

Southern California

Volume 57, #4

April 2020

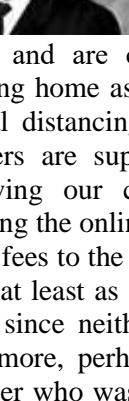
Published by ALACBU

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Robert Shore

A Whole New World





Well, our world has changed dramatically since my last column. First and foremost, I hope that all of my readers are remaining safe, and are contributing to everyone's safety by staying home as much as possible and by maintaining social distancing. Second, I hope that many of our players are supporting our clubs, and by doing so allowing our clubs to support their directors, by playing the online games that are returning a portion of their fees to the clubs. As a goal, I suggest planning to play at least as often as you do in more normal times. And since neither distance nor driving are obstacles any more, perhaps you can play with an occasional partner who was too distant for your regular club, and perhaps you can play an evening game without needing to worry about driving home in the dark.

Obviously, not much is happening at the District level. Needless to say, the April board meeting will not go forward. I am trying to get educated enough so that we can hold an online meeting, but I'm not there yet. And the Board is keeping a very close eye on state, national, and world developments with an eye toward determining whether we can or should move forward with Bridge Week, the Summer's Best Regional, at Long Beach this summer. No decisions have been made yet.

A horizontal row of 19 identical smiley faces, each consisting of a simple black outline of a head with two dots for eyes and a curved line for a smile.

Black points are enough
Thank you for playing with me
I am Life Master

- Haiku by HoMing Yim.

A horizontal row of 20 identical smiley faces, each with a black outline and a simple black line for a smile.

District Director Report

by Kevin Lane

“Bridge is a game and should be fun.”



Corona virus and Columbus

The Corona virus is severely impacting bridge including, most notably, the cancellation of the Columbus NABC.

The board of directors was actively and intensively meeting prior to the scheduled Columbus NABC, and under the leadership of President Georgia Heth handled the Columbus decision masterfully.

In lieu of meeting in person, the board will hold a virtual meeting to handle some critical items from the Columbus agenda. In addition, the board has already identified a number of issues that are fallout from the ongoing pandemic. Holding a virtual meeting is a great opportunity, but the meeting will necessarily be shorter than other meetings, and the virtual meetings the board has already held definitely fall short of the productivity and communication of face to face.

The board has only increased our virtual/online meetings during my tenure on the board. I expect that to continue, and that's a good thing.

I welcome your input. klaned23@gmail.com

Inside This Issue

Director's Chair	page 2
Play or Defend?	page 3
Rank Changes	page 4
Bridge Week Tournament Flyer	page 5
Around the Units	page 7
Problem Solvers' Panel	page 12

From the Director's Chair: by Brian Richardson



My Final Hurrah

This is my last effort at writing this column. Rather than dealing with one topic of potential interest to players and directors, this article will deal briefly with a number of topics.

Director – they did not alert/announce.

Not infrequently opponents do not alert a bid which should be alerted/announced. First it is important to understand that there is **NO** automatic penalty for this failure. If you can convince the Director that you would have taken some action if the bid had been alerted you **MAY** get some redress, e.g., an adjusted score. However, bridge operates on the basis that you have a duty to protect yourself! This means that if you are a sufficiently experienced player who is aware that a particular bid should have been alerted, and (a) it was not alerted, and (b) you did not ask the meaning, you are unlikely to get any redress. Example: 1NT – P - 4♦ - P, 4♥ - All Pass. You are unlikely to receive a sympathetic response from the Director if you, an experienced upper B stratum player, claim that you would have made a lead-directing Double of the 4♦ bid, if it had been alerted. I suspect that not many bridge players would see the 4♦ as natural.

A word of caution for those players who frequently fail to alert or announce bids that require some statement. The Director has the authority to allocate a Procedural Penalty for frequent infractions. The purpose of a Procedural Penalty is to reinforce players of the need to follow appropriate procedures.

You Cannot Bid When Your Partner Hesitated before Passing!

This is 100% incorrect. Nobody, **not** even the Director, and certainly not the opponents, can stop you from bidding. If you are of the opinion that your hand justifies a specific bid, irrespective of partner's action, then you are entitled to make that bid. Now, when the play is finished the Director may disagree with your bid after partner's break in tempo, and allocate an adjusted score on the Board, or he may let the score stand.

Placing Dummy's Cards on the Table.

In a suit contract, the Laws require the Trump suit to be placed on Dummy's right, but the Laws are silent as regards the placement of the other suits, and neither do they make any mention of where any particular suit is to be placed in a No-Trump contract. However, **the Laws do NOT permit the use of memory aids.**

Therefore, it is illegal, in any contract, to always place the suit of the lead in a specific place in Dummy. [Of course, if the lead in a suit contract happened to be a trump, Dummy is required to place that suit on his right.]

It is also illegal, in any contract, to always place Dummy's longest, or shortest, suit, or any other suit, in a specific place on the table. It is important to note that such action could be interpreted as a "memory aid", and therefore illegal. [As mentioned earlier the trump suit is the **ONLY** exception to this.]

The best advice I can give Dummy, is that, apart from in a suit contract, you should be truly random for the order of placement for the suits.

I Didn't Mean to Play That Card!

Quite a number of players believe that they can change the card they have nominated to be played by Dummy, if they do it "in the same breath". Nowhere in the Laws does such a phrase exist. Once a card has been designated by Declarer it is the card to be played, UNLESS the Director can be convinced that this was a truly inadvertent play. Convincing the Director that you really did intend to play another card, rather than the card you nominated, is not an easy task.

