

Bridge News

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Robert Shore



Tournament News

ACBL has made decisions about the resumption of tournaments. No real surprises. It will start by authorizing Sectionals beginning in August. Regionals will follow. Tournaments will be authorized on a case-by-case basis, depending on a number of factors that largely track common sense.

Here's the part you need to know. As predicted in last month's column, vaccines will be mandatory. ACBL will require each tournament organizer to appoint a specific person who will be responsible for ensuring compliance with this requirement. No food will be given out, except for sealed packages. Tables will be farther apart, reducing room capacity by about 50%. Masks will be required. Bottom line: get vaccinated, and keep your vaccine card available.

These procedures will not be mandatory for clubs (or for STACs or other events that don't require ACBL tournament directors on site). Clubs are independent private businesses, and can run their games as they see fit, subject to local law. I'm guessing, though, that many clubs will find similar requirements, at least with respect to vaccines, to be a business necessity.

And of course, at some point tournaments will return to the new normal. ACBL seems to be taking a pretty conservative approach, in part because of substantial uncertainty about how willing players will be to return to face-to-face play. So my guess is that these restrictions will likely stay in place until the start of 2022. We'll find out over the next several months whether I'm right.

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District Director Report

by John Jones



Kevin Lane has resigned and, after serving a few years as the First Alternate District 23 Director, I have taken over. Kevin has promised his help, which I much appreciate. My ACBL director's new email is District23Director@acbl.org. I am no longer a District 23 representative on the ACBL Board of Governors because you can't serve on both boards simultaneously. What's the difference between the Board of Directors and the Board of Governors? The difference is similar to the difference between the US Senate and the US House of Representatives. The Board of Directors has exactly 25 representatives. Our district, District 23 (D23), is the smallest geographically, comprised of Los Angeles County. The Board of Governors (which may change its name soon) has approximately 150 representatives, five per district plus past presidents and a few others.

How long will I be the district director? I'll be the D23 Director until the end of this year. At that point, the configuration of the Board of Directors will change. The 25 directors who guide ACBL policy will be collapsed into 13 Regions. District 23 and District 22 (the rest of Southern California) will be combined into Region 11. A regional director for Region 11 will be elected to serve for four years. I believe that this

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Grand National Teams

Our GNT coordinator, waiting in the wings for the last two years, will finally have the opportunity to strut his stuff. Jeff Grotenhuis is scheduling all four flights of this year's Grand National Teams District competition at the Long Beach Bridge Club on June 12-13, 2021. This year's Summer Nationals have been cancelled, so the national finals will be on-line instead, which probably means that the Championship Flight will not be considered an NABC+ championship, which is one of the requirements for Grand Life Master status. Put your teams together now for the opportunity to earn the chance to represent your District at the national level.

Something you want me to know? Contact me at Bob78164@yahoo.com.

DIRECTOR continued from page 1

reduction is a good idea. Twenty-five representatives are too many to form a good working board; seven would be better still. Anyone wishing to run for election to the four-year term as Region 11 Director needs declare his or her candidacy in writing by May 31. See page 63 of the April ACBL *Bridge Bulletin* for details if you are interested.

Kevin and I split the March 10 – 12 meetings. I was the substitute representative on March 10th when Kevin had a minor surgical procedure. Most of the votes in this meeting were rubber-stamp issues. Kevin was the representative March 11th and 12th while Jeff Goldsmith and I played in the NAP Semi's and Final. This was the NAP that began in 2019 before COVID shutdowns. Jeff and I finished 14th after I got tired and played poorly near the end.

There has been one Board of Directors meeting since then, a special one on April 8 to deal with only one issue prior to the Board of Governors meeting two days later. I was asked to also attend this Board of Governors meeting but was required to remain silent unless called on. One issue was an advisory vote to create an "ACBL Cheating Hall of Shame." This was voted down because of poor wording and complaints about it being too inflammatory. However, the vote itself was only advisory and the Board of Directors, not the Board of Governors, will make the final decision. I suspect the language will be far less inflammatory but the names of those who are suspended or placed on probation for

cheating will be periodically published in the ACBL *Bridge Bulletin*.

The ACBL management and employees are dealing with more day-to-day issues than previously. This is a good idea and something that Kevin has lobbied in favor of for quite a while. The Board of Directors should focus on guidance and let our competent employees deal with the details. A couple of decisions that have been made include Sectional, Regional and National tournaments possibly returning after August 1. When tournaments do resume, face masks and vaccination cards will be required. Clubs may reopen when allowed by the county or region where they are located. Clubs may require masks and vaccination.

Online cheating during the pandemic is rampant. There have been more players suspended or put on probation during this time than over the last 20 years combined. I'll talk more about cheating in my next issue. But, don't cheat!

The Director's Corner by David White



On Restarting F2F Tournaments.

ACBL sent out the rules and guidelines for sanctioning of sectionals and regionals starting August first. Currently, these rules, as written, are not negotiable and waivers can be granted only by ACBL headquarters, not the local sponsor.

1. All staff, including volunteers, players and kitbitzers must be fully vaccinated. (Two shots Pfizer or Moderna; one shot Johnson & Johnson.) Proof must be provided.
2. All staff, players, and kitbitzers, (everybody in the playing area) must wear a mask or face shield.

Exceptions for medical conditions or religious belief may be granted only by ACBL on a case by case basis.

Note the implications: if you do not have a proper vaccination card and/or do not wear a mask, you will not be allowed in the playing area. There is

nothing you can say or do, no document from anyone except ACBL that will grant you a waiver to this policy. Tournament directors are not allowed to run the tournament if anyone fails to comply.

More notes on the new Alerts and procedures.

