

# The Kibitzer

Newsletter for Duplicate Bridge Players

ACBL Unit 360

Fall, 2022



## President's Message

Things were very busy at the Bridge Center this summer. We raised \$5,175 in donations with the Longest Day event. We held two open houses and hosted the Fall Sectional tournament. It had good attendance, and we feel the event was a success.

Also, during the summer, bridge classes were held for beginners and experienced players.

As we look toward the end of this year, we have several bridge events on the calendar:

-- The annual Board of Directors election will be held in November. Be sure to vote.

-- On October 16th the Front Range Challenge will be held in Denver.

-- On November 6th we will have an Open House in the afternoon. There will be a BBQ lunch and a bridge game.

-- On Saturday December 10th we will have the Unit 360 annual membership meeting. More details will be coming.

See you at the bridge table.

-Bud Raabe



## Achievements:

### Junior Master (5 pts):

Sharon Maxwell

### Club Master (20 pts):

Claudia Lee

Jeffrey Fox

Kathleen Dawson

Laura Lowan

### Sectional Master (50 pts):

Carol Johnson

### Regional Master (100 pts):

Carol McLean

### Life Master & Bronze LM (500 pts):

Nancy Teel

Inside this Issue:	
Election Information	2
Thank You Sara Lynn	5
Educational Gifts	5
Lebensohl	6
Penalty Cards	7
Open House	8
Upcoming Events	9
Fall Sectional Results	10
Notable Achievements	13
Takeout Doubles	15



## Unit 360 Board Election



The election for the U360 Board of Directors will be held electronically the month of November using Survey Monkey. U360 members without email addresses will receive a mailed ballot. Ballots will also be available next to the Election Box at the Bridge Center. The results will be announced at the Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> Membership Meeting.

The election committee is pleased to announce the following excellent seven candidates vying for four positions. You will vote for four and the top four candidates will be elected to serve a two-year term.

Your Election Committee – Bonnie Bagley, Jean Collins, Jeff Rapp



**Kay Brock**

I am an attorney licensed to practice law in Colorado and Texas. I spent my 35-year legal career working for the State of Texas, Travis County, and the City of Austin. My legal specialties are business bankruptcy law and local taxation. I retired and moved to Colorado Springs from Austin, Texas with my husband Brad in 2019, and I have been active in Unit 360 since I arrived.

The Bridge Center is an asset to the community, and we are lucky to have it. I have made so many good friends, learned so much, and had so much fun at the Bridge Center. I want to do everything I can to help Unit 360 flourish and provide its members with affordable opportunities for both serious bridge competition and community. I have already contributed to Unit 360 by helping with sectional tournaments, editing the Kibitzer newsletter, and consulting with the Unit 360 board on legal matters. My background makes me well qualified to help Unit 360 grow and thrive, and as a board member I will continue my efforts to make the Bridge Center even more of what we all hope and expect it to become.



**Ann Couch**

I graduated from the University of Arkansas with a B. A. I am also a registered Medical Technologist and have worked in various hospitals. I was an Air Force wife and served on many volunteer boards during our twenty plus years in the service. I have been a member of our Bridge club since 2007. It has been a wonderful club, and I have met many terrific fellow bridge players. I served on the board at our Bridge Center for four years as treasurer. I have volunteered at my church and served there as treasurer for four years; and have been president and treasurer of my local sorority alumnae club. I have been an officer with my local golf league; and am currently an officer with the Pikes Peak Over the Hill Gang. I am currently on the board at the bridge center and would be proud to continue serve at our Bridge Center.



### **Howard Donaldson**

I am a graduate of the University of Nevada (B.S., Secondary Education, Mathematics), and Golden Gate University, School of Law. During my career, I was licensed to practice law before the United States Military Court of Criminal Appeals, the Supreme Court of California and the United States Supreme Court.

In September 2016, I retired after almost 44 years of federal service that included a little over two years as a US Army Air Defense Artillery lieutenant, over 28 years as a US Air Force judge advocate and nearly 14 years as a civilian attorney working as the Deputy Director and Senior Civilian Counsel for the Staff Judge Advocate Office at North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and United States Northern Command, the position in which I served until retirement.

I regularly support Pikes Peak Roundtable, a community service outreach program. In my spare time, I enjoy participating in Garden of the Gods Club activities, woodworking and playing Bridge.

