

Bridge News

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Robert Shore



It's a Date!

We have a date for our North American Pairs District Finals. The finals will be held Sunday, November 7, at the Long Beach Bridge Center. We will comply with all requirements imposed by the city, state, and venue (as well as the ACBL's requirements), which currently means both proof of vaccination and masks will be required. The finals will be a two-session event. We hope there are enough players to permit a flighted event (Flight A, Flight B, and Flight C each get their own section), but depending on attendance, we may be forced to use a stratiflighted event (combining flights and then ranking each flight separately).

There's a slight change in procedure this year. Ordinarily we hold a couple of Unit Finals (many people think of these events as District semifinals) after club qualifying and before the District Finals. When we do that, people have to play (and do well enough in) one of those Unit Finals to qualify for the District Final. We're not doing that this year. If you qualified at the club level, this year you can jump right into the District Final. So make plans to go to Long Beach and give it a shot. You may win a nice check to help you go to the National Finals in Reno in March 2022.

More Play at the Tables

This month, tournament play will take another step on the road to returning to Southern California tables. On October 8, 9, and 10, Riverside will be holding an open, in-person Sectional. As I have in the past, I intend to play at that tournament. At this point I'm not sure anyone really knows how much attendance to expect. I'm hoping that our continued progress in achieving high vaccination rates and reversing the spread of the Delta variant will embolden

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District Director Report

by John Jones



Will the Austin nationals, scheduled for November 25 through December 5 of this fall occur? It's still iffy. Travis County Texas, which has the city of Austin in its jurisdiction, has dropped from Covid category 5 to Covid 4 as of the web posting on September 28. It will need to drop to category 2 to allow the tournament to occur. Mathematically, once the categories start moving it is quite likely that it will move several categories and level two is quite possible. There are two other items that will also need to occur before the tournament can happen. One is a vote of the ACBL Board of Directors. The other is the ACBL being able to field enough directors to run the tournament. I would have considered the latter two items to be slam dunks a couple of months ago. However, there is a movement to boycott the nationals due to the political decisions of the state of Texas and Governor Greg Abbott. I'll let everybody know more when I know more.

The Board of Directors approved management pursuing two future nationals. The first of those will be the Memphis nationals for the Spring 2025, between March 13 and March 23 of 2025. The second is San Diego national for the Fall of 2026, between November 26 and December 5 of 2026. Memphis proved popular the last time it was used and the facility has been renovated and reportedly looks terrific. San

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more people to return to in-person bridge. For me, much of the magic of our game is the community that has grown around it, and I just can't attain that sense of community from on-line bridge. So I'm looking forward to seeing people at the table that I haven't seen for nearly two years. I hope you'll be one of them.

And for those who may be wondering, at last report District 22 is planning to resume in-person regional play with its annual Palm Springs Regional. Our own District 23 is moving full speed ahead on the assumption that Bridge Week (the Long Beach Regional), the Summer's Best Regional, will proceed as scheduled in July 2022. By then, we hope that pandemic restrictions will be a fading memory.

Another Meeting

Our third and final meeting of the year is coming up. Although I'd hoped to hold it in person I don't think that will be feasible yet, so we will conduct it remotely. I plan to hold the meeting the afternoon of Saturday, November 6. I'll solicit input, but our most likely start time will be around 10:00 a.m. I hope to be able to vote on bylaw changes necessitated by ACBL's structural changes — we can't have bylaws assigning specific tasks to our District Director when the office of District Director will cease to exist as of the first of the year.

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

DIRECTOR continued from page 1

Diego is always popular. Players living in cold locals love to come to Southern California during the colder season. San Diego will be in our region by the time the tournament takes place. Neither tournament is guaranteed yet; there are minor negotiations and contracts to sign still, but both tournaments are over 99% likely to occur.

Regionals and Sectionals continue to be approved based upon a few factors. For the tournaments to be approved at this time 1) the local tournament has to want to proceed (there is an issue of losing money), 2) the Covid percentage for the locale has to be low, 3) the ABCL has to be able to staff the tournament with enough directors, 4) vaccinations are required (which lets out areas resisting showing of vaccinations), 5) masks are required. It seems that about 1 in 4 is getting approved with the most frequent reason for not going forward being the local committee backing out.

This is generally a sucky job. But one of the more pleasurable parts is getting to make nominations to the Goodwill committee. We haven't had any nominations for the past few years. I'm not sure why not. I made a list of deserving individuals and I'm taking the top two on my list. Jeff Goldsmith and Carol Frank are my two nominees. Jeff had done an incredible amount for bridge. He has maintained an awesome website for several years. The website contains the Kaplan Ruben hand evaluator, which is an extremely valuable hand evaluation tool. Jeff has also served District 23 in a variety of capacities. He has been the district Ethics Chairperson, a tough and thankless job. He has been a member of the district Tournament Committee and came up with several creative ideas. He has served on countless regional and sectional appeals committees. He has been a PSP panelist for years and was a proofreader for a while. He has played in many Pro/Am type games and always volunteers to help out with the district's youth. On the national level Jeff has served on and chaired national appeal committees. He has been a member of the national Laws Commission. He has been helpful at the local level too. He has volunteered several times to be auctioned off and play a game with the highest bidder to help Unit 559 raise money. He is the best source in the district for getting quick help on difficult ruling situations. Carol Frank is our D23 Scholarship Committee Chair. She helps out with the D23 youth in a variety of ways. She has organized matches between Northern California youth versus Southern California youth. She directs the online Caltech games on Monday and Thursday nights. She is incredible in her concern for other bridge players. She once tried to reach a partner who lives in Chicago. When she couldn't reach him over a period of time, she was convinced that he was likely in trouble. She wound up flying to Chicago and went to his apartment. She made the security people in the apartment open the door. Sure enough, her friend was passed out on the floor. She almost certainly saved his life. Carol helps out in bridge so many awesome ways. You'd be really challenged to find a nicer person in or out of bridge.

