Gilbert Stinebaugh 9.46, Leda Danzig 8.93, Sheila Bozin 8.61, Dick Lum 8.58, Tom Wylie 7.30, William Carlson, Jr. 7.07.

70% Games for January: Fred Upton & Stephen Woelfer 75.95, Marion Weis & Russell Weis 75.89, Marilyn Ewing & Ilene Feinstein 73.53, Marel Bates & Bruce Altschuler 73.32, Deedy Nordyke & Frank Nordyke 71.68, Sally Ritter & Michael Curtis 71.43, Bunnie Roth & Joan Marks 70.28

In Memoriam: The unit notes with sadness →

the passing of three of our long time and much loved players. They have left us with lasting memories of friendship and grace.

We lost an important member of our bridge family when **Barbara Baxter** died peacefully at home on December 9. Barbara was associated with the Bridge Academy for 40 years. She had been a director and had also served on the Unit Board for many years. Barbara was known by many and recognized by all. She leaves fond memories with her “bridge family” and we extend condolences to her family.

Jimmie Swan left us on January 21. Jimmie was a fixture at the 750 Club day games. She welcomed new and returning players and her gracious demeanor contributed to the warm environment that has been created at the 750 Club. During the week following Jimmie’s passing, the 750 Club held a memorial game to honor her and to allow players to share their memories of her. We send our sincere condolences to Phil Swan and remind him that he too is an important member of our bridge family.

Lila Treitel passed away on January 22. Her son Peter remembers her as a wonderful wife and mother to him and to his father Werner who died in October 2010. Lila and Werner had partnered at the 750 Club night games before his death. Lila was a kind and generous person and she will be missed by friends and family. Our condolences to her son Peter.

Column News: Make sure that your news will appear in the next edition of Bridge News by sending it to me 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: Friday, March 2, 7:00 p.m.

District 22/23 STAC, March 5-10

Club Championship: Tuesday, March 13, 11:30 a.m.

Club Championship: Saturday, March 17, 3:00 p.m.

Handicapped Swiss Teams Every Tuesday Evening

Friday Night games on March 2 and March 16

Club Championships

The Club Championship on January 18 was won by Jeannette Betts/Anne Andres in Flights A, B and C. The NLM Championship on February 9 was led by Jeannette Betts/David Lyons in Flights A and B with Dawn Suart/Linda Bernard winning Flight C. On February 13 the Club Championship was headed by Gary King/Ted Gibbs in Flight A with Lorna Wallace/Mike Welsh leading Flight B and Mary Overby/Pat Berg ahead in Flight C.

Team Winners

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

| | |
|--------------|---|
| January 17: | Gabriela Jackson, Betsy Amador, Harry Wessells, Mark Raggio |
| January 24: | Lorraine Hohn, Luis Gamio, Jim Dutton, Bronek Felczer |
| January 31: | Mary Ann Coyle, John Farr, Bo Bogema, John J. McDermott |
| February 7: | Mary Ann Coyle, Jackie Hess, Bo Bogema, John J. McDermott |
| February 14: | Mary Ann Coyle, Jackie Hess, Bo Bogema, Jerome Drayton |

Milestones

Sadly we report that Marie Pink has passed away. Marie was a frequent participant in the regular and Non Life Master games at the South Bay Bridge Club.

My Old Pard

I first played Bridge with Maurice Suhre back in the 60's. Since then we have played as partners what seems like a million times. These days we are regulars in the Monday morning game at the South Bay Bridge Club. At least till a few weeks ago when Maurice had a surgery go wrong. He was in critical condition for a week. Although still quite weak, he appears to be headed in the right direction. His wife Rosemary would like you to say a little prayer for him. Hopefully in a few more weeks Maurice will be back at the bridge table and playing the piano again. →

GUV Memorial Award

It was Gary King versus the worlds toughest opening leader during a recent game at the Long Beach Bridge Center. It was no contest.

Gary held a 15-17 HCP NT opener including ♥8xx. He opened 1NT and bought it there. The ♥2 was led and dummy came down with ♥J9xx. Gary ducked and RHO's 10 spot won the trick. Back came a heart and opening leader cashed ♥AKQ. Three more defensive tricks and Gary went down in a contract everyone else had made. That LOL opponent on Gary's left was no pushover when it came to opening leads. Beware of table 11 at the LBBC.