I have been an active member of the ACBL and Unit 360 since 2016, and presently serve as the Vice President of the Board of Directors. During the Pandemic, I was involved in various COVID-19 response efforts in El Paso County, and spearheaded "Operation GRAND SLAM," a program dedicated to encouraging Unit 360 members who had recovered from COVID-19 to donate their convalescent plasma. I was elected to the Board in 2021 and helped with the Grand Re-opening of the Bridge Center in July 2021, leading the efforts to ensure the facility was safe from another outbreak of COVID-19. I look forward to continue serving our Unit 360 members as a board member.



### **James "Jim" Hurley**

I learned to play contract bridge as a teenager and continued to play through my college years and for several years thereafter. My first experience playing duplicate bridge was in the Fall of 1992. A lovely lady, Diana Mullaly, invited me to play in an evening game that Clara Remele, one of our unit's first game owners, was directing. That evening playing with Diana, I learned that duplicate bridge was way beyond my understanding of the game of bridge. However, with encouragement from Diana and Betty Kennedy, I decided to move forward and began to play in the novice section. Some months later, both Diana and Betty advised me to start playing with the "big kids" since that was where the real learning would take place. And, they were correct in their assessment. Now 30 years later, I am happy that I "hung in there" and continued to play.

I would like to serve the members of Unit 360 on the Board of Directors. I bring historical knowledge to the board. We have a unique and wonderful situation with our Bridge Center, which we want to maintain. As we move beyond the COVID challenge, we must continue to draw more players--both young and not-so-young--from the Pikes Peak Region into our fold. It would be my honor to help with that challenge.





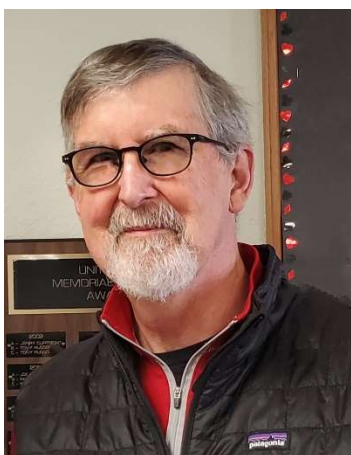
### **Bess Oldham**

I started my career when I was 14 years old and have been a Store Clerk, Secretary, Bookkeeper, Office Manager, President of my local union Chapter, Pueblo County Coordinator for Dick Lamb's campaign for Governor, Word Processing Supervisor at Boys Town Research Center.

I also worked for an Architectural Firm in Omaha, computer support for the Engineering Dept and was then promoted to Systems Analyst.

I retired in 1997 and became a volunteer teacher for AARP; 55 Alive Drivers Training for 15 years, was President of my 18-hole golf league, President of Bowling League, Treasurer of Senior Golf League.

I joined the Pueblo Unit of ACBL in 2000, was a board member and also a director of the Saturday Club. I have always been an active participant and leader in any position I have held. It would be an honor to be a Board Member and to represent the members of the former Pueblo Unit.



### **Bob Wagstaff**

I am a retired psychotherapist. I've lived in Colorado Springs since 1984 coming here from Chicago. I worked at the Myron Stratton Home, at Penrose-St. Francis and in private practice. I learned bridge as an adolescent at the family kitchen table using a Goren system table cloth, played bridge again in graduate school and did not play again for several decades.

I began bridge again along with my wife Laura Lowan about three years ago finding the game more complex and intriguing than the game I had played long ago. When my wife and I resumed learning and playing again, I created three rules which seem to have worked for us. They are: have fun, occasionally make a contract (more than occasionally since we've gotten better) and learn something each time we play. I look forward to

serving the Unit 360 members as a member of the Board.



### **Murlene Williams**

I was born in Texas, raised in New Mexico, and went back to Texas to go to college. A few months after starting my first teaching job in Corpus Christi, I met Roger. We, along with our two kiddos, traveled all over the US and Germany via the Air Force for twenty years.

-During that time, I had many different jobs outside of teaching to include: sports director for the Army, researcher for a government grant, an employment counselor, and a medical library developer.

-After retiring from thirty years of teaching and serving as a school principal, I explored a world outside of work. One experience is at Westside Cares where I have worked with the homeless for the last eighteen years.

-Another experience is finding this Bridge Center. Sharon Kruse and I walked into the club together in 2004 and decided to give duplicate a try. I'm so glad we did! The ever-evolving

knowledge of the game via teachers, mentors, and friends has been invaluable. Better still are the relationships that have developed.