Cheating in bridge continues to be a major problem. The latest casualties were friends of mine. Tobi Sokolow is a world champion. She, her husband David Sokolow, and Claudette Hartman, one of Tobi's clients, were accused of online cheating. Instead of trying to go through the process of trying to defend themselves and then receive punishment if guilty, they resigned from the ACBL. This essentially bars them from the ACBL for 10 years, which is a far greater

length of time than any punishment they might have faced. I am sad because Tobi and David are friends and good players. I have been in their home in Austin Texas. I have played with Tobi and on teams with David. I wish them the best, but I wish the online cheating would stop!

I will close by reminding everyone that at the close of this year that my position goes away with District 23 and District 22 combining to form Region 11. Both District 22 and 23 will remain as districts though.

The Director’s Corner *by David White*

If you have to wear both a mask and glasses, you maybe entitled to condensation.”



Hesitations on BBO

It seems long hesitations are more common on BBO than in F2F games. And, for the most part, we tend to treat them as artifacts of the internet. It is rare that a player who has been bidding and playing in tempo, (8 to 12 seconds) will have an internet problem, just when they have a difficult bid. BBO has a tool to help you sort out internet problems from hesitations that could be unauthorized information (UI).

If you have a timing question, note the table number where the situation occurred. It’s usually at the top of the BBO table window. Click on your Director tab. Goto running tournaments and left click on the game in question. The popup window has ‘TABLE HISTORY’. Click on this and enter the table number in the new popup.

The window that now appears is every bid, play, chat, and alert that happened at the table and how long it took for that action to occur. This page can be printed or saved as a text file. It will only go away when you lose it or ask for another table history.

At a recent tournament the following auction occurred:

W	N	E	S
	pass	pass	1♠
2♥	3♦	pass	3♥
pass	3♠	pass	3NT
pass	pass	pass	

It was agreed that South’s 3♥ call was not game forcing. With the exception of North’s 3♦ call and South’s 3NT, all calls were within a reasonable time (less than 12 seconds). So no internet problems.

North’s 3♦ call took 33 seconds, South’s 3NT call took 44 seconds

These players were experts and four other experts were consulted. None thought a slow 3♠ suggested 3NT or 4♠, but all thought that it suggested bidding some game.

This indicates that pass of 3♠ was a logical alternative, and North’s unauthorized information suggested that passing would work out worse than bidding. The fact that South took 44 seconds to bid 3NT rules out the possibility that his plan was always to two-step to 3NT to offer his partner a choice of games.

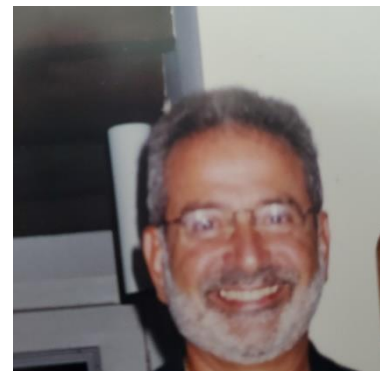
The score was adjusted to 3♠.

Having the exact length of time eliminates the problem that players don’t know how long 10, or 20 seconds actually is. It also tells you what the tempo was. When a players says they always take a long time, you know if that is true.

Using Table History can get you the information you need to make a better rulling.

“When you said life would get back to normal after June... Julyed.”

[Editor’s Note: last month we honored new life masters and other notable achievements. One photo got lost in the wash – here is **Steve Onderwyzer**, Platinum Life Master.]



District 23 Rank Changes August 2021

Junior Master

M. G. Bhakta
Patty Hansen
Colleen Shinn

Club Master

Shelby Birch
Caryn Mason

Sectional Master

Joey Duree
Alex S. Geczy
Nancy J. Imbery
Chang-Huey Wu

Regional Master

Betz Salmont
Peter W. Woodruff

NABC Master

Amedeo Ursini

Advanced NABC Master

John P. Janus

Life Master

Ravnesh C. Amar
Lynn W. Edelson

Bronze Life Master

Ravnesh C. Amar
Robert C. Bishop
Lynn W. Edelson
Margot E. Hartman
Karraine Murray
David H. Stern

Silver Life Master

William L. Dilks
Robin S. Thayer

RubyLife Master

Laura L. Gastelum

Gold Life Master

Jim L. Lopes
Vera R. Mandell

Sapphire Life Master

Roshen Hadulla

Emerald Life Master

Stelios Touchtidis

The Puzzle Page

October Rebus

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



Bridge Jeopardy by John Jones

Category: Types of Signals

And the answer is ...

\$100 – High encourages, low discourages, high/low in count situations = even.

\$200 – Low encourages, high discourages, high/low in count situations = odd.

\$300 – First discard of 3, 5, 7, or 9 encourages. First discard of 2, 4, 6 or 8 indicates a holding we don't appreciate.

\$400 – Used in several situations, including giving partner a ruff, "Low" asks for the lower suit to be returned, and "High" asks for the higher suit to be returned.

\$500 – The playing of highest honor you have to show the next lower honors in the suit.

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

Play or Defend? by John Jones

North

♠ Q
♥ J 5 4
♦ A 10 9 8 7 6 5
♣ 8 2

West

♠ J 10 7 5
♥ A K Q 10 2
♦ Q J
♣ A 9

East

♠ 9 8 5 4
♥ 9 8 7 6 3
♦ K 4 3
♣ 3

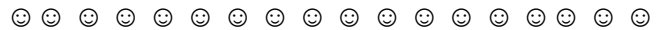
South

♠ A K 3 2
♥ void
♦ 2
♣ K Q J 10 7 6 5 4

Contract = 6♣

Opening Lead = ♣A, followed by ♠9.

With both sides able to see all the cards and play perfectly, would you prefer to declare or defend?



More Bridge Wisdom from the Pros

Never reproach your partner if there be the slightest thing for which you can reproach yourself. (Eli Culbertson)

(On the motivation of clients) I'm not sure whether glory or masterpoints is first on the list, but I know learning to play better is definitely last. (Eddie Kantar)

The chances are that if you asked an average seven year old to add five and four and one and subtract from thirteen he could come up with the right answer. Why is it then, that so many intelligent adults produce the wrong one at the card table? (Victor Mollo)

To play well you must know the ropes – including the kind you give an opponent so that he can hang himself. (Alfred Sheinwold)



Solution to “Play or Defend?”