Similarly, a Defender may not change the card he played IF that card **COULD** have been seen by Partner. It is very important to note that it does not matter whether or not Partner actually saw the card. If the card was in a position where partner could have seen it, that card is to be played. An example of this situation is when Declarer has led towards Dummy's AQ, and the Defender sitting over Dummy, anticipating that Declarer will finesse, detaches the King from his hand, before he realizes that Declarer has played the Ace from Dummy. If the King was held in a position that the Partner of the Defender with the King **COULD** have seen it, it is deemed to be a played card. It is irrelevant whether or not Declarer, or Dummy, saw the card.

A number of players seem to believe that Declarer cannot have a Penalty Card. They are correct in this belief. However, Declarer does not have carte blanche to change a card that has been detached from his hand and held face up, touching or nearly touching the table, or maintained in such a position as to indicate that it has been played.

I Did Not Mean to Make That Bid!

In dealing, briefly, with this topic I will restrict my comments to situations in which Bidding Boxes are in use.

Imagine a situation where a player has placed the 1♣ bidding card on the Table, and, without pause for thought, realizes that he should have made a different bid. As long as his partner has not made a call, this bid can be changed, **if** the Director approves. Even if the player to the left of the opening bidder has made a call, say, 1♠, the original opening bid may still be changed, **if** the Director approves. The experienced Director will usually take the opening bidder away from the table and ask him what he meant to bid. If the player's hand clearly indicates that the intention was to bid 1♦, or 2♣, then the Director will almost certainly accept that this was a mechanical error, and permit the change, as those two bidding cards are very near the 1♣ in the Bidding Box. However, if the player wanted to change his opening bid to anything else, then the Director will almost certainly consider this to be an inattention error and **NOT** permit the change. If Opener's LHO has bid and the Director has authorized a change of the opening bid then LHO may change his bid should he so wish.

I Didn't See Your Bid.

"These words strike fear into the heart of the director. First and foremost, unauthorized information now exists. The best that can happen is that your poor partner must attempt to bid and play as if you'd never made the comment. It's possible that there will be no way to overcome the problem, and the director will need to adjust the score. Of course, that adjustment will not be in your favor. Keep in mind that this is not a mechanical error, or an inadvertent bid. You intended to make the bid you made, but you didn't intend it to apply over your partner's bid, or an opponent's bid. You cannot change this bid without penalty. Would you like my advice? Never let the words, "I didn't see your bid," cross your lips. Brush up on your poker face, and tough out the consequences."

The above paragraph, in *italics*, was written by S.G. Johnston in "The EZ Game" in 2008. It remains very relevant in 2020.

#####

I finish my stint of writing these columns with two requests:

- If there is an infraction of any sort at the table, call the Director, PLEASE.
- At this difficult time in our country's history, stay healthy, PLEASE

[Editor's note: we are going to miss Brian's insightful and helpful writing. We would certainly like to continue this feature in the SCBN. Anyone interested in picking up the baton that Brian is passing? If so, give us a ring ... er ... an email. Or a smoke signal. Or something.]

Play or Defend?

by John Jones

North

♠ K Q 9 3
♥ A K Q
♦ Q 7 2
♣ K 6 2

West

♠ void
♥ J 4
♦ A K 9 8 4 3
♣ Q 10 9 8 7

East

♠ A 10 8 7 5 4
♥ 6 3 2
♦ J 10
♣ 5 4

South

♠ J 6 2
♥ 10 9 8 7 5
♦ 6 5
♣ A J 3

Here is another real hand. It was played in Europe. The actual auction was:

West	North	East	South
1♦	dbl	2♠#	pass
3♦	dbl	pass	4♥

= weak

West leads the ♦A. Do you play or defend?

If you need a hint, turn to page 4.

The solution is on page 11.

District 23 Rank Changes February 2020

Junior Master

Mike Allen
 Alka Amar
 Marilyn Amato
 Jane A. Anderson
 Ertunga Bertoz
 Bob Castle
 Kathryn E. Chapman
 Lynda W. Gordon
 Mark S. Greenfield
 Dawn S. Haldane
 Michael Lam
 Lorelei Levy
 Marci Malakouti
 William P. McKenna
 Cathy Miao
 A. J. Neimannley
 Julianne R. O'Connor
 Donald V. Pardi
 Paul W. Poareo
 Dorothy E. Shackelton
 Lynn Speyer
 Susan Teal
 Melinda G. Wilson

Club Master

Stephen S. Anderson
 Robert Cook
 Deanna V. Kean
 Julia Sladek
 Tak Chun Wong

Sectional Master

Elaine L. Bock
 Aimee A. Deiter
 Joy Gibson

NABC Master

Audrey V. Jessup
 Charles E. Laine

Advanced NABC Master

Lillian Slater

Life Master

Sandra P. Spero

Bronze Life Master

Carol Copley
 Joan D. Little
 Ernest A. Ross
 Bruce G. Schelden
 Sandra P. Spero

Silver Life Master

Dawn D. Lee
 Jane E. Reid

Gold Life Master

Patrick Cardullo
 Brian W. Dixon
 Rama Linz
 W. F. Reynolds

Sapphire Life Master

Marv J. Dauer

Hint for “Play or Defend?

At the table, West cashed the Ace and King of Diamonds, East echoed and West led a third diamond, which East ruffed with the six. It was lucky that the ♦J was in the West hand, not the East hand. Still, the ♦Q can no longer be used as a pitch for the losing club. Can you make it after this start?

Join Us for the “Mountains and Valleys” Sectional Tournament

Sponsored Jointly by Units 516 and 551

May 29-30-31

At the Upland Women's Club, 590 N. Second Ave., Upland.

Friday: Stratified Pairs, 1 & 7 p.m.

Saturday: Stratified Pairs, 10 a.m. & 3 p.m.