-My thanks go out to the many people who have served on the Board throughout the years. They have kept a steady keel, especially during Covid. If chosen to serve on the Board, I will give a full measure of my energy, abilities, and time to follow in their footsteps.

## **THANK YOU, SARA LYNN THOMAS**

Sara Lynn Thomas has been the Bridge Center Building Manager for the last year. She is resigning at the end of 2022. Thank you, Sara Lynn, for doing this important function.



### **Want a Free Bridge Game?**

**Bring a new non-member to the Bridge Center for a bridge game, introduce him/her to the Director, and the non-member will get to play that game for FREE -- and YOU will TOO!!!!**

### **Do You Have Marketing Experience?**

**The Marketing Committee is asking for volunteers with marketing and advertising experience to help them with promoting bridge playing in the Unit 360 geographical area. Please contact Fred or Bud if you are interested in volunteering.**

### **Exciting Educational Gifts to Unit 360**

The ACBL Educational Foundation (ACBLEF) is a nonprofit foundation that began as a charitable arm of the ACBL in 2017. Its mission is to introduce more people, of all ages and walks of life, to the game of bridge. Robert Todd, the President of the Foundation, is a pro player who is dedicated to bridge education and who is also a very personable guy.

Unit 360 has become a three-time benefactor of the ACBLEF in a very short time. Firstly, our board applied for and received a \$500 grant to help with our bridge education program. Secondly, the Foundation has a \$100,000 grant from ACBL to help get more people to learn bridge. Ann Parker is a bridge teacher participating in a pilot program with Face Book advertising paid for by the ACBLEF to promote beginning bridge lessons. Ann has two current students and ten prospective students who learned of our beginning bridge lessons through FB.

Finally, and perhaps best of all, Ft. Carson was selected as a recipient of a Patty Tucker Learn to Play Bridge in a Day grant. Patty will be coming to teach a 5-hour class at Ft. Carson on February 4<sup>th</sup>. It's free to all participants and includes free follow-on classes as well. It's open to any active duty, retired, and military dependents plus anyone who works on the base (other area bases included). This will help boost participation in our club because our members will be there encouraging the students and supporting their learning journey. We will be letting them know what a wonderful opportunity they will have to continue playing at our club. So, start spreading the word to anyone you know who would qualify to take Patty's free Workshop and free follow-on classes. -Ann Parker

## Lebensohl

by Fran Pilch

What starts with an L and ends with an L and is so ridiculously complicated that only the geniuses among us at the Bridge Center comprehend it? Why yes, it is the Lebensohl Convention. The other day I asked Kay Brock if she liked it and used it, and here is what she said: “I think I get ‘parts’ of it.” Then she and I agreed that playing just ‘parts’ of Lebensohl probably could lead to big trouble. Sort of like a love affair, I think Lebensohl should be an all or nothing kind of thing.

Another more seasoned lady at the Bridge Center offered, “The trouble with Lebensohl is that it doesn’t really seem to make sense.” To which John Dukellis replied, “It makes sense to me.” Of course that was John Dukellis, to whom every weird bridge convention makes sense.

Here was my experience with Lebensohl. I eagerly signed up for John’s 5 lesson series on it. It was a great series, but unfortunately I had to miss the very first lesson – which proved to be a serious handicap. When I tried to do the homework for lesson TWO, I answered only 2 (of 50) questions correctly, and I suspect I only got those right through dumb luck. Clearly I needed to brush up my Lebensohl.

I looked it up on Google and found page after page of incomprehensible gibberish. Some instructions were seven pages long! Single spaced! Most started with, “This is a very complicated convention...” Not encouraging at all!

But I persisted. I studied it and studied it and studied it until finally I thought Professor Higgins would have said, “By George, I think she’s got it!” Then I sat down in an open, with the kind and patient John D as my partner, to demonstrate my newfound prowess.

Sadly, it never came up. But I managed to screw up Two Over One, the Unusual Two No Trump, AND a cue bid. My mind was so full of Lebensohl that I forgot most everything else! Here is my conclusion. The average brain can hold only so many conventions. When you pour in a new one, out goes an old one. Or two. Or three. Like a sluice. Would you agree?

Recently I was feeling pretty full of myself after we had come in third in a 299er. I approached John and asked him when he thought I would be ready to learn Precision. He didn’t say anything right away. Was he thinking in a week, a month, perhaps a year, I wondered? Oddly, he said absolutely nothing. He just turned and walked away. I thought I saw a slight smile on his face.

