

Southern California

Bridge News

Volume 54, #4

April 2018

Published by ALACBU

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Woes at the Table

by Mike Marcucci



What subjects cause endless discussion & will probably never be resolved? I propose that here's one of them: Should the hand scores and result % be displayed on BridgeMates once a score has been entered for a hand? Wow

– does that bring up the hackles on players. One minute you are friends. The next minute they are walking away in a huff!

For those novices who have never played with BridgeMates, you've probably at least seen them on tables. They started appearing about 10 years ago – in 2 different versions as I recall. For about 2 years the versions vied with one another and the one you see nowadays finally won out. They are an electronic scoring system that eliminates the scoring slips that directors must hand-input into their main computer to produce results. There was a need – folks have complained about the time it takes to produce results since bridge began in 1935. Some entrepreneur saw that need and filled it. With board results being continuously beamed over to that main computer, as soon as that very last score is input at a table, results are flashed up as if by magic. A marvel of computer power.

Advantages are many. 1) Since opponents are required to look at each score being entered and press the “accept” button, theoretically there should be no mistakes. There are still slip-ups from time to time, but most folks would agree that 90% of those hand-input mistakes have been eliminated. 2) Scoring slips are not needed. Yea for the environment. 3) Your ACBL player numbers are input at the beginning of session. Again, less work for the director and fewer

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District Director Report

February 2018

by Kevin Lane

“Bridge is a game and should be fun.”

Philadelphia report



The Philadelphia board meetings are complete. And – good news – with 3 days remaining the NABC itself is slated to exceed table count estimates by 600 tables. Here is my report on the board

meetings.

The ACBL

Previously I had reported the good-news/bad-news situation where ACBL headquarters is incredibly active with our new CEO (good news) where my fear was that an organization as small as the ACBL needs more focus to thrive. I'm pleased that a consensus emerged at the meetings that more focus would indeed be better for the ACBL.

Budget

The board approved a budget with a substantial loss projected for 2018. I voted in support of this budget.

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mistakes. Your name then pops up on each screen as players move between tables and the North player can then decide whether to warn his partner or not! 4) Scores are automatically calculated when the trick result is entered. No more look-up tables to examine. 5) The 'Mates can access all results and summarize the pair results at the end of the game so you have an estimate of how you did without even walking over to the director's table. Enjoy your last sips of coffee while you copy down all of your board results right there on the "results" screen. Might not be absolutely accurate if any table results are still outstanding, but close enough to enable a smile ☺ or a frown ☹.

There is one other "advantage" that is my subject today. 6) !&#%? After your board result is entered, the 'Mate will show you all the previous scores on that particular board & display your % score on that board up to that time. From completely inaccurate after the 1st table (they are ALL 50%) to completely accurate at the last table (everyone has played the board), folks LOVE to see how they are doing and the comments start flowing. Why did other folks bid such & such? How did we only make 4 and others are making 5? The whole idea of quiet bridge evaporates in post mortems.

The Director can "enable" this feature or "disable" it if they choose. How I wish more club directors would disable it!!! FYI, at MOST tournaments, this feature is disabled. There are several good reasons for that. Here we are trying to improve the mechanics of duplicate bridge so that our players can focus on good communications with their partner and playing good bridge in general, and what do the programmers at the 'Mate manufacturer do – they include a feature to slow down the movement and give information to the players that they do not need. Now we are regressing to one of the disadvantages of those scoring slips. Why should anyone be interested in what others have done on a board until the end of the game? How can it help anyone's game on the next board to know how the last one turned out for you? IMHO, the info is a distraction. Use the time to stretch your legs, go get a cup of coffee, or say hi to a friend instead of lingering over results that you can do nothing about and just serve to distract you from what faces you on the next board. As soon as that next table opens up, you should be there!

Of course, we all realize that it is "fun" to know what happened and we all love to have things to

talk about. These are the times of the "instant gratification" mentality. Think about that distraction point. When you look at that data, you are purposely distracting yourself! Isn't it hard enough to focus on bidding and defending without electing to break that focus with extraneous info?

I am continually amazed by how the game of bridge has evolved over the course of 90 years. Yes, I am going to paint a target on my back by disclosing that, after all this time on those "history" searches that many folks know I do, I have just about completed the task of reading every copy of the ACBL Bridge Bulletin that has ever been published back to 1935. Many of our newer players would be amazed to know that players wore suits & ties and cocktail dresses to play bridge until sometime in the late 60's. Gentlemen were gentlemen and ladies were ladies. Playing bridge was a special social event and a respected pastime. Systems were being talked about and developed. Did you know that when Mike Michaels proposed our first "Michaels" bids back in the late 50s, it only applied to majors?

The connection here is the seriousness and pride that everyone took in playing our game for its first 40-45 years. Does everyone know that attendance and membership increased from nothing in 1935 to 200,000 in 1976 and has declined ever since? There were no electronic gadgets in the early days. Folks concentrated on how to play bridge better! Those old-timers, our predecessors, would be surprised to see their sons and daughters doing anything to distract themselves from the prime directive – how can I play better bridge?

This column threatens to go on forever. Pardon me for opening up the history bag – there is MUCH more to say. But there are other days to expand on things other than our small, friendly 'Mates. I have heard that some directors have turned my #6 feature OFF and have had so many complaints from their players that they felt they had to reverse themselves. Too bad that players are trading that comfy feeling of knowing the (interim) results on boards for an unintentional distraction to their own bridge games. My vote will always be "OFF".

San Diego Regional is next for me. So many tournaments – so little time! Hope to see you there. In the meantime, happy trails.

Moving the NAP flight B/C finals to later in the spring NABC

The board voted to move the NAP flight B/C finals to the second weekend of the Spring NABC. The ACBL tried an experiment in the last few years of having the NAP B/C in the first Sunday/Monday, but

we ultimately decided that the second weekend works better for scheduling.

Next month I will finish my report on the Philly NABC board meetings.

Contact me at kland23@gmail.com to share your thoughts.

District 23 Rank Changes February 2018

Junior Master

Gerald Ansell
Marlene Ansell
Elaine Bock
Dana Dewberry
Ted Dowe
Ronald Lu
Charlotte Roush
Peggy Shapiro
Tak Chun Wong

Club Master

Bill Kessler
Vic Marovish
Simonetta May
Barbara Rabinovich
Jennifer Wellman

Sectional Master

Ronald Bloom
Gordon Hull
Dixie Matt
Won-Young McDevitt
Mathew Riklin
John Romm

Regional Master

Patricia Kraus
Howard Schecter
Rose Marie Tashima

NABC Master

Jojo Sarkar

Life Master

Chien-San Han

D Kleinfeld

Bronze Life Master

Colleen Gardner
D Kleinfeld

Silver Life Master

Bee-De Lim
Fredy Minter

Ruby Life Master

Brian Dixon

Gold Life Master

Dennis Semain

Diamond Life Master

Roy Wilson

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Looking for a Club?