Have you ever had an opponent fail to alert something simple, e.g. a transfer over 1NT. You wait for an alert, you ask for an explanation, and still you wait. It annoys us all, including the senior Tournament Directors and the writers of the new convention chart.

What caused this behavior to start years ago, was a phrase in the old guidelines which required players to “protect themselves” against unusual bids. That meant players would ask about everything.

“Protect yourself” is no longer in the documentation of the alert procedure. What the TDs are being told now is: “If there is no alert, assume it’s Standard American. If it’s not Standard American and there is damage the TD should adjust.” The fault lies with the player who failed to alert, not with the opponents who didn’t check up on the call.

The best example I can give you is an opening 2♦ call that isn’t alerted. Standard is considered weak preemptive hand, 5-10 HCP and a 6 card suit, you can proceed with that assumption. If it turns out to be Roman, Flannery, or Strong, and you were damaged, we’ll adjust the score. Another example: you open 1♣ and LHO overcalls 2♣. If it’s standard and unalerted, it’s Michaels, they have both majors. Once again if it’s anything else and you were damaged we will adjust.

This doesn't mean you shouldn't ask about really strange bids. 1♣ - P - 1NT - 4NT. While there is a standard American meaning to 4NT (it's Unusual) it's rare enough and unusual enough that I'm sure most players will ask about it and rightly so.

BBO uses this reasoning for 1NT openers. If it isn't announced, it's 15-17 HCP. If you play something different, you must alert.

So, for directors: “you didn’t protect yourself” is no longer a valid reason not to adjust a score for misinformation.

And for players, you don’t have to wait for an alert or explanation of “common” bids.

District 23 Rank Changes March 2020

Junior Master

Susan Feiles
Jonathan Fuhrman
Susan E. Kane
Susan W. Lucaszewski
Marilyn S. Schmitter
Sara Shapiro

Club Master

Mary Chiu
Cindy R. Cox
James R. Heltsley
Lisa Nesbitt
Uma Shrivastata

Sectional Master

Adrienne E. Kirman

NABC Master
Linda B. Goldberg
Hashim Mahmood
Julie Moelis
Howard S. Newberg
Marci Valner

Bronze Life Master

Lynn J. Danielson

Silver Life Master

Jerry Goodman
Julie A. Kimelman
Sharry L. Vida

Ruby Life Master

Roy R. Ladd

Gold Life Master

Susan Raphael

The Puzzle Page

Play or Defend?
by John Jones

<p><u>West</u></p> <p>♠ J 9 8 5</p> <p>♥ J 9 8 5</p> <p>♦ Q 10 6</p> <p>♣ Q 6</p>	<p><u>North</u></p> <p>♠ A K Q 3 2</p> <p>♥ 10 4</p> <p>♦ K 5 4 3</p> <p>♣ J 2</p>	<p><u>East</u></p> <p>♠ 7 6</p> <p>♥ 7 6</p> <p>♦ 9 8 7</p> <p>♣ 10 9 8 7 5 4</p>
<p><u>South</u></p> <p>♠ 10 4</p> <p>♥ A K Q 3 2</p> <p>♦ A J 2</p> <p>♣ A K 3</p>		

Opening Lead = you choose it!
Contract = 7NT

Do you wish to play 7NT and make it, or defend 7NT and beat it?

Bridge Jeopardy
by John Jones

Category: Famous Bridge Authors

And the answer is ...

- \$100 – Local expert who authored Modern Bridge Defense.
- \$200 – Former Dallas Ace who authored How to Read Your Opponents Cards.
- \$300 – Former editor of this newsletter who authored How to Win at Duplicate Bridge.
- \$400 – British writer who wrote fictional Bridge in the Menagerie.
- \$500 – Former Los Angeles Times bridge editor who authored Five Weeks to Winning Bridge

May Rebus

Well, can *you* figure out what this says?



Solutions to these puzzles are on the page following. No peeking!

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Solution to “Play or Defend?”

Defend and lead the ♠J

The ♠J puts the heart threat and the diamond threat both in the same hand, the one the opening leader is pitching after. There are variations, because declarer can run clubs late to try to squeeze RHO. But with LHO pitching after declarer and declarer needing to use the ♦K to get to the dummy to run the spades, no squeeze works. In this position, declarer can't execute a squeeze.

Dummy

♠Q 2
♥T 4
♦5 4 3
♣J 2

Declarer

♠void
♥A K Q 3
♦A J
♣A K 3

There are several variations, but they all fail. – JJ

If you want me to go over one of the many variations, email me at johndjones44@yahoo.com.

This hand was sent to me by Ed Barad who got it from Harry Wessels, who may have gotten it from the Bridge World magazine. Harry passed away recently and his burial is on May 3 in Riverside. For more details, email sbbc.club.manager@gmail.com.

Solution to “Rebus”

Four Card Major

Have a good bridge rebus? Send it to johndjones44@yahoo.com

Bridge Jeopardy Questions

\$100 – Who is Eddie Kantar?

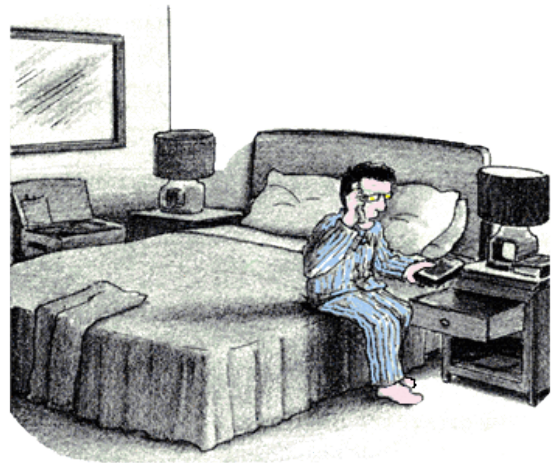
\$200 – Who is Mike Lawrence?