Sunday: Swiss Teams, 10 a.m. (two sessions)

More details to follow next month ... or see our flyer at acbl.org

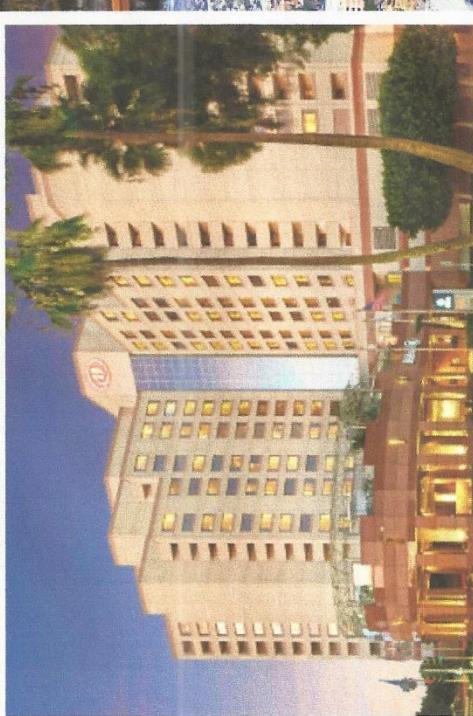
**LOS ANGELES PRESENTS
THE 86TH ANNUAL
BRIDGE WEEK**

**TOURNAMENT
HIGHLIGHTS**

**The Summer's
Best Regional***

JUNE 29 - JULY 5

D23 Youth Day on
Friday July 3rd
Players 26 and under
PLAY FREE ALL DAY



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

MONDAY JUNE 29TH

** Free 2-hour Bridge Workshop
10:30 am - 12:30 pm
Followed by Lunch

Marjorie Michelin
Grand Life Master

**Pro Am Game at 1:00 pm
Card fee for Am's: \$15

Please register before June 22

Dalia Hernandez
dalia.hernandez@gmail.com
562.221.1398

NEED A PARTNER?

Jan Wickersham
wickershamjanet@gmail.com
626.487.4014

TOURNAMENT MANAGER:

Peter Benjamin
ahoneydo@aol.com
310.720.6050

DIRECTOR-IN-CHARGE:

Ken Horwadel
District 23 Director: Kevin Lane
District 23 President: Bob Shore

Room Rate: \$149 (Free WiFi) Please Refer to ALACBU
Reservation must be made by

Monday, June 15

tinyurl.com/BridgeWeek2020
562.983.3400 or 562.983.3414

Group code: AB5

Card Fees: **\$15 (Members) \$19 (expired 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: **\$12**
Lunch: **\$5 for Sunday Lunch**

Background Photo Credit: Long Beach Convention & Visitor's Bureau
Revised 3/01/2020

* First leg of the Grand Slam Cup
Sanction Number: R2007106



**Monday, June 29, 2020**

299er Free Workshop/Lunch (Reserv. Rqd.)
..... 10:30 am
Pro-Am Pairs (Reserv. Rqd.) 1:00 pm
Aft Side Game Series (1 of 6) 1:00 pm
Stratified Charity Pairs 7:00 pm
Stratified Swiss Teams (1 of 2 Sessions) ..7:00 pm

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

AM Side Game Series (1 of 5) 10:00 am
299er Pairs (Single Session) 10:00 am
Betsy Ross KO (1 & 2 of 4) ...10:00 am
Bernie Mateer Open ABC Pairs
..... 10:00 am & 3:00 pm
GOLD RUSH Pairs10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Guest Lecture 2:15 pm
Aft Side Game Series (2 of 6) 3:00 pm
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session) ..3:00 pm
Stratified Swiss Teams (2 of 2 Sessions)..7:00 pm

Thursday, July 2, 2020

AM Side Game Series (3 of 5) 10:00 am
299er Pairs (Single Session) 10:00 am
Firecracker KO (3 & 4 of 4)...10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Bracketed Round Robin Teams.....
..... 10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Open ABC Pairs10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Pat Banks GOLD RUSH Pairs.....
..... 10:00 am & 3:00 pm

Saturday, July 4, 2020 (Cont.)

GOLD RUSH Pairs10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Aft Side Game Series (6 of 6) 3:00 pm
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session) .. 3:00 pm

Guest Lecture 2:15 pm
Aft Side Game Series (4 of 5) 3:00 pm
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session) ..3:00 pm

Sunday, July 5, 2020

Liberty Bell Stratified Fast Pairs.....
..... 10:00 am & TBA
Flight A/X/Y Swiss Teams..... 10:00 am & TBA
Bracketed B Round Robin Teams.....
..... 10:00 am & TBA

D23 Youth Day

AM Side Game Series 10:00 am
Walt Otto 299er Pairs (Single Session) 10:00 am
0-99er Pairs (Single Session)..... 10:00 am
Starburst KO (1 & 2 of 4) ...10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Cecil Cook Open ABC Pairs..10:00 am & 3:00 pm
GOLD RUSH Pairs.....10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Guest Lecture 2:15 pm
Aft Side Game Series (5 of 6) 3:00 pm
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session) ..3:00 pm
Youth Reception 6:30 pm

Saturday, July 4, 2020

AM Side Game Series (5 of 5) 10:00 am
299er Pairs (Single Session) 10:00 am
Starburst KO (3 & 4 of 4) ...10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Bracketed Round Robin Teams.....
..... 10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Barbara Nussbaum Open ABC Pairs ..
..... 10:00 am & 3:00 pm
Stratified Swiss Teams (Single Session) ..3:00 pm