# Penalty Cards

## A look at the Laws of Bridge by Karen Campbell

There is an 8 of clubs on the table—penalty card? Easy-peasy. Play it at the first legal opportunity.

Not so fast. How did it get there? Was it played in error or did it fall out of a defender's hand?

This 8 of clubs fell to the table as the defender played another card. Because it is not an honor (10 or above) it is a "Minor" penalty card. It does not need to be played at the first legal opportunity. If defender has a club honor it may be played before the 8. If the defender has other "minor" clubs (9 or lower), the card on the table needs to be played before another "spot" card. The defender may lead another suit when the minor penalty card is down. There are no lead restrictions on either defender.

If this 8 of clubs was played in error and replaced by another card, it remains on the table and is now a "Major" penalty card. It must be played at the first legal opportunity, whether in leading, following suit, discarding, or trumping. If the defender has two or more penalty cards that can be legally played, the declarer designates which is to be played. (Law 50 D)

There are also lead restrictions that the declarer can make. The declarer may require the partner of the defender with the penalty card to lead the suit of the penalty card or prohibit the lead of that suit as long as the defender is on lead. If the Declarer exercises either of these options the card is replaced in the defender's hand and is no longer a penalty card. If partner can't comply with the lead restrictions the penalty card is returned to the defender's hand. (Law 50 2a) If the Declarer does not require or prohibit a lead the card remains on the table as a penalty card played at first legal opportunity.

When the defender has two or more penalty cards, they are all "Major" penalty cards. The declarer can select which card is played if there is a choice between the two cards.

Lead restrictions apply. If the declarer requires or forbids the lead of the suit of one of the penalty cards suits, all cards of that suit are returned to the defender's hand.

If the declarer feels they were harmed by the penalty cards the director may adjust the score.  
(Law 49, 50, 51)

This rarely happens but what do you do with a card exposed during the auction? Call the director.

When the director arrives at the table they will have the cards placed face up until the end of the auction. If the card is below a 10 the auction continues. If the card is a 10 or higher the offender's partner must pass at their next turn to call. If two or more cards are exposed the offender's partner must pass at their turn to call.

If the offender becomes the declarer or dummy the cards are returned to the hand. If the offender becomes the defender the card remains on the table as a "Major" penalty card. Lead restrictions apply.  
(Law 24)

Strange Happenings....

Director arrives at the table and there are two dummies down. One for NS and one for EW. If one of the dummies belongs to the declarer, they can pick it up and play continues. The correct dummy displays their hand. The dummy that belongs to the defenders stays on the table as 13 Penalty cards and is played by the declarer!

Karen  
[karenunit360@aol.com](mailto:karenunit360@aol.com)





# BRIDGE CENTER OPEN HOUSE

Where:

Colorado Springs Bridge Center  
901 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street

When:

Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>

Time:

Free Lunch - 12:00 p.m.

Bridge Game - 12:30 p.m.

\$1.00 per person

For more information go to:

[ColoradoSpringsBridge.com](http://ColoradoSpringsBridge.com)

or call:

Fred Cannon 719 213-3302

**Come join  
us and  
bring a  
friend**

---

**FREE BBQ  
Lunch  
Grilled Brats**

---

**Open Bridge  
Game**

---

**Proof of  
Covid  
vaccination  
required**

---







Sun. Nov. 6: U360 Open House at the Bridge Center (lunch & game)

Fri. Nov. 11: - Flight B NAP Finals at the Las Vegas Regional

Sat. Nov. 12: - Flights A & C NAP Finals at the Las Vegas Regional

Sat. Dec. 10: Membership Meeting & game at the Bridge Center

## 2023

Mon. Jan. 30 - Sun. Feb. 5: District 17 STaC  
at District 17 clubs

Wed. Feb. 8 - Sat. Feb. 11: U360 Winter Sectional  
at the Colorado Springs Bridge Center

Sat. Feb. 25 & Sun. Feb. 26: U360 299er Sectional  
at the Colorado Springs Bridge Center

Thurs. April 6 & Fri. April 7: D17 Championship GNT Finals  
online on Bridge Base Online

Thurs. April 27 - Sun. April 30: U360 Spring Sectional  
at the Colorado Springs Bridge Center

Sat. May 26 & Sun. May 27: D17 Flight A, B & C GNT Finals  
at the Denver Regional

Mon. June 5 - Sun. June 11: District 17 STaC  
at District 17 clubs

Thurs. Sept. 14 - Sun. Sept. 17: U360 Fall Sectional  
at the Colorado Springs Bridge Center

Mon. Sept. 18 - Sun. Sept. 24: District 17 STaC  
at District 17 clubs

## U360 Fall Sectional September 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>

There were 169 tables and 171 players (as compared to the 2019 Sectional which had 281 players and 266 tables). A total of 965.62 silver masterpoints were earned.