Check out

<https://web3.acbl.org/findalist/club>

All clubs in Los Angeles are listed.
You can look up all the game times,
locations, and contact info.

DISTRICT 23 LOS ANGELES GRAND NATIONAL TEAMS

**QUALIFY FOR SUMMER ACBL NATIONALS - ATLANTA - JULY, 2018
OR JUST PLAY FOR FUN**

2 SESSIONS EACH DAY: APRIL 28-29, 10 AM & 3 PM

LONG BEACH BRIDGE CLUB

4782 PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY, 90804 . CLOSE TO 405 FWY

TEAMS OF 4 TO 6

**COMPETE AGAINST YOUR PEERS IN THE BRACKET OF YOUR
CHOICE**

4 BRACKETS:

(OPEN Unlimited masterpoints

A - 0-6000 masterpoints

B - 0-2500

C - 0-500 (NON- LIFE MASTERS ONLY)

SWISS TEAMS ON SATURDAY

ONLY THE TOP TEAMS IN EACH BRACKET

WILL PLAY KNOCK OUTS ON SUNDAY.

**WINNER OF EACH BRACKET MAY, IF THEY CHOOSE,
REPRESENT DISTRICT AT NATIONALS IN ATLANTA**

GOLD POINTS TO BE AWARDED TO TOP TEAMS

WINNING TEAMS MAY OPT OUT OF NATIONALS W/OUT PENALTY

RUNNERS UP WILL THEN BE OFFERED OPPORTUNITY TO

REPRESENT OUR DISTRICT

PLAY FOR FUN AND EXPERIENCE AND SUPPORT OUR DISTRICT

NO PRE-REGISTRATION

CARD FEES \$60.00 PER TEAM PER SESSION

CONDITIONS OF CONTEST at bridgewebs.com/acbl/

For further info:

howardeinberg@yahoo.com,

or Howard Einberg 310-704-2564, or

Julie Kimelman 818-817-0094



LOS ANGELES LONG BEACH REGIONAL

JULY 2-8, 2018

TOURNAMENT HIGHLIGHTS

DAYLIGHT SCHEDULE! 299ER GAMES EVERY DAY!
PILE UP YOUR GOLD POINTS IN OUR GOLD RUSH PAIRS!
STAR SPEAKERS EVERY DAY! SATURDAY SPECIAL SHOW!

Monday July 2nd.
Free 2-hour Bridge Workshop
 10:30 - 12:30 am
 Followed by lunch

Marjorie Michelin
 Grand Life Master

Pro Am Game at 1 pm
 Card fee for Am's: \$14

Please pre register before 6/24
 Gerri Carlson
 gcoffa@aol.com
 310-377-0316

Need a Partner?
 Diane Sachs
 diancesachs@yahoo.com
 562-981-4884

Tournament Manager:
 Peter Benjamin
 ahoneydo@aol.com
 310-720-6050

Director-in-Charge:
 Ken Horwedel
 District 23 Director: Kevin Lane
 District 23 President: Mike Marcucci



Hilton Long Beach
 701 West Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, CA

Room rate: \$139 (Free Wifi) please refer to ALACBU
 Reservation must be made by Friday, June 9.
 800-445-8667 or 562-983-3400

Card fees: \$14 for ACBL Members
 \$18 for expired ACBL Members

Notice: Non-members will be required to either join
 ACBL on an annual basis or on a new temporary one-
 month membership for \$7.99.

Self parking: \$6

Sanction Number: R1807009



Monday, July 2, 2018
 299er Free Workshop/Lunch (Reserv. Rqd).....10:30 am
 Pro-Am Pairs (single session).....1:00 pm
 Aft Side Game Series (1 of 6).....1:00 pm
 Stratified Charity Pairs (single session).....7:00 pm
 Starburst KO (1 of 4).....7:00 pm

Tuesday, July 3, 2018
 Starburst KO (2, 3 & 4 of 4).....10:30 am, 3:00 & 7:30 pm
 AM Side Game Series (1 of 5).....10:30 am
 299er Pairs (single session).....10:30 am
 Stratified Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Mark Schreiber Gold Rush Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Betsy Ross KO (1 & 2 of 4).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Guest Lecture.....2:30 pm
 Aft Side Game Series (2 of 6).....3:00 pm
 Stratified Swiss Teams (single session).....3:00 pm
 PM Side Game Series (1 of 5).....7:30 pm

Wednesday, July 4, 2018
 AM Side Game Series (2 of 5).....10:30 am
 299er Pairs (single session).....10:30 am
 Bernie Mateer Stratified Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Lois Miller Gold Rush Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Betsy Ross KO (3 & 4 of 4).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Firecracker KO (1 & 2 of 4).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Guest Lecture.....2:30 pm
 Aft Side Game Series (3 of 6).....3:00 pm
 Stratified Swiss Teams (single session).....3:00 pm
 PM Side Game Series (2 of 5).....7:30 pm
 Blackbird Turbo Swiss (1 of 2).....7:30 pm

Thursday, July 5, 2018
 AM Side Game Series (3 of 5).....10:30 am
 299er Pairs (single session).....10:30 am
 Miriam Collup Stratified Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Red & White Stratified Swiss Teams (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Firecracker KO (3 & 4 of 4).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Guest Lecture.....2:30 pm
 Aft Side Game Series (4 of 6).....3:00 pm
 Stratified Swiss Teams (single session).....3:00 pm
 PM Side Game Series (3 of 5).....7:30 pm
 Blackbird Turbo Swiss (2 of 2).....7:30 pm

Friday, July 6, 2018
 AM Side Game Series (4 of 5).....10:30 am
 299er Pairs (single session).....10:30 am
 0-99 Pairs (single session).....10:30 am
 WLA Player of the Year - Bob Chen - Gold Rush Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Unit 559 Stratified Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Liberty Bell KO (1 & 2 of 4).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Guest Lecture.....2:30 pm
 Aft Side Game Series (5 of 6).....3:00 pm
 Stratified Swiss Teams (single session).....3:00 pm
 Bluefinch Turbo Swiss (1 of 2).....7:30 pm
 PM Side Game Series (4 of 5).....7:30 pm

Saturday, July 7, 2018
 AM Side Game Series (5 of 5).....10:30 am
 299er Pairs (single session).....10:30 am
 Anand Kumar Gold Rush Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm

Saturday, July 7, 2018
 Stratified Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Liberty Bell KO (3 & 4 of 4).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Queen Mary Compact KO (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & 3:00 pm
 Aft Side Game Series (6 of 6).....3:00 pm
 Stratified Swiss Teams (single session).....3:00 pm
 Entertainment Event.....6:30 pm
 Bluefinch Turbo Swiss (2 of 2).....7:30 pm
 PM Side Game Series (5 of 5).....7:30 pm

Sunday, July 8, 2018
 Ft Henry Stratified Fast Pairs (1 & 2 of 2).....10:30 am & TBA
 Flight A/X Swiss Teams.....10:30 am & TBA
 Pat Abbey Bracketed B/C/D Swiss Teams.....10:30 am & TBA

Event Colors:
 299ers: Orange
 Teams: Green
 Pairs: Blue

KOs may be handicapped.
 Games will be stratified
 by average masterpoints.

Stratified Games: 0-1500 / 1500-3000 / 3000+
Stratified Games: 0-3000 / 3000-5000 / 5000+
 Gold Rush: 0-100 / 100-300 / 300-750
 Flight A/X: 0-5000 / 5000+
 Bracketed Flight B/C/D:
 Bracketed by average points of team.
 No player over 3000 MPs
 Turbo Swiss Teams: 3 x 8 boards

From the Director's Chair: *by Jim Perkins*

Revokes (and Tricks Taken More Generally)

During the play of the hand, most of us have been taught to arrange our played cards so the long axis of the card points toward the side that won the trick and the short axis points to the side that lost the trick. Some players ignore this suggestion and just pile their cards haphazardly. There is no rule requiring that the suggestion be followed but a player that does not follow the suggestion can cause problems if a later dispute arises regarding the result achieved. In that regard, I suggest that players keep their cards positioned and in order until agreement on the result is reached by all four players so that any dispute can more easily be investigated and corrected. If an Opponent revokes, I generally make a mental note of the trick on which that happened and when play is complete, reposition the card slightly (for example, push it up a little). This creates a physical record so I am better able to state my case when the director arrives.

One of the most common disputes about the result of a hand involves a revoke. A player has a lapse in attention or concentration and fails to follow suit to a trick. If all agree that a revoke has occurred and been established, the laws are clear. As we noted a few months back, any time an irregularity has occurred you should summon the director (we don't get paid by the call, so call freely). However, when the director arrives, he should rule that if the player that revoked won the trick on which she revoked and the side that revoked won any subsequent tricks, the offending side transfers two tricks over and above the table result to the non-offending side. If the player that revoked did not win the trick on which she revoked and the side that revoked won any subsequent tricks, the offending side transfers one trick over and above the table result to the non-offending side.

Two important exceptions apply. No player may revoke at trick 12 (or, as my friend Colin would say, "No revoke can occur on the penultimate trick"). We simply back up the last two tricks and require that the offending player follow to the suit led at trick 12 and play the remaining card on the final trick. No penalty applies. Second, the rule stated above may not "restore equity." For example, the defenders have established their suit and

declarer has established his side suit. Declarer is on lead and draws the final trump. Except both defenders show out. Declarer then begins to run his established suit, but a defender trumps in and then the defenders run their suit. Clearly declarer would have taken many more tricks if not for the revoke, and that "equitable" result is awarded to the non-offending side.

When is a revoke established? A revoke is established when the partner of the player that revoked plays to the next trick (and not until). In the case of declarer, a revoke is established when the declarer plays a card from the dummy to the subsequent trick. (Dummy can revoke also, but it is rare as all four players can see it. The usual explanation for a dummy revoke is that dummy was laid down with a hidden card. Leading to the question of how three players missed that a 12 card dummy appeared.) Partners can legally help each other out by asking "No Hearts partner?" when a player shows out and even dummy, otherwise required to remain silent during the play, can pipe in to avoid this irregularity by asking declarer, "No Clubs declarer?"

Finally, a revoke is highly different than most other irregularities in bridge. If your partner fails to alert your conventional bid, you are required to inform the opponents at your first legal opportunity -- at the end of the auction if you are declarer (or dummy) or when play is complete if you are a defender. Other irregularities also require self-reporting. However, for whatever reason, when it comes to revokes, TPTB (the powers that be) have decided that you are under no obligation to report your own revokes. If the opponents are blissfully unaware that you have revoked you need not bring that fact to their attention. You may keep whatever result was obtained, even if aided or enhanced by the revoke.

Which leads to the (almost certainly fictional but) amusing story about a strong declarer playing against a . . . let's just say not quite so strong defenders. She held ten high trumps, five in each hand and three top tricks outside. She won the opening lead, cashed two more top tricks and embarked on a line where she ruffed all her losing Hearts in Dummy and all Dummy's losing Hearts in hand, making all 13 tricks. It was a top board.

New Feature in the Bridge News:

We plan to add a "Letters to the Editor" column to the SCBN. Got news, a topic, a question, or just a gripe to air? Send a note to bridgenews@acbldistrict23.org and we'll give you your 15 minutes of fame.

Around the Units in District 23



Long Beach by Jon Yinger

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com

February 25 Unit Game: Overall results: 1st in A: John Melis/Coleen Gardner, 2nd Jo Melis/Jon Yinger, 3rd Dalia Hernandez/Cliff Goodrich, 4th John Petrie/Jeanette Estill, 5th Sharon Biederman/Fred Willbanks, 6th Kiyo Nagaishi/Mark Tang. In the B flight overalls Carol Murakoshi/Larry Slutsky were 3rd, Sherry Troeger/Gayle Grubb 4th, Rosalie Storc/Penny O'Toole 5th. In the C flight overalls Jane Reid/Joyce Henderson were 3rd. Congratulations to all!

March 11 Club Championship Game: Overall results: 1st in A: Stephen Licker/Robert Gish, 2nd John Melis/Kay Tseng, 3rd Dalia Hernandez Julie DeLuccio, 4th George Tien/Tim Lee, 5th Jackson Tsao/Tsu Jan, 6th Bill Ng/Chiye Horiguchi, 7th Jo Melis/Jon Yinger. In the B flight overalls Betty Witteried/Christine Frumen were 4th, John Hagman/Paul Chen 5th, George Welsh/Tim Cole 6th. In the C flight overalls Tai Wang/Chiu Lee were 5th. Congratulations to all!

70+% GAMES Feb 16 through Mar 15: In the Friday afternoon game March 9 John and Jo Melis were first with 70.86%. Congratulations!