\$300 – Who is Marshall Miles?

\$400 – Who is Victor Mollo?

\$500 – Who is Alfred Sheinwold?

Submitted by John Jones:



Housekeeping? May I have this Gidions Bible replaced with Max Hardy's second volume of Two Over One as soon as possible?

YOU KNOW YOU ARE LIVING IN 2021 WHEN...

(thanks to Mike Marcucci for these)

1. You accidentally enter your PIN on the microwave.
2. You haven't played solitaire with real cards in years.
3. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
4. You e-mail the person who works at the desk next to you.
5. Your reason for not staying in touch with friends and family is that they don't have e-mail addresses.
6. You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the groceries.
7. Every commercial on television has a web site at the bottom of the screen.
8. Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't even have the first 20 or 30 (or 60 or 80) years of your life, is now a cause for panic, and you turn around to go and get it
10. You get up in the morning and go on line before getting your coffee.
11. You start tilting your head sideways to smile. :)
12. You're reading this and nodding and laughing.
13. Even worse, you know exactly to whom you are going to forward this message.
14. You are too busy to notice there was no #9 on this list.
15. You actually scrolled back up to check that there wasn't a #9 on this list.

Around the Units in District 23



Long Beach by Lillian Slater

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com

Sorry, no news from Long Beach this time.



Pomona – Covina by Tom Lill www.acblunit551.org

Individual: Saturday May 1, 9:30 a.m., Upland
Unit Game: Saturday May 15, 11:00 a.m., Glendora
Unit Board Meeting: 10:00 a.m. before the game

Good News / Bad News regarding the Individual game! We've restarted it. Unfortunately, *this* month the first Saturday falls on the first of the month, meaning by the time you receive this masterpiece, the game will be history. But stay tuned for future game sites and dates.

Even Gooder News: the Unit game is back! We got word in mid-April, but that was too late to hold an April game. So we will restart the festivities on the usual 3rd Saturday this month.

But (there's always a But these days), our rent has gone up. By 50%, in fact. No complaints, we are still getting a bargain price. But we *do* have to raise the entry fee up to \$9 per person. Please remember: we haven't raised the fee for quite a few years. And, the game is not a money-maker for the Unit. OK, OK, the game's Director gets paid a pittance. Would anyone would like to take over this usually thankless

task? We'll be *very happy* to give you the Director's test!

And, we need *your* support. Six tables is our break-even point, with fewer tables we lose a bit. If we start out by having a succession of 3- and 4-table games ... well, pfui, no one wants that.

The New Unit Game Rules: you don't need to show proof of vaccination, although getting that done is a whopping good idea. You must wear either a mask OR a face shield. Snacks will all be of the individually-wrapped, unit-dose (to borrow some pharmacy jargon from the wife) type. There'll still be coffee, water, and sodas.

Advance signups are appreciated but not mandatory. Just let one of our Board members know you plan to come. A good choice would be to send an email to thomasmlill8@gmail.com.

And even Much More Gooder News: F2F pairs play is back! No, La Fetra is still keeping *schtum* about when they will reopen. But we've gotten a sanction for a Monday, 12:30 pairs game. It's at the home of Rose Roberts, in Upland. But there are some Rules to follow (another one of those darned Buts):

1. We are space limited. So advance signups are a must. Call Rose (909-946-8132) or send me an email AT LEAST ONE DAY beforehand. Walk-ins will be seated as space permits.
2. Masks or face shields are mandatory. We have a few extras on hand – but bring your own, please. Vaccination isn't required at this time ... but it's a Very Good Idea.
3. In our first trial games, we've seated quite a few casual, "party bridge" players. So you Very Good Players: when these people hesitate or commit some similar infraction ... they are NOT trying to cheat you. They simply do not know any better. Tolerance, please. Education, not Indignation, is the answer. If we get complaints about boorish behavior at the table – we can, and will, suspend those players for cause.
4. Unit-dose snacks and water are available. No sodas. Que lastima, amigos.
5. The entry fee will be \$3 per player.

Directions to the playing site are on our Unit web site.

Speaking of emails: those of you getting the semi-regular (now what on earth does *that* term mean, really?) Bridge Alert updates – the old email from which it has been coming has been phased out by the time you read this. In spite of repeated attempts, many on the list have not responded to the update request. So if you don't send a request to the new email (hint: see previous paragraph) soon, you'll be dropped from the list.

You may, or may not know this: Mojo is planning on merging the PPDVBC with the other multi-club VBC in the district. Read his column further down for detail, please. Of importance those those (few) of us who have been playing in the PPDVBC – the entry fee rebates I've been getting (as club manager of two of the clubs in the pool) are going to get mostly rebated back to those who have supported the club. When the merger happens, I'll start the accounting from scratch at that point, since the money breakdown will likely be different. The rebate to the players can be applied at La Fetra (if & when), or Bridge41 games.

Back to the “well there aren't any rank changes this month” scenario.

This month, Hand-of-the-Month returns to the “Why Me?” school. The following two deals occurred – consecutively, no less – during a BBO casual game. Both times, Yours Truly was one of the victims. Well, at least we weren't playing for money.