**Top Masterpoint Winners: 31.50 – Flo Newlin, Aurora**  
**29.03 – Jim Black**

**Gazette Trophy Winner: Mike Hellman**

(U360 member with the most masterpoints in the two 2022 U360 Sectionals)

### Many thanks go to:\*\*

Kay Brock, Partnership Chair  
Karen Campbell, Reservations  
John Dukellis, Board Duplication  
Dawn Neeley, Kitchen Supervisor  
Bud Raabe – Security Officer  
Jeff Rapp - Hospitality Chair & Supplies  
Theresa Venhuis – Director  
Caddies – Corban Black (Thursday) & Tyler Blixt (Sunday)



Also, thank you to the many U360 members who supported the tournament and helped in many ways. With appreciation to all,

Bonnie Bagley, Tournament Chair

\*\* (also, thank you Bonnie. We couldn't do it without you. KB)

## Fall Sectional Winners:

### Thursday Night Swiss Teams Winners:



Douglas Fjare & Kristi Fjare (Estes Park), Greg Smith (Denver), Alan Hierseman (Olathe KS) – Flight A



Rhoda Barr (Breckenridge), Shari Dorton & Christopher Dorton (Silverthorne), Lee Kulbitski – Flight B





Carol Raabe, Bud Raabe, Pamela Bricker (not pictured), Joe Bricker (not pictured) – Flight C

### Friday Winners:



Robert Wingear, Judy Hummel – Open Pairs A



Jeff Rapp, Wilt Cooper (Littleton) – Open Pairs B

Joanne Groome & Karin Vannett (Littleton) (not pictured) – Open Pairs C



Laura Lowan, Kay Brock – morning 299ers D, E & F  
Sarah Howell, Carol Hansen – afternoon 299ers D (not pictured)



Mark Bishop, Bob Wagstaff – afternoon 299ers E, F

### Saturday Winners:



Ying Zhang (Longmont), Rick Clelland (Boulder) – Open Pairs A, B





Shari Dorton & Christopher Dorton (Silverthorne) – Open Pairs C

Jane Vagge, Joan Newhouse (not pictured) – morning 299er D, E & F



Sally Donaldson, Howard Donaldson – afternoon 299ers D



Mark Bishop, Bob Wagstaff – afternoon 299ers E, F

## Sunday Swiss Teams Winners:



Jim Black, Margie Schrader, Chris Champion, Melvin Levine – A (tie)



Cal Newlin, Jr. & Flo Newlin (Denver), Bonnie Smith (Littleton), Don Vancil (Denver) – A (tie)



Greg Smith (Denver), Alan Hierseman (Olathe KS), Kristi Fjare & Douglas Fjare (Estes Park) – B