Solution: you should elect to declare.

Win the second round of clubs. Cash three more rounds of clubs pitching two small diamonds and a small heart from the dummy. Play a sixth round of clubs and West has a discard problem. West, who is down to ♠JT76 ♥AK ♦QJ ♣void, cannot afford to discard a diamond because then a diamond to dummy’s ace subjects East to a ruffing finesse in diamonds. West cannot afford to come down to just one heart as a spade to dummy and a heart ruff sets up the ♥J. Thus, West must discard a spade. After West discards a spade, dummy discards another diamond. East can safely throw the last heart, coming down to ♠9854 and ♦K43.

Cross to the ♠Q, ruff a heart and cash the ace and king of spades. This leaves the following three card end position (with the lead in South’s hand):

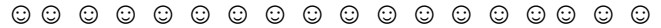
- North: ♠void ♥J ♦A10 ♣void
- West: ♠void ♥A ♦QJ ♣void
- East: ♠9 ♥void ♦K4 ♣void
- South: ♠3 ♥void ♦2 ♣4

South plays the last club, and West must keep the ♥A to avoid dummy’s ♥J from being good. So West pitches a diamond. Dummy now throws the ♥J away, coming down to ♦A10. If East discards the ♠9 then declarer’s ♠3 is good, but if East discards a diamond, then both diamonds in the dummy are good.

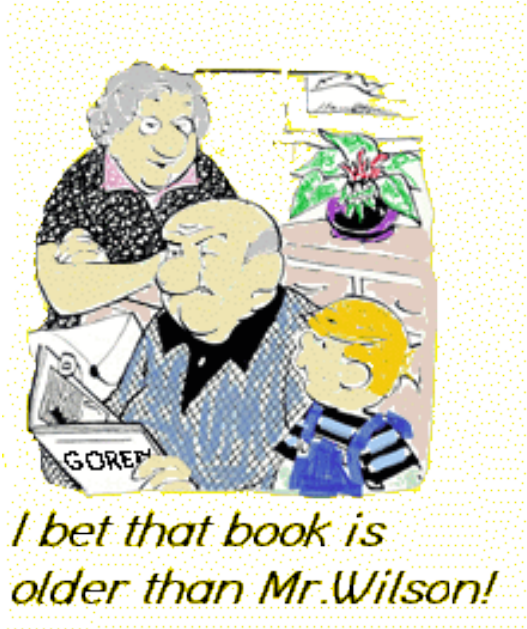
Bitchin’ as my surfer friends would say. Thanks to Eddie Kantar for this fabulous problem.

Bridge Jeopardy Questions

- \$100 – What are Standard Signals?
- \$200 – What are Upside Down Signals?
- \$300 – What are Odd – Even Discards?
- \$400 – What are Suit Preference Signals?
- \$500 – What are Honor Signals?



Submitted by John Jones:



Solution to “Rebus”

Upside-Down Signals

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

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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:** October 2, 10:00 a.m., Ontario
November 6, 10:00, place TBD
- Unit Game:** Saturday October 16, 11:00 a.m.,
Glendora
- Unit Board Meeting:** 10:15 a.m. before the game

We've concluded the series of "Welcome Back" Club Championship games at La Fetra ...except we really have not! "Alert!" "Please explain."

Along with the eight weeks of regular Club Championships, the ACBL authorized two weeks of "Upgraded Club Championship games." These pay even better masterpoints than the regular club championships.

Finally, October has always (well, recently-always anyway) been Club Appreciation month, where clubs could offer one Club Appreciation game (paying better masterpoints). This year, as part of the Welcome-Back effort, the ACBL is allowing F2F clubs to hold pair or team games awarding upgraded masterpoint awards during any two weeks in October as part of Club Appreciation Month.

So there will be masterpoints galore for most of the rest of this year. Now, a Club Appreciation Team Game actually pays some gold points to the participants. Well, "points" is an exaggeration. The most gold you can win is 0.25. Better than a slap in the face, I suppose.

So if there is enough interest, (and at the moment, it appear that there is), we'll hold team games during one of the two October Club Appreciation weeks. I'll be taking a poll at F2F games, but you can vote my sending me an email, also. For team games (assuming we hold them), you can form your own team, or come as a pair and get random teammates. Advance signups will be required, however, since we would need to have an exact multiple of four people at these games.

Und zo, here's a *tentative* schedule for these upgraded games. Subject to change without notice, so ... you can always ask! Or better still, show up and play.

Club Appreciation Pairs

Tuesday, October 5,
Friday, October 8

Club Appreciation Teams (5% gold points)

Tuesday, October 19
Friday, October 22

Upgraded Club Championships

Tuesday, November 2
Friday, November 5
Tuesday, November 30
Friday, December 3

The schedule is a bit confused because of a couple of STaCs in November and December, and the Palm Springs Regional in December.

You might have noticed that we have a new playing site for our monthly Individual. That's right! My complex is allowing me to reserve the rec room in my building for such use. Masks are not required, but you should wear one if not fully vaccinated. And there's plenty of visitor parking. That's the good news. The bad news? I'm living even further from the center of things than before. Only a mile, though. My apartment complex is near the corner of Francis and

Mountain in Ontario. Directions and a map can be found on our Unit web site. Don't trust your GPS. It will try to bring you in the back way (from Magnolia), which is the hard way. Reservations to the game are necessary, as I can only accommodate four tables. It's a small room.

Just one promotion to report this month. Caryn Mason is now a Club Master. Congratulations, Caryn.

Winner of the September Individual was Yours Truly, with a fairly impressive (ahem!) 68.2% game. Peter Kavounas placed second, Roger Boyar third, and Kathy Malovos fourth.

In the September Unit game, Fredy and Lulu Minter had a fairly good (!) game at 74.5%. Not often you score 70.3% and finish second, but that's what happened to Bill Papa and Vic Sartor. Ho Ming Yim - Mary Ann Wotring were third (first in B), with Yours Truly - Hanan Mogharbel fourth, Clint Lew - Linda Tessier fifth, and Kurt Trieselmann - Paul Chrisney were first in flight C to round out the winners.