Na Zdrowie

West LA by Robert Shore

Errors and Omissions

If you write enough of these columns, it's bound to happen. People whose names ought to appear in the

column, don't, and others get their names misspelled or otherwise mangled. An instance of each has been brought to my attention since last I put fingers to keyboard. Carol McCully is now a member of our unit, and should have been mentioned for her team's tie for first in the Friday afternoon Swiss at the Palm Springs Regional. And I've been afraid to review my old columns to learn just how long I've been misspelling Maria Pendergast's name for her many accomplishments before she gave up on hoping I'd notice on my own and gently pointed out for my benefit the correct spelling of her name. My apologies for the mistakes, and congratulations on your at-the-table achievements.

They'd Like to Thank the Academy

One of the privileges of being Unit President is the opportunity to spread around some good news. I received in the mail certificates honoring our unit's winners of the Helen Shanbrom Ace of Clubs contest and I've been trying to make personal presentations at the clubs. So if you haven't already received your certificate, let me know if there's a weekend or evening game you expect to play, and I'll try to make it then.

Our 2011 Ace of Clubs winners, for most master →



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Gold Point Program

Speakers will present helpful bridge tips before the 0-299er games most afternoon and evening sessions.

Looking for **Gold Points**? The entire tournament schedule is packed with **Gold Point events** including the popular **Knockout Teams** and **our newest game**, the daily **Gold Pairs** in which you can win **Gold Points** and **nobody you play against will have more than 750 masterpoints**.

points won at clubs, were Betty Feliciano, Kay Faguet, Robert Feinberg, Ryan Wessels, Phyllis Selig-Kerns, Fuad Khuri, Richard Gliksman, Sheri Rivera, Rahim Israel, Gary King, Aram Bedros, Peter Benjamin, and Becky Clough. You'll note that the more experienced players on this list, in addition to being fearsome competitors at the club, also have considerable records in tournament play. We fully expect the same of the winners who don't yet have that level of experience. The 2011 Mini McKenney winners, for the most master points won overall in 2011, were Betty Feliciano, Katherine Weisberg, Robert Feinberg, Ryan Wessels, Jim Brunet, Bill Rogers, Richard Gliksman, Charles Kelley, Rahim Israel, Gary King, Aram Bedros, Peter Benjamin, and Becky Clough. Congratulations to all the winners.

The Luck of the Irish

I'll have a report on Sadie Hawkins Day next month. Coming up in March 17 at Beverly Hills is a St. Patrick's Day Unit Championship. Anyone who shows up wearing green can be assured that all of their finesses will win and their suits will break well. We look forward to seeing you there. Also, I hope you've put together your team for this year's edition of Grand National Teams. The Open Flight and Flight B (0-2000) will be competing for a trip to Philadelphia on March 3-4. The winners get to go to Philadelphia to represent our District, not to mention a rather large bundle of gold points just for getting that far.

Don't Try This at Home

All white at matchpoints in second seat, you hold:

♠T ♥A96 ♦J853 ♣Q8432.

RHO passes, as do you, and LHO opens 2♠, which partner greets with a double. RHO raises to 3♠, and you compete with 4♣, buying the hand. Dummy tracks with

♠K62 ♥K1085 ♦A76 ♣AJ6

The opening lead is the spade queen, which you duck, LHO shifts to the diamond 10, which you duck to RHO's queen. RHO shifts to a spade. What's your plan? And do you agree with everything that's happened so

District 23 Rank Changes January, 2012

Junior Master (5 MPs)

Sue Bernstein
Walter Briggs
Shari Elias
George Henderson
Janet Hettick
Joann Jubas
Sri Nagesh
Gerald Parry
Carla Spinner

Club Master (20 MPs)

Selma Archerd
Beatrice Breslaw
Barbara Catino
Richard Jackson
Nancy Koss
Muncie Marder
John Meek
Cheryl Spring
Donald Zachary

Sectional Master (50 MPs)

Elizabeth Biggins
Linda Silvey
Titti Steiner

NABC Master (200 MPs)

Nancy Klemens
Leonard Popowitz
Rochelle Popowitz

Life Master (300 MPs)

Joe Unis, Tai Wang, Bruce Weiner

Bronze Life Master (500 MPs)

R Turner

Silver Life Master (1000 MPs)

Carol Diamant

Gold Life Master (2500 MPs)

Ruth Gittelman
Eric Tan
Robert Tayrien

far?