John Dias, Jean Collins, Ann Parker, Michael Stuart - C



## Notable Achievements



Pat Atkinson & Mark Bishop, 70%, Friday  
299ers, June 17



Tom Goings & Kathy Nimz, 70.83%, Tuesday  
morning August 2



Murlene Williams & Roger Williams, 70.64%,  
Saturday evening, July 2



Linda Nicholos & George Nicholos, 71.13%, Friday  
August 12



Mike Hand & David Wilson, 70.37%, Tuesday  
morning, July 19



Mary Olson & Linda Nicholos, 71.43%, Monday  
August 22





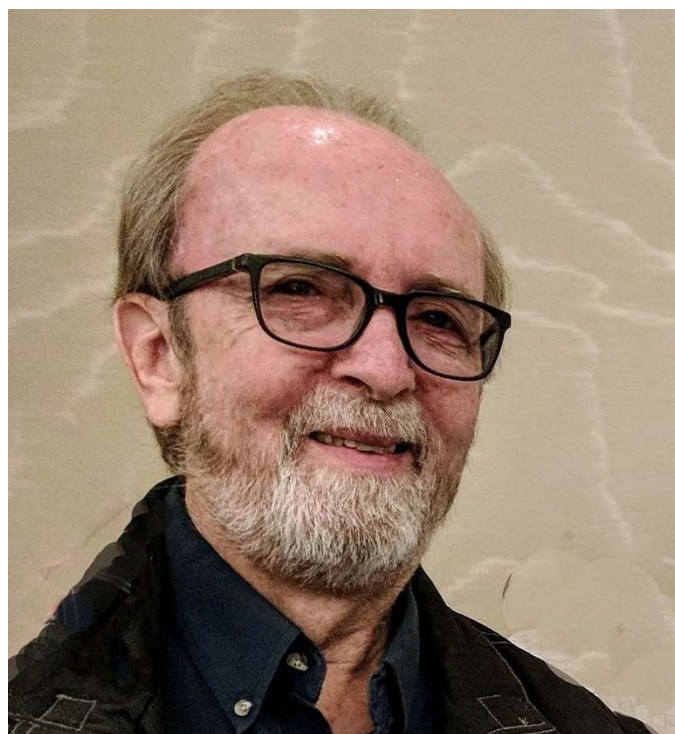
Lisa Sommer & Charles Sommer, 75%, Royal STaC, Monday September 12



Mike Hellman, Ruby Life Master (1500 MPs)



Mark Bishop & Bob Wagstaff, 71.30%, Tuesday 499 Royal STaC, September 13



Bob Sompil, Ruby Life Master (1500 MPs)



Linda Nicholas, Ruby Life Master (1500 MPs)

*The Kibitzer* is published several times a year by the Colorado Springs Bridge Center, Unit 360 of the American Contract Bridge League. Our unit is dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of the game of duplicate bridge in the Pikes Peak and Southeastern Colorado region. News contributions and comments can be emailed to the editor Kay Brock at [kay.brock@yahoo.com](mailto:kay.brock@yahoo.com)





Helen Kosley, Life Master & Bronze Life Master  
(500 MPs)



Nancy Teel, Life Master & Bronze Life Master (500  
MPs)

## **Takeout Doubles**

### By Dennis Goldston

With the exception of the Pass card, the Double card is the most important one in your bidding box. The uses of this card have literally expanded into areas few could have even imagined 40 years ago. As a result, Mike Lawrence was able to publish a 200-page book in 2002, entitled *Double! New Meanings for an Old Bid*. If you're at all typical, you are probably "getting by" with only about 5 or 6 uses, and I'm not suggesting you change. Instead, I want to help you get the best use possible out of the one double that can improve your game the most – the takeout double.

"Wait a minute," you're saying. What's new with takeout doubles? Not much, in terms of theory, is different, but in terms of style, the change is pretty significant. And that change mirrors the changes in bidding across the board; in short, the bridge world has recognized that bridge is a bidder's game. It's easier to play well as a declarer than it is to play well as a defender. Modern bidding favors a "get in quick and get out" style to not only allow you to occasionally "steal a hand," but also to get in the way of the opponents' attempt at finding their ideal spot.

What could possibly go wrong, then? Going down 1 or 2 for -200 or -300 when the opponents only have a part-score is one thing. And that thought brings us to the crux of the matter – evaluating risk versus reward. Almost any bid (or play) offers some reward, but what about the risk? Would it surprise you to learn that the takeout double is usually the least risky bid you can make in a competitive auction? Why? Because the odds of finding an 8-card fit are high, and even very good opponents are reluctant to double you when they sense such a fit. Thus, you should lean toward being aggressive with such hands.

We start, then, with the premise that we want the perfect 4 by 1 shape (stiff in opponent's suit) when making a takeout double. We want that shape so badly, in fact, that we will subtract points (in our calculations) for having anything worse. Put another way, we will need something in the way of compensation (usually, extra HCPs) for falling short of this ideal.

If we have fewer than 4 cards in any unbid suit, we will subtract a point for every deviation. Three-card support earns a minus one score. Having less than 4-card support also penalizes your hand in another way. With the perfect 4 by 1 shape, you get to count two points for your singleton (unless it's an ace); having only 3-card support in an unbid suit will often cause you to have a doubleton in the opponent's suit, and you then lose another point in your calculation. This discussion is a long-winded way (my apologies) of stressing how important shape is in your calculations. NOTE: with only two cards (or less) in an unbid major, a takeout double is a very poor choice, excusable only when the hand is strong enough to double first and then bid a suit.

