

Bridge News

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Robert Shore



The Future of Bridge Week, the Summer's Best Regional

Our August Board meeting focused on two issues arising from Bridge Week. First, the financial loss turned out to be sufficiently large that we did not have enough money in the treasury to retire the debt. This was a severe problem because the major bills from the hotel are charged directly to the credit card of our Tournament Manager. He was in the line of fire for a personal loss of several thousand dollars. The second issue was Bridge Week's future.

I am proud to say that our community stepped up in response to our immediate problem to make sure our Tournament Manager wouldn't suffer the loss. First, our esteemed Newsletter Editor, Tom Lill, reiterated a previous offer to substantially reduce his stipend for preparing the *Bridge News*. He offered to return the extra money already paid to him from the date of that offer. We gratefully accepted. Second, a number of our Units expedited their payments of the voluntary assessments we request that they pay annually. We are grateful to the Units who for their contributions to the District. Finally, an angel who has asked to remain anonymous is making a substantial donation to the District's treasury. My understanding is that these donations, in total, will allow the District to retire the debt from Bridge Week.

That allows us to focus, in September, on the future of Bridge Week. Several options are on the table, and I expect all to be a serious topic of discussion at our continued Board meeting. One possibility is to seek a merger with our neighbors in District 22. A merger would almost certainly mean that we would no longer be permitted our own entries to the North American Pairs and Grand National

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Regional Director's Report

by David Lodge



Let's start this month's article with a correction from my from August article. "EDGAR", (Electronic Data Gathering and Anti cheating Radar), the anti-cheating software, is still in testing mode and is not expected to be available for complete application until around the end of the year or early next year. We, the national Board of Directors, know that there is still a lot of cheating going on in virtual games. We're excitedly awaiting the full release of EDGAR which we believe will have a dramatic impact on the number of people who denigrate our game with their behavior.

I want to thank all of you who take the time to read my column. Most of what takes place at our BOD meetings is necessary but painstakingly detailed and completely devoid of anything of interest for the vast majority of our membership. Such is the case with much of what I must write about each month. Most of my involvement is related to my role as chair of the finance committee. In that capacity, I'll have the privilege of traveling to the ACBL headquarters in Horn Lake, MI., later this month. I'll be spending time with the Director of Finance, Peyton Dodson, in order to provide whatever assistance I can in the creation of next year's budget. This is a great opportunity to look

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Teams competitions, but we would have to compete with current District 22 players for the right to play in the National Finals of those events. As a less drastic alternative, we can discuss with District 22 the possibility of a financial partnership to run Bridge Week. District 22 would almost certainly insist on a significant level of control and involvement in financial and operational decisions before agreeing to such a plan — they would want to be sure that the tournament at least results in a break even, or at worse a small loss.

Another possibility is to investigate the possibility of cancelling Bridge Week for the time being, until attendance numbers return to pre-pandemic levels. In my opinion, that decision would be the end of Bridge Week. Even if we are still able to cancel our contracts with the hotel, in my opinion it's highly questionable that we would be able to pick up where we left off when we are ready to return. And I am highly skeptical that tournament attendance will ever return to pre-pandemic levels.

A third possibility is to do nothing and hope attendance more closely approaches normal for our next tournament. This doesn't appear feasible. Even if our table count had been 100 higher than our actual 743 tables (and in my opinion this is a best-case scenario for next year), Bridge Week still would have operated at a loss. The District is simply not in a strong enough position to withstand that loss.

The final option that I expect will receive serious discussion is a price increase. I will recommend to the Board that we increase card fees, at least for regionally rated events, to \$20 per person per session. (We would have roughly broken even if we had charged \$18.) This increase gives us a bit of room to survive a possible further drop in our attendance numbers. If attendance holds steady or increases, the resulting profit will place the District on track for a return to financial health.

Continued Board Meeting

After extensive discussion, we recessed our August 13 Board meeting. It will resume at 9:30 a.m. on September 10, via Zoom. Once again, I hope that all of our Units make every effort to have a full complement of representatives attend so that we have a quorum that is capable of making decisions.

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

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deeply into some of the ways we're spending money. The process allows one to look at historical data and question whether an expenditure, if still expected to occur next year, is still justified. It's sort of like all those streaming services we sign up for and if you're household is anything like mine, don't use anywhere as often as we anticipated. In this regard, I anticipate having dialogues with Joe Jones, the Executive Director, and with the managers of the major departments—operations, marketing and IT. As I indicated last month, the league is expecting to lose close to \$1 million dollars this year. What stars have to align in order to have that loss disappear next year? Hopefully, COVID becomes a non-issue and more people come back to tournaments; hopefully, a lot of money that we're spending on IT resolves many of the existing process issues and there is no need to replicate the expense next year; hopefully, the marketing initiatives begin to bear fruit and we reverse the course of diminishing membership; hopefully, we get better control of our Tournament Directors' (TD's) costs. That's a lot of hoping! As an aside, the costs related to the BOD have been reduced by approximately 40% over the last several years and will continue to go down as we reduce our numbers from the pre-reorganization membership of 25 to the final 13 that will be in effect as on January 1, 2024.

The league plans for the venues for our NABCs several years in advance. In that regard, the BOD held a special meeting in August to discuss the venue for the summer of 2026. When I joined the BOD, this responsibility resided in a BOD committee. The site selection is now conducted by management. They are aided by an outside consultant which specializes in prospecting for appropriate sites, whittling the potential cities and related facilities down to a manageable few, then interfacing with the hotels/conference centers to investigate the likelihood that any one of them will be a suitable site. Management selected Dallas for the summer of 2026. They made a very compelling presentation about all the benefits of their selection. However, thankfully, some BOD members have long memories. There was significant pushback because of the potential of very limited restaurants, none within easy walking distance, exposure to 100+ degree heat, hotel fees for use of the pool and the fitness center, etc. The BOD voted to reject the committee's suggestion. The committee will go back to the drawing board and attempt to locate a suitable venue for that slot.

If you no longer had to show proof of vaccination against the corona virus in order to attend a regional or national, would that encourage you to come? If the league no longer required proof of vaccination, and you've been attending these tournaments, would you no longer attend because of fear of increased likelihood of getting infected? Tough questions. This is the situation that management deals with at every step along the tournament path. There seems to be some loosening of the vaccine proof requirement in other segments of our society. We're still requiring proof of vaccination. Keep tuned. We'll let you know if anything changes.