First, a real gem of a deal. I was the dealer, East, with none vulnerable:

	<u>North</u>		<u>East</u>
	♠ J		♠ A 10 9 8 3 2
	♥ K Q 4 3		♥ A
	♦ Q 7 6 4 3		♦ A
	♣ K 8 3		♣ A 9 5 4 2
<u>West</u>		<u>South</u>	
♠ Q 5 4		♠ K 7 6	
♥ J 9 8 7 6 2		♥ 10 5	
♦ 10 8 2		♦ K J 9 5	
♣ 10		♣ Q J 7 6	

I opened 1♠, and after three passes, proceeded to wrap up 12 tricks for an embarrassing +230. The Questions: playing 2/1, is that West dog worth a forcing 1NT followed by a 2♣ preference if necessary? Or, playing Standard, is it worth a direct 2♠ bid? Finally, that East hand is a 4-loser hand, but is it really, truly worth a 2♣ opening with four Aces and nine spot cards?

There were 12 tables in play, and most got to game somehow. One enterprising pair even got to the making slam! Nice, with 19 HCP between the two hands (one point of which is useless). Of course there *is* some shape!

Now try this one on for size. I'm still East, with both sides vulnerable this time:

<u>West</u>	<u>East</u>
♠ K 10	♠ A Q 4 2
♥ A K Q 10 2	♥ 8 7 6 3
♦ A Q 8 7	♦ 10 5 3
♣ K 9	♣ A 2

West opened 2NT, and after I bid Stayman (not Puppet), we wound up in 4♥. +710. Now the questions:

1. Is that West hand really too strong for 2NT? 21 HCP and a really good 5 card heart suit. Well?
2. Was I chicken to sign off in 4♥? The East hand counts to 11, West has promised 20-21, As always, I guessed wrong.
3. Should we have been playing Puppet Stayman? That sure makes it easier to get to the small slam (the grand is a poor bet).

Whadaya gonna do!?!

Quote for the month: “I'm glad to see so many children in the crowd. You should be grateful because I got you a day off school! [Child: Today is Saturday!]” (Thomas Dewey, to a group of children)

Downey – Whittier
by Linda Eagan and Liz Burrell

[Nothing from Downey-Whittier this month.]



Santa Clarita- Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

The Longest Day is our annual fundraising event held to fight against Alzheimer’s disease, held by Alzheimer’s Association. This is our 8th year in the partnership and since very few clubs are playing face-to-face bridge, we will hold games with our Virtual Club on Saturday, June 19th and Sunday, June 20th.

The pandemic impact on face-to-face bridge play has been extensive and this year’s restrictions and uncertainties led our Unit 556 Board to make the difficult decision to postpone our annual tournament, “The Magic Mountain Sectional,” until 2022.

New Rank Changes:

Club Master:

Georgia Seid
Susan Teal

Sectional Master:

Thomas Beggane
Kathy Hsiao
Judy Smith

Regional Master:

Mike Connell

Silver Life Master:

Sharry Vida

Ruby Life Master:

Roy Ladd

Winners in Unit 556+ Open MP games:

Mon. Mar. 22

N/S	Paula Olivares – Bill Brodek	63.06%
E/W	Amr Elghamry – Rae Murbach	67.78%

Tues. Mar. 23

N/S	May Abagi – Hani Abraham	61.51%
E/W	Ruth Baker – Roy Ladd	59.92%

Thurs. Mar. 25 N/S

	James Rozzell – Sharon Wolf	64.08%
E/W	Amr Elghamry – Rae Murbach	63.36%

Fri. Mar. 26

N/S	Steve Shanker – James Rozzell	57.32%
E/W	Bob McBroom – David White	62.88%

Mon. Mar. 29

N/S	Judy Gage – Susan Shea	56.11%
E/W	Tomoko Stock – David Khalieque	65.56%

Tues. Mar. 30

N/S	Pat Larin – David White	59.26%
E/W	Amr Elghamry – Dominique Moore	66.67%

Thurs. Apr. 1

N/S	Elliott Nueman – Alan Nueman	59.09%
E/W	Carolyn Cohen – Dominique Moore	64.14%

Fri. Apr. 2

N/S	Mira Rowe – Ron Oest	64.65%
E/W	Rae Murbach – Gerard Geremia	63.13%

Mon. Apr. 5

N/S	Rae Murbach – Gerard Geremia	64.04%
E/W	Alan Nueman – Harry Randhawa	62.83%

Tues. Apr. 6

N/S	Kristi Kubo - Carol Ashbacher	61.57%
E/W	Amr Elghamry – Dominique Moore	70.83%

Thurs. Apr. 8

N/S	Diana Borgatti – Cathryn Martin	62.69%
E/W	Mira Rowe – Ron Oest	61.73%

Fri. Apr. 9

N/S	Anita Walker – Tracy Boys	60.74%
E/W	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	74.26%

Mon. Apr. 12

N/S	Amr Elghamry – Rae Murbach	63.89%
E/W	Paula Olivares – Bill Brodek	62.12%

Tues. Apr. 13

N/S	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	65.28%
E/W	Amr Elghamry – Dominique Moore	60.19%

Thurs. Apr. 15

N/S	Bill Brodek – Temo Arjani	64.81%
E/W	Paula Olivares – Roy Ladd	63.89%

Fri. Apr. 16

N/S	Carolyn Cohen – Bill Brodek	61.49%
E/W	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	59.01%

Mon. Apr. 19

N/S	Rae Murbach – Gerard Geremia	74.87%
E/W	Carol Reukauf – Paul Reukauf	59.85%

Tues. Apr. 20

N/S	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	66.67%
E/W	Ruth Baker – Roy Ladd	68.33%

Thurs. Apr. 22		
N/S	Kathy Swaine – Robot	61.11%
E/W	Carol Trenda – Gary Trenda	58.02%
Fri. Apr. 23		
N/S	Adam Barron – Sharon Wolf	65.28%
E/W	Amr Elghamry – Rae Murbach	68.61%

Winners of Unit 556+ Sunday Afternoon IMP Pairs Game at 3:25:

Sunday Mar. 28	Kathy Flynn – Bob McBroom
Sunday, Apr. 4	Pat Larin - Robot
Sunday, Apr. 11	Mira Rowe – Ron Oest
Sunday, Apr. 18	Roshen Hadulla – Bill Brodek

We are saddened to report that Sam Khayat died Sunday, April 4th. He had not been well for some time. His wife, Marla, said that his family was with him at home on Saturday and Sam had a good day. He passed quietly in his sleep overnight Sat/Sun. His wife’s information is -Marla Khayat- 26752A - Whispering Leaves Dr - Newhall, CA 91321. Several of his family are overseas so no word about a service or memorial at this time.