Stratified Pairs: 0-750 / 750-3000 / 3000+
Open ABC Pairs: 0-2500 / 2500-5000 / 5000+
GOLD RUSH Pairs:
0-100 / 100-300 / 300-750
A/X/Y Swiss Teams:
0-3000 / 3000-5000 / 5000+
Bracketed B Round Robin Teams: 0-2500

(continued on right)



Around the Units in District 23



Long Beach by Jon Yinger

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com

February 23 Unit Game: Overall results: 1st in A Thad Mikols/Joyce Henderson, 2nd Rob Preece/Fern Dunbar, 3rd Judith Jones/Al Appel, 4th John Melis/Jackie Hess, 5th Dalia Hernandez/Alan Flower, 6th Mary Kiechle/Steve Sturm. In the B flight overalls Bill Skupen/Bill Clark were 5th, Jane Reid/Colleen Gardner 6th. In the C flight overalls Bob and Rosemary Cuccias were 2nd, Robin Hill/Joan Johnson 3rd, Nancy Toussaint/Bettyanne Houts 4th. And in the 199er game Susan Johnson/Karen Krull were 1st, Marcie Lane/John Markovich 2nd, Donna and Al Aidekman 3rd, Beth Byrne/Carolyn Byrnes 4th, Melanie Smothers/Ted Dowe 5th. Congratulations to all!

70% GAMES Feb 16 through March 15: In open games: Feb 20 Phil Schuster/Jon Yinger had 70.10%. In the morning game March 2 Bill McClean had 78%. In the evening game March 11 George Derevjanik/Mary Singer had 71.25%. In beginner and NLM games: Feb 17 in the evening beginner game Ilan Rothsetin/David Morgan tied with Sylvia Kaprelyan/Edward Von Leffren, each pair making 70%. In the NLM game Feb 19 Ted Dowe/Eric Kaplan had 70.83%. In the NLM game Feb 24 Carolee Windsor/Yvonne Kroneberger had 77.19%. In the Feb 28 beginner game Monte Smith/Linda Rose had 70.83%. March 4 in the 199er game Nancy Imbry/Joey DuRee were 1st with 76.25%. Congratulations to all ten pairs!

BIG MASTER POINT AWARDS Feb 16 through March 15: In the Unit Game Feb 23 Thad Mikols/Joyce Henderson won 4.81mp for 1st, Bern Dunbar/Rob Preece 3.61mp for 2nd. Congratulations to both pairs!

NEW MEMBERS: Judy Martin, Henry Meurer, Judith Meurer. Welcome to you all!

STATUS CHANGES: New Junior Masters: Herb Glazeroff, Chia Yao. New Club Masters: Estelle Byrnes, Patricia Donley, Freda Otto, John Tholen. New Regional Master: Jerry Reid. New NABC Master: Ardis Laine. New Life Master: Joyce Roberts. New Bronze Life Master: Linda Nye. New Ruby Life Master: Pamela Cole. New Diamond Life Master: Verna Baccus. Congratulations to you all!

CONDOLENCES to family and friends of Doreen Maes.

GET WELL: Phyllis Parker

UP-COMING EVENTS AT THE CLUB:

For the remainder of March, and for the month of April, the LBBC will be closed. I will send you all an email when the club will be reopened. Stay healthy.

NEWS FROM LEISURE WORLD

BRIDGE CLUBS

Judy Carter-Johnson

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP--Clubhouse#3 February 20: Judith Jones/Al Appel 1 in A. Russ Grey/Fred Reker 2 in A, 1 in B. Judy-Carter Johnson/Gene Yaffee 3 in A, 2 in B. Shirley Knopf/Larry Topper 4 in A. Patricia and Robert Adams 5 in A, 3 in B. Joan Tschorki/Mark Singer 6 in A. Jeanette Estill/Eileen Kotecki 4 in B. Barbara Wallace/Bill Dilks 5 in B, 1 in C. Miriam Kelley/Judy Matthias 2 in C. Salley Fenton/Chie Wickham 3 in C.

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP--Clubhouse #1 February 21: Emma Tripinski/Ted Cooper 1 in A, 1 in B. Ernest Ross/Roy Tomooka 2 in A, 2 in B. Jeanette Estill/Marilyn McClintock 3 in A. Thad Mikols/Larry Topper 4 in A. Barbara Harris/Jean Kato 5 in A, 3 in B. Monica and Paul Honey 6 in A, 4 in B, 1 in C. Judy-Carter-Johnson/Mark Singer 5 in B. Sue Boswell/Kar-Yee Nelson 6 in B, 2 in C. Ellen Kice/Russel Gray 3 in C. Sylvia Kaprelyan/Von Leffren 4 in C.

UNIT RATED GAME--Clubhouse #1 March 6: Sue Fardette/Fred Reker 1 in A. Lynn Danielson/Larry Topper 2 in A. Jeanette Estill/Marilyn McClintock 3 in A. Joan Tschorki/Al Appel 4 in A. Barbara

Harris/Jean Kato 5 in A, 1 in B. Judy Carter-Johnson/Mark Singer 2 in B. Sally Fenton/Judy Percer 3 in B, 1 in C. Rosemary Ford/Julie Mills 4 in B. Ellen Kice/Russ Gray 2 in C.

CONGRATS TO: Jeanette Estill and Sibyl Smith - 72.88% game on February 24!! Also Congrats to Linda Nye who is now a LIFE MASTER!! Any news for next month's column, please e mail me @ jcj90740@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 18 – Maybe
11:00 a.m., Glendora
Individual: No game in April

Sigh. Our main playing site is closed (completely) until April 13, at least. So there will be no club games held until at least April 14. If the situation changes, I will let those of you on my email list know as soon as I find out.