Stay healthy, stay safe and enjoy or great game!

The Director's Corner by David White

Bridge Terms: Revisited

"A Winner will laugh when the irony of fate catches up with him. A Loser will smolder at the unfairness."



Stop the presses. My column on bridge terms and slang solicited more emails than I ever got before. I also received a few questions pertaining to tournament flyers and schedules. Most of the questions asked are covered in Bridge Terminology 101 on the

District 23 website. (Follow this link to download: <https://www.bridgewebs.com/acbl23/Terminology%20101.pdf>)

So, here are some short non-technical explanations.

An **Event** is a competition that ends with only one (hopefully) winner. Events can last 1, 2, 4, or even more sessions.

A **Session** is usually the most bridge you can play at one sitting. Any more, and the brain quits working. Three hours is the usual; about the same amount of time you would spend at a movie. Note: if an event is listed as a **two session play-though**, there is no break between sessions.

Events can be:

Open: anybody can play regardless of masterpoints.

I/N (Intermediate/ Newcomer): a game for players with less experience. These are usually limited to those with less than 500 masterpoints. That limit varies, but is rarely more than 749.

Rookie or Novice: for real beginners with less than 20, or 50 points. This limit is rarely higher than 100 points.

Rating: a ranking of events based on expected size or quality of the event. The higher the rating the greater the masterpoints awarded. It also determines the color of the points awarded. Here is a quick list show to color and expected award for a 20 table game.

Club	2.0	Black
Local	3.0	Red or Black
Sectional	5.0	Silver
Regional	7.0	Gold or Red
National	Note 2	Platinum or Gold

Note 1. Special event like charities and fund raisers are not on this chart and can be any color

Note 2. National events pay specific amounts by regulation usually 75 to 150 platinum.

Match: a segment of a team competition. Matches can be as short as one board (rarely), or as long as 2 sessions for International events. They are normally played as a head to head, but there are variations for odd numbers of teams. A match is always scored as a head to head regardless of how played. Masterpoints are awarded for the winners of each match.

Most events can be broken down into small competitions. These methods are Stratified, Bracketed, or a qualification.

Stratified: all pairs or teams in a Stratified event play against each other. But scores are compared only within several overlapping groups.

For example, the open strat includes all pairs, or teams, in the event. If the second strat is listed as 2000, it only includes pairs (or teams) whose average masterpoint holding is 2000 points or less. A third

strat might be 750, which only includes pairs (or teams) averaging less than 750 MP.

Points are awarded in each strat, but players only receive the highest amount. If a pair (or team) wins 1 point in strat A, but 1.5 points in strat C, only the C points are awarded.

Bracketed: are usually round-robin teams or knockout teams. When you buy an entry into a bracketed event, you will be asked two important questions; the total number of masterpoint held by all the contestants, and how many members on the team. You should know both before buying-in.

The Directors will break the event into groups where each group has a similar number of points. (Usually there is less than a 20% difference between the highest team in the group and the lowest. At least that's what the directors try for, but there is no guarantee.)

Teams will only play against their own group, or bracket.

Qualification: usually used only in large national events. Everybody plays everybody. At the end of a session, or two, the lowest scoring half of the field is eliminated and only the upper half plays on. This can be repeated several times. There are no brackets or strats in the qualifying rounds.

North: just to clarify, the direction of North is arbitrary, not the actual compass heading. North on all tables in all sections will point the same direction. (Usually this is towards table A-1 wherever that might be.)

Housekeeping note: D23 is still looking for a new webmaster and author of this column. I have several cruises planned for the next nine months. Website maintenance and writing will be hard to do from Antarctica.

“Winners want to play against the strongest opponents they can find, to improve their game and test their ability.

Losers prefer to play against the weakest players they can find. They believe that is the surest way to win.

[Editor's note: last month, Mr. White gave us definitions of some slang terms in bridge. Here is an alternative for one of them. A hand with 7-4-1-1 shape was referred to as a “Swan.” OK, I guess. But if you write that distribution as 4-7-1-1, it should be called a “Perfume.” No?

Southern California Bridge News

Published monthly by ALACBU, Inc.

1800 Avenue of the Stars, 12th Floor,

Los Angeles, CA 90067

Phone: 310-440-4100

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

For those who don't quite see the connection – most of whom probably have a Y-chromosome – 4711 is a famous perfume manufactured in Cologne, Germany. The number represents the address of the original site of manufacture.]

D23 Long Beach Regional

4-10 July 2022

by Mike Marcucci

Our 86th D23 Bridge Week was held this year at the friendly Long Beach Hilton. Weather was beautiful & the restaurants were open for business. There was a break in the Monday night game so players could go outside & observe the holiday fireworks, which were all around us. At least 30 displays were visible around the city and they lasted until past 11 PM. Folks were in the mood to celebrate, but that did not include enough area bridge players because only 743 tables of players showed up for our big week. That's about 50% of the pre-C19 normal (and down from 5000 in the days of the Pasadena Convention Center). Sure hope that improves next year & we can break those shackles of seclusion.

On the flip side of that stat, it has not been a good year for Regionals around the country. Monterey, which is usually a monster, only drew 833 tables. Prior to Long Beach, Orlando had 451 tables, Tampa – 511, and Austin – 701. Then post LB, we have Toronto at 624, Boise at 313, then Chicago with 284. So where have all the bridge players gone? We'll let you debate that yourselves, but we have a pretty good idea.

So congrats are in order for all our Long Beach supporters from Region 11 (D22 and D23 together)

and we thank you for your strong FTF desires and on-site hotel stays that allowed us to meet our minimum requirements. Always a good thing. ☺

Margie Michelin & Dalia Hernandez rounded up 24 tables of Pro-Am players for our 1st afternoon on July 4th and the happy winners were Ellis Feigenbaum, Laguna Woods & Melinda Wilson, Torrance.



Our D23 Tournament Manager, Peter Benjamin, reports that we had 509 dedicated bridge players in attendance who were awarded a total of 6959.7 Master Points for the week. Ken Horwedel acted as lead director, assisted by Peter Knee, McKenzie Myers, and Brandon Sheumaker. Morris Jones handed out those orange entry wristbands and we stopped counting the partnerships arranged by Jan Wickersham.

