



Palmetto Pre-Empts



South Carolina Unit 160 of the American Contract Bridge League

July to September, 2006

Changes in Rank

Here are major changes in rank since April, 2006. Our congratulations to all listed below:

New Life Master:

Jo Tuft of Easley.
Brent Holcomb, Columbia
Linda Lewis, Anderson
Sylvia White, Columbia

New Bronze Life Master

Shirley Salvo, Kiawah Island
Dorothy Veasey, Aiken
Marilyn Gillespie, John's Island
Brent Holcomb, Columbia
Diana Skinner, Goose Creek
Donna Brinkley, HHI
Bernetha Henry, Hopkins

New Silver Life Master

John Burden, Charleston
Ann Dabbiere, Mount Pleasant
Brenda Gantt, Greenville
Patricia Howard, Greer
Janet LaBelle HHI
G. Mackey, Columbia
Sandy Pierce, Greenville
Ann Rickard, Spartanburg
Virginia Packard, Greenville
Paul Patton, HHI
Mitchell Scott, Beaufort

New Gold Life Master

Lucas Lebioda, Columbia
Joyce Nichols, Charleston

Blythewood's Joyce Hampton Is First In Atlanta Regional

Playing with partner Jerry Helms, Joyce Hampton scored 126.6 points in the annual Labor Day regional in Atlanta. Together they led all players in the master point totals. Their teammates (Steve Weinstein, Paul Soloway, Eric Rodwell, Jeff Meckstroth) were 3rd to 6th only one to two points behind.

This also placed Joyce tops in the 0-1500 point category as well, but **Fred Ferguson** of Hilton Head scored 50 points and was 6th in this category. Congratulations to both players. No other SC players were in top ten lists overall, but our best scoring players were

1. 126 Joyce Hampton, Blythewood
2. 90 Tom Rutledge, Charleston
3. 85 Ellen Allen, Summerville
4. 85 Larry Allen, Summerville

Hawkes – Rahtjen Win In Hunt Valley Regional

Jim Hawkes of Charleston and Anne Rahtjen of Mt. Pleasant traveled to Maryland for a Mid-Atlantic regional and scored 98 and 94 master points respectively. This placed them 3rd and 9th on the overall list of winners. We note Anne was first in the under 1500 category. Congratulations!

Regan and Brown Tops in Charlotte June 8-11, 2006

Several SC players were at or near the top of the masterpoint standing at the recent

Charlotte Sectional. **Richard Brown** (Easley) and **Rich Regan** (Lyman) were the leaders with 23.98 master points. **Ethyl Butler** (Ft Mill) led the SC 229-er Category with 7.57 points.

Palmetto State Sectional Big Success August 3-6, 2006

The annual August sectional in Columbia attracted 227 players who won over 734 masterpoints altogether.

Imp Pair winners were Bob Webb and Spencer Hurd. Open Pair winners were Wane Hollingsworth and Richard Brown (**twice!**), Anne Rahtjen and Jim Hawkes, and Tom Rutledge and Bill Wisdom.

299-er Pair winners: Janice Ripley and Carolyn Swartout, John Sharpe and Leon Price, Karen Coulter and Leck Mason, and June Sutterfield and Iris Holt.

In the Sunday Swiss, it was Greg Roberts, Hugh Brown, Wayne Hollingsworth and Richard Brown who outscored the field with 114 victory points and only one loss. Second, with 102 victory points, with only a last round loss was the team of Jim Hawkes, Anne Rahtjen, Mark and Susanne McLaughlin. Third with also one loss but only 100 victory points was the team of Bob and Pat Webb, Rich Regan and Spencer Hurd. First in B was the team Jacqueline Strong, Robert Woodham, JC Saunders and Herman Scheilblich. First in C: Joan Boos, Annette Barton, Judith Gillespie, Kay Davis.

District 7 STAC Report

The STAC (Sectional Tournament at Clubs) sponsored by our district June 12-18, 2006, was a big success. Outstanding results by SC players include:

- 6. 19.01 **Betty Burt**, N. Myrtle Beach
- 7. 18.89 **Bettye Mitchell**, Charleston

- 10. 18.41 **Jane Gerstenburger**, Aiken

Bettye Mitchell led all 299-er players in the district.

Tournament Calendar

Sep 22-24 Spartanburg
Sep29-Oct 1 Aiken
Oct 5-8 Non LM, Hilton Head
Oct 6-8 Myrtle Beach

Oct 16-22	Columbia Regional
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Oct 27-29	199-er, Charleston
Nov 11-12	Charlotte (N.A.P. Finals)
Nov 16-19	Hilton Head
Nov 29-Dec 3	Atlanta
Dec 11-17	STAC (District 7)

Dec 26 – Jan 1 Charleston Regional

Hendersonville Sectional, June 2006

The Hendersonville Sectional, famed for being one of the nation's largest sectionals (for a three-day event) was another exciting affair this year.