We cannot, at this time, say whether or not the April Unit game will be held. The Knights of Columbus hall is also closed until further notice. Stay tuned to our Unit web site for updates – I'll beat on the webmaster (I know him *very well*) to keep things current. I'll also send out updates on my email blast. You don't receive it? Why not?

But, as of this writing, our planned joint Sectional tournament with Unit 516 is still ON. See the ad on page 4. Of course, the situation is fluid, and this could change. Again, stay tuned to our Unit web site for updates.

Well, better lucky than good, Your Correspondent won the March Individual, with a score of 62.5%. David Ochroch was only $\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoint behind, followed by Clint Lew. Steve Mancini and Al Lax tied for the fourth spot.

The March Unit game was, unfortunately, cancelled, due to our playing site's closure. *If* we are able to hold the April game, we will be presenting the

2019 awards at that time. (My thoughts on the whole situation are best expressed in this month's Quote.)

A fair number of points were won in March, largely due to the STaC. The majority of the points in March were silver points. There were two "whopper" games. Amr Elghamry – Dominique Moore blitzed the field in the Friday morning session, scoring 9.94 masterpoints with their huge 71.53% game. On Tuesday, Roger Boyar – Steve Mancini took top District honors in the morning with their 67.0% game. Overall, 24 players won 61.76 points in the abbreviated March schedule. Amr and Dominique topped the list; Steve Mancini was third, at 7.45; Roger Boyar fourth, 6.41, and Clint Lew fifth, 5.20. Oh well, the April list will be – ahem – quite short, it seems.

The top game in March was that 71.53% bomb by Amr and Dominique. The only other 65% effort was that Tuesday STaC game by Roger and Steve. Other winners: Bill Papa, Vic Sartor, Sofi Kasubhai, and Clint Lew.

No promotions to report this month.

With play so restricted, there haven't been a lot of really interesting hands. But this one may amuse you. We'll start by just looking at your (East's) cards. North deals, E-W vulnerable.

♠ none ♥ 3 ♦ KQ976543 ♣ AKQ5.

Wow, according to the losing trick count, you have a two-loser hand! Your main suit is a bit moth-eaten, of course. As you are deciding what to do, North opens 2♠. Over to you. I suppose 3♦, 4♦ and 5♦ all have something to recommend them, and all are of course flawed in some way.

Made your decision? Then let's look at the whole deal, and find out what happened. BTW, it was a two-table Individual; too bad, it would have been interesting to see what various people did! Ready?

♠ J106532	♣ none
♥ 1084	♥ 3
♦ AJ108	♦ KQ976543
♣ none	♣ AKQ5
♠ KQ9874	♠ A
♥ AKQ962	♥ J52
♦ none	♦ 2
♣ 4	♣ J10987632

At one table, North opened 2♠. Not everyone's choice, to be sure, but OK, that's what happened. East bid 3♦, trying perhaps for the White Feather Award. Or perhaps he sensed that it was one giant misfit of a deal. Pass, pass, pass. With the foul trump break, making 4, losing only 3 trump tricks! (Actually, declarer has a lot of tricks, but can't take them all, due to the trump situation.)

At the other table, East tried 5♦, raised to 6♦ (!) by West. Making the same 10 tricks for down 2.

Go figure! Yes, this deal comes to you courtesy of the Laurel & Hardy School of Bridge.

Also note that either East or West can take 10 tricks in a NT contract and West can take 11 tricks in a Heart contract. (Thanks to Brian Richardson for pointing this out. Can anyone think of a way to get to either 3NT or 4♥ on this deal?)

Quote for the month: "Against stupidity the very gods themselves contend in vain." (Johan Christoph Friedrich von Schiller)



Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

As we are all aware, the COVID-19 epidemic has changed life in our world. The Unit Board agreed to postpone the Awards Luncheon and Unit game until later in the year when it is safe to do so. This year's Magic Mountain Sectional is still scheduled to be held on October 3rd and 4th at the Friendly Valley Auditorium in Santa Clarita.

ACBL-wide Senior Pairs Results from Monday, March 2nd:

North/South

1 st , 67.86%	Ted Maki – Lamonte Johnson
2 nd , 59.52%	Donna Davidson – Robert McBroom
3 rd , 50.00%	Aggi Oschin – Sharon Hoelscher

East/West

1 st , 64.88%	Sharry Vida – Beth Morrin
2 nd , 59.23%	Ruth Baker – Anita Walker
3 rd , 54.17%	Roshen Hadulla – Carol Provost

STaC Game Results from Tuesday Evening, March

3rd:

1 st , 63.54%	Lamonte Johnson and Ted Maki
2 nd , 57.17%	Betty Pavey – Rand Pinsky
3 rd , 56.77%	Irwin Novick – Ron Oest

STaC Game Results from Thursday Morning, March 5th:

1 st , 56.67%	Irwin Novick – Kristi Kubo
2 nd , 58.29%	Ron Oest – Russ Baker
3 rd , 55.90%	Donna Davidson – Robert McBroom

Upcoming Events (tentative):

World-Wide Bridge Contest: Friday, June 5th at 12:30 at Joshua Tree Bridge Club, 2747 W. Ave L, Lancaster.

Longest Day Games: Monday, June 15th at the Senior Center in Santa Clarita and Friday, June 19th at Joshua Tree in Lancaster.

Next Board meeting: TBA

Downey – Whittier by Linda Eagan and Liz Burrell

[Editor's Note: *be careful what you ask for, because you might get it. When we sent out the reminder for the inputs to the April SCBN, we noted there probably wouldn't be a lot of bridge-related news. So, we suggested that if that was the case, we might have to fill up some space with our jokes – and that would probably be a Bad Thing.*

With that in mind, here is the ... ahem ... news from Downey-Whittier:]

THIS WAS SENT TO ME FROM ENGLAND BY A BRITISH FRIEND OF MINE

A light-hearted distraction from a serious situation:

UK Virus ALERT - Updates

The English are feeling the pinch in relation to recent virus threat and have therefore raised their threat level from "Miffed" to "Peeved."