BIG MASTER POINT AWARDS Feb 16 through Mar 15: Feb 21 Jackie and Richard Hess won 4.31 for 1st, Kevin Lane/Jeff Grotenhuis 3.23mp for 2nd. In the unit game Feb 25 Colleen Gardner/John Melis won 4.38mp for 1st, Jo Melis/Jon Yinger 3.25mp for 2nd. In the evening game March 7 Al Lum/Steve Hirsch won 3.50mp for 1st. March 11 Stephen Licker/Robert Gish won 4.52mp for 1st, Kay Tseng/John Melis 3.39mp for 2nd. March 12 Jackie Hess/Al Appel won 3.50mp for 1st. March 13 Al

Appel/Judith Jones won 4.81mp for 1st, Mark Tang/Chiye Noriguchi 3.61mp for 2nd. And March 14

Robert and John Bakovic won 3.35mp for 1st. Congratulations to all!!

NEW CLUB MEMBERS: Carol Cundiff, Patricia Donley, Janice Furman, Sherry Geller-Vogeli, Christopher Oliver, Barbara Peterson, Kathy Sullivan, Jim Werner, Jamuna Murthy. Welcome to the club!

STATUS CHANGES: New Junior Master: Freda Otto. New Club Master: Ardis Laine. New Sectional Master: Charles Laine. Congratulations to you all!

GET WELL WISHES TO Peggy Waite and Betty McClellan.

CONDOLENCES to the families and friends of Bob Ballack and Kersten Truelson both of whom passed away earlier this month.

UP-COMING EVENTS AT THE CLUB:
March 19-24 D22/23 STaC Week. Extra points, \$11 card fees.
March 25 Unit Game. Card fee \$8. Only dessert served
March 27: a day honoring Fran Vargas who turns 97 years old tomorrow.
April 8: NLM Sectional. 9am mini lesson—John Jones. 10am game. 2:30 game. Regular open game will also be held beginning at 12:30.
April 11 7pm: Charity game
April 13: 4:15pm: Charity game
April 14: 12:30pm: Charity game.
April 20: 4:15pm: Unit-rated game. Spaghetti dinner.
April 22: Unit Game. Card fee \$8. Only dessert served.

NEWS FROM LEISURE WORLD BRIDGE CLUBS- Judy Carter-Johnson

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP GAME—
Clubhouse #1 February 23: Al Appel/Verna Burns 1 in A. Judy Carter-Johnson/Harshad Vora 2 in A, 1 in B, 1 in C. Sharon Beran/Arne Lier 3 in A. Dale Rensing/Robert Santen 4 in A, 2 in B. Kay Hyland/Jane Reid 5 in A, 3 in B, 2 in C. Julie Cunningham/Jane Gibbons 6/7 in A, 4 in B, 3 in C. Fern Dunbar/Hanefi Erten 6/7 in A. Joyce Henderson/Alan Olschwang 5 in B. Marlene McIlroy/Ted Cooper 4 in C.

UNIT RATED GAME--Clubhouse #1 March 9: Sue Fardette/Marilyn McClintock 1 in A, 1 in B. Diane Schmitz/Sibyl Smith 2 in A, 2 in B. Joan Tschirki/Al Appel 3 in A. Verna Burns/Emma Trepinski 4 in A. Betty Jackson/Diane Sachs 5 in A. Fern Dunbar/Hanefi Erten 6 in A. Jack Dampman/George Koehm 3 in B, 1 in C. Sally Fenton/Mary Lund 4 in B, 2 in C. Sylvia Kaprelyan/George Alemshah 5 in B, 3 in C. Fred Reker/Mark Singer 4 in C

REMINDER: ACBL classifies Leisure World bridge games as "invitational" meaning non-resident guests must secure an advance reservation. Games are held on Monday/Thursday at clubhouse #3 at 12:15. For reservations please call: Monday—Midge Dunagan (562) 594-9686. Thursday—Cookie Pham (562) 431-6453. 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 also held on Friday/Saturday at clubhouse #1 at 12:15. For reservations please call: Friday—Jeanette Estill (714) 647-2609. Saturday—Sue Fardette (714) 995-5879. Any news for next month's column, please e mail me at icj90740@gmail.com Results of all Leisure World games are posted on www.acblunit557.org



Pomona – Covina
by Tom Lill
www.acblunit551.org

Unit Game: Saturday, April 21, 11:00 a.m., Glendora
Individual: Saturday, April 7, 9:30 a.m., Chino

The March Individual was captured by Al Lax. Roger Boyar was second, Margie Hall third, with Clint Lew tying Dale Quasny for the fourth spot.

The March Unit game was basically a two horse race. Bill Papa – Vic Sartor (first) and Fredy Minter – Lulu Minter easily outdistanced the field. Gerard Geremia – Amr Elghamry took third, Penny Barbieri – Rosalie Roberts fourth, and Eileen Finlay – Timothy Finlay took fifth.

There are fewer winners than usual this month ... not because of poor attendance, but because Fredy and Lulu Minter insist on steam-rolling everyone

else. They had FOUR 70%+ game this month, with the best being 75.58% As far as the rest of us go: Karen Olin, Mary Miller, Joe Unis, Clint Lew, Roger Boyar, Ken Bloomfield, Kurt Trieselmann, Karen McCarthy, Suzanne Wojick, Herb Stampfl, Richard Patterson, Sofi Kasubhai, Claudia Cochran, Penny Barbieri, Hanan Mogharbel, and Yours Truly all found themselves atop the leader board at least once.

No promotions to report this month. Better news next month, perhaps.

Our Hand of the Month is another exercise in judgment – and frustration. As South, with only the opponents vulnerable, you pick up this uninspiring collection:

♠ Q9 ♥ 43 ♦ Q2 ♣ J975432

Some junky high cards and terrible shape. Partner deals, but it goes pass – pass – pass (you don't preempt on rubbish like that, do you? Even in third seat? Well,) 1♦. Partner comes to life ... with 2♣!!! RHO bids 2♥. Not quite believing your eyes, you venture 4♣. Well, maybe 5♣ would be better, but let's go just 4. The opponents keep bidding hearts and you keep competing in clubs. How high ya gonna go, sport?