Sam and his partner Bob Brothers played every Monday for many years at the Friendly Bridge Club. Sam learned bridge as a child and played for 80 years. He always bid what he thought he could make and didn’t like the opponents to get the contract. He preferred to bid 3NT if at all possible which seemed like 90% of the time.....and he made it 80% of the time.

A kind, gentle, friendly, soft-spoken man, we will miss him.

Next Board meeting: TBA, via Zoom.

**Masterpoint Limited
On-line Clubs
by David White**



All-Western club expands; again.

The D23 is one of the sponsoring organizations of the All-Western 99er Night club. Along with Districts 17, 19, 21, and 22, this virtual club holds two games every night. A 0-20 point game at

6:20 and a 0-99 point game at 6:30. (All times are PDT.)

While we have no new additions this month, we’re trying to convince Districts 18 and 20 to join the club.

This on-line club is open all players with 100 Masterpoints or less who are residents of District 17, 19, 21, 22, or 23; provided their home club has enrolled in the program. There is no guest plan for this club, each player must be a member of a club in one of those four districts.

A large portion of the entry fee is returned to the players home club.

This club also host a zoom chat before the game and a short lesson, question, and answer session on Zoom after the game.

99er Nite Club games are held Mon-Thur at 6:20pm and 6:30pm. At this time the club has no series awards.

Finding these limited games on BBO can sometimes be a challenge.

From the BBO opening screen, click on COMPETITIVE. On the new Tournaments screen click on ACBL Virtual Clubs. In the upper right hand corner, Click on SEARCH. Then type in the search word. *D23* for the D23 club, or *All* for the All-Western club. The game will appear in the much shorter list. Click the game and register as normal. If you are blocked or refused, message the director or ‘ellis10’.

D23 Club

This online club is sponsored by Unit 556. It holds one game weekly at 3:15pm on Sundays. It is open to players with less than 500 masterpoints. At least one member of the partnership must be a resident of District 23.

While this game does not return any money to home clubs or the district, it charges only the minimum entry fee required by BBO, \$3.00.

This game also rewards the series winners. The top six players each month, by the average of their two best games.

For April these winners were:

1. Caryn Musicer (tie)	59.03%
2. Glen Musicer (tie)	59.03%
3. Lynn Sager (tie)	56.83%
4. Julie Hanson (tie)	56.83%
5. Jacqueline Moor (tie)	56.48%
6. Harkirat Randhawa (tie)	56.48%

Honorable Mention:

To two player who played with a different partner each week:

Paulette Burkitt	56.25%
Dave Khalieque	56.00%

Pasadena – San Gabriel by Morris “Mojo” Jones



mojo@bridgemojo.com

Some changes are in store! I need a vacation. This month marks the one-year anniversary of the Pasadena Pomona Downey VBC (virtual bridge club). It's been a great support to our closed clubs, and has certainly kept me busy. Between teaching and directing games, it's been a full time job for me.

I haven't really had anyone to whom I could turn over the management, and I know that the players want to keep playing.

I have an agreement in principal to pool our three-unit online club with the Unit 556+ virtual club in the neighboring Santa Clarita Valley area. Their pool includes the Glendale Verdugo unit, and our player group includes a considerable overlap already.

This appeals to me because it's very different from the huge cross-country “alliance” pools, where you're not likely to run into any old friends. It will still be small with a pretty familiar player group. You might think of it as the “North Los Angeles County VBC” (plus a small unit in Baja).

Basically it comes down to merging our management. Paula Olivares can give me a vacation, and I can give her one as well. I'll return to directing games for the club after a little time off.

Over the month of May we'll be ironing out a game schedule to keep our local online games running

(most likely) through the end of 2021. We'll be looking at how to merge the six weekly games of Unit 556+ with the nine weekly games of PPDVBC. Both groups have similar table counts and player counts, so it seems like a good match.

If you have any feedback to offer, I'd love to hear from you soon! Email mojo@bridgemojo.com or use the contact form at <https://bridgemojo.com>.

My last bridge classes for this season are winding down. I'll pick up again with all the series in the fall.

We have some great rank changes from our novice/intermediate group! New Junior Masters: Jon Fuhrman, Susan Kane, and Sara Shapiro. New Club Master: Uma Shrivastava. Congratulations all!

Special (GNT) Announcement

District 23's Grand National Teams (GNT) Final will be a *live face-to-face* event! Form a team and join us Saturday and Sunday June 12-13, 2021 at the Long Beach Bridge Club.

Capacity may be limited and preference will be given (in order of registration) to teams that preregister.

The venue will use these recent recommendations from the CDC website:

- Proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test within the prior three days is mandatory.
- Bid boxes will have players names.
- Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes at every table
- No food at the bridge tables
- Masks are not required but strongly suggested
- Stay home with cough or fever

WARNING!

The CDC does not know the efficacy of the vaccines against new variants. You may be at risk.

Even with the vaccine we might carry the virus. Please be cautious when out in the greater community to avoid spreading COVID.