Speakers for the Week

- Monday Marjorie Michelin
 - Tuesday Thomas MacCormac
 - Thursday Mike Passell
 - Friday Donna Compton
 - Saturday Mitch Dunitz & Expert Panel
- Mark Itabashi, Dan Korbel, Ifti Baqai, Chris Compton, Greg Hintz

The winners of the 2022 Stoddard Trophy for the week's most total points were:

Billy Miller & David Grainger – 121.1 MPs each.



Congrats and thanks to the D23 Tournament Committee and the LB Hilton Staff and management who worked hard to provide an outstanding playing area, the quick and efficient lunches, lots of coffee, and winner prizes, but mostly the cheerful and friendly atmosphere and attitudes for the whole week.

Thanks also to everyone who signed the D23 Life Master list on the wall. It is being corrected and updated with a goal of 100% accuracy eventually. It will take some work! 4218 players & counting.

Looking forward to next year.

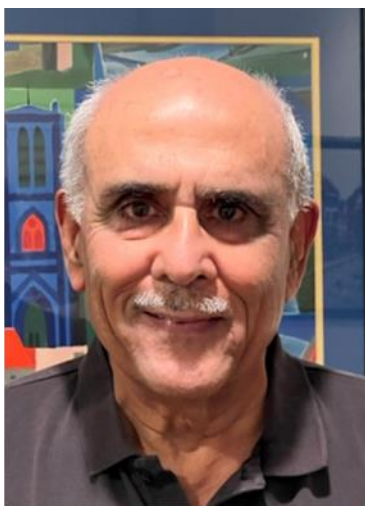
NEW LIFE MASTERS in D23

by Mike Marcucci



Mike Moss – Sep 21

Unit 568



Ramesh Sawhney – Dec 21
Unit 559



Lisa Walker – Jan 22
Unit 559



Lillian Slater – Dec 21
Unit 557

The Puzzle Page

Bridge Jeopardy by John Jones

Category: Asking for Aces

And the answer is ...

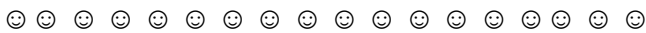
\$100 – Answering 5♣ shows one or four keycards.

\$200 – 4♣ directly over NT.

\$300 – 1♦ – 2♦ – 4♦.

\$400 – When 4 of the bid immediately higher than the trump suit is the keycard ask.

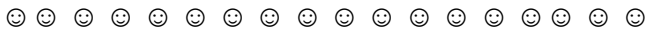
\$500 – Partner doesn't want you to count the ace of the suit of their void.



You think it's bad now? In 20 years, our country will be run by people who were home schooled by day drinkers.

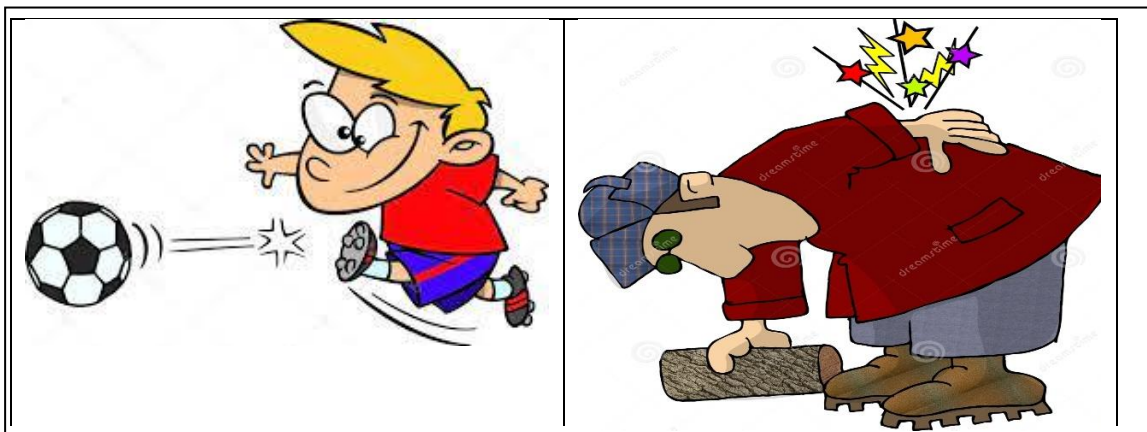
Had a big mix-up at the store today. When the woman said "Strip down, facing me" she was referring to my credit card.

Maybe if we start telling people the brain is an app, they'll start using it.



September Rebus

Well, can you figure out what this says?



Play or Defend? by John Jones

North

♠ A K 8 6 5
♥ J 8 5 4
♦ J
♣ A 6 2

West

♠ J 9 7 2
♥ A Q 7
♦ 10 8 6 5 4
♣ 8

East

♠ 10 4 3
♥ K 9 2
♦ Q 9 2
♣ Q 10 9 3

South

♠ Q
♥ 10 6 3
♦ A K 7 3
♣ K J 7 5 4

Contract = 3NT

Opening Lead = ♦5

All players can see all the cards. Do you play or defend?

(Solutions to these puzzles are on page 8. No peeking!)

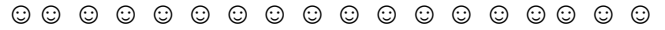
Solution to “Play or Defend?”

Answer: Play. Win trick one. Cash the spade queen at T2 (this is necessary). Duck a club at T3. Win the expected diamond return (there is nothing better for the defense provided the spade queen was unblocked). Cross to the ace of clubs and cash the two top spades. Finesse the club jack and cash out the club suit. You score three spades, two diamonds and four clubs. It doesn't help the defense to take the three hearts when they are in (they get them in the end in any case).

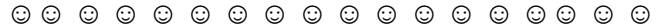
This is another hand from Julian Pottage's original book Play or Defend.

Bridge Jeopardy Questions

- \$100 – What is 1430?
- \$200 – What is Gerber?
- \$300 – What is Minorwood?
- \$400 – What is Kickback? (Also called Redwood)
- \$500 – What is Exclusion Blackwood?