Speaking of the Individual - because input to the SCBN often comes in very late, some issues are published just too late to announce the Individual. So, I'll try to announce it for the following month, also.

And also speaking of the Individual, we compute an "Annual Champion" based on the best 6 (of 11, usually) performances over the past year. Of course, due to the pandemic, we didn't hold a lot of games in 2020 (or the first half of 2021, for that matter). But we can crown a champion for the 2019-2021 season. The top five qualifiers:

Clint Lew	60.3%
Tom Lill	59.2%
Roger Boyar	59.0%
Linda Tessier	53.23%
Stephen Andersen	53.17%

The winner gets his/her name inscribed on the "perpetual plaque," which one of these days I will get around to updating.

Winning pairs at La Fetra in September were Clint Lew - Linda Tessier, Hanan Mogharbel - Yours Truly, Roger Boyar - Steve Mancini, Fredy and Lulu Minter, Caryn Mason - Mary Ann Wotring, and Richard Parker - Caryn Mason. The top score in September was a nice 70% game by the Minters.

I've run across a fair number of interesting hands over the past month; unfortunately I didn't

manage to record any of them. So for our Hand-of-the-Month, let's try something a little different. Here's a double-dummy problem for you. You are South, the contract is 4♠, and receive the opening lead of the ♥A.

♠ 8 7		
♥ J 9 6 4 2		
♦ A K 9		
♣ A K 9		
♠ 5 2		♠ Q 6 4 3
♥ A K 3		♥ Q 10 8 7 5
♦ Q J 10 8		♦ 4 2
♣ Q J 10 8		♣ 4 2
♠ A K J 10 9		
♥ -		
♦ 7 6 5 3		
♣ 7 6 5 3		

If you duck the opening lead, West switches to the ♦Q. If you duck *that*, he switches to the ♣Q. And if you duck *that*, he reverts back to the ♥K.

The contract is makeable. I'll give you the answer next month.

Quote for the month: "You know how dumb the average guy is? Well, by definition, half of them are even dumber than THAT." [J.R. "Bob" Dobbs]

Downey - Whittier by Liz Burrell

Sorry, no news from Downey - Whittier this time.



Santa Clarita- Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

Unit 556 has added two new members to our board of directors, Tom Beggane and David Khalieque. We introduced Tom last month and this month we are introducing you to David.

David Khalieque was born in Kabul, Afghanistan. Upon graduation from Kabul University Faculty of Education, and completion of 6 months' service with the army, he began working for the Pan Am/Afghan airlines. After almost a year at the Kabul Airport, the bloody coup d'etat of the Afghan

communist party of 1978 took place and he decided to flee the country with all his family members because the reality of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was imminent. Upon his arrival (a long story by itself), in Virginia in August of 1979, his cousin who had already been in the states for two years, helped him get a job as a waiter. For the next five years he waited tables while completing a degree in computer science. After graduation he got a job with the Los Angeles Unified School District where he worked for 31 years, first as a programmer, then systems programmer and finally promoted to Deputy Director of Information Technology.

David is married with two sons and two grandchildren and enjoys playing bridge in his spare time.

During his teenage years, he watched his father playing Rubber bridge with his friends. David began to play bridge after high school with his friends and cousins. After leaving Kabul, he did not play bridge for many years. In April of 2017 he came to the Friendly Bridge Club and asked to kibitz the game at the Newhall senior center. He was not familiar with duplicate bridge but after a few days of practice joined the duplicate games in Santa Clarita has been an avid player ever since.

**Virtual Game Schedule
(August through November)**

Monday:	12:15 PM	Open game
Tuesday:	10:15 AM	599er game (\$5)
	6:15 PM	Open game
Wednesday:	10:15 AM	599er game (\$5)
Thursday:	10:15 AM	Open game
Friday:	12:15 PM	Open game
Sunday:	12:15 PM	599er game
	12:30 PM	Open game

Contact our game manager at virtualclub@bridgemojo.com for reservations. Our games cost \$3 unless it is a special game series.

Winners in Unit 556+ Open MP games:

Mon. Aug. 23		
N/S	Maria Verona – Andrei Verona	66.35%
E/W	Rae Murbach – Gerard Geremia	64.02%
Tues. Aug. 24		
N/S	Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong	68.33%
E/W	Maria Verona – Andrei Verona	67.50%

Thurs. Aug. 26		
N/S	Carolyn Cohen – Dominique Moore	60.10%
E/W	Mira Rowe – Ron Oest	68.73%
Fri. Aug. 27		
	David White – Bob McBroom	70.19%
Sun. Aug. 29		
N/S	Genise Hasan - Ann McClelland	63.93%
E/W	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	70.37%
Mon. Aug. 30		
N/S	Bill Brodek – Temo Arjani	66.40%
E/W	Rae Murbach – Gerard Geremia	61.68%
Tues. Aug 31		
N/S	Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong	59.57%
E/W	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	56.48%
Thurs. Sept 2		
N/S	Carol Trenda – Gary Trenda	67.66%
E/W	Gerard Geremia – Joseph Viola	68.65%
Fri. Sept. 3		
N/S	Paula Olivares – Linda Young	64.74%
E/W	Pat Larin – Wayne Rapp	66.88%
Sun. Sept. 5		
N/S	Kathy Flynn – Bob McBroom	60.46%
E/W	Amr Elghamry – Gerard Geremia	59.54%
Mon. Sept. 6		
N/S	Avice Osmundson –Carolyn Staab	61.48%
E/W	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	63.58%
Tues. Sept. 7		
N/S	Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong	75.62%
E/W	Ruth Baker – Roy Ladd	63.89%
Thurs. Sept. 9		
N/S	Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong	68.88%
E/W	Carolyn Cohen – Dominique Moore	63.55%
Fri. Sept. 10		
N/S	Carolyn Cohen – Bill Brodek	63.89%
E/W	Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong	58.76%
Sun. Sept. 12		
N/S	Stephen Licker – Bud Kalafian	64.68%
E/W	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	57.54%
Mon. Sept. 13		
N/S	Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky	67.41%
E/W	Alan Nurman – Harry Randhawa	61.65%
Tues. Sept. 14		
N/S	Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong	62.96%
E/W	Kathy Flynn – Bob McBroom	60.12%