This year there were 364 tables and 501 players. These numbers mean that many players must have played only once or twice and then gone hiking!

Top scorers were:

- 1. 28.75 Richard Potter, NC
- 2. 27.17 **Hugh Brown**, McCormick
- 3. 22.48 **Kurt Gandenburger**, Pendleton
- 8 16.57 **Richard Guarneri**, Charleston
- 16.57 **Jeff Ziemer**, Taylors

In the 299-er Category, the top SC players were

- 2. 8.53 **David Stone**, Seneca
 - 3. 8.33 **James Harris**, Seneca
 - 10. 6.19 **Merle and Sylvia Freeman**, Seneca
-

News: the **Unit 160 web site** is available for announcements and local game results also. Back issues of PP and other info is available at: unit160bridge.org.

Hot Item: As of Sep 6, 2006, **Richard Brown** of Easley is leading the nation in points won at Sectional with 267 silver points

The US Bridge Championships - Part I

The 2006 US Bridge Championships were held in NY in August and many of the matches, including all of the Finals, were shown live on the internet.

Bridge Base showed the view-graph often with several matches simultaneously in fact. One may play bridge with no charge on BBO, and IMP and matchpoint play is available. During the championships, one could log onto BBO.com and watch the matches at home. AT NO COST.

Many of the world's best players were there of course, and the famous Nickell team (Nickell, Freeman, Meckstroth, Rodwell, Soloway, Hamman) was seeded into the Semi-Finals, as was Ekeblad (Russ Ekeblad, Ron Rubin, Fred Gitelman, Eric Greco, Geoff Hampson) Two other teams were seeded into the Round of Eight. There was an "Open" round-robin and the goal was to get into the next round (12 teams in a Round of Sixteen, counting the seeded teams).

Surviving preliminaries and getting into the Round of Sixteen was Charleston's **John Hurd**, now of NYC, playing on the Swartz team (Richie Schwartz, Mike Becker, Joel Wooldridge, John Hurd, Chris Willenkin and Grant Baze).

Their opponents on the Weed (Non-Playing Captain) team were James Cayne, Michael Seamon, Bobby Levin, Steve Weinstein, Benito Garozzo, and Richard Reisig. By the last hand Schwartz was leading, by 4 imps after many ups and downs, when a soon to be famous Last Round Hand occurred.

		North (Hurd)	
		♠ JT63	
		♥ T96	
		♦ AQT8	
		♣ 62	
West (Seamon)		East (Cayne)	
♠ 5		♠ 7	
♥ AQ832		♥ J75	
♦ 76		♦ KJ9432	
♣ AQJ94		♣ T53	
		South (Wooldridge)	
		♠ AKQ9842	
		♥ K4	
		♦ 5	
		♣ K87	
Both Vul		East Dealer	

Cayne	J.W.	Seamon	Hurd
East	South	West	North
P	1S	2H	2S
3D	4S	all pass	

There are many ways to open the South hand, and the 1S bid chosen by Wooldridge allowed a maximum of exploration for slam. Another approach is to open 4S – but the hand is too strong for 4S according to most players. Vulnerable at IMPs, one should distinguish between the given hand and ,say,

1. ♠AQJT876 ♥42 ♦T♣QJ4 or even
2. ♠QJT87632 ♥42 ♦T♣J4

At any rate, Seamon (West) also has a problem. Do you bid a Michaels Cue Bid (2S) or just overcall? He chose to overcall in hearts, leaving clubs for a later surprise. Probably the style of opponents and the partnership agreements (and vulnerability too) have something to say about the choice. A Michaels .cue bid would be appropriate for most partnerships with, say,

1. ♠5 ♥KQ6543 ♦T3 ♣AT985, or
2. ♠5 ♥KJT65 ♦T♣KJT872

so maybe the actual hand is too strong for the cue bid in their partnership.

Seamon led the passive ♦7 (in the suit bid by partner!). Declarer rose with the ace, ruffed a diamond high (stripping the West hand of safe diamond exit cards) led a spade to dummy's jack, and a heart to his king. Seamon won and cashed a heart and exited with a third heart. And 4S was duly defeated when declarer eventually lost two hearts and two clubs. The expert commentators on-line pointed out that if Levin-Weinstein could stop in 3S somehow, then Weed would win the match. The other auction, however, was completely different and explosive:

East	South	West	North
Baze	Levin	C.W.	S.W.
P	4D	4S	5D
P	5S	P	P
P			

Levin opened 4D, a super-transfer to 4S showing a hand too good to open 4S. Called the "Namyats" Convention, which is Stayman spelled backwards, it is still played by many experts who wish to clarify their major suit pre-empts. A bid of 4C would show a great heart pre-empt.