Declarer in this hand realized that RHO was endplayed at trick 2, so he pitched his heart loser. Unfortunately, the endplay proved to be an illusion when LHO won the trick with the spade ace and led another diamond. There's no way to avoid the loss of a second diamond and a club (LHO has the stiff 9 so the marked finesse brings the suit home for one loser), ending up -100 for a poor result. LHO reasoned that since you needed some values to compete, it was extremely unlikely that you had bypassed 3NT looking at the spade king, so he thought this was a good time to underlead an ace. Be honest — would you have known to play the king at trick one?

Ruff Surfing

A new year means a new slate of tournaments, and as always, we were well represented in the winner's circle. Becky and Roger Clough went to Hawaii where they won the top bracket of the Tuesday-Wednesday Knockout Teams and the Saturday Compact Knockout Teams. In Houston, Reese Milner was on the winning team in the top bracket of the Thursday-Friday Knockout Teams. Mike Savage picked up a Swiss win at the Laguna Woods Sectional.

The Cloughs kept up their winning ways in Riverside with a victory in the top bracket of the Thursday Compact Knockout. Also winning their bracket in the same event was the team of Ken and Diane Bishop, Richard Glikman, and Karen Schwartz. Ifti Baqai won the Friday Open Pairs event and tied for first in the Saturday Open Pairs event. Mike Savage and Gary King took home top honors in the top bracket of the Saturday Compact Knockout Teams, while Bill Wickham's team picked up the victory in the Friday-Saturday Knockout Teams. Robert and Ellen Kent teamed with Jill Richmond to win the Stratified Swiss. Congratulations to all of the winners!

Around the Clubs

Danny Kleinman decided to monopolize this month's club championships at Barrington, winning with Evan Krantz and with Sally Karbelnig. Reporting 70% games were Denny Seltzer, Paul Smith, Jaclyn Hatfield, and Helaine Blatt. Beverly Hills club champions were Nourit Chowaiki and Rahim Israel and Viktor Anikovich and Fred Mautner. Your Humble Scribe

picked up a 70% game with Ryan Wessels, and others were recorded by Maria Pendergast and Robert Levy, Nourit Chowaiki and Rahim Israel, Nancie Barrier and Marshall Wengrow, Farideh Sigari and Sam Namer, and Sam and Sandra Haveson (playing on Valentine's Day). Congratulations to all!

Climbing the Ladder

Lots to report here, because the ACBL has decided that points earned in online play will now count for all purposes. Thus, a lot of retroactive promotions have just occurred. Joining us in our addiction as Junior Masters are Kathleen Carter, Barbara Federman, Marjorie Frank, Beverly Phillips, and Gail Zanger. Be sure to give them a warm welcome when you encounter them at the table. Advancing to Club Master are Susan Coggins, Marlene Felix, Barbara Fransen, Judy Freeman, Jeannette Mandelbaum, Jerome Tepperman, Chris Tolles, Sarah Yort, and Selim Zilkha. Moving up to Sectional Master are Michael Frishberg, Doug Green, and James Nathan. Our newest Regional Masters are Keith Adams and Bella Feniger.

Plenty of movement this month in the Life Master ranks as well. Congratulations to D. Geffner, Diane Licht, Bill Rogers, Toby Rothman, and Arthur Weiner for reaching Bronze Life Master. Vera Mandell and Torrence McGough are now Silver Life Masters while Phyllis Mory joins her husband as a Gold Life Master. Fred Mautner has become a Diamond Life Master. Well done to all of you.

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

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Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

This month's panelists: Nolan Chang, Dan Emmons, Brad Haas, Yehudit Hasin, Aaron Jones, Roger Lee, Adam Meyerson, Elianna Meyerson, Mike Shuster, Chien-Yao Tseng, Becca Wernis, and Yichi Zhang

To promote the First Annual LA Scholastic competition on March 31, our panelists this month are the young stars of LA bridge (although some of them no longer live in LA). Our panelists range in age from 15 to about 40. See the end of the column for their biographies. There are five problems in this set, six questions since problem one has a two-part answer. Problems 1a, 1b and 2 will be in this month's issue, while problems 3, 4, and 5 will be in the April issue. Because of the conflict with last names (two Meyersons, a panelist named Jones, and a moderator named Jones), the panelists will be identified by their first names this month.

1

IMPs
all vul

| East | South | West | North |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 3♦ | dbl | 4♦ | pass |
| pass | ? | | |

You, South, hold: ♠AJT7 ♥KQ ♦KQ7 ♣KQ54

- a) Do you agree with your double?
- b) What now?

The double from this problem was in the Bridge World several years ago in a different context. There were world class players in favor of 3NT, but even more world class players in favor of double because the hand is too good for 3NT. I found that surprising for a couple of reasons. First, 3NT looks like Goldilocks' Baby Bear's bid – "just right!" Second, the hand is a very soft 20 HCP; it has only one ace and a devalued ♥KQ.