Thurs. Sept. 16 N/S		
Paula Olivares – Roy Ladd		69.44%
E/W Kathy Swaine – Robot		70.45%
Fri. Sept. 17		
Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong		67.59%
Sun. Sept. 19		
N/S Ruth Baker – Roy Ladd		68.83%
E/W Roshen Hadulla – Bill Brodek		61.42%
Mon. Sept. 20		
N/S Gerard Geremia – Rae Murbach		65.10%
E/W Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong		56.02%
Tues. Sept. 21		
N/S Susanne Hollis – Suzanne Wilcox		58.83%
E/W Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong		63.40%
Thurs. Sept. 23		
N/S Avice Osmundson – Lianne Walliser		68.06%
E/W Tomoko Stock – Ruth Baker		61.11%
Fri. Sept. 24		
N/S Mira Rowe – Ron Oest		66.98%
E/W Bill Brodek – Robot		63.98%

Winners in Unit 556+ Limited MP games:

Tues. Aug 24		
N/S Thomas Beggane – Robot		63.10%
E/W Patricia Konrad – Robot		57.94%
Wed. Aug. 25		
Kenneth Peyton – Michael Connell		63.89%
Sun. Aug. 29		
N/S Caryn Musicer – Glen Musicer		62.50%
E/W Jerome Paul – Margaret Shifley		64.93%
Tues. Aug. 31		
Jerome Paul – Margaret Shifley		60.42%
Wed. Sept. 1		
Kenneth Peyton – Michael Connell		63.89%
Sun. Sept. 5		
N/S Caryn Musicer – Glen Musicer		60.19%
E/W Carol Reukauf – Paul Reukauf		62.50%
Tues. Sept. 7		
N/S Jerome Paul – Margaret Shifley		61.26%
E/W Nancy Guenther – Robot		63.84%
Wed. Sept. 8		
Maria Marvosh – Robot		67.36%

Sun. Sept. 12		
N/S Michael Perera – Robot		58.33%
E/W Jerome Paul – Margaret Shifley		64.81%
Tues. Sept. 14		
Caryn Musicer – Glen Musicer		73.33%
Wed. Sept. 15		
Nancy Guenther – Judith Tomic		70.83%
Sun. Sept. 19		
N/S Paul Reukauf – Robot		60.32%
E/W Hilary Clark – Thomas Beggane		63.49%
Tues. Sept. 21		
Jerome Paul – Margaret Shifley		66.11%
Wed. Sept. 22		
N/S Karen Harms – Margaret Shifley		55.95%
E/W Suzanne Kuuskmae – Carol Decordova		56.75%

The Unit 556+ Virtual Bridge Club will continue games on BBO for at least the rest of 2021.

Next Board meeting: TBA, via Zoom.

Pasadena – San Gabriel by Morris “Mojo” Jones

bridgemojo.com



We're continuing to hold two Unit games monthly on Sundays at the Arcadia Bridge Center. This month our games will be on October 10 and 24 at 12:30 p.m.!

Our unit games require reservations and proof of vaccination. For a reservation, call Miriam Harrington at (626) 232-0558. You can send a photo of your vaccination card to Roy by email at unit559webmaster@gmail.com.

September's games were well attended -- eleven tables on Sept. 12 and 10 on Sept. 26. Winners on Sept. 12 were Arthur and Dominique Moore, with Madhu Sudan and Stanley Majcher running a close second playing the other direction. On Sept. 26, winners were Patrick Cardullo and Carolyn Cohen just barely shy of a 70% game! Second went to Fredy and Lulu Minter, both pairs playing N/S.

Our online players are enjoying sharing games with the players from Glendale and Santa Clarita in the

Unit 556 + PPD virtual club. You may recall that over the summer Paula Olivares took over managing the online clubs so I could enjoy a break. I'm returning the favor for the Fall Quarter of 2021. Starting October 1, you'll be hearing from me rather than Paula about upcoming games. Reservations are still required, and generally only players from our combined "north LA County" units are admitted.

For any questions regarding the virtual club, you can reach the club manager at any time at virtualclub@bridgemojo.com.

My own teaching schedule is heating up. I have three online bridge classes that are in progress.

If you noticed the ACBL's "Intro to Bridge" program, they've been doing a great job of bringing in non-bridge players who want to learn the game. The goal is to provide a good foundation of basic bridge and get them ready to enjoy the game, then pass them on to teachers and clubs who are more local for them to continue on. ACBL contracted with Hall of Fame teacher Patty Tucker from Atlanta to develop a 10-week program to introduce bridge to new players.

If you noticed the offered class times, none of them were suitable for working West Coast students. All of the teachers were on the East Coast, and unwilling to spend the late night hours required to cover the West Coast. As a result, I've been drafted to join the teacher group. We already have a good collection of students enrolled for an Intro to Bridge class starting Wednesday, October 6, at 6:30 p.m. Pacific time.

Also on my calendar is BridgeWhiz, the program from the ACBL Educational Foundation to bring middle- and high-school students into the game. I've been working with the "coaches" on their program tailored for kids, based on the successful program by Al Bender of Bridge for Youth in Seattle. I'm not sure when my session will be, but there's hardly anything more daunting than a Zoom meeting filled with 40 12-18 year-old kids!

Wish me luck! Hope to see you at a bridge table without a mask soon. ☺

Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

Panelists are: Mark Bartusek, Jordan Chodorow, Ed Davis, Mitch Dunitz, Jeff Goldsmith, Roger Lee, Rick Roeder, Mike Shuster, John Swanson, 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.