Willenken found a great call, since waiting is not an option. His cue-bid of 4S (South's suit), showed hearts and a minor. Now North (Weinstein) also found a great call, since the partnership is virtually committed to 5S at least. He bid 5D. If South had held say

♠AKQT876 ♥2 ♦K7♣A43

then a slam could be reached.

Now Baze, at the end of a grueling week, having drifted back in this tough match from way down, fell from grace. He could have doubled 5D, letting partner in on the real dangers and on **non-dangers**. There is a tendency not to double such bids hoping the

opponents will climb too high. There are other dangers in keeping secrets in bridge.

Willenken could not lead a diamond – his partner did not bid diamonds as at the other table. Usually, if you defeat contracts in which the opponents may have 15 tricks once they get going, you have to cash winners, and the difficulty is often knowing which winners to cash.

Willenken cashed the ace of clubs.

His partner played the three, showing count (and in their partnership agreements, which might not apply at the 5-level, suggested an “obvious shift”). In hindsight, Baze should prevent partner from cashing another ace because BAZE KNOWS the diamonds are not dangerous. He should get his partner to continue clubs. This may give away one trick (if partner cashes the club king and sets up the queen in declarer’s hand). Note that the auction shows West is 5-5 at least in hearts and clubs. Thus, only one winner can be set up in clubs, even if declarer holds KJx in clubs. But one heart pitch in dummy is not a danger either - Baze knows from the Michaels cue bid that declarer has at most two hearts anyway.

So Baze slyly declined to double the 5D bid, and now missed the opportunity to falsecard partner into making a safe play. Opportunity only knocks twice. Willenken cashed the heart ace. Now 5S was cold. And the Weed team edged ahead at the wire.

The US Bridge Championship – Part II

The Semi-Finals (120 board matches) included seeded into it the Nickell team (Nick Nickel, Richard Freeman, Jeff Meckstroth, Eric Rodwell, Paul Soloway, Bob Hamman) and the Ekeblad team (Russ Ekeblad, Ron Rubin, Fred Gitelman, Eric Greco, Geoff Hampson).

Qualifying also were the Jacobs team, seeded into the Round of Eight. There they beat Fout (John Fout, Jeff Roman, William Ehlers, John Rengstorff). Next they beat Weed (240-169), making it to the last two teams to qualify for the Semi-Finals, where they played Nickell. Meltzer who had edged Robinson by 193-191 in the previous round had to play Ekeblad.

Ekeblad led Meltzer 66 to 43 after 30 boards but Meltzer crept back to down only 15 imps with 45 boards to go, 156 to 141. But the next 15 hands went 57 to 3 for Ekeblad, who were able to coast to a 281 to 188 victory.

It looked like the same story in the other semi-final as Jacobs leapt ahead of Nickell 64 to 13 in the first 15 boards. With 15 hands to go, Nickell was down 59 imps. They “won” the last 15 board session 62-13 so trailed by only 10 – but the match was over. It would be Jacobs versus Ekeblad in the finals.

The quarter by quarter (or eighth by eighth, actually) scores in the Finals were:

Ekeblad	43	15	0	29	44	32	30	20	Tot	213
Jacobs	8	40	33	31	17	23	9	57	Tot	218

Down 32 imps, 193 to 161, with only 15 hands to go, Jacobs roared back 57 to 20 and won by 218 to 213. Here again, the last four hands were a fitting conclusion to a great battle by both teams. We show the match with four hands to go, 210 to 188, Ekeblad leading.

On Hand 117, a slam auction goes awry for Greco-Hampson.

East: ♠---, ♥KQJ652, ♦AJ32, ♣A32

West: ♠AKT72, ♥A, ♦K987, ♣J95

Observe that 6D (or 6H) only requires diamonds splitting 3-2, so the slam is a good percentage action at IMPs. Weinstein – Garner used a little known gadget to handle the East hand.

Jacobs Team		Ekeblad Team	
East	West	East	West
Garner	Weinstein	Hampson	Greco
1H	1S	1C*	1S*
2C*	2D**	2H	2NT
3D^	4D^^	3H	4C
4H	4NT	4H	P
5H	6D		

Garner’s 2C bid is an artificial bid showing a variety of hands and the 2D response guaranteed 8+ points. The 3D call said 16+ points, 5 hearts, 4 diamonds, not 3 spades. Not bad for one bid. 4d was alerted, evidently a slam try, and 4H is probably another push for hearts. Weinstein put it in slam.

Hampson’s 3H rebid (after his big club opening) made things difficult. Maybe he should show his second suit immediately. If a 3D bid doesn’t strike gold in partner’s hand, there is time to bid hearts again later.

Greco’s 4C (cheapest cue bid) did not make it easier for Hampson but we can see no reason for not trying 4D here. Greco could then bid 6D (and if Hampson’s diamonds were not a true suit, he could correct to 6H or 6NT). Over 4H, I think Greco should bid 5D, saving the day. Greco has a massive hand opposite a strong club opening.