Soon, though, level may be raised yet again to "Irritated" or even "A Bit Cross."

The English have not been "A Bit Cross" since the blitz in 1940 when tea supplies nearly ran out.

The virus has been re-categorized from "Tiresome" to "A Bloody Nuisance." The last time the British issued a "Bloody Nuisance" warning level was in 1588, when threatened by the Spanish Armada.

The French government announced yesterday that it has raised its alert level from "Run" to "Hide." The only two higher levels in France are "Collaborate" and "Surrender." The rise was precipitated by a recent fire that destroyed France's white flag factory, effectively paralyzing the country's military capability.

The Germans have increased their alert state from “Disdainful Arrogance” to “Dress in Uniform and Sing Marching Songs.”

Belgians, on the other hand, are all on holiday as usual; the only threat they are worried about is NATO pulling out of Brussels.

The Spanish are all excited to see their new submarines ready to deploy. These beautifully designed subs have glass bottoms so the new Spanish navy can get a really good look at the old Spanish navy.

Australia, meanwhile, has raised its alert level from “No worries” to “She’ll be alright, Mate.” Two more escalation levels remain: “Crikey! I think we’ll need to cancel the barbie this weekend!” and “The barbie is cancelled.” So far, no situation has ever warranted use of the final escalation level.



West Los Angeles

by Elizabeth Ryan

My family is fine and healthy, I hope that your families are too. There are a few things to share with you this month. Both Beverly Hills and Barrington Bridge clubs are hosting games on Bridge Base Online (BBO). For up-to-date information refer to each clubs' website.

Let's congratulate Seymour Stoll, Keith Miller, Linda Lin and Karraine Murray for winning the 0-2000 Swiss Teams at the Costa Mesa Regional on February 2, 2020.

RECENT 70% GAMES

Beverly Hills Bridge Club

February 25, 2020: Viktor Anikovich & Michael Halberstadt (70.89)

Barrington Bridge Club

February 28, 2020: Aram Bedros & Art Zail (71.15)
March 13, 2020: Alan Schneider & Viktor Anikovich
(70.83)

BLAST FROM THE PAST

The ACBL's Ace of Clubs awards were first awarded in 1985 recognizing outstanding performance in club games in 1984. There were various categories mirroring those of the Mini-McKenneys.

The first National Rookie of the Year (0-5 masterpoints) went to a player who is still active in local clubs and tournaments. This player was described in the March 1985 ACBL Bulletin as being a practicing clinical psychologist from Culver City playing mostly at Karla Kay's Wild Whist Bridge Club. Favorite partners included Judy Levi, Bryan Conley and David Mars. Identify this player by unscrambling these letters (5 letters, first name; 8 letters, last name):

AMFYUABLNRB

The year 1991 saw another local win the National Rookie of the Year Award. This player was described in the April 1992 ACBL Bulletin as an independent insurance agent who played bridge as a student at Michigan State University who, after a hiatus of over 20 years, was returning to the game, Playing primarily at the Culver City Bridge Club. Currently a denizen of the Barrington Bridge Club you can identify the player by unscrambling these letters: (5 letters, first name; 6 letters, last name):

KRNOAWYEANS

A horizontal row of 20 identical smiley faces, each consisting of a black outline of a head with two black dots for eyes and a curved line for a smile.

Submitted by John Jones:

I had a really bad day today.
We came in last this afternoon,
and after the game my partner
got run over by a bus.



Then I got fired from my job as a bus driver.

A horizontal row of fifteen small, uniform, light-colored circles, likely representing data points or markers in a sequence.

[Editor's Note: as we saw in the Downey-Whittier news, we must be careful what we ask for, because we just might get it. Linda Silvey, former contributor to this department, submitted the following poem:]

I think that I shall never find
A game more challenging for the mind,
Than bridge whose conventions truly test
With Stayman, Blackwood, and all the rest.
A bridge game can be played all day
For winning cards we often pray.
Life Masters play with a special flair
And playing a slam needs extra care.
We try to appear that we are wise
When our partner's bid is a surprise.
Poems are parodied by fools like us,
While the evolution of bridge is genius!

Adapted from "Trees"
by Joyce Kilmer (1913)

[More from the Editor: meanwhile, a contributor who wishes to remain anonymous supplied us with the following limerick. A bit coarse, perhaps, but we are all over 21. Hmmmm, we suspect that we are all over mumblety-mumble-one. Brace yourself:

There was a bridge player from Nantucket
Whose favorite expression was "Oh, F- - k it!"
The Director threw him out
With a very loud shout,
"Just leave and go kick the bucket!"

[Not being able to resist a challenge, we decided to see if we could eschew the obvious rhyme for "Nantucket," and came up with this:]

There was a bridge play'r from Nantucket
Whose favorite play was to "duck it."
It didn't work well,
His game went to Hell,
His partners bade him "kick the bucket!"

[Whereupon our contributor came back with]

The bridge clubs are closed 'cause of the Virus.
Our frequent games are missed by all of us.

But thanks to the internet,
We still can all connect
Through BBO for games without much fuss!

[OK, Enough is Enough!]

Solution to "Play or Defend?"