1a) Do you agree with your double?

Four panelists choose double. One of them intended to double and bid again, much like the Bridge World panel.

Dan: Yes, I agree with the double. The only other call I'd consider in its place is 3NT, but my hand is so good that I can just bid 3NT later anyways if my partner chooses anything but spades. The thing that worries me most about double is that I don't convey the diamond stopper, but I feel like my partner is a lot more likely to be holding a 5-card major or an intermediate hand that could generate a slam than a balanced hand with no 4-card major and no diamond stopper, so I think I'm a lot less likely to give my

partner a problem this way.

Three other panelists choose double because they don't like their prospects in 3NT.

Brad: Yes. I don't think it is strong enough to bid 3NT vulnerable in that position. I don't have a good source of tricks.

Nolan: Yes. There really is no other bid except 3NT and that is risky because you are relying on partner to have something

Yichi: Yes. Double is the only good choice. A 3♠ overcall with four (not particularly good) spades? Bid 3NT with only 4 winners? No thanks!



The rest of the panel choose 3NT. Let's hear their reasons.

Adam: No. I would've bid 3NT initially.

Aaron: No. With a balanced 20-count, opposite an unpassed partner, and a double stop in diamonds, I'm bidding 3NT the first time around.

Yehudit: No. I expect partner to bid a 4 card heart suit, and not necessarily at the 3-level, and 3♦-double-pass-4♥ can get pretty awkward. I would bid 3NT, which for me shows about 18-20 HCP balanced. [*Most experts would have a somewhat lower minimum, especially if the hand contained a decent suit*] In my opinion, it is useful to play transfers and Stayman over 3NT in this position. [*I agree, I play these methods with Yehudit and my other expert partners*]

Becca: No. So many points, yet so few fast winners! I like 3NT with this hand instead of double. I should find partner with enough points to make that, and if partner has substantially more, they should bid on (and they would need to have substantially more for us to make slam).

Chien-Yao: No, I don't agree with the double. I would bid 3NT in the first round. Even if we have a 4-4 spade fit, it is still very likely that 3NT is a superior contract. Furthermore, slam is very far away with this hand.

Some feel very strongly the double is wrong.

Roger: No, absolutely not. We have the world's most normal 3NT bid. Making a 3-level takeout double with a doubleton heart and KQx of their suit is not bridge.

Elianna: No, absolutely not. I would have bid 3NT, and avoided this problem (or at least, been in a different one).

Mike: No. I would classify double as a blunder. I prefer 3NT, which could be best even when partner has five spades if diamond ruffs are lurking. LHO, who preempted vulnerable missing the KQ of his suit, is likely to have an outside ace as an entry to give a second ruff.

1b) What now?

The panelist who liked his hand before still does.

Dan: Double again. Apart from not holding 3 hearts, this bid seems about right on both shape and points. I doubt it will get left in, but if it does then it's probably right. Any suit my partner picks is one that I'm happy with, and I have such a strong hand that my partner can probably make 4♥ in a 7-card fit, if that's what it comes too. I regrettably still haven't shown the diamond stopper, but my partner probably even has reasonable chances in 5♣ in a 4-4 fit. And since it's IMPs I think that's good enough.

Others double again, hoping something good will occur.

Elianna: Double. If I'm not allowed to stand on the table and yell "double" so that partner will leave it in [*that might get you a zero tolerance penalty, and probably would be unauthorized information for partner anyway*], I guess that I'll just double meekly, and hope to not place partner in a 4-2 or worse heart fit.

Yichi: Double again. 4♦ doesn't seem likely to make, even if they have a 10-card fit. I see 2 diamond tricks, assuming opener is not the kind of person who opens 3♦ with JTxxxxx. [*Yichi apparently plays the second double as co-operative, or semi-penalty. That's not the American style; it's mostly takeout in most American expert partnerships. Beating it will be less of a problem than getting partner to put a green card on the table.*] Maybe you have 4♠ but it seems too risky to bid, especially with the strong hand on your left.

Some panelists double, but aren't passing 4♥.

Mike: Double. If partner responds 4♥, I'll bid 4♣. Seriously, unless partner has six hearts, how bad can this be? He can always correct to clubs with length there, since I could have just jumped to 4♣ directly over 3♦ if I was truly one-suited. I did have a very famous partner pass with a void once in a similar auction unfortunately.