Nine imps were lost here, lowering Ekeblad’s lead to 13 imps.

On the next hand (see next page) two different auction led to a dramatic result:

East	South	West	North
1C	1S	2H*	P
3D	P	3NT	all pass

Here the 2H bid was a system bid (apparently asking about hearts) and 3D must have showed good enough hearts. After the inevitable spade lead, West came to nine top tricks, plus 600. At the other table, the initial bids were different, but had the same essential meaning.

Having missed a good slam, Greco-Hampson bid a poor one.

		North (Gitelman) (Ekeblad)	
		♠ 9765	
		♥ 654	
		♦ Q753	
		♣ T9	
West (Weinstein)		East (Garner) Jacobs	
♠ K2		♠ T4	
♥ 87		♥ AQ92	
♦ AJT92		♦ K4	
♣ AQJ2		♣ K6543	
		South (Moss)	
		♠ AQJ83	
		♥ KJT3	
		♦ 86	
		♣ 87	
Vul EW		Board 118 East Dealer	

Hampson	Zia	Greco	Rosenberg
East	South	West	North
1D*	1S	2S**	Dbl
5C	P	6C	all Pass

The so-so slam is down one since the heart finesse (into the overcaller) loses. The 1D was a precision-like bid, and 2S was artificial. Greco took a shot at raising to slam having extras for his 2S bid (evidently the 2S bid denied a 4-card holding in hearts). Since a 2C opening would show a 6-card or longer suit, Greco must have pictured a hand in East with better diamonds or better shape, say,

1. ♠xx ♥Axx ♦KQx♣Kxxxx

Or even 2. ♠x ♥Ax ♦KQxx ♣Kxxxx

Plus 12 Imps, Jacobs down by 1. An extra undertrick in 4H at each table gave Ekeblad back Imps, to lead by four Imps going into the last hand.

		North (Gitelman) (Ekeblad)	
		♠ T5	
		♥ AKT9754	
		♦ 753	
		♣ 9	
West (Weinstein)		East (Garner) Jacobs	
♠ K9753		♠ AQJ82	
♥ 863		♥ ----	
♦ QJ6		♦ KT84	
♣ A2		♣ QJ73	
		South (Moss)	
		♠ 4	
		♥ QJ2	
		♦ A92	
		♣ KT8654	
Vul - None		Board 120 West Dealer	

West	North	East	South
P	3H	Dbl	4H
4S	P	P	5H
Dbl	P	5S	all pass

The barrage of bids by NS made it hard for EW to realize that their hands meshed perfectly for a slam, and one feels that NS did all they could do. Also, another push and the opponents may sniff closer to the slam! And 6H would seem to be -500 against normal defense (spade ace, diamond shift). NS was probably happy with the result. But Zia and Rosenberg can make magic happen

West	North	East	South
Greco	M.R.	Hampson	Zia
P	2H*	2S	3S
4H	P	4S	5H
5S	6H	P	P
Dbl	P	P	P

The 2H opening was a “good” weak two bid).

Note that a push on the hand (or a gain) wins for Ekeblad. After Greco’s 5S bid, it seemed all was over. No, Rosenberg is thinking. An electronic gasp must have occurred on the internet when Michael Rosenberg bid 6H. The ace of spades lead followed by a diamond shift beats 6H by 500 and gains an imp vs 480 at the other table. And a 6S bid also wins for Ekeblad.

Hampson chose to pass, echoing the apparent judgment of all eight players. Unfortunately for Ekeblad, however, Hampson chose to lead the club queen from his sequence. Now Rosenberg was in control. He ducked the queen in dummy, a great play. Hampson cashed a spade and shifted to a diamond but it was too late. Rosenberg won this with dummy’s ace and ruffed a club in hand, dropping Greco’s ace. He led the ace of hearts and a second heart to dummy. Finally, he ruffed one more club, setting up the suit for diamond pitches. He led a third heart to dummy and could claim the rest for down one, gaining 9 Imps for his team.

Jacobs won at the wire by five Imps, coming back from down 22 with four hands to go.

Morganton, NC, Summer Sizzler Sectional Draws SC Crowd, July 28-30

The Latest Sectional at Morganton, NC, drew a sizeable SC crowd. There were 277 tables in play and the hospitality was outstanding- food and master points were given away in abundance. **Mark and Suzanne McLaughlin** of Charleston were the top master point winners with just over 19 each. **Hugh Brown** of McCormick and partner **Richard Brown** (no relation) of Easley were 5th and 6th overall with 16.42 points. **Caren Von Hippel** and **Bill Walker** of Salem, SC, were tied for second in the 299-er Category with 9.83 points. **Jo**

Remmey of Tega Cay, SC, had 8.06 points.
Congratulations to all.

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