This turns out to be the full deal:

♠ J2	
♥ 105	
♦ 743	
♣ AKQ876	
♠ A865	♠ KJ743
♥ K986	♥ AQJ72
♦ KJ1098	♦ A65
♣ none	♣ none
♠ Q9	
♥ 43	
♦ Q2	
♣ J975432	

Yeah, just another 13-card fit. Unfortunately, the N-S hands fit together like shoes on a snake, and the opponents are cold for 7 of either major, thanks to the 2-2 spade break and the fortunate diamond position. (Of course, as they say, regarding the diamond position: "one peek is worth two finesses.") At one table, N-S bid all the way to 6♣: -1100. At most tables, E-W played 5♥ or 5♠, making most if not all of the tricks. And at one table, North opened 3♣, and South had to check to see that everyone had pulled

cards from the same board. (Quietly, of course! Ethics!)

Quote for the month: "When a politician changes his position it's sometimes hard to tell whether he has seen the light or felt the heat." (Robert Fuoss)



Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

This year's Magic Mountain Sectional will be held on September 22nd and 23rd at the Friendly Valley Auditorium in Santa Clarita. For more information, contact tournament chair, Gay Gipson (gegipson@gmail.com)

Unit Game Results from Sunday, March 18th:

First with 62.70%	Roy Ladd and Bert Stock
Second with 62.2%	Sharry Vida and Henry Roediger
Third with 61.57%	Kathy Flynn and Robert McBroom
Fourth with 55.56%	Carol Provost and George MacDonald
Fifth with 55.29%	Russ Buker and Ron Oest

ACBL-wide Senior Pairs Results from Monday, March 19th:

First with 64.65%	Carol Trenda and Gary Trenda
Second with 64.25%	Carol Ashbacher and Richard Ashbacher
Third with 62.77%	Rita Vannatter and Paul Giff
Fourth with 61.87%	Roshen Hadulla and Arif Shah

STaC Game Results from Tuesday, March 20th:

First N/S with 62.20%	Betty Pavey and Bert Stock
Second N/S with 56.13%	Lamonte Johnson and Ted Maki
Third N/S with 61.57%	Irwin Novick and Rand Pinsky

First E/W with 69.64%	Elaine Moore and Robert McBroom
Second E/W with 56.04%	Paula Olivares and Peter Knee

Third E/W with 52.64%
Oest

Russ Buker and Ron

Congratulations to Elaine Moore and Robert McBroom whose score of 69.6% is first in District 23 and will receive an extra 4.69 silver points.

Upcoming Events:

Swiss Pairs Game: Monday, April 16th, 12:30 PM at the Senior Center in Santa Clarita

Western Conference STaC games: May 7-13

Swiss Teams Game: Monday, May 14th, 12:30 PM at the Senior Center in Santa Clarita

World Wide Bridge Contest: Friday, June 1st at 12:30 at Joshua Tree

Longest Day Games: Monday, June 18th at the Senior Center in

Santa Clarita and Friday, June 22nd at Joshua Tree in Palmdale

Instant Matchpoint Game, Monday, July 9th, 12:30 PM at the Senior Center

Next Board meeting: Tuesday, July 17th at 5:30 PM at the Senior Center in Santa Clarita



San Fernando Valley by Linda Silvey

[Editor's Note: Linda was unable to submit a column this month, because she's recovering from hip surgery. Let's wish her a speedy recovery. Meanwhile, Terry Morton has the latest news from Unit 561.]

Special Congratulations

February Top Ten Masterpoints at the 750 Club were: Ray Primus 16.23, Dwight Hunt 12.76, Susan Raphael 12.17, Dan Strauss 11.68, Ron Malkin 11.40, Tony Mirchandani 11.34, D Kleinfeld 10.46, Phyllis Seeder 10.45, Jerry Goodman 9.35, Mike Wiener 9.14.

April and June Special Events at The 750 Club

Club Championship week will be held during the week of April 16 – April 20.

Winning players will be able to earn extra black points for no extra fees during the day and evening sessions.

On Friday, June 8, the Annual "Carol Lang" Game will be held in honor of the late Carol Lang and her husband, Mike, who started The 750 Club in 2006. Winners will receive an award certificate and their names will be engraved on the memorial plaque. Advance reservations will be required for this event.

"Longest Day" Games will be held on Thursday, June 21. There will be three Open Stratified games at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7pm. All proceeds, including card fees and additional contributions will be donated the "Alzheimer's Association."

May 4-5: San Fernando Valley Sectional

Unit 561 will host a San Fernando Valley Sectional Tournament on Friday - Saturday, May 4-5, at the 750 Bridge Club (Prince of Peace Church) 5700 Rudnick Ave, Woodland Hills. Limited MP Pairs, Fri, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., Stratified Open Pairs, Fri and Sat, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Fees will be ACBL members \$12, Non-members \$15. Swiss Teams, Sat, 10 a.m., fee of \$112/Team (which includes lunch).



**Torrance-
South Bay
by Steve Mager**

Unit: www.freewebs.com/bridgeatunit568
SBBC: www.southbaybridgeclub.com

Upcoming Events at the South Bay Bridge Club

Unit Game: Friday, April 6, 11:30 AM
Club Championship Week: April 9 thru April 14

Club Championships

Patty Taylor and Jack Stewart led the way in all Flights at the March 2 Club Championship.

During the Club Championship week March 5-10 the overall winners were as follows.

March 5:	A) Bob Bacharach/Henry Crowder
Afternoon	B) Glenn Musicar/ Stan Greengard
	C) Barbara Catino/Barbara Laier

March 5:	Laura Gastelum/Mark Raggio
Evening	
March 6:	Elaine Godin/Francis Israel
March 7:	A & B) Patty Taylor/Stan Greengard
Afternoon	C) Beverly Narahara/Carol King
March 7:	A) Chris Freeland/Joan Chrishal
Evening	B) Ramani Ravikandan/Laura
Gastelum	
March 8	A) George Stinson/Setsuko Miyasaka
NLM B&C)	Ed Ruttenberg/Kathryn Dennyshy
March 9	A) Mike Welsh/Ted Gibbs
Afternoon	B) Stan Greengard/Robert Rothman
March 9	A) Ray Mack/Lise Cote
Evening	B) Patty Taylor/Jack Stewart
March 10)	A) Gerri Soffa/Mike Savage
	B) Ed Perlberg/Ed Deccarbonell

Team Winners

March 6:	Fran Israel, CVal Gamio, Ray Mack, Mike Savage
March 20:	CVal Gamio, John Jones, Mike Savage, Mark Raggio

GUV AWARD

At the recent NABC in Philadelphia John Jones and his partner Rick Roeder may have set some kind of record for cell phone violations. Apparently John had his cell phone out during play in the IMP pairs and was penalized a full board when a director spotted this. John said this cost him about 15 places of overall in a national event. An event or two later Rick apparently was nailed for the same offense leaving the playing area when he pulled out his cell before getting out of the room. At least this was not as expensive in terms of overall placings.

