



APRIL 2019 NEWSLETTER



APRIL FOOLS' EDITION

So, was the discontinuance of the Newsletter another April Fools' Day deal? Well, maybe, maybe not.

But, what is was for sure, is a plea for some help with content. We have a large number of talented folks in our club and I really wish some of you would contribute to our Newsletter. Articles need not be specifically about bridge but probably not about your pet gerbil either.

Just write them in an email, hand them to me on paper, or, best, attach a Word Document to an email

If you added all the people tuned into the games on TV, that number would be.....no, no, not fair, because if it's past the second inning, everyone is asleep.

But then again, we spend three plus hours staring at little rectangular thingies with silly symbols and pictures on them, so I guess we shouldn't judge.

Anyway, April is Charity Month in ACBL - Nation. So, all games will be Charity Club Championships. We will donate four dollars per table to charitable organizations split about evenly between the ACBL Charity Foundation and local charities of our choice.

The second Friday Team Game is back to the usual Dirty Dozen handicapped format

APRIL SCHEDULE

Well, it's Playoff Season for our winter sports. March Madness, college basketball's annual tournament to determine the national champion will be over in April (I wonder why March Madness lasts until April). They start with 68 teams and determine a winner in three weekends. Soon starts the pro basketball and hockey playoffs. They start with 16 teams and it takes two months to get a winner. Whatever.

I guess the baseball season has started, but I'm not sure how you know. There is now an average of 6.4 pitching changes per game. I think they take about eight minutes each, so anyone watching a baseball game spends 51 minutes watching the grass grow. Quite exciting! So, this means that for each major league season, about 6800 man years are spent watching grass grow (Note: I did this calculation in my head so it could be off a tad).

Game Schedule - April 2019

Monday 1:30pm	Wednesday 1:30pm	Friday 1:30pm
1-Apr Open Pairs	3-Apr Open Pairs	5-Apr Open Pairs
8-Apr Open Pairs	10-Apr Open Pairs	12-Apr Dirty Dozen Teams Handicapped
15-Apr Open Pairs	17-Apr Open Pairs	19-Apr Open Pairs
22-Apr Open Pairs	24-Apr Open Pairs	26-Apr Open Pairs
29-Apr Open Pairs		

All Games ACBL or Local Charity Games

SPRING FLING CONGRATULATIONS PHYLLIS INGRAM PRO – AM

Believe it or not, that's the official name of the event we held on the last Friday in March.

Despite the best efforts of our membership, we were eventually able to have a very nice game. When the sign up and cancellation period ended on the prior Monday we had 57 people signed up to play. In the following three days, this number went up and down reaching a zenith of 66 and eventually settling in at 56. The last and final change occurred on Thursday at 9:00 PM. I refused to look at my email on Friday morning because I was worn out by this mess. But the truly good news was everyone showed up and we had a great event.

Thanks to Lauren and Sedley for organizing this event, thanks to all of you who brought the very tasty treats for your fellow members to enjoy, and to all those who attended. Marc pointed out to me that there were zero director calls during the entire game, which he concluded means tasty makes for non testy.

Part of the event was a little presentation to Phyllis commemorating reaching Life Master. We revived an old tradition (from before I moved here) by giving a commemorative gift reflecting the achievement, rather than a monetary award. I personally think this was a wonderful change. For you detail freaks, it was a really pretty thing engraved with her name and accomplishment. Being an engineer by education, I had to ask what its function was. Well, you put things (like earrings, rings, pendants and popcorn) in it. I guess that makes it a thing thing. Well, if I ever make Life Master, I hope I get something different since I ain't got none of that stuff (or any stuff at all, for that matter).

So, that, or course leads us to an old routine by George Carlin about stuff (sorry, but my brain was wired by a plumbtrician so it goes strange places). Do you know what a plumbtrician is? I didn't until I moved here, but it's a serviceperson who does plumbing and electrical work, neither particularly well. (I think this is something that can only be found in the south, you know, like shrimp and grits covered with some kind of brown gravy.) Anyway, that's why my brain has a bunch of short circuits, poor connections, and a few leaks.