Answer: Choose to play. If the defense starts as it did at the table and the ♦Q can't be used as a pitch for the losing club, you can still prevail. Overruff and pull the remaining trumps in two rounds. Cash the top two clubs ending in the dummy. Lead a low spade. East must duck or you have three top spade winners. When East ducks (playing the ♣7 or ♣8) win the ♣J. Now lead a spade to the king. If East wins she is endplayed. If she ducks, play the losing club. West will win but has to yield a ruff and sluff. This hand was reported by Larry Cohen. Visit <https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles> for a host of Larry's interesting bridge articles.

Southern California Bridge News

Published monthly by ALACBU, Inc.

410 Mill Creek Lane, San Gabriel, CA 91775

Phone: 626-281-2179

email bridgenews@acbldistrict23.org

Editor/Designer..... Tom Lill

Managing Editor..... Bob Shore

Contributing Editor..... John Jones

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

Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

Panelists are: Gerry Bare, Sid Brownstein, Mitch Dunitz, Ross Grabel, Jill Meyers, Mike Shuster, and Jon Wittes. Also, what would an April Fools edition be without a guest appearance by the Hideous Hog?

This column is dedicated to the memory of Andrew Campbell. Andy passed away recently. I had the pleasure of partnering Andy occasionally. Andy was a staunch 2/1 Game Forcing player and theorist in the days when many referred to the system as Walsh. He was also one of the nicest, most pleasant partners I have ever had the privilege of playing with. He was also a great photographer! Andy's failing eyesight made it difficult for him to play bridge over the last couple of decades. I know that he and his wife Roberta got to play in the 2002 Montreal Olympiad, but I think he didn't get to play much thereafter.

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

You, South, hold: ♠J863 ♥84 ♦K ♣KJ1093

What call do you make?

IMPs
None Vul

[The spades are mediocre, and clubs might be a better strain. The hand is just barely worth a positive advance showing about 8 to a poor 11. Should we go with 1♠ or 2♣ and hope to bid again? Should we make a value bid in 2♦ or 3♣? Should we overbid with 2♥ to gain a better chance to reach the best strain? I like 2♣ hoping to get a chance to call 2♦ or 3♦ later. Let's hear from the panel.]

Meyers: 2♣. I don't expect it to go all pass, and if it does we are not missing a game; at my next opportunity, assuming there is such an opportunity below the 4-level, I will bid spades. That should paint a good picture.

Brownstein: 2♣. 2♣ and if they bid, then I'll bid 2♦.

Wittes: 2♣. If I get a chance to bid again, I will bid spades. This should show a near invitational hand with better clubs than spades.

Dunitz: 2♣. I'm not thrilled but the alternatives are worse.

Grabel: 2♦. I'm very close to bidding 2♣ and following with 2♦. Also, a possibility is 1♦ and following up any 2-level action with 3♣. I think, though, that placing my hope in partner having four spades will make a game decision straight forward and is worth the risk.

Bare: 2♦. This is a slight stretch but expect competition as they have a good fit, maybe even a great one.

Shuster: 2♦. Too strong for 1♦. Too weak for 2♥. If I was sure someone else would bid again, I might start with 2♣, but with 8 HCP, that plan is too risky. *[If this is a part score hand with partner holding four spades and only three clubs, playing in an inferior part score strain will not be as punishing at IMPs as it would be at MP.]*

Hog: 2♦. I always make the bid that gives me the greatest chance to play game from my side.

2

Matchpoints
Both Vul

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	???
You, South, hold: ♠532 ♥AK4 ♦J732 ♣K64			
What call do you make?			

[This hand has invitational values, but no spade stopper and only three hearts. I remember the old TV commercial “What’s a mother to do?” Most of the panel tries a negative double despite being a heart short. I think that is a bad idea. Partner will think you are making a game try if you run from a heart “fit.” I like pass or 2♣ better.]

Dunitz: 1NT. Yuck!

Wittes: Dbl. I know I only have three hearts, but I have extra values to compensate, and this hand will be much too difficult to describe if I don’t take initial action. If no trump is the place to play, I surely want partner to declare.

Grabel: Dbl. All actions are flawed but the chance that partner can bid 1NT makes it worth it. I just want to go plus here and I will pass all minimum bids by partner.

Bare: Dbl. The lack of four hearts is a serious negative, but I have too much to pass.

Meyers: Dbl. What I lack in heart length I have in HCP and good hearts. 1NT is a fleeting thought but I would much rather have partner be the declarer in NT if he or she has a stopper.

[I consider Jill to be the best competitive bidder that I have ever played a significant amount against. I disagree with her on this one though. I’ll let Shuster describe my viewpoint.]

Shuster. Pass. A negative double is a heart bid and is far too dangerous on a 3-bagger. In fact, the last time I tried a 3-card negative double, we wound up in a 3=3 fit and Chip Martel, then captain of the US Junior team, chewed me out. I don’t fancy raising clubs on Kxx when I’m balanced. Pass isn’t a dirty word here. If partner also passes, that is likely best. When choosing from close options, ask yourself how you’d feel about partner’s likely continuations. So how would you feel if you passed and partner passed? Compare that to how you would feel if you doubled and partner bid hearts.

Brownstein: Pass. I have two reasonable options. Option 1 is to try 2♣, but I hate this. Option 2 is to pass then 3♣ after a double. I’ll try Option 2. If partner passes it’s probably best to defend.

[Gene Freed was a partner of mine (I won my first regional with him). He could misplay trivial declarer play problems, but he was a brilliant competitive bidder. Playing in Eli Borok’s money IMP game, Gene (as my opponent) held a hand similar to this problem, 11 HCPs, only three hearts and three clubs. Gene raised to 2♣ in complete tempo. His partner competed to 3♣ which was the best contract and made. I asked Gene why he bid 2♣, and he said partner almost never has exactly three clubs when the auction gets competitive.]