I must confess a number of years ago I lost 5 victory points in a nationally rated Swiss match event because a certain unnamed female friend called and my cell was on. This was a qualifying event and it almost cost us a Q. I am sure I would never have been forgiven by teammates if it did.

Na Zdrowie



West LA by Robert Shore

Beating the Snow

Some of our members braved the snow long enough to play the Spring Nationals in Philadelphia. Our Unit's headliner proved to be Eric Greco. Eric's win in the Vanderbilt Knockout Teams was his 16th NABC+ championship, but his first Vanderbilt victory. I'm thinking there's a pretty good chance it won't be his last.

Eric had a bit of company from our Unit. Phil Feldman won the Monday Flight B/C Pairs event, and Alex Kolesnik won the first Saturday A/X Pairs. Alex warmed up for Philadelphia at the San Diego Sectional, where he also won the Saturday morning Open Pairs.

Still Growing

Our Unit's Board is slowly but steadily growing its roster, aiming for full strength though we still have openings. I am delighted to announce that Marcia Fisher has agreed to be the latest addition to our Board. We still have openings, so if anyone is interested in contributing their time and effort to our Board, please speak to any Board member and let us know you're interested.

Approaching the Playoffs

The Spring Bridge League is in its home stretch. Taking the lead going into the final weekend is the team of Aram Bedros, Art Zail, Wayne Karson, Om Chokriwala, and Bill Schreiber. The team of Tate Shafer, Linda Lin, Seymour Stoll, Doron Shouly, and Stuart Hemple retains its lead in the Handicap Flight. The final weekend of the League will be held on April 5. The Unit will likely sanction two more League events this year, so watch for the start of the next League.

Points, Schmoints

It's time to announce the 2017 winners of the Unit's Mini McKenney awards. These awards go to the Unit player in each point category who accumulated the most points in a calendar year. Without further ado, our winners. Prevailing in the Rookie of the Year category was Jiaqi Zhu. The year's top Junior Master was Linda Lin. Sylvia Ziman was the Club Master of the Year, and Alex Wiles won the Sectional Master category. Winning the Regional

Master category was Saul Prieuer, and Ravnesh Amar with the Unit's top NABC Master.

The Life Master of the Year was Lisa Karako. Stuart Hemple won the Bronze Life Master category. Jim Perkins topped all Silver Life Masters and Anna Benatar was the Unit's top Ruby Life Master. Maria Pendergast was our Gold Life Master of the Year. Your Humble Scribe won the Sapphire Life Master contest. Ifiti Baqai was Diamond Life Master of the Year, Alex Kolesnik was the top Emerald Life Master, and Becky Clough was our top Grand Life Master.

Welcome Mat

We have more than three full tables of new members to report this month. Our Unit's newest members are Kathleen and William Barry, Carol and Leon Bender, Ross Bengel, Sharon Coryell, Maida Hastings, Ilene Trabolzi, and Robert Wibbelsman. Transferring into our Unit from other Units are Laura Jones, John Tiedeman, Yueqiang Xue, and Rosalie Zalis. Please give them a warm West Los Angeles welcome when you see them at the table.

Around the Clubs

Racking up 70% games at Barrington last month were Bill Sides and Joan Rubin, Sally Aminoff and Bella Feniger, Rob Perlsweig and Bill Schreiber, and Aram Bedros and Art Zail. Club champions last month were Irwin Salk and Murray Salkin and Aram Bedros and Jim Perkins.

At Beverly Hills, the 70% games were scored by Martin Gelfand and Richie Weinberger, Valerie Aron and David Segal, Ed Piken and Viktor Anikovich, Dean Schenker and Bruce Altshuler, and Om Chokriwala and Alyssa Kennedy. Club champions were Aram Bedros and Om Chokriwala, Alan Schneider and Viktor Anikovich, Maria Pendergast and Rick Turner, Martin Gelfand and Richie Weinberger, and Bella Feniger and Andre Cornette.

Climbing the Ladder

Our Unit's newest Junior Masters are Gillian Cooper, Eveline Ginzburg, and Robert Moyer. Steven Novak is now a Club Master and Leslie Dean has become a Sectional Master. Reaching NABC Master status are Susan Frank, Linda Gieske, Jaclyn Hatfield, and Bob Weingarten.

Lee Axelrod is our Unit's newest Bronze Life Master. Congratulations to all on your accomplishments.

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

Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

Panelists: Gerald Bare, Mark Bartusek, Leo Bell, Mr. Mealy-mouth, David Sacks, Mike Shuster, John Swanson, and Jon Wittes.

The combination of several problems caused me to reuse hands I used many years ago. This being the April edition caused me to bring back Mr. Hideous Hogg as a guest panelist. Mr. Hideous Hogg is neither exactly the late Ron Anderson, nor the Victor Mollo Menagerie animal, nor the Leo Bell creation. He is with us on this panel though. No fooling!.

[Editor's note: for those of you unfamiliar with the original Hideous Hog ("HH"), go immediately to Baron Barclay bridge supplies and purchase "Bridge in the Menagerie," by Victor Mollo. Quoting from a description of the various characters in the book, "HH is widely regarded as a genius by his club-mates, and he cannot understand why he is so grossly under-rated."]

1

IMPs
N/S Vul

East	South	West	North
1♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass???			
You, South, hold: ♠K8 ♥K1064 ♦K9 ♣KJ764			
What call do you make?			

One panelist wants to start this tough set with a plus score.

Bell: Pass. If I could be sure game or slam would make, I'd bid 3NT or 4♥. I'll take the sure 300 or 500 and apologize to teammates if we lose IMPs. Yes, I know we could miss a slam if partner has the perfect hand, but reaching it might be difficult anyway.

Other panelists try what they think is the most likely game.

Sacks: 3NT. Perhaps only "worth" 2NT, or some contorted auction to show hearts and NT values. However, after following recent world and national championship trends, this hand must upgrade to about 15+ points. Opposite partner's 10 plus, we should be able to locate almost all the cards at trick one and find our way to nine tricks.

than a 300 point set (even when LHO runs, which he will). So, the choice is between judging whether the danger of a club ruff and trump promotion is greater than the danger of the defenders' sneak-attack in a pointed suit. Since LHO won't have a late entry, and any potential sneak-attack suit rates to block for the opponents, I judge the trump danger to be greater.

Other panelists cuebid to select between 3NT and 4♥.

Bare: 2♣. Tough set, the club spots aren't great, so I'll try for 4♥ or 3NT.