This column is dedicated to my friend Miguel Reygadas. Miguel passed away at the age of 75 on September 25 of complications of pneumonia, kidney failure and a bacterial disease (apparently not Covid related). I got to play on teams with Miguel Reygadas in two WBF world championships. Despite being a Yankee baseball fan, Miguel was a wonderful man! Miguel was widely recognized as Mexico's best bridge player ever. But he was a quiet, humble man and he preferred to speak Spanish over his limited English, thus many Americans didn't know he was a great player. I will include my favorite Miguel story.

I was playing in a Reno regional (during the period when the Reno regional before New Years' Eve was hugely attended). After the evening session I was talking with a group of friends. An obviously agitated friend of mine brusquely interrupted the group and placed a paper in my hand that had an auction and his

hand with the dummy. He explained that the play went, blah, blah, blah. What do I do? I answered that it was important to judge declarer's skill to know how to defend on this hand. If declarer was a beginner he might have erred. But if declarer was an expert, he might have set up a swindle. I asked him who his declarer was. My friend answered "Some nobody." I hesitated, not knowing what to tell him. My friend added "Just that guy you started against." That got me thinking because I knew the event had been seeded, thus we had likely started against a good pair. I thought back to the first round. My partner, Valerie Gamio, was in the group of people who were talking. I asked Val "Didn't we start against Miguel?" Val answered "Yes." I turned to my friend and stated "You got swindled, didn't you?" My friend walked away.

Vaya con Dios Miguel!

<h1>1</h1> <p>IMPs none Vul</p>	North	East	South	West
	1♥	pass	1♠	pass
	4♦	dbl	???	
<p>You, South, hold: ♠KQ102 ♥3 ♦8643 ♣A1054</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

The double of 4♦ by the opponents has actually helped us. It has allowed us to pass forcing. Not all partnerships play the pass identically though. If the opponents had not bid, then for partnerships which play the Last Train Convention 4♥ would be last Train, a general slam try, but not a cuebid.

Goldsmith: 4♥. It's worth Last Train and no more.

It's my feeling that the double allowing the forcing pass, cancels Last Train. Agreeing with me is:

Shuster: Pass. Had RHO not doubled; I'd have been forced to make a last train try of 4♥. However, since we now have extra room, last train is off, 4♥ has become a heart cuebid and pass shows general interest. I've always played that if your first cuebid is in partner's suit, it is never shortness.

Lee: Pass. I'm bidding RKC next, but I'll give partner the chance to show a little more about their hand before I do.

Bartusek: Pass. Seems clear to me in order to see if partner can redouble showing first round control. We might have a grand with enough controls and a source of tricks. RKC right now would give me a problem inviting a grand if partner has a diamond void and jumps (partner won't know that we possess the trump queen). If I can determine that we have all the controls, then partner might be able to bid 7♠ with a source of tricks (solid hearts) if I can follow up with 5NT.

Davis: Pass. I have some excellent slam cards. However, I have no forward-going bid that I like over double. My hand is not right for taking control via a keycard-ask, a redouble would show the ace of diamonds and may cause partner to return to 4♠ with ♠Axxx ♥AKQJxx ♦void ♣Qxx, and a 4♥ bid would imply a useful card in hearts (which in turn might cause partner to bid keycard with ♠Axxx ♥KJxxx ♦A ♣KQx rather than sign off in 4♠). If they had not doubled 4♦, I would bid 5♣ but I think my best move over the double is to pass. I play that pass of their double in our control-showing auction does not show or deny slam interest — it just leaves room for partner's next bid (others may prefer different agreements). If partner bids 4♠, I will pass since I do not want to get to 5♠ opposite ♠Axxx ♥KQJxxx ♦K ♣KQ). If partner bids 4♥, I will assume that shows the heart ace and we will get to slam. I will bid 5♣ and then bid 6♠ over his next bid (or bid 7♠ if he makes a grand slam force by bidding 5NT).

Roeder: Pass. Indicates some slam interest as I play 4♠ as the weakest action. Some play otherwise and play pass as weakest action. The reason I like pass to be stronger than a 4♠ rebid is that I preserve space for partner to make two useful calls below 4♠ (redouble and 4♥). Am I strong enough to cue 5♣? With no diamond wastage, a definite "perhaps". However, for slam to be good, I would like to hear partner make another positive noise. Give partner ♠AJxx ♥AKxxxx ♦x ♣Kx. That is fairly minimum for a 4♦ splinter. Slam is good. Pass leaves room for partner to bid 4♥. Note that the absence of the ♠J makes slam more problematic.

Swanson: Pass, allowing partner to show further interest. If partner redoubles or bids 4♥ I will bid slam. If he bids 4♠ I'll pass.

Directly cuebidding is:

Chodorow: 5♣. I'm hoping to hear GSF (5NT) next. I like 1♠ over 1♥ to be either five-plus or four decent, so I'm not worried about a trump loser. The direct 5♣ should show the ♣A and nothing of note in hearts in a hand improved by the splinter. I won't stop below 6♠.

Checking for Keycards are:

Dunitz: 4NT. I started to bid 4♥ as a forward going bid-but why pass the buck? This hand is too good. So, I'm bringing out the wood.

Wittes: 4NT. I wish I had a fifth spade, but the ♣A, quality of my trump suit, and no wastage in diamonds are just too good to think we would not have a reasonable play for slam.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em; margin: 0;">2</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">IMPs N-S Vul</p>	South	West	North	East
	1♥	pass	1♠	2♦
	4♦*	5♦	5♥	pass
	???			

* Splinter (spade raise with diamond shortness)

You, South, hold: ♠K1093 ♥AKQJ82 ♦void ♣K64

What call do you make?

A significant question is what partner is doing with his 5♥ call. Generally, this would show a heart honor, but our holding indicates that can't be the case on this hand. Selecting the correct strain may be important.

Goldsmith: 6♥. 5♥ seems impossible. What more can I have, though, so less than 6♥ seems tough to justify.

Wittes: 6♥. I must be getting paranoid, but just in case partner has something like ♠AQJxxx ♥xxx ♦Ax ♣xx, partner might be asking for a club control, and a club lead through my hand might doom the slam.

Shuster: 6♥. Maybe I should try for seven with 6♦, but that could result in a grand slam off the trump ace. Instead, I'll just focus on the strain choice, since it appears hearts may be best.