Chien-Yao: Double. If partner bids 4♥, I will correct to 4♣. It is impossible that I have single-suited spade hand because I would have already bid 4♣ instead of double for the second time. Therefore, this 4♣ bid should →

imply spades and clubs.

Other panelists pass, with varying degrees of confidence.

Yehudit: Pass.

Yehudit included a long analysis of the IMP mathematics involved in doubling versus passing. The decision hinged on whether partner holding a near yarborough would bid or pass. Since the American style is to remove a 4-level double with shortness and no values, I registered her answer as a pass. American experts are influenced by the great Edgar Kaplan who said “takeout doubles are meant to be taken out”. In Europe, I think the second double would be treated as more co-operative than in North America.

Adam: Pass. I'm stuck; if I double again I'm likely going to hear 4♥ from partner and I don't want to play a 4-2 fit. This is one of the reasons I'd have bid 3NT the first time. I'm going to pass but very unhappy about it.

Becca: Pass. I'd like to double for penalties, but suspect partner will take it out [*very likely, he has short diamonds and not many HCPs*].

Aaron: Pass. Double is begging partner to bid 4♥, and while it's likely partner has at least something, I'll just be happy that I can go plus against 4♦.

Two panelists that didn't like the hand for 3NT in the first place still don't like the hand for offense.

Brad: Pass. I would pass and take the positive score. I imagine my

partner's hand is terrible, with no aces, and a couple of jacks. If my partner had anything at all he would have bid something, because his distribution is almost certainly excellent after hearing my takeout double. He probably has at most one diamond (and my diamond values are wasted and look better on defense). I think it's a red flag that partner stayed quiet when he is known to have great distribution [*excellent point*]. I'm also a little bit worried that we would miss a spade game if my partner has ♠Kxxx
♥T9xx ♦x ♣Axxx.

Nolan: Pass. You have already told partner your hand, if he doesn't want to bid, respect his decision [*if we discount the ♦KQx then we are left with a soft, off shape, 15 HCP, - count me among the passers*].

Finally, one panelist flipped a mental coin and it wouldn't come down.

Roger: Abstain. It's not surprising that we have put ourselves in a position where we have no bid that describes our hand.



2

IMPs
NS vul

| East | South | West | North |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♣ | ? | | |

You, South, hold: ♠KQT2 ♥A72 ♦J6532 ♣4
What call do you make?

A smorgasbord of possible bids: Pass, double, 1♦ and 1♣ would all be the choice of some respected experts. It's important to note that partner is not a passed hand. If partner were passed, 1♣ would look more attractive than it did to the panel. Let's hear from the passers first.

Becca: Pass. Honestly, in a real game I would pass without thinking too hard about this one. I'll enthusiastically support anything partner bids.

Dan: Pass. I mean which options are realistic here? Only pass, double, and 1♦ seem to be that good. My spades are ALMOST good enough to make the 4-card overcall, but even if they were KQJT I don't think I like this bid when I have another longer suit, so I rule that out. 1♦ has pretty few ways to win and a lot of ways to lose too. It could deter my partner from making the winning lead, it can tell the opponents how to play their contract, and it certainly doesn't consume any of their bidding space. I like my 1-level overcalls to be backed either by a reasonable hand or a reasonable suit, and while I'm not too far from the first criterion I'm nowhere near the second. Also consider that almost any hand partner has that generates a game between us is one where he can come into the auction himself. This brings me down to pass and double. Double doesn't strike me as awful, but given that I'm doing it a wee bit light I'd really like to offer my partner 4 cards in both majors. So I'm down to just pass, and I'm happy to go with that.

Some double and think it's aggressive.

Adam: Double. Non-vulnerable in a low-level auction is a good time to be aggressive.

Brad: Double. It's a little light but I would probably not get in trouble with this bid.

Some are a little happier with double.

Elianna: Double. This seems pretty clear. If not double, then pass. I don't really want to bid diamonds, because I don't want partner thinking that's my strong suit, and go after it on lead. I know some people will bid spades, but I am too used to playing opposite partners that like to raise me on doubleton.

Yichi: Double. If my partner complains that I had a 5-card suit, I'll pretend that I mis-sorted my hand. I wouldn't want to play with Jxxxx as a trump suit without 4 card support.

Chien-Yao: Double. Double is the most flexible way to find the best contract we could have. 1♦ overcall is not good because partner would lead diamond if opponents win the contract. 1♣ overcall is also possible, but we might land in the wrong 4-3 fit contract and get the longer trumps tapped.