Wittes: 2♣. Very close to a pass, but I think it is probably unlikely we will get them for 800 against our vulnerable game, so I will try for 3NT or 4♥, either of which is a likely make. It is closer to a pass at IMPs than matchpoints, as 500 against our 600 or 620 is not that big a difference, especially taking into account

possible bad breaks and partner is in the balancing seat.

Mealymouth: 2♣. Even if I can make 3♣, that's not enough for a penalty pass when vul. against not. If partner replies in hearts, we'll play in 4♥; otherwise, in 3NT. Without four strong hearts, I won't bid them first.

Some panelists cuebid to try to find hearts, but aren't forcing to game if they don't find the heart fit.

Swanson: 2♣. If partner bids hearts, I'll bid game; if he bids diamonds, I will bid 2NT, expecting him to continue, unless he is sub-minimum.

Bartusek: 2♣. Partner can balance with some 9 - 10 HCP hands, so I have to be careful. If partner bids 2♥, then we're in game; partner's 2♠ bid will fetch 2NT by me. My two doubletons make me lean towards suit play despite my club stoppers.

Hogg: 3NT. When 3NT played by ME is a possible contract, it's the right option to choose.

Partner is undoubtedly short in clubs for his balancing double. Forcing to game may be punishing partner for a light balance. Taking the money by passing makes some sense.

😊 😊 😊 😊 😊 😊

On one occasion Helen Sobel signaled Charles Goren for a spade ruff while Charles kept leading other suits, which caused Helen to noticeably fidget in her chair. Finally, Charles stated, "Helen, you have to stop that – it makes for a bad partnership. Besides, I have no more spades."

😊 😊 😊 😊 😊 😊

2

IMPs
Both vul

South	West	North	East
1♣	3♠	Dbl	Pass
???			

You, South, hold: ♠J75 ♥1054 ♦AKJ5 ♣K92

What call do you make?

The panelists complained a little about the light opening bid. Most of the panel would not open a 4333 12 HCP hand. I didn't want to alter the problem since I didn't design it. If I had designed it, I would upgrade the ♥T to the ♥J.

Some try an exasperated pass, hoping partner has enough defense to beat it.

Wittes: Pass. What a tough problem! If partner has a random 2=4=3=4 invitational or better hand, this is probably the winning action, as we will probably collect 200 or 500 against a probable part score. However, -730 is not out of the question, especially if RHO has a couple of well-placed heart honors. In the long haul, I think pass is most likely to net us a plus score.

Bare: Pass. It's close between pass and 3NT. Any bid could turn sour on this hand.

Bartusek: Pass. Seems like the normal thing to do. If LHO were non-vul, I might try 3NT, but I'm afraid he might have a good suit vulnerable.

Mealymouth: Pass. Something is happening, but you don't know what it is, do you, Mister Jones? *Readers have asked who Mr. Mealymouth is; maybe he is really Bob Dylan?* Living up to my moniker, I'll waffle. Everything depends on my partnership agreements, of which I have three with different sets of partners. With most, I play (A) Negative Doubles through 2♠ (as on the ACBL Yellow Card); with many others, I play (B) Negative Doubles through 3♠ (as in *Bridge World Standard*; with a few I play (C) Negative Doubles through 3♦ (a Compromise). So: (A) or (C), pass and drool. (B), pass. A Negative Doubler should be prepared for a penalty pass at the three-level when opener has a balanced sub-minimum. *So Mealymouth knows his ABCs; will his pass be successful?*

Sacks: Pass. What else am I supposed to do with this piece of cheese that I should have passed in the first place?

Shuster: Pass. I suppose 3NT is possible, but even if they don't run spades, we haven't taken 9 tricks yet.

One panelist tries 3NT, and points out that even if there isn't a spade stopper that the suit might block.

Swanson: 3NT. At matchpoints I would pass expecting to defeat 3♠ most of the time. At IMPs I would roll the dice with 3NT. I don't want to pay out an occasional 730 when nine minor suit tricks may be available. We might not even need a traditional spade stopper, should partner hold two little and RHO a singleton honor.

Another panelist hopes that hearts are playable.

Bell: 4♥. Someone obviously put a gun to my head and made me open this piece of doggie doo. The only other really logical choices are 4♦ (hoping partner has a fit) or pass (hoping partner has some defensive tricks). Any guess here could be spectacularly wrong, but I just can't bring myself to pass 3♠ doubled with no trump tricks. Hopefully, partner has five or more hearts.

Hogg: 3NT. We might have a spade stopper, maybe spades will block, and possibly they will lead something else. But remember the tip I gave you last hand, "When 3NT played by ME is a possible contract, it's the right option to choose.". See how easy bidding is.

John Mohan constructed this problem; he thinks that pass is best. I'm inclined to agree with the pass, but pass, 3NT, 4♣, 4♦ or 4♥ might work best on this nightmare layout.

<div style="font-size: 48pt; text-align: center;">3</div> <div style="text-align: center;">IMPs None vul</div>	West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♥	Pass	???
<p>You, South, hold: ♠7 ♥A ♦AKJ9653 ♣K963</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

How to handle a hand that wants to bid diamonds when 2♦, 3♦ and 4♦ aren't natural. One panelist hopes the opponents reopen.

Mealmouth: Pass. The time to bid diamonds has not yet come. I won't cuebid 2♦, lest a misguided partner think it shows heart support. I won't jump to 3♦, lest we're playing it as a limit raise. I won't bid 4♦, which partner will surely take as a splinter. I won't bid 5♦, as I may not be able to make it, and (shudder!) partner may think I intend it as Exclusion Roman Key-Card Blackwood. 5♦ *shouldn't be Exclusion RKC, since trumps haven't been established yet. 2♦ followed by 5♦ should be Exclusion RKC.* Pass is almost forcing on West, as undoubtedly the opponents play Negative Doubles at least through 1♥ and believe in "opener's duty to reopen," a necessary selling point some 55 years ago when Al ("if I can get by this round ...") Roth set about convincing the stick-in-the-muds of that era to abandon low-level penalty doubles. But speaking of Negative Doubles, why hasn't East made one? Are the opponents still marching with their spades to the bog?

One panelist cuebids and hopes things will work well.

Wittes: 2♦. This set must be straight out of Bridge in the Menagerie. I'm still not sure what I'll do on subsequent rounds, but this hand is too good not to start with 2♦. *He probably will follow with 3♦ and then possibly 3NT.*

All other panelist bid some number of NT.

Sacks: 1NT. Yuck! This is the lesser of bad bids. Unless partner does something interesting, this just does not feel like a game going hand on this misfit.