Submitted by John Jones



Solution to “Rebus”

“KickBack”

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

District 23 Rank Changes July 2022

Junior Master

Rebecca A. Austin
Glenn T. Barry
Leon Estes
Marilyn L. Gelfand
Tina J. Kenefick
Stuart Soldate
John C. Sparks

Club Master

Mary Sue Foard
Colleen Shinn

Sectional Master

Kitty Keck

Regional Master

Giacomo Beretta
Carol C. Connolly
Pamela Haskins
Danny H. Lerner

Regional Master

Madge F. London
Kay Wardell

NABC Master

Carolyn E. Byrnes
Won-Young McDevitt

Advanced ABC Master

Terry R. Hane
Betsy K. Nicassio
Ramani Ravikandan

Life Master

Carol L. Decordova
Joyce A. Field
John L. Galligher
Edward A. Ruttenberg

Bronze Life Master

Diane S. Bishop
Carol L. Decordova

Bronze Life Master

Joyce A. Field
Ardis K. Laine
Charles E. Laine
Edward A. Ruttenberg
Judith C. Tomic

Silver Life Master

Lynn W. Edelson
John L. Galligher

Ruby Life Master

Sheldon Levitt
Jane E. Reid
Jojo Sarkar
Kris Sommer

Gold Life Master

Cathryn L. Martin

Sapphire Life Master

Michael L. Klemens

Around the Units in District 23



Pomona – Covina by Tom Lill www.acblunit551.org

Individual: September 3, 10 a.m., Ontario
October 1, 10 a.m., TBD

Club Championships: September 6 and 9, La Fetra

Unit Game: Saturday September 17, 11:00 a.m.,
Glendora

Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

In the August Individual, Kiran Kumar took top honors with a 60.42% effort. Trailing here we find John Jones in second, Linda Tessier and Caryn Mason tied for third, Stephen Andersen fifth, followed by Art Weinstein and Art Wallace rounding out the leader board.

In the August Unit game, Susan Emminger – Gary Atwell edged out Vic Sartor – Nona Stokes, by less than one matchpoint, for top honors. Lulu and Fredy Minter were third, Hanan Mogharbel – Kiran Kumar next, and Steve Mancini – Caryn Mason rounded out the honors list.

There were no rank advancements this month.

Topping the charts again this month are Fredy and Lulu Minter, with an impressive 72.982% game. This beat out two 67.5%+ performances, one by Caryn Mason – Richard Parker, and another by Hanan Mogharbel – Yours Truly. The only others in the winners' circle were by Bill Papa and Vic Sartor.

For starters in our Hand-of-the-Month Circus, here's a hand I picked up playing solitaire on BBO:

♠ none ♥ AQ10752 ♦ AKQJ862 ♣ none.

Yeppers, another "semi-balanced" hand. You don't pick up 1-loser hands very often (well, *I* don't), but there it is. I elected to open 2♣ and of course LHO preempted in spades, raised to 4♠ by RHO. Hmmmm. How can I show this two-suiter? I elected 4NT (two places to play) and got for my reward "No explanation

available" from the obviously under-voltaged robot. The ensuing auction was a nightmare, the robot competing vigorously in CLUBS on six to J109, chasing me all the way to 7♦. The ♥KJ were on my right – finesseable – but of course there was no dummy entry so I could not pick them up. Down 2. Oh well.

Now for our "real" hand-of-the-month. This was hand-dealt – no, we can't blame a computer on this one – during our August Unit game. We'll start with just the North hand (which I had the pleasure to hold) and the somewhat bizarre auction. West dealt, both sides are vulnerable.

♠ AJ9874 ♥ Q109852 ♦ none ♣ 10.

(You didn't think this was going to be a 4-4-3-2 hand, did you?)

West	North	East	South
1♦	2♦ (1)	3♣	pass
3♦	4♦ (2)	4♣	pass
5♣	5♦ (3)	X	5♠
X	all pass		

(1) Both majors

(2) *I really meant* it, partner.

(3) Partner, you are going to bid a major suit if I have to bid SEVEN diamonds!

Partner's hand was

♠ K1064 ♥ 74 ♦ J43 ♣ 862

The defenders had a card-play misfortune so we were down only 1, -200. We should have been down 2, which still would have been a good result, because at the other four tables, the results were (I kid you not):

6♣ =	-1370
6♣X =	-1540
6♦ +1	-1390
5♠X -2	-500

It was just *so* much fun watching the other players react as I just kept on bidding diamonds! You might take note of the fact that N-S held only 11 HCP between them ... fortunately 10 of them were in our long suits, only the ♦J being a wasted value. Or, as Marty Bergen says, "points, shmoints!"

Finally – another addition to Mr. White’s hand-descriptors: this hand, with its 1-0-6-6 shape, might be called a “Hastings” over in England.

Quote for the month: “Sometimes I think the surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that none of it has tried to contact us”. (Hobbes, speaking to Calvin)

Downey – Whittier by Liz Burrell

Yesterday, August 24, was a good day at Downey. We participated in the Western Conference Summer Fun StaC game and several of our players had great games. Connie Kang and Gabrielle Sill were 4th overall in the Wednesday Morning Open group and had a 63.75% game earning 4.43 silver points. Linda and Mark Fraser had a 59.90% game. They were 7th in A, 1st in B and 1st in C earning 5.12 silver points. They have only played at Downey once before and we hope it won’t be the last time. Barbara Horn and Kiran Kumar had a 56.25% game with 1.07 silver points. Two other pairs scored very well and earned silver points: Steve and Linda Wood with a 53.75% game and 1.05 points; and Julie Hanson and Angela Peters with 50.63% and .64 points. Congratulations to all.

At our game on August 17, Alan Flower/Jon Yinger were first with 59.52%, scoring .80 black points; Kiran Kumar/Barbara Horn were second with .56 points; and Steve/Linda Wood earned .40 black points. On August 10, Barbara Horn/John Dobson were first with 63.46% earning 1.00 black points; John Petrie/Sankar Reddy were second and earned .50 black points. On August 3, John Petrie/Sankar Reddy were first with a very nice 68.75% game and .90 black points; Connie Kang/Gabrielle Sill were second with .63 black points; and Ivan Claman/Terry Binns were third with .45 black points.

We are slightly encouraged with attendance in August since we have averaged just about 4.5 tables each Wednesday so far. We would love to have 7 full tables or more each week, but that doesn’t seem likely. It’s a bit like navigating the ocean in a rowboat with a slow leak. But we’re still paddling.

Next Wednesday, August 31 will be the last opportunity to qualify for North American Pairs (NAP) at Downey. If you still need to qualify, please join us at our usual time of 10:00 a.m. We’d love to have you join us even if you’ve already qualified.

Contact information: Liz Burrell, 562-972-2913, lizburrell7@gmail.com



Santa Clarita- Antelope Valley by Beth Morrin

Unit 556 is still looking for a place in the Santa Clarita area to restart face-to-face bridge games. If anyone has suggestions, please contact one of our board members. The Virtual Club is still going strong.