Bring your own lunch or snacks to eat away from the bridge tables (if needed).

Bring your completed vaccination card the first time you play. You may email a photo of both sides of your card if preferred to jeffgro@gmail.com. You will be turned away without proof of vaccination.

DISTRICT 23

Grand National Teams Finals

June 12th and 13th 2021

Long Beach Bridge Center, 4782 Pacific Coast Hwy, Long Beach, CA 90804



Swiss Qualifying

Saturday, June 12 @ 10 am
and
Saturday, June 12 @ 3 pm

Knock Out Finals

Sunday, June 13 @ 10 am
and
Sunday, June 13 @ 3 pm

National Finals will be held July 14-July 17 during
Summer National Online Bridge Championships (NAOBCs) on BBO

Winners need not attend National Finals.
In which case, second place finishers will have the right to attend.

Permissible Convention Charts

Open Championship Flight

Open + : Unlimited

Flight A : Open + 0-6000

Flight B : Open 0-2000

Flight C : Basic + Non LM under 500

Estimated Masterpoint Awards

For National Winners in Each

Flight Open + : 36.00 Gold

Flight A : 30.00 Gold

Flight B : 26.00 Gold

Flight C : 15.00 25% Gold, 75% Red

Event chair

Jeff Grotenhuis • District 23 GNT/NAP Coordinator
email: jeffgro@gmail.com • cell: 310-600-4275



Conditions of Contest may be found at:
<http://www.bridgewebs.com/acbl23/>



Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

Panelists are: Sid Brownstein, David Chechelashvili, Jordan Chodorow, Mister Mealy-mouth, Jill Meyers, Margie Michelin, Rick Roeder, Mike Shuster, and Jon Wittes

As always, panelists are playing 5-card majors, 15 - 17 NT, and 2/1 GF. Beyond that, except where indicated, panelists may use any reasonable methods.

Before I shared my ice tea with my previous computer, causing its untimely demise, this was intended to be the April edition, coming out on April 1. Thus, we will have our annual guest appearance from the Hog.

This issue is dedicated to former panelist Steve Cooper, who passed away in March after a long battle with cancer. Steve was not only a very skilled player, but he loved bridge as much as anyone I know! Steve leaves behind his beloved wife and bridge partner Kitty Munson Copper. Steve and Kitty frequently argued at the bridge table, but away from the table were as a kind and loving couple as you could ever find. I occasionally played on teams with Steve and Kitty and will miss Steve.

1

IMPs
N-S Vul

South	West	North	East
			4♦
pass	pass	5♣	pass
???			

You, South, hold: ♠KJ3 ♥A8765 ♦AKQ10 ♣10

What call do you make?

We start with an interesting problem. Optimists are thinking about a grand. Pessimists are afraid we may already be too high.

Meyers: Pass. Nothing says we can make six, or five for that matter.

Wittes: 5♦: What a great problem to start the set! Since East opened 4♦ missing the AKQ10, they must have 8 diamonds, possibly even 9, even at favorable vulnerability. The problem is if they have only 8

diamonds and partner has the one remaining diamond, the opponents will get a ruff on opening lead if we play in clubs. Partner is under a lot of pressure. Obviously if partner has eight solid clubs and the ♠A, we're cold for a grand in no trump. Could partner possibly have KQJ9xxxx(x) of clubs and the Ace of spades or 8 or 9 solid clubs and Kx of hearts? I don't expect to hear anything but 6♣ over 5♦, but if partner can somehow bid 5♠, I will bid the grand in no trump. Otherwise, I will content myself with 6NT so the diamond void (if there is one) is on opening lead.

Chodorow: 5♦. Partner's range is as wide as the 405, but unless 5♣ was our last making contract, this has to be the right start.

Chechelashvili: 6NT. There is a reason why partner could not find a take out double, she is either short in one of the majors with long clubs (4207), or her hand is all about clubs 2308 for example. In both cases, I believe Pass can be as right so can being in 6NT. Partner can easily have xxxx in spades and our 5♣ will easily go down after first lead, while we have a chance to make 6NT if clubs are solid ♠void ♥xxxx ♦Qx ♣AKQJxxx.

Brownstein: 6NT. 5♦ would leave me guessing unless partner bid 7♣.

Roeder: 6NT. I would like to bid 5NT to allow partner to bid a side 4-bagger if we are on same wavelength. However, since ambiguity might exist, I will make a practical (*though far from foolproof*) bid. Passing 5♣ could easily be right but it is not my style since those who pass probably also would have gone along with France's puppet, World War 2 government in Vichy. *For more on bridge and Vichy, see Roeder's article in the recent D22 newsletter.*

Michelin: 6NT. We may be cold for grand, or small slam or down three. East's diamonds are so bad he probably has an ace. He might easily have two aces but with that many diamonds and two aces he might not have preempted. I will settle on 6NT and hope my partner has good clubs.

Hog: 6NT. What can we make? At least if I bid 6NT I will get to play it. Good declarers are occasionally worth an extra trick. The Hog is sometimes worth two extra tricks.

Shuster: 6NT. Should have play. FWIW, I'd never have passed 4♦ after breaking tempo like that... (I can't imagine passing 4♦ in tempo with this much hand.) *But what would you bid? It's true that most of us have little experience with having 4 honors in the opponents' suit after a 4-level preempt. I do know of an interesting story about honors in the opponent's suit. My friend Fara Kaufman tells of a rubber bridge hand in which she had four honors against a doubled slam. After beating the snot out of the contract she added insult to injury by claiming her honors. Na Zowie!!!*

Our most optimistic panelist worries about missing a grand.