The basic calculations themselves are fairly simple and straightforward. If partner can respond at the one level, we need 11 working points to double, and we require two additional points for each subsequent level. Some of you will note a slight "complication" here in the sense that, theoretically, I am allowed to double a 1C bid with 11 working points, and I am also allowed to double a 1H bid with 11 working points. But partner has three suits to choose from at the one level when I double 1C while partner has only one suit at the one level when I double 1H. Factoring in fractions is far too complicated, however. Just assume that you need better spot cards to double 1H with only 11 working points.

What are working points? We never count queens or jacks in the opponent's suit, and we only count kings if the king is BEHIND (to the left) the bidder. Aces, obviously, do still count at full value.

Now, let's apply these ideas. In his 1994 book, entitled *The Complete Book on Takeout Doubles*, Mike Lawrence offered the following hand as an absolute minimum for doubling a 1H bid by RHO:

AT94 6 K982 KT94.

Based on the ideas I outlined above, this hand is better than a minimum for me (it adds up to 12 working points). Replace the ace of spades with the king of spades and replace a couple of the 9s with 7s, and you would then have something like my absolute minimum.

Am I disagreeing with Mike Lawrence? Only if the Mike Lawrence of 1994 has not changed his position, but I'd be willing to bet a lot of money that he HAS changed his mind. Think about how bidding has become much more aggressive in the years since then.

How extreme would I be willing to go? Not vulnerable, at matchpoints (Team game), I'd be willing to double 1C on as little as

KT32 KT32 K432 2.

The hand has 11 working points, and partner has three suits to choose from at the one level. I rate the risk of getting doubled in one of a suit here as virtually non-existent. The more realistic danger is that partner might bid 1NT or jump to game; in such a situation, he might be disappointed with my hand, which is why you "inform" your partner of your style. Those risks are more than compensated for, however, by the gains I can achieve by getting into this auction at a very low level and allowing my partner to compete. Give partner the following hand, for example:

xx QJ9xx Ax xxxx.



If I pass, and my LHO bids 1S, my partner can only pass, and we are shut out of this auction. After a T/O double, however, my partner can compete all the way to 3H. On a good day, a 3H contract might even make, but on most days, it will only go down one trick, and it's highly unlikely that the opponents can double you.

You won't see many players at our club doubling with hands like the one above, and, yet, those same players might well bid on a hand like the following:

Q653 Q8 K84 AJ53.

I would **not** double a 1H bid on my right because this hand has only 10 working points (I can't count the queen of hearts, I lose a point for having only 3 diamonds, and I only get 1 point for my doubleton heart). I can compete with marginal hands IF I have the right shape.

Do I ever make "off-shape" doubles? It might appear that I do on some hands, but the answer might simply be that I have the requisite number of working points. The following hand came up at a club game on May 13, 2010. I was sitting East, holding

A9 K7632 74 A843.

With no one vulnerable, North dealt and passed, holding

J863 QJ8 K653 K7.

I opened 1H (Rule of 21  $\frac{1}{2}$  hand; I actually have 22  $\frac{1}{2}$ ).

A good player was sitting South, holding

KT5 AT9 A82 QT62.

Would you pass or bid over 1H? She passed, and we stole the hand after my partner, holding

Q742 54 QJT9 J95,

bid 1S (we played a club partial, down 2, undoubled for -100). N/S can make 2NT or 3S.

Who was at fault? South has a clear T/O double of 1H because she has 11 working points with terrific spot cards. She has 13 HCPs, all working, but she has to subtract a point in spades and diamonds since she has only 3-card support in those suits. I would add back one point for having two aces since I count two aces as being worth 9 HCPs instead of 8 (aces are undervalued in the old Goren point count scheme).

Watch what happens to the auction if South makes a T/O double. West MIGHT still bid 1S, but even if she does, North can double (promising exactly 4 spades and 8-10 points, in case you aren't familiar with that bid). The point is that N/S will now be in the driver's seat, either playing a contract of their own or doubling us off. We will NOT be able to steal this hand. South should double here in spite of her poor shape because she can compensate for that poor shape with extra HCPs and good spots.

Although I will promise you that your results will improve if you adopt this style, the day will come when you go down 2, doubled, for -300 or -500. When that happens, don't call, don't write, don't e-mail, and don't beat me up at the club. Just remember the good days.

-Dennis Goldston