Lee: 6♥. A grand seems tough at this point, and I want to make sure we get to hearts when it's right to do so. It's hard to imagine what partner's 5♥ bid is about given what I hold though.

Bartusek: 6♠. Tough problem...I fear that partner might have misbid. One does not cuebid shortness in partner's primary suit; thus, 5♥ should be natural. Partner has an unambiguous way to invite slam by making a forcing pass and then pulling a double. An important question is why didn't partner support my hearts on the first round? Partner should have either a 3-card heart limit raise or possibly a weaker hand with very good spades. I have undisclosed extras for my previous bidding, but a grand is out of the question

since partner would have either cuebid 6♣ or just jumped to slam holding ♠AQ and ♣A, thus, I shouldn't cuebid 6♦. BTW, the South hand is either "too strong" or "too weak" to bid 4♦ (3♦ is probably better). An old bridge concept states that splintering and then bidding 4NT shows a void (but that concept is probably obsolete in this era of Exclusion RKC).

Davis: ♠. I am not sure how to interpret partner's 5♥ bid. It does not seem likely that he would bid 1♠ on four weak spades with four hearts in his hand so, if he means 5♥ as non-forcing, I think he should have good spades. As far as his interest in slam, over 5♦ he could have bid 5♠ if he thought 5♠ would make and, with stronger interest in slam, he could have passed 5♦ and then pulled to 5♠ if I doubled or raised my 5♠ bid to 6♠. My hand has many tricks and good controls (if we are off the ace of clubs, it is likely to be on my right). I will bid 6♠ but I would feel more confident about it being right if partner had bid 5♠ rather than 5♥.

Allowing for a grand are:

Chodorow: 6♦: This confirms the void. I like my splinters to deny two fast losers in any side suit, so bypassing 6♣ should show the club king.

Dunitz: 6♦. I'm very excited. Partner bid 5♥ and now, my tail is wagging. I'm bidding 6♦. If partner has the club ace and the spade ace queen....

Roeder: 6♦. If partner has AQ of Spades (or ace sixth) and ♣A, he will know what to do.

Swanson: 6♦.

<h1 style="font-size: 48px; margin: 0;">3</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">Matchpoints N-S Vul</p>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
		1♠	2♠*	2NT
	???			
	* Michaels, hearts and a minor			
	You, South, hold: ♠K93 ♥K82 ♦A10984 ♣K6			
	What call do you make?			

Let's see, West has an opening bid, partner has a red versus white Michaels bid (forcing us to the 3-level), East has 10 – 12 balanced and we've got 13 HCP. Hmmm, I'm betting there is a skunk in the woodshed, and I'm betting it's the East player. The panel agrees. We'll start with a couple of panelists who have nice gadget bids for this situation.

Swanson: Dbl. First item on the agenda is to indicate defensive values. My next call will, in some manner, show heart support. East is obviously attempting to confuse the issue holding a spade fit. As usual, the best approach would have been to simply bid 4♣. *I agree. Psyching against experts is less likely to succeed than bidding quickly to your sides best spot.*

Davis: 3♦. This may seem like a strange bid but I play 3♦ is invitational or better in hearts when partner has shown hearts and a minor. I am going to bid 4♥ but partner may show his minor if my LHO bids 3♠. If partner does bid 4♦, I will bid 5♦ if the opponents bid on to 4♠. Michaels over their 1M opening bid has a big disadvantage in that the Michaels bidder's minor is unknown. This often makes it difficult for his partner to know what action to take.

Lee: 4♦. I play this is artificial and tells partner I'm bidding 4♥ on power. Maybe I'm wrong-siding it but that's life.

Several panelists directly bid what they think they can make.

Dunitz: 4♥. I can't bid less at these colors.

Goldsmith: 4♥. If the ♠K were anywhere else, I

could cue bid 3♠, but it's probably worthless. Since we expect to make 4♥, bid it, then double anything thereafter. This looks like robot bidding.

Roeder: 4♥. Another 50-HCP deck! When partner bids Michaels at these colors, I will not be talked out of my normal bid.

Wittes: 4♥. It's very possible this is not enough. At this vulnerability, East is surely psyching with a weak hand and a big spade fit, and partner should have a good hand, and maybe even more distribution than usual. If my king of spades were somewhere else, I would explore a possible slam.

These panelists set up a force, getting ready for the opponents to save in 4♠ and making certain a pass from either side of the table is forcing.

Shuster: 3♠. I suspect East is having a spot of fun with us. I have a good raise to 4♥ and want to set up a force for when they save. So, a cuebid it is.

Bartusek: 3♠. I need to confirm for partner that it is "our" hand. The 2NT bid looks like a psych attempting to confuse the issue. This way we'll be in a forcing auction if the opponents sacrifice in 4♠. If I just bid 4♥ and the opponents bid 4♠ I won't know what to do (and pass by either of us won't be forcing).

Chodorow: 3♠. We are on the way to 4♥. I deeply dislike 4♥ with this hand. The cuebid in this situation should show the balance of power (which we clearly have, notwithstanding whatever chicanery East is up to), whereas 4♥ can be on heart length and out. This way, we can respect each other's subsequent doubles.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">4</h1> <p>IMPs E-W Vul</p>	South	West	North	East
		1♠	dbl	pass
	2♣ ???	pass	2♥	pass
<p>You, South, hold: ♠K10 ♥753 ♦1094 ♣K10854</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

The crux of this problem is “How strong is doubling and bidding a new suit”? In old fashioned Goren this showed about 16 HCP. In my methods this shows about 19 HCP or about the equivalent if distributional. I would force to game. Some panelists disagree and allow for getting out below game, especially since it is not clear that the ♠K is a working card.

Wittes: 3♥. I’m not crazy about this bid, however, spades were not raised on my right, so partner rates to have a very good hand, and might actually have some values in spades instead of xxx or xx. If my K10 is actually working, this hand might be worth a raise.

Goldsmith: 3♥. Just worth a bump to ♥.

Shuster: 3♥. The ♠K is of questionable value, but I do have a good hand in context and support. Support with support.