Mealy-mouth: 6NT. Hoping for bad breaks so that the grand slam bid at the other table will fail.

This was an actual hand, sent to me via Facebook from Michael Kamil. Kamil reported that the actual hand for partner was ♠void ♥xxx ♦J987xxxx ♣Ax. Passers make 5♣ unless they lead hearts. 6NT probably makes. The opening lead is likely a diamond, and the ♠A dies on the vine. Kamil only opened 3♦, and his opponent bid 3NT. But at the other table Kamil's teammates had to negotiate the auction after the 4♦ opening. Kamil's teammates "found their way, with pinpoint bidding, to 6NT, received a diamond lead for +1440".

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">2</h1> <p>Matchpoints E-W Vul</p>	South	West	North	East
	pass	pass	dbl	1♦
	pass	pass	dbl	2♦
	???			pass
<p>You, South, hold: ♠K93 ♥1062 ♦J103 ♣J754</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

Less dramatic than the previous hand, this is also a Kamil contribution. Pass, 2♥, 2♠, 2NT, and 3♣ are all possibilities.

Shuster: 3♣. Partner ought to have a singleton diamond here, so either he has a 5-card major or he has at least four clubs. I assume they would have bid a 5-card major at some point, that leaves 4+ clubs. Why play what might be a 3-3 fit when we can play what is at least a 4-4 fit?

Michelin: 3♣. I could pick a 3-card major here I have no ruffing value. I would like to bid 2♠ and if it was a disaster, tell partner I had a club in with my spades, but online bridge it's impossible so I will bid a pedestrian 3♣. Lou Papp, or "POOR LOU" as we fondly know him as says "bid what you are looking at."

Mealymouth: 3♣. Better a 5-4 fit in 3♣ than a 3-3 fit in whichever major I would otherwise misguess to bid.

Brownstein: 3♣.

Wittes: 2♥. I don't like bidding three card suits on these auctions, but with my weak hand and lack of distribution, I'm going to try to get out as cheaply as possible. Also, just in case partner has a really great hand, I will give them more room to operate.

Roeder: 2♥. 2♠ is out since that would guarantee a 4-bagger. If partner is 4=3=1=5, I am readying apologies.

Chodorow: 2♥. The spades are nicer, but there's more of an implication of a four-card suit if I bypass hearts to bid 2♠. As North, I would expect 2♥ to be on three a fair percentage of the time.

Chechelashvili: 2♥. Having almost the top range of what partner can expect from us, I would rather bid a 3-card major than bid clubs at 3 level. Yes, partner may raise to 3♥ with 4=4=1=4 when they would have passed 3♣.

However, partner can also be 4=4=2=3 and in this case we end up in 2♥.

Meyers: Pass. It is matchpoints; I don't think we have a game and they are vul.

Hog: Pass. Lead the ♦J. Dummy rates to have as little as I do and few if any entries. Matchpoints is a silly game; playing for money is much more my style.

Partner's actual hand was ♠AJTx ♥Kxx ♦Qx ♣AKQ9 and pass will yield plus 200. 3♣ needs a spade guess, 2♠ is a favorite, 2♥ was down two.

Bidding 3♣ seemed obvious at first glance. The more I considered the problem, the more attractive passing seemed.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">3</h1> <p>IMPs Both Vul</p>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
	pass	pass	1♦	2♣
	pass	pass	dbl	pass
	???			
	You, South, hold: ♠QJ864 ♥A62 ♦82 ♣964 What call do you make?			

This two part question requires two decisions: 1) do you agree with the first pass,

2) what now? I'll start with those that disagree with the original pass (they all would double, nobody was overbidding enough to even seriously consider 2♠.

Wittes: 3a) No. I would actually make a negative double and correct 2♦ or 2♥ to 2♠.

3b) 3♠. Since I passed initially, I would bid 3♠. I don't think I can have any more, since I didn't take any initial action.

Roeder: 3a) No. While pass is quite reasonable, it defers issues in a number of situations.

3b) 3♠. Only vulnerable at IMPs. My previous pass did have the significant benefit of limiting my hand. If partner has a hand like ♠AKx ♥Kxx ♦Axxxxx ♣x, a 2♠ bid by you will end the auction.

Chodorow: 3a) No. It's not horrible, but it puts you in such an uncomfortable (and easily foreseeable) position. Normally, I would want a) both majors, b) diamond support, or c) a six-card major to double here, but I don't think I'll get crucified. I'll put a club in with my spades if necessary.

3b) 2♠, in tempo. Partner will strain to take out, so I'm not going to put us in a minus position off the top on what may be just a partscore hand. My strength falls within (though admittedly closer to the top than the bottom of) the range partner expects. One more peep and we're off to the races. The lesson on this hand type is not what to do with the South hand but to be the annoying East who bids 2♣ over 1♦ (and 2♦ over 1♣) whenever it's not insane.

Now for the crowd which prefers the original Pass.

Hog: 3a) Yes. Making an aggressive double would increase the chance my partner would play the hand. I avoid actions that increase my chance to be the dummy and have to watch my partner mangle the play.

3b) 2♠. My partners frequently make silly bids, and unless he reopened with solid values this may be high enough.

Chechelashvili: 3a) Yes. I agree with the initial pass. If I had fit in diamonds in addition to my spades, I would double.

3b). 3♠.

Brownstein: 3a) Yes.

3b) 3♠.

Shuster: 3a) Yes. Double wouldn't be awful, but it would be very awkward if partner bid 3♥ in comp.

3b) 3♠. I have to show a sign of life at some point. If we're off one here, unlucky. To be honest, I'd rather bid four than two, but three seems completely normal. Partner is also aware of the form of scoring.