The Unit has 10 folding card tables that need to be stored somewhere. If anyone has some extra space and would store these tables until our next Sectional, please contact Rand Pinsky.

Virtual Game Schedule

Monday:	12:15 PM	Open game
Tuesday:	6:15 PM	Open game
Thursday:	10:15 AM	Open game
Friday:	12:15 PM	Open game
Sunday:	12:15 PM	749er game
	12:30 PM	Open game

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

Leaders in the Ace of Clubs Competition (as of June 30th)

0-5 MP	Alison Bosdet
20-50 MP	Hani Abraham
50-100 MP	Les Spitz
100-200	Tom Beggane
200-300	David Khalieque
300-500	Aggi Oschin
500-1000	Kristi Kubo
1000-1500	Ruth Baker
1500-2500	Kathy Swaine
2500-3500	Rand Pinsky
3500-5000	Bill Brodek

Mon July 25
Gerard Geremia – Rae Murbach 70.14%

Tues. July 26
Amr Elghamry – Dominique Moore 68.65%
Bill Brodek – Robot 67.46%

Fri. July 29		
Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky		68.79%
Gerard Geremia – Rae Murbach		65.78%
Thurs. Aug. 4		
Rae Murbach – Diana Borgatti		65.28%
Sun. Aug. 7		
Amr Elghamry – Gerard Geremia		66.22%
Joseph Viola – Rae Murbach		65.31%
Mon. Aug 8		
Linda Young – William Martin		65.17%
Tues. Aug. 9		
Kathy Swaine – Rand Pinsky		71.05%
Mon. Aug. 15		
Roy Ladd – Ruth Baker		70.66%
Tues. Aug. 16		
Joseph Viola – Rae Murbach		68.85%
Hanan Mogharbel – Thomas Lill		67.26%
Fri. Aug. 19		
Adam Barron – Sharon Wolf		68.06%
Mira Rowe – Ron Oest		66.44%
Tues. Aug. 23		
Lulu Minter – Ernest Wong		66.36%

Next Board meeting: TBA, via Zoom.

Online games continue with six games a week through the Unit 556+PPD group. The schedule is available at <https://bridgemojo.com/unit556>

I'll be taking over day-to-day club management for Paula Olivares in September and October. We send a reminder email and take reservations on the day before each game. If you'd like to be included in the email list, drop me a note to virtualclub@bridgemojo.com.

We had two great unit games in August. The August 14th game was run as an NAP Qualifier. Winners N/S were Fredy and Lulu Minter and E/W Robert Shore and Mike Savage.

Our August 28th game was a Western Conference STaC game. Winners N/S were Abby Triback and Sadika Elewy. E/W winners were Robert Shore and Mike Savage.

Our September Unit Games will be held on September 11 and 25. The unit games feature a great playing field, extra masterpoints, and wonderful food and snacks provided by Unit 559. Games are Sunday at 12:30 p.m., and reservations are required. Contact Miriam Harrington at (626) 232-0558.

Pasadena – San Gabriel by Morris “Mojo” Jones

bridgemojo.com



It's the season for beginning bridge classes, and it's certainly the year for them!

We have two beginning bridge classes starting in September, both are six weeks long, using the Audrey Grant Better Bridge curriculum. Bridge Basics 1 – Introduction starts Sept. 10 on Saturday Mornings at 9:30 a.m. at the Arcadia Bridge Center. Another session starts on Sept. 14, Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m., through PCC Extension at Arcadia High School.

Information on beginning bridge classes is available on the BridgeMojo site:

<https://bridgemojo.com/class>



Long Beach by Lillian Slater

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com



Status Changes

Junior Life Master	Glenn Barry
	Leon Estes
NABC Master	Carolyn Byrnes
Bronze Life Master	Ardie Laine
	Charles Laine
Silver Life Master	John Galligher
Ruby Life Master	Jane Reid




Jane Reid



John Galligher



Ardis & Charles Laine



Unit News

Thanks to all who played in the August 28th unit game! Patience was required when:

- The computer was slow so Sean couldn't assign tables.
- A new way of collecting the game fees was tried. A special thanks to all who donated the extra \$2 to minimize the change needed.

Thanks to Paul Pettler and Sharon Beran who responded when called to fill in!

Hope to see most of you at next month's unit game on September 25!

Stay tuned for details about our sectional planned for November 12-13. Saturday will be pairs and Sunday will be a team game.

by Lillian Slater, Unit President

70's Club Big Games



Jeff Strutzel and Bill McClean scored a 74.19% game in a field of 10 tables on August 22 in the Western Conference Summer STaC, upgrading their earnings to 16.21 Silver points.



Joey DuRee and Nancy Imbery scored a 77.50% game in a field of 2 and 1/2 tables in the August 19th NLM section.





John Petrie and Louis Shen earned a 72.79% score in a field of 11 tables at the unit game on August 28.

Problem Solvers' Panel

Moderator: John Jones

Mark Bartusek, Jordan Chodorow, Kitty Cooper, Ed Davis, Lynne Feldman, Mister Mealy-mouth, Rick Roeder, Mike Shuster, and Jon Wittes are panelists.

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.

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IMPs
None Vul

West	North	East	South
3♣	pass	pass	???

You, South, hold: ♠ QJ103 ♥ AQJ872 ♦ 8 ♣ KQ10

What call do you make?

Preempts work, and this 3♣ bid creates a headache for South. 15 HCP is the normal expert minimum for mandatory action, and this isn't the worst 15 HCP ever, with some connecting honors and a couple of tens. But no bid stands out. We'll start with the passer.

Mealy-mouth: Pass. I reject a double without diamond support (pulling a likely diamond advance to hearts will land us in a bad contract when our side has no good fit). I reject 3NT (not enough strength). That leaves 3♥ and pass as plausible alternatives. Each puts all of our eggs in one basket. With only five hearts and a good 10 HCP outside of clubs, I don't like my chances in a heart contract. However, with a likely two trump tricks defending against 3♣, I do like my chances of beating it. Yes, we might have the wherewithal for game somewhere, but if so, we may get 150 or 200 points defending against 3♣. So, I'll gamble a pass as my best bet. Anything else risks turning a likely plus into a likely minus.

One panelist straight-forwardly overcalls in her best suit.

Cooper: 3♥. Double could be right but I would hate to hear partner bid diamonds.

Other panelists want to get both majors focused.