If you care to listen, here it is.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=george+carlin+stuff+routine&view=detail&mid=0C9D83F33FC270ECA0790C9D83F33FC270ECA079&FORM=VIRE>



This space was intended for the articles a number of members told me they would send for this newsletter. Apparently they were sent by Pony Express and have not arrived. Luckily, while reading the Daily Bulletins from the recent Memphis Nationals, I came across an excellent article by Steve Gaynor about IMP Strategy. Seems like the editor of the Memphis Newsletters also thought it was excellent since it was published twice.

Please read and reread number 11. In my opinion, this is superb advice for any form of scoring. I think all partnerships would be well served by the agreement they both delegate the heroics to their partner.

Anyway, Mr. Gaynor article follows.

IMP Strategy

(For Swiss Teams, Knockout Teams and IMP Pairs)

By Steven Gaynor

In a matchpoint event, we are always looking for that extra trick or playing in a risky major suit or no trump rather than a poorer-scoring, but safer, minor suit. Why? Because it pays off big time when it works. We may even risk our contract to make a play for an overtrick. On defense we strive not to blow a trick rather than beat a contract. In IMP scoring, however, the considerations change drastically. Now just making or beating a contract can give us a big score, but extra tricks are chump change. (OK, I know we have all won or lost a match by 1 IMP.)

Winning IMP strategies include:

- 1. Make your contract.** Do not worry about overtricks or undertricks. If you are in the right spot, things will usually work out in your favor.
- 2. Trust your bidding system.** Even at pairs, you will be a winner if you are in the right suit at the right level despite blowing an overtrick once in a while.
- 3. Stretch to bid a game.** If vulnerable, game should be bid even if it is as low as a 40% chance. If not vulnerable, it should be a 50% prospect.

If you bid three vulnerable games that your opponents do not bid and you make only one of them, you break even. If you are in an auction and the decision is now in your hands whether to bid game or not — if you have to think about it, bid game.

- 4. Do not double their partial.** You better have them down two in your own hand before you chance a double of a bid below game. And 'down two in your own hand' means you have a fistful of trump tricks. Do not count on your partner for many of these tricks.
- 5. Do not go for numbers.** Don't make some wild, preemptive bid just because you have six or seven (or more) cards in one suit. It is not worth it.
- 6. Your competitive bidding should be more constructive at IMP scoring.** Upgrade your overcalls by at least a queen. This means that if you would overcall with 8 points at pairs, overcall with 10 or more at IMPs.

7. Play your safest contract. If in the bidding you find you have a better fit in a minor than a major, play in the minor, especially at a partial. You want to make whatever contract you bid. Plus 110 is only a bit worse than plus 140 and it may not even make any difference sometimes.

This also applies to game and slam bidding. If partner opens 1NT and you have a four-card major with at least invitational values, bid Stayman. Plus 620 and plus 630 are the same at IMPs.

8. Do not stretch to bid slams. Bid slams only when they have at least 75% probability of success.

9. Do not stretch to bid slams. Oh, is this a repeat? Well, good. The point needs extra emphasis.

10. You have partners at the other table. Don't make a risky bid or play because you think you are down in a match.

Once, in a seven-board match, we bid a slam down two vulnerable for minus 200, bid 3NT with a combined 21 high-card points after a bidding misunderstanding --- which my partner played well for down one and minus 100 --- and doubled them in 4*H*, making five for minus 990. We thought we were slaughtered. Wrong. We won IMPs on all three boards and blitzed the other team.

11. Don't be a hero. Do not make a confusing bid that (1) may be passed when it is forcing or (2) shows extra values that you don't have. Make the call that shows your strength.

12. "Take out insurance." In every team game, there will be a hand where both sides can make game. Usually it is a wild hand with lots of distribution, doubles fits and long suits. It is usually right to bid one more (called "taking out insurance") – unless you are sure they are going down and you cannot make your bid.

13. On defense, strive at all costs to beat the contract even when it means giving up an overtrick. You may take risks that you would never dream of at matchpoints – such as leading the king from K-x, hoping to find your partner with the ace of that suit or the queen and a quick entry in trumps. Sometimes you give up an overtrick, so you lose 1 IMP. If your bold play sets a contract just one time in 10, you are ahead.

14. If it's hard for you, it's hard for them. The player sitting in your seat at the other table is holding the same cards you are. This guiding principle will help you on several of the points already listed.

Steven Gaynor is an Emerald Life Master who lives in Minneapolis MN. He is a member of the national Charity and Goodwill Committees.

More from the guy in Wallingford