Michelin: 3a) Yes. I did not bid 2♠ the first time since I did not have 10+ or at least a good nine.

3b) 3♠. This should give partner the idea I was close to bidding 2♠ with five spades. He may have been reopening for me if he was short since I have three clubs and I may be punishing him for protecting my hand but I'll stick with showing him my value bid.

Meyers: 3a) Yes. I agree with the original pass.

3b) 3♠. I would bid 3♠, only because we are vulnerable and I don't want to miss a vul. game at IMPs. I would like to have a little more, or at least better texture in spades.

Mealy-mouth: 3a) Yes. My partner is trying to set a record for most doubles, lifetime, and if I were to double first (my only sane alternative) I'd preempt him.

3b) What now? 3♠. I'm trying to set a record for most jumps, lifetime, in reply to partner's takeout doubles, and here's a chance to add to my total. Mr. Guinness, here I come!

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">4</h1> <p>IMPs None Vul</p>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
	pass	pass	1♦	pass
	1NT	pass	2♦	pass
	???			
<p>You, South, hold: ♠Q9 ♥A97 ♦J72 ♣QJ532</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

Before we get to the chorus of “3♦” panelists, let’s hear from a panelist that presents an argument for staying in 2♦.

Shuster: Pass. We rate to have a weakness in one major or the other; we need another fast trick to get to nine before they get to five. Even opposite solid diamonds and the spade ace, we’d need help in hearts and a third spade before game became good. Not only that, it is a white game. I might stretch to 3♦ if I was red.

Brownstein: 3♦.

Wittes: 3♦. I have a maximum and a fit. If nothing else, I might keep the opponents out of competing in a major suit.

Roeder: 3♦. Two-way action, baby! I sound like Burt Reynolds directing in “Boogie Nights”! Not only does 3NT have a chance to make opposite some maximums, you want to make sure that the opponents have little shot to bid a major if partner holds a min.

Michelin: 3♦. Well, here I am with a quack-quack 10 count. One of my jacks is at least in partner’s suit hopefully a 6+ card suit. He didn’t jump to 3♦ but it’s IMPs and April Fools so the joke is on partner. I am going to raise to 3♦. This is a bid my husband always

says, I bid it in case it makes game (3NT). Usually when he raises me with a hand like this I am down one. If partner bids 3♠ I am happy to bid 3NT.

Meyers: 3♦. I have enough to invite, partner will pass or bid 3NT.

Chodorow: 3♦. Soliciting partner’s judgment.

Chechelashvili: 3♦. I have to invite with 10 HCP even when they are not good, as I can easily have 6 for my 1NT bid. 10HCP and 3-card fit in partner’s six-card minor is enough to invite I think.

Mealymouth: 3♦. But only because partner is wearing his hearing aid. Else I’d rebid 2NT just in case he didn’t hear my 1NT last turn.

Hog: 2NT. Right on values with a maximum 1NT bid with scattered values. This increases the chance I will play the hand, which is always a good thing for our side.

This problem was given to me by my friend Carol Frank. She bid 3♦. Her partner held ♠K ♥862 ♦AK98643 ♣AT and inexplicably passed. Carol’s expert kibitzer, Claude Vogel from Chicago, (frequently referred to in George Jacob’s column in the ACBL Bulletin) suggested 2♥ as the best bid. I think with only one stopper and help everywhere, 2NT is the most descriptive call.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">5</h1> <p>Matchpoints Both Vul.</p>	South	West	North	East
	???	1♣	1♦	pass
	You, South, hold: ♠AQ84 ♥Q963 ♦85 ♣964 What call do you make?			

We have enough to bid but nothing resembling a clear bid. Oh Dear! What's a panelist to do? Pass, 1♥, 1♠, and 1NT are all in the running.

Wittes: Pass. I don't really have anything to say. 1NT might be right, but I have marginal values and no club stopper.

Roeder: Pass. Scared off by the vulnerability and my third club. Given negative doubles, your lefty may well not be done. If so, listen and learn.

Shuster plays Overcall Structure in many of his partnerships. It is a great system for defensive bidding, but he answered the problem as if he was using standard methods.

Shuster: 1♥. I prefer methods where intervenor can show diamonds with a 4-card major immediately (*I do too*), however, lacking such tools, we need to look for a major fit. Game is quite good opposite ♠Kxxx ♥Kx ♦AQJxxx ♣x and has play opposite less. Maybe I'll wind up in 2♥ on a 4-3 in the bad cases, but if I'm lucky, I'll score 110 there.

Michelin: 1♥. My partner may have a major suit but the wrong shape for a takeout double. I do have some values and can play in hearts or spades and have tolerance for diamonds.

Meyers: 1♥. I hate it.

Chodorow: 1♥. I'm hoping like heck to hear 1♠ rather than a heart raise. I like to play that the 1♦ overcall just about promises an opener (else 2♦ over 1♣, as noted above), so we have at least half the deck and I owe partner a constructive move.

Chechelashvili: 1♠. Lead directing. If I thought it was our hand for sure, then I would start with 1♥. But my LHO can easily bid 1NT or 2♣ and win the auction. If we make 4♥ I trust my partner to be strong enough to rebid 2♥. Partner will not have 3=4=5=1 shape with 11+HCP as she would start with double.

Hog: 1NT. The Hog always has a stopper and is ready for the suit they have bid. Well except when I don't. But the opening leader has to guess whether I've got the stoppers this time or not.

Mealy-mouth: 1NT. Stopper, shmopper! I expect West to keep leading majors until I have eight tricks home.

Brownstein: 1NT. I won't pass!

My friend Dave Pelka held this hand during a practice session. He tried 1♥. I raised to him 2♥ and he made it easily.