Bartusek: 4♣. Anything could be right. Double just seems too dangerous with only a stiff diamond. I

strongly considered 3NT and 3♥ also, but 4 of the right major seems like it needs the least from partner to have a chance. This is also the most likely auction to escape a double since RHO won't know how distributional I am (sorry I'm only 4=5 instead of 5=5). Partner will always default to hearts with equal length. (*Might partner choose spades over hearts with ♠K9x and ♥xxx?*) 3NT was my initial choice until I reconsidered how much I need from partner. If I'm going to guess, then I'll hope for some major suit length and both major suit kings opposite.

Double gets both majors in play, but the flaw is what action to take if partner advances 3♦ or 4♦ over the double.

Wittes: Double. 3NT could be right, but 4 of a major seems like the best bet for game. If partner bids 3 of a major, I'll raise. If partner bids 3♦, I'll try 3NT. If partner bids 4♦, I'll try 4♥. The only bid that would make things uncomfortable is 5♦, which seems unlikely.

Shuster: Double. This hand is promising in three strains, and double is the only way to keep all three in play. If partner advances 3♦, I'll try 3NT.

Feldman: Double. If partner bids 3♦ I will overbid with 3NT.

Chodorow: Double. As quotidian as this problem may seem, I find it the hardest of the set. Double is

reasonable; it's the most flexible bid, though unsuitability for diamonds is a clear flaw and rebid problems beckon. 3♥ ("When in doubt, bid your best suit") is reasonable, though least flexible. 3NT - hoping for partner to have a couple clubs, so that notrump plays better than suit - is esoteric with a stiff diamond, but not a big overbid in add-a-king balancing seat; also, the opponents may think it sounds diamond-y. I will double, intending to rebid notrump over diamonds, though that sequence sounds stronger than this hand and the thought of partner's jumping to 4♦ fills me with dread.

Finally, let's hear from the panelists that make the call I like, 3NT.

Davis: 3NT. This may be the only vote for 3NT as doubling and then correcting 3♦ to 3♥ or 3NT will be a popular choice. And 3NT will be a silly contract if partner has three of four small diamonds. But the trick-taking value of my hand is sufficient for 3NT (two club stoppers, four probable heart tricks plus three spade tricks if opposite an honor). Also, nine tricks in notrump may be easier than ten tricks in a major as there is a danger that my RHO will ruff off one of my club winners if we play in hearts or spades. If I double and partner has good hand with diamond length, he may choose to bid 4♦ and that would keep us from being able to stop in any notrump contract below 6NT. If I double and partner has a bad hand with diamond length, that runs the risk of 3♦ by partner, 3NT by me and double by RHO for a diamond lead.

Roeder: 3NT. Pass might be technically correct but I am seduced by major suit texture. Any other choices should be immediately flushed down the toilet. If I do not get a diamond lead, I will be optimistic.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">2</h1> <p>Matchpoints Both Vul</p>	South	West	North	East
	1♥	pass	1♠	pass
	???			
<p>You, South, hold: ♠ 76 ♥ AKQ1042 ♦ A97 ♣ A8</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

Several panelists note that 3NT in this situation normally shows six or more good hearts and short spades (normally one or two).

Shuster: 3NT. This shows a 2NT rebid with a sixth heart. I was about the ♦J away from this being a 2♣ opener.

Chodorow: 3NT. With a Kaplan-Rubens Hand Evaluator score of 21, this hand is too good for a rebid of either 2NT or 3♥. A 2NT opening would have been perfect if the hearts were either minor; still, I've seen Mike Savage open 2NT with this hand type, and it can work. A 3NT rebid, which should show running hearts, a likely stop in each minor, and spade weakness, is clearly imperfect but seems closest. I've been a good boy and deserve to have the ♥J fall.

Bartusek: 3NT. Easy for my system. I've always played 3NT as showing six good hearts and a desire to play 3NT. With all the losers and possessing quick tricks on the side no-trump could easily play better than hearts.

Mealymouth: 3NT. A jump to 2NT or 3♥ will be passed too often when game is a favorite for either of

these jumps to be acceptable. If partner has a normal minimum, which game do we belong in, 3NT or 4♥? I don't know. Fortunately, I don't have to decide, for a jump to 3NT implies long strong hearts and allows partner pick the right game ... or seek the right slam.

Davis: 3 NT. This shows 6+ hearts, no shortness (other than possibly in spades) and too much strength to invite partner to bid game by bidding 2NT or 3♥.

A heavy 3♥ might be right. Given how light players are responding, 3♥ could be the limit.

Wittes: 3♥. 3NT could be right, but I think 3♥ (although a little top heavy), is the best descriptive bid for my hand.

Feldman: 3♥. What's the problem?

Cooper: 3♥. Seems a model for this bid.

One panelist opts for the 4♥ game.

Roeder: 4♥. Without the ♥T, a 3♥ rebid would be my call.

3♣ or 3♦ as a quasi-natural game-forcing jump shift are also possible calls. I like 3♣ better than 3♦.

<h1 style="font-size: 48px; margin: 0;">3</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">IMPs Both Vul</p>	West	North	East	South
	1♠*	dbl	pass	pass
	2♣	2♦	3♣	3♦
	pass	3♠	pass	???
<p>You, South, hold: ♠ Q98654 ♥ A3 ♦ K53 ♣ 54</p> <p>What call do you make?</p>				

*1♠ = 4-card majors, may have a longer side suit

This has been a complex auction up to this juncture, and the panelists were given the following request “South has already had a couple of decisions. If you would have acted differently up to this point, please speak up and describe your approach. But please don’t abstain, answer the problem at this point (it is the way I got it).”

I don’t think we encounter canapé systems as often as we used to. In some canapé systems a major could be opened on four small cards. Combating that can be tough. Does 2♦ here promise 18+ HCP? I think it does, but not everyone would agree. Should 3♦ be forcing? Probably not, because South may just have long spades. Is 3♦ an underbid then? In my opinion, yes! Does 3♠ offer spades as a playable strain? I think it should.

Some panelists want to play in spades.

Shuster: 4♣. Once we’re going to the 4-level, we might as well get a game bonus for making. I think RHO holds a stiff spade honor and partner holds AJ, KJ or AT.

Bartusek: 4♣. I would have bid 1NT on the first round, thinking that my spades weren’t good enough to penalize a 5-card 1♠ opener. A first-round pass might be best if opener only has four spades, but 1NT beautifully describes my hand and makes partner’s follow-ups easier. I believe 3♠ should show values in spades (and concern about clubs) because partner had a 3♥ call available without spade values. Might as well try to play a 6-2 spade fit instead of 5♦.