Swanson: 1NT. I have no experience to rely on, and bridge literature doesn't waste paper with advice on what action to take in such an unlikely situation. I suppose that, using Transfer Advances, I could bid 2♣ and play the surprise pass card when partner bids 2♦. *The way I play Transfer Advances, 2♣ is the last natural bid before the transfers begin at two of the opponent's suit.* As it is, I will keep the auction going, holding both high cards and diamonds in reserve.

Bare: 2NT. No bid looks very good, but where is the spade suit?

Bartusek: 2NT. Seems right on strength. The auction will just spiral out of control if you cuebid 2♦. 2♦ followed by 3♦ will be a Western Cue. It's an impossible hand to bid, but after the 2NT call my follow-up diamond bids will be natural.

Bell: 3NT. What else?

Shuster: 3NT. This is obviously an awkward hand, but I'm down to hoping that spades are adequately stopped or otherwise blocked. I don't have a natural advance in diamonds, and bidding clubs, even if forcing, isn't going to accomplish anything. Imagine partner raises to 3♣ - what then? Partner won't have a diamond stop to bid NT himself.

Hogg: 3NT. Surely you are catching on grasshopper! I should write a book, "3NT by ME".

I'd try 1NT hoping someone would bid and I could then bid diamonds naturally. This is a deliberate underbid.

4

IMPs
Both vul

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

You, South, hold: ♠AQ94 ♥7 ♦Q6 ♣AKJ1073
What call do you make?

One panelist bids 3♣, about what the hand is worth.

Bell: 3♣. If partner makes a move I'll bid 3NT.

All other panelists pass, most of them focusing on the ramifications of how the heart suit lies.

Shuster: Pass. This hand is really all about hearts. If partner doesn't have at least four hearts, the opponents probably can make 4♥. But if he does, then the lack of a negative double makes game our way very unlikely. Rather than risk -620, it must be better to try to get a plus score here, as our defensive prospects are rather promising with potential club ruffs and/or trump promotions coming in partner's hand.

Bare: Pass. Partner couldn't make a negative double. I am afraid of hearts so I pass.

Wittes: Pass. Partner didn't have enough to make a negative double, and I'm looking at a stiff heart. I'm a believer! The opponents have a better place to play than 1♠.

Bartusek: Pass. It seems very unlikely that we have a game, but the opponents might be cold for 4♥ if I give LHO another shot at the auction.

Mealymouth: Pass. None but the lonely heart can know my sorrow ... for the poor opponents who are in

the wrong suit and will go minus instead of plus. I fear to act facing a passing partner when I have a singleton in an unbid major.

Sacks: Pass. Partner did not bid over 1♠! Bidding on this hand is begging for the auction to continue 2♥ by West, pass, 4♥ by East. Yes, it might be our hand in clubs, but more likely 1♠ is our best spot to score some IMPs.

Swanson: Pass. I think it more like that they have a game in a red suit than we do in clubs or notrump. This seems as good a place as any to try for a plus score.

Hogg: 3NT. Do I sound like a broken record? My opponents think that playing bridge against me is like a broken record. 3NT by the Hogg making. 3NT by the Hogg making. 3NT by the Hogg making. I'll just collect the money,

I held this hand in an individual game that was being scored in both matchpoints and IMPs. I passed, but my first reaction was to try 3NT. Pass was a winner on the actual hand, because partner had a weak hand with hearts and had judged well not to make a marginal Negative Double holding three spades. The opponents belonged in diamonds.

<div style="font-size: 48pt; text-align: center;">5</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Matchpoints None vul</div>		East 3♦	South ???	West	North
			You, South, hold: ♠KQ105 ♥AKQJ109 ♦void ♣AK5		

What call do you make?

We certainly have a great hand, but how to best describe it?

Wittes: Double. I'll bid 4♦ over anything partner bids, looking seriously for a small or even possibly a grand slam. If partner has a pass over the double, we are likely to get this for more than a small slam.

Sacks: Double. A cuebid shows a strong two suiter. 4♥ precludes a black suit slam.

Swanson: 4♦, to be followed by 6♥. Hopefully, this is not a variation of the Mississippi hearts hand. *[The Mississippi Hearts Hand is a setup hand. A player held ♠AKQ ♥AKQJT9 ♦void ♣AKQJ. He bid 7♥, only to find himself doubled with the opening leader holding ♠void ♥8765432 ♦AKQJT9 ♣void. The 7♥ bidder was only able to take his 6 trump tricks.]*

Bare: 4♦. Over 4♠ I bid 6♥. No way to really describe this hand.

Bartusek: 4♦. Initially showing a major 2-suiter (although it could theoretically be a different 2-suiter). Over 4♠ I will RKC and suggest playing 5♥ (extra heart length) if partner shows 0 controls. Over a 1-control 5♦ call I will jump to 6♥ and strongly consider bidding 7♠ if partner corrects to 6♠. I wonder if some people will try a hazardous 5♦ "Exclusion Blackwood" initially? Thereafter, I don't see a way to properly describe your respective suit lengths to reach the best contract. Note: I am afraid partner will pass a takeout double with some 3=2=4=4 hand with J10xx of Diamonds.

Mealy-mouth: 4♦, then 6♥ over partner's expected 4♠ reply. Even your mother should know what to do after that. *I think my mother would have passed regardless of what she held. Mother didn't like artificial bids, you'd be lucky if she didn't pass 4♦.*

Shuster: 4♦. I'm driving to at least 6♥, but won't risk partner's passing a takeout double along the way. I'll probably bid 6♥ next, but this gives partner the option to convert to spades with a real suit, which could solve a late club loser.

Bell: 5♦. This shows a big hand with a diamond void. Over 5♠, I'll bid 6♥ which should propel us to a grand if partner has something like Axxxx xx xxx xxx. The real problem is if partner bids 5♥, but I'll take my chances and raise. *[If Leo is correct that the jump to 5♦ shows a void, this must be the right sequence.]*

Hogg: 6♥. Unless that Lucky Rabbit is on opening lead. If the Lucky Rabbit is on opening lead I will only bid 4♥ because The Rabbit's guardian angel will knock over the Rabbit's coffee at the moment he is ready to lead and his partner will ruff his accidental lead. The Rabbit's guardian angel is the second best Angel on the planet. The best Angel? Why Mike Trout of course. He's almost as good at baseball as I am in bridge. Except I don't fail over 60% of the time!

Roger Clough sent me this problem. His wife Becky held this hand. She bid an immediate 6♥. Roger, holding the ♠A and the ♦A, raised to 7♥ which made for an excellent score. Have a good hand? Send it to me at johndjones44@yahoo.com.