Hog: 3NT. Papa on my left will never lead spades. He’ll be certain that I have spades well stopped and want a spade lead. He will cleverly lead something else, likely a heart. That tempo and my great play is probably all that we need.

West	North	East	South
1♠	pass	2♠	1♣
You, South, hold: ♠AQ ♥J7 ♦AKJ6 ♣QJ832			
What call do you make?			

3

Matchpoints
Both Vul

Wittes: 2NT. Should show a balanced 18-19.

Bare: 2NT. If partner is broke we may still have a minor fit.

Shuster: 2NT. Partner's pass doesn't deny a decent hand (see #2 above).

Grabel: 2NT. A possible wire crossing here but I'm not passing. If partner passes or raises (unlikely), fine; if 3♣, I will pass; and if 3♥, I will pass and pray!

Meyers: 2NT. I don't care whether partner interprets this as natural or minor takeout.

Brownstein: 2NT. 2NT as intended (not an unreasonable 1NT opening).

[Normally abstentions make for the worst possible answer in a bidding panel. But in this case, Mitch explains his objection to the problem and has a reasonable alternative to the auction up to this juncture. Let's hear from him.]

Dunitz: Abstain. Seriously, why not bid 1NT the first time?

[I got this hand from a Peter Hollands You-tube video which was recently advertised on BBO. He opened 1♣ and had the auction proceed this way. He made the video and argued why pass was the right call. If pass is the right call here, can 1♣ on the previous round really be the right bid? It would be even worse if the opponents bid and raised hearts!]

Hog: 2NT. It was very risky opening 1♣. Opening some number of NT bid gets the Hog on stroke. The correct opening is 2NT if I'm playing it.

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

You, South, hold: ♠9764 ♥KJ10 ♦J104 ♣A96

What call do you make?

Brownstein: 2NT. 2NT what else?

[There are some alternatives. Most of the panel is excited about being maximum, even with no clear bid to describe the hand.]

Meyers: 5♦. Wow! I have a great hand with what appears to be no wastage, and partner should have extras with 1354 distribution. Even if partner has as “little” as ♠x ♥Axx ♦AKQxx ♣Kxxx we should make a game. I am bidding 5♦.

Bare: 4♣. We could have a slam.

Wittes: 4♦. It would be hard to imagine a more useful hand for partner on this auction. Partner can’t really play me for more, since I only bid 2♦ over 2♣.

Grabel: 2♠. 2♠, an impossible suggestion to play when I didn’t bid 2♠ over 2♣. Should suggest values limited by my 2♦ call and put all strains in play. If I had 4♥, I would just raise, so I hope partner reads me for this hand.

Shuster: 4NT. I would like to know partner’s style with 1=3=4=5 shape. With most standard players, partner’s shape could be either 1=3=4=5 or 1=3=5=4, so 4NT, let partner pick the minor. Some number of spades as a kind of Bluhmer, if read correctly, is probably best, but I’d not risk that without discussion. Most likely slam is on a finesse and maybe a break as well.

Dunitz: 3♠. Can’t be natural. A true Bluhmer. I have an absolute max and no idea where we belong. Great problem.

[The Bluhmer references are to the late Lou Bluhm, an Atlanta area expert who promoted bids like 3♠ here to mean “I have a good hand for my previous auction and don’t have a bid that describes my hand well”. Lou would certainly bid 3♠.]

Hog: 3NT. I will sort the ♣A in with my spades and place my spades on the left side. I will then graciously let my hand tilt just a little to let the peeking Chimp on my left notice my ♠A9764. Once again, the wrong opening lead will allow the Hog to bring home the bacon!

5

Matchpoints
Both Vul.

West	North	East	South
		1♦	???

You, South, hold: ♠AQ84 ♥64 ♦J4 ♣AQ743

What call do you make?

[We have 13 HCP, certainly enough to get into the auction. But with only five clubs including so-so club spots is 2♣ the best call? 1♠, pass, and even an off-shape takeout (shades of the old Italian Blue Team, but without their smoke signals) might be considered.]

Bare: Pass. If I had some spot cards I'd bid a spade.

Brownstein: P ass. Pass for now.

Meyers: Pass. I don't have a takeout double and I don't have enough to bid 2♣, particularly with my poor suit quality.

Shuster: Pass. 2♣ is tempting, but it blows out major suit fits for both sides - and we are as likely to have the balance of power as the opposition (not to mention the risk of just going -200 or more.) I'll be better placed to judge later. Not 1♠ on a decent 4-card suit with a flexible hand, even though that could win the board. The auction is not over.

Dunitz: 2♣.

Grabel: 2♣. If this our hand, I will get a chance to bid spades. This seems straightforward unless our esteemed moderator is trying to coax a 1♠ response here . [Esteemed moderator? Who did Ross think was moderating?]

Wittes: 2♣. This is a lot more difficult with West and North being unpassed hands. I have some sympathy with the 1♠ bidders, since it would be easy to lose the spade suit on a lot of subsequent auctions if that's where we belong, plus I'm not crazy about over calling ragged five card minors at the 2-level, especially vulnerable.

Hog: 1♠. What's the bid most likely to let me declare a game? 1♠ of course.

[Editor's Note: If you don't know who the Hideous Hog, Papa, and the Chimp are, you have missed out on some of the best bridge writing ever! These characters, and many more, were created by Victor Mollo [1909-1987] during his long-running "Menagerie" series. There are 11 books in the series, some of them published posthumously. Sadly, not all are in print, but the initial book, "Bridge in the Menagerie," gets reprinted regularly. If you've never been exposed to these stories, we suggest you proceed immediately to Baron Barclay (or whatever bridge supply house you favor) and get at least one of the books. You won't stop there!]