Mealy-mouth: 4♣. I’m not bidding 3NT or any number of diamonds. Partner is proposing game in spades, not showing a stopper for 3NT. “Four-Card Majors” mean one thing when using the methods of Culbertson and Goren, but something else when using strong-club systems or canapé. West’s spades here are unlikely to be as good as Ely’s and Charlie’s were, nor

as mine would be on the rare occasions when I open them. The sixth spade impels me to play in spades and accept game.

Others try for game in NT.

Roeder: 3NT. I’m OK with the previous bidding. I’m not overly concerned with the bad guys running five club tricks. I presume partner had extras to chirp 2♦ and 3♣. The red suit honors indicate the probability that partner has one of the two high clubs to justify his robust bidding.

Wittes: 3NT. I can’t imagine a hand that can double, bid 2♦ over 2♣, and then bid 3♠ over 3♦ without a club card. Even though the opponents open 4-card majors, possibly with a longer suit, I can’t imagine them opening 1♠ on a poor 4-card suit.

Other panelists bids game in diamonds.

Cooper: 5♦. Partner heard me pass 1♠ doubled so she/he knows I have a spade stopper. Thus, this is either looking for a club stop or is some sort of try. I am bidding what I think we can make. 3♦ was an underbid, but I do not see any great alternatives - maybe 3♠. A 4♥ cuebid might get passed since it sounds like an offer to play with three good hearts.

Feldman: 5♦.

Other panelists opt for more flexible bids that ask partner for help selecting the best contract.

Davis: 4♣. Partner’s 3♠ bid should be natural and forcing as 4♣ is a possible final contract for us since they are playing a system where they will often open 1♠ on a 4-card suit. I have already shown length and strength in spades by passing partner’s takeout double of 1♠ and I think that partner’s 3♠ bid shows a high card in spades. The problem is that it may be only one high card and I need two high cards, i.e., two cards ten or higher since otherwise I might have three spade losers. Partner could have what I need but he might not. I hope partner takes my 4♣ bid as asking him to

choose between 4♦, 4♠ and 5♦. I will pass if he makes any of those bids.

If Ed's 4♣ is interpreted correctly then it works for me. Otherwise, I agree fully with Jordan and his explanation!

Chodorow: 4♥. I disagree with both previous actions. This is not a Rule of nine penalty conversion: one-level contract + six trumps + one trump honor = eight. I would have bid at least 1NT on the first round. On the second round, with partner having shown 18+, 3♦ is the underbid of the month. I would have bid 3♠ showing undisclosed values including spades and inferentially asking for a club stopper for 3NT. When partner can make another forward-going move over my peep, I owe a cuebid on the way to many diamonds.

<h1 style="font-size: 48px; margin: 0;">4</h1> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Matchpoints N-S Vul</p>	North	East	South	West
	2♣	3♠	pass*	pass
	dbl	pass	???	

You, South, hold: ♠ A62 ♥ A9754 ♦ J32 ♣ QJ

What call do you make?

*Pass = At least two queens or better

This time the panelists got these instructions “I intend on commenting on the meaning of the pass. Feel free to discuss what you feel the best methods are. But again, please answer the problem the way I got it.”

I saddled the panelists with a bid that used to be standard expert practice, but I think is a poor treatment: pass shows two queens or better, double shows a bad hand, with less than two queens, and any distribution. I believe it is far superior to play that double shows a positive hand with values that are useful on either offense or defense. Pass is a bad hand, any distribution. A free bid shows positive value, but not necessarily two of the top three honors.

The first thing to be discussed is the meaning of double. Double is penalty, not takeout. It shows a balanced hand or better in terms of spades. However, if we get three spades tricks and six side winners, that leaves four long spades tricks for a declarer with a seven-card spade suit. That is down five for 1100. Even 1400 wouldn't be enough to compensate for 6NT making for 1440.

Hoping for better spades from partner is:

Mealy-mouth: Pass. Second choice: a gambling 6NT. Not that I like the special agreement of my earlier pass (I'd rather have been able to bid 3♥), but that's not the issue here. A similar problem was discussed by Jeff Rubens in *The Bridge World's* “Master Solvers' Club” many years ago. Jeff was the only one who diagnosed it correctly. An opponent had psyched on favorable vulnerability, stealing opener's suit and intending to run if doubled. Opener's double is not a takeout double in auctions like this. It is a penalty double intended to smoke out a psych. Even if not based on a five-card spade suit, it will be based on a balanced hand and down four looks likely. But this time East was not smoked out. Why didn't East run to his long minor? Perhaps because this time he wasn't

psyching, but perhaps because he's “playing poker” with us. There's a widely accepted theory that no double is ever for penalties, so maybe East expects us to save him. Yes, we may collect too small a penalty against 3♠ doubled to make up for a missed 6♥, but it's too late now to seek 6♥ safely. Certainly, 4♥ won't do the job, and might be based on six hearts with no more strength than two red queens, but 5♥ isn't assured even with a hand as good as this one. It would be nice if the authorities permitted Descartes Doubles, which are doubles of partner's doubles and say, “I doubt, therefore I am.” If they accomplish nothing else, at least Descartes Doubles give partner a chance to clarify his own double. Perhaps by the next decade the powers that be will see the fog and permit them.

Making a simple cuebid was the choice of some panelists.

Chodorow: 4♠. I will bid hearts next.

Bartusek: 4♠. I play the same way since a first-round double would show a double negative. Now I'm strong enough to force to slam, and I might as well cuebid my spade ace in search of a grand. I will offer up hearts on the next round.

Cooper: 4♠. I'm planning to bid 5♥ next. I would have bid 4♥ last time, a positive with five+ hearts but this hand is almost a slam force so maybe pass was fine. Perhaps 5NT pick a slam followed by 6♥ would be a better approach.

Wittes: 4♠. We must have a slam of some sort, and possibly a grand. 4♠ leaves room for investigation.

What's the difference between 4♠ and 5♠? 5♠ takes up more room, but makes it clear immediately that a grand is possible.

Feldman: 5♠. I'm interested in at least a small slam; I will bid 6♥ over 6 of a minor.