And some think double is the Baby Bear bid.

Mike: Double. I'm not sure what secrets you are trying to uncover here. It is strong enough to compete, but bidding diamonds would be dumb and 1♣ preempts two other playable strains. Double is the call that is right in front of your nose.

Aaron: Double. I can pass from here to eternity after, and the shape is right to act at these colors.

Yehudit: Double. What's the problem?

Nolan: Double. This is a perfect hand for a double, you have support for both majors and the unbid minor. Also, your points are spread out so any suit will be fine with you.



Roger: Double seems perfect. I'm okay with overcalling on chunky 4 card suits, but not with such an attractive alternative available.

When this hand came up in an American team trial several years ago, one player holding these cards passed. The other player holding this hand was Peter Weichsel, and he overcalled 1♦. This looks very wrong to me, for reasons my panelists have already covered. My rank order of the bids is double (I would double at any vulnerability or conditions), 1♣ (Marshall Miles choice, I would guess), pass, with 1♦ being a distant fourth choice (we don't even want a diamond lead). Yet 1♦ was the big winner for a strange reason. The 1♣ opening bidder was Chip Martel, who held AQTxx of diamonds to go along with his six clubs and his very strong hand. Having heard the 1♦ overcall behind him, Martel bid conservatively and missed a slam).

~ about our panelists ~

Nolan Chang is our youngest star, and also a high school water polo standout. **Yichi Zhang, Zhaorong Jin** (answers not included), **Dan Emmons** and **Rebecca (Becca) Wernis** comprise the Caltech #1 team which has qualified for the national college final

in Philadelphia this summer. Dan represented the USA in junior competition in Croatia last summer, and Becca was recently named to the USA under 26 women's team for this summer's competition in China. **Roger Lee** was on the 2009 Caltech national championship team, has moderated this column, and recently won the prestigious Blue Ribbon Pairs in Seattle. He is a member of the USA under 26 team in China. **Hsi-Chun Liu** (answers not included) and **Chien-Yao Tseng** were also on the Caltech 2009 college championship team. **Brad Haas** founded the UCLA bridge club in 2004, was the UCLA captain from 2004 – 2006, and is now a doctor for Kaiser Permanente. **Elianna Meyerson** started bridge clubs at the Claremont Universities and at the University of Nebraska; she is a certified director and has taught bridge. **Adam Meyerson** is the former UCLA bridge coach (national college champs in 2008) and the inventor of the Meyerson convention. He is also a regular member of the panel. The Meyersons have recently moved to San Jose. **Aaron Jones** is a post-doc at CSULB. **Ryan Wessels** (answers not included) was previously the star of the Claremont Mudd team. **Yehudit Hasin** is a post-doc at UCLA and has played for Israel in international competition. **Mike Shuster** is a former USA junior player, has been a long time regular member of this panel and now lives in Pennsylvania.

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me that if it worked, it was Hamilton but if it didn't, it was Capelletti. Our friend Lee Barton from Edmonton claims he invented what we know as Smolen, but that Smolen got credit for it because he was better known.

So what conventions are essential? Have you learned all of Barbara Seagram's 25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know? Have you learned her 25 More Bridge Conventions You Should Know? Do you need all of these? I believe you need what you can handle. By that I mean what your memory can handle. If you're anything like me, before a new convention becomes mine and I own it, I forget it at least once. Roger and I try to practice new conventions online or in the local bridge club, but not at a tournament where we have teammates. Bridge Baron (software available from Baron Barclay Bridge Supplies) allows you set the parameters to include the conventions you want to practice and it will spew forth many hands so you can practice bidding the new convention. Bridge Base Online (BBO) also has a bidding room where you

and a partner can practice bidding.

So, what conventions are a must? I think you can do well if you play the eight listed below. I play many more conventions, most of which rarely come up. I asked my husband what his list would be, and we agreed on seven out of eight of them. My list is:

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Take out doubles | Negative doubles |
| Stayman | Jacoby Transfers |
| New minor forcing | Unusual No Trump |
| Michaels | Some form of Blackwood |

You should sit down with your partner and come to agreement about your conventions. If you don't use and understand the ones on my list, there are resources available to assist you. If you don't have Bridge Baron or Barbara Seagram's books, go to Google. Put the name of the convention in and press enter. Wow! There is lots of help out there. How many new conventions should you add? I think you should add as many as you can handle. By that I mean, how many you can remember. Memory is a problem for many of us however the doctor is always encouraging us to exercise and bridge is exercise for your mind. Have fun.