Bartusek: 3♥. I’m going to underbid slightly with the spade king likely being wasted. If partner wants to pass 3♥, then I’m okay with it (it’s only a NV game). It seems too risky unilaterally jumping to 3NT to protect the spade king when I don’t know if we have enough running tricks for 3NT. Partner can always cuebid 3♠ over 3♥ asking for a spade stopper. My second choice would be 2NT.

Chodorow: 3♥, the Goldilocks bid. Someone once said, “No hand is too strong to overcall,” an obvious exaggeration meaning that doubling and then bidding a suit should show a true biggie. *That someone might have been Eric Kokish. Kokish is one of the best theoreticians in bridge, and he frequently espouses very heavy overcalls. Another player who believes in heavy overcalls is Orange County expert David Weiss. I remember looking at David’s convention card (I believe he was my teammate at the time), and noticing*

that the top end for his overcalls was either 24 or 25. Accordingly, I consider it too unilateral to pass, treating the spades as worthless (sometimes partner has a high honor, or even three small, where the doubleton may help) and ignoring the three trumps and the king-fifth side suit. 4♥ would be the same hand with the pointed suits exchanged.

Swanson: 3♥. Although 4♥ is OK also.

Getting to game directly is:

Lee: 4♥. This isn’t rocket science.

2NT is an effort to protect the ♠K. It’s not clear if the panelists suggesting 2NT are treating 2NT as forcing (I would).

Dunitz: 2NT. There are three reasonable choices: Pass; 2NT; and ♥. At IMPs, I’m reluctant to pass. I’m very tempted to bid 2NT although if 3NT is the right spot, we could still get there after a 3♥ bid (partner could advance with 3♠, and then I could bid 3NT). All this is true, but in my heart, I know I’d bid 2NT.

Roeder: 2NT. Superman arrives to make a “hero” bid. My ♠K is an unproven value in a 4♥ contract. 2NT is not a “bail out” bid as it shows values.

Agreeing with me that 2NT should be forcing, but making sure that partner doesn’t think it is non-forcing and pass:

Davis: 2♠. I have too much not to bid a game. I think 2NT over 2♥ should be natural and forcing so I would bid 2NT if I knew that partner thought the same way. Without that agreement, I will bid 2♠ and then bid 3NT if partner bids 3♦ or 3♠, bid 3♥ if partner bids 3♣ and bid 4♥ if partner bids 3♥.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">5</h1> <p>Matchpoints None Vul.</p>	South	West	North	East
	1NT ???	2♦	1♠ 2♥	pass 3♦
	You, South, hold: ♠KJ ♥1072 ♦983 ♣AQ985 What call do you make?			

I made this problem up based upon a real problem which occurred in a tournament. Oddly, I don't feel terribly strongly about the answer, because there are so many possible hands partner could have. One inference that is available is that partner didn't double the 2♦ bid. That makes it unlikely that partner's distribution is 5=4=1=3, increasing the chance that partner has a fifth heart. And what is double in this situation? Let's hear from the panel.

Goldsmith: Pass. Partner has at least two diamonds (no takeout double of diamonds), so taking the low road seems right. Looks like 16 or only 15 total trumps, so double seems theoretically right, but at white/white, I'm chicken and will pass.

Disagreeing with the pass is:

Roeder: 3♠. If there is a good bid here, please advise. One upside of bidding is that partner could have a fifth Heart. Settling to defend 3♦ undoubled appears to be losing matchpoint strategy since their decision to bid the third diamond may have already put you at "average minus". Since I am quite hesitant to play for +300 in 3♦ doubled, I take an admittedly aggressive action.

Swanson: 3♠. Maximal overcall doubles as a game try don't apply when there is no agreed suit.

Shuster: 4♦. Let partner tell me the strain. For what it's worth, this headache could have been avoided completely if I had raised to 2♠ on the first round. This isn't the only horrible auction that we set ourselves up for - even if the opponents stayed out, we would have been stuck over 2♣, 2♦ or 2♥ from partner.

Lee: Dbl. I'm unusual in preferring to play this is "takeout" (ie, optional — no fit for your major, but convertible values in case you are 55 or 64). Rosenberg introduced me to this idea in this auction (partner opens 1♠ and rebids 2♥), and I think he is right to think that way.

Bartusek: Dbl. Seems clear, asking partner to do

something intelligent (DSI double). I'm under the 2♦ bidder so this can't really be purely penalty. It just says that I have extra values with a few diamonds, but I don't know what to do.

Chodorow: 3♠. Great problem! The choices for me are: double, 3♥ or 3♠. As a general rule, my direct-seat doubles are not penalty except in clearly defined situations, so this should ostensibly be a DSI (*Do Something Intelligent*) double. On the other hand, partner has already named her two suits and if I do have a penalty double of diamonds, it would be nice to be able to make it. So, what are partner's possible lengths? Let's assume for the sake of discussion that partner has a stiff diamond. Partner could be 6+ spades and 4+ hearts, in which case I'm safe raising spades. Partner could be 5-5, in which case I should raise hearts. Could partner be 5=4=1=3? I don't think so; she should normally double with that shape. I fear I've taken long enough that sticking to my principles and making a DSI double may land us in committee. Of the 3M bids, 3♠ feels safest; 3♥ gains only when partner is 5-5, and even then the diamond tap may hurt in hearts.

Davis: 3♠. This bid shows a balanced limit raise in spades. I am a spade short but my spades are very strong and I think we rate to make a game if partner bids on.

Wittes: 3♥. With most of my partners, I play that a double of 2♦ would show extra values with diamond shortness, therefore, I expect partner to be 5-5 in the majors.

Saving my favorite comment on this set for last!

Dunitz: 4♦. What is the meaning of double here? It's the right bid if it is an ambiguous forward going bid. And if it's old fashioned? Hmm. I want to be in 4♥ if partner has five hearts. If partner has four hearts and the ♣K, 4♠ could be tasty. Ok, I'm bidding 4♦, a choice of games torture bid. I can picture Ifti frowning as he tries to figure out what I'm doing! *Poor Ifti!*