Shuster: 5♠. I have the first-round control and want to invite a grand. There could be volumes written on the differences between 5♠ and 5NT, but my preferences are not standard and most people do promise hearts with 5♠. If partner can come back 5NT, I'll be able to zoom to 6♥, making it clear that 6♥ is the lowest I'm willing to play. I like double of 3♠ as takeout. Once the bad guys are playing the suit naming game, we can't afford to sit out a round of the auction arguing about a couple of queens.

Let's consider 6NT.

Davis: 4♠. When partner opened 2♣, it was very likely that my hand had enough high cards for slam and nothing in this auction has changed that expectation. Partner's double of 3♠ says he is willing to defend 3♠X so I expect him to have a hand where he might have rebid 2NT (e.g., ♠JTx ♥KQx ♦AKQ ♣AKxx). I expect that we will belong in 6NT even if we have a heart. My intention is to play 6NT and the 4♠ bid is an attempt to play notrump from partner's side. If partner bids a suit over 4♠, I will bid 5♠ and, if partner bids a suit again, I will bid 6NT. (A 6♠ bid by me would probably get partner to bid 6NT but I would not take the risk of partner interpreting it to mean something else.) And, of course, if partner bids 4NT or 5NT over a spade bid by me, I will bid 6NT.

Roeder: 6NT. I cannot decide if your pass of 3♠ was idiotic or merely moronic. Selecting the best adjective may be more challenging than any of your five problems. You have been effectively preempted and needed to take a good first shot to start getting your hand off your chest. Your pass is akin to Neville Chamberlain's posture on 1938 Adolf Hitler. Thank God for Churchill and the French Resistance!! If you are gin for 7♥, you owe partner a stiff drink or a Doobie, depending on their personal preference. You will have some votes for 4♠ cuebids, but the only helpful response might be 5♥. Would you then bid the grand? I am unsure I would have the guts to do so unless I needed a board.

<h1 style="font-size: 4em;">5</h1> <p>IMPs</p>	East	South	West	North
	1♦	???		
	You, South, hold: ♠ 109753 ♥ AKQJ ♦ 83 ♣ J9			
	What call do you make?			

Of the problems I presented this month, three of them (problems 1, 3 and 4) were made complex by the opponent's actions. Problem 2 is dependent on one's system and methods. This problem is simple in the sense that it doesn't depend on the opponent's complexities nor our methods. Here we have enough to bid and decent distribution, but a poor spade suit that we don't especially want led if we wind up on defense. What approach should we take? Despite the simplicity of the auction and methods not being relevant, we have a significant panel disagreement. There are votes for Pass, Double, 1♠ and 2♦ (Michaels). Further, my problem pre-screener, Gabe Foster, likes 1♥. That's five different actions over a one-level opening bid. Isn't bridge a simple game?

I'll start with an action I don't like, the 2♦ Michaels call. The reason I don't like bidding Michaels on 5-4 hands is that partner frequently misjudges the offensive/defensive ratio of the hand.

Roeder: 2♦. Consider the alternatives!

Wittes: 2♦. I'm not a big advocate of bidding Michaels with only nine cards in the majors, but my hearts are so good and my spades are so bad, that 2♦ seems like the appropriate bid on this hand.

Shuster: 2♦. I want to get both majors in and the hearts kind of look like a 5-bagger. Partner won't expect the world's fair for a nonvulnerable 2♦ call here, but even so, it is a lot to bid. To be honest, I admire pass here, but if I actually did that, how could I face the juniors I mentor?

Despite my dislike for 2♦, I'm almost certain that the previous moderator of this panel, the late Marshall Miles, would have bid 2♦. I saw him bid Michaels with 5-4 on difficult hands often.

Another possibility I'm not in love with is double. A 2♣ advance by partner will become difficult.

Davis: Double. I would like a heart lead if LHO is declarer. However, I also want to compete in the majors and competing in the majors is more important. The best way to do that is by doubling 1♦. I don't

mind bidding 2♦ (Michaels, showing 5-5 in the majors) with this amount of strength but I don't like doing it with 5-4 in the majors. If I instead had ♠AKJQx ♥T9xx ♦xx ♣Jx, it would be fine to overcall 1♠ and then bid 2♥ if partner showed some values. But this hand is not worth overcalling 1♠ when I do not want a spade lead and when I might have to leave my hearts unmentioned. There is a risk that partner might compete to 3♣ on a 5-card suit when I double 1♦ but that will probably be okay if the opponents are making 2♦.

Cooper: Double. Yes, I want a heart lead. However, 1♥ is too distorting and I have five spades which I am treating as four by doubling.

Chodorow: Double. I wouldn't bid 1♥ for the lead; if we defend, I am likely to be on lead. If I bid 1♥ - the only alternative to double. I would do so constructively, knowing that a five-card side suit is a positive factor for a four-card overcall. A 1♠ overcall on ten-high and 11 HCP is verboten. When I overcall with less than an opening hand, I have the ace, king or queen in my suit so that partner will not kick a quick trick on power by leading away from the king of my suit. And I didn't come to the bridge table to pass. Double is the standout; it keeps all options in play.

My first reaction to this hand was to bid 1♠ and at least get the shape bid accurately. I feel strongly that is what Eddie Kantar would have done if he were still with us. Eddie believed strongly in bidding shape accurately.

Bartusek: 1♠. Obviously, I'd like a better suit, but this is the only way to find a 5-3 spade fit. We can usually find our heart fit via a responsive double by partner or a heart rebid by me. A double would not only lie about my strength but also about my diamond support. Pass just seems way too timid, and we might not be able to easily back into the auction later.

Feldman: 1♠. I will bid 2♥ if an option later.

Mealy-mouth passed on many hands on this difficult set. Pass on this hand was not popular with the panel.

Everyone found some call to make on this hand. Pass fails to show values and has that flaw. But it has the advantage of not misdescribing the shape nor bidding a suit we don't want led.

Mealymouth: Pass. The spades are too weak and the hearts too short to bid either. I could have eked out a double with one diamond fewer and one more club. I expect another turn and if the auction comes back to me at 1NT, 2♣ or 2♦ without a major having been bid, I can eke out a double then.

This hand was sent to me by my friend Paul Kushner, who lives in the Tahoe-Reno area. Partner held: ♠AQJ ♥xx ♦xx ♣Q76432. Paul at the table selected "pass, in honor of his 2nd cousin, twice removed, Al Roth". The ♠K was onside, but there was an overruff possibility in clubs if spades were trump. Thus, spades would make two, clubs would make two and 3♦ by the opponents would be down one.