

BRIGHT LEAF ALERT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF UNIT 191

SEPTEMBER 2025

President's Note.....

This is a busy month for Unit 191. There are several big events coming up! Read this issue of the Alert carefully for many details. Here are the highlights!

- *Sept 1st – potluck lunch – be sure to RSVP to Henry to reserve your spot.
- *Sept 9th and 23th – 2025-26 Mentoring program begins. Contact Michael (mlavine@umass.edu) to join.
- *Sept 18th – New limited masterpoints game (0-750) at 9:30am.
- *Sept 20th - NAP District Finals in Charlotte (see article in this edition of Alert for details).
- *Sept 25th-28th – Raleigh Sectional Tournament – Support our neighbors and play as they support our tournaments!
- *Check the emailed calendar each week for updates.

I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer. Our game attendance seemed to be higher despite the typical summer travel season. We hope to see you all in a game soon! May all your finesses work perfectly this month!

Deanna

Calling all Volunteers!

It is time to plan for our Fall Sectional

Dates: November 13-16!

Many of you told us over the summer that you were disappointed about the July cancellation and that you would be happy to help in November. Now is the time to make that commitment. We do not want to cancel again! Here is what we need:

We need people to plan and implement the Sunday Swiss Lunch

- *Selling lunch tickets before and between games on Friday and Saturday.
- *Ordering supplies
- *Picking up food Sunday morning or making food items depending on menu decisions - TBA
- *Assisting with lunch buffet set up and clean up.

We need 2 Greeters who will direct people arriving at the venue each day giving directions for parking and entrance to venue. Greeters will stand outside (2 doors opposite sides of building) to guide players inside from 9-9:50am. (Continued)

We need guaranteed partners for all pairs games (Open and Limited games) and volunteers who might fill out a team game on Thursday night or Sunday. Ann Fisher (afisher9tk@gmail.com) is the partnership chair once again. If you need a partner, Ann is wonderful at finding people. Just email her!

We need coolers filled with ice and ice brought every day as we do not have a refrigerator on site.

As usual we need treats and food items to share! Our players love to eat! Please bring something or donate \$\$ so we can have delicious goodies each day.

We need hot breakfast items delivered to hospitality each morning – Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Quiche or Egg Casserole or similar items. Please inform Mary Newman (mnewman0529@gmail.com) or Ira Mueller (ira.d.mueller@gmail.com) if you can help!

Set up help on Thursday afternoon around 4pm.
You might be asked to move chairs/tables a bit and help set up game equipment on tables etc.

Tear down help and clean up on Sunday after Swiss game ends.

Clean up and hospitality help each day!
And more...

If you are willing to help us show your commitment by sending me an email to deanna@elarus.com and I will record your offer. Doing so, will reduce the stress associated with planning this event on the Board and lower my blood pressure! Thank you for stepping up to make this a terrific event!

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Activity in Unit 191 from August 1 through August 31

465 members

We welcome new member:

Plato Deliyannis

And a transfer to our unit:

Johara Nour

The following members have attained a new ranking:

Junior Master

Plato Deliyannis

Thomas Janke

Club Master

John Boyer III

Bill Chappell

Regional Master

Bayard Atwood

Ruby Life Master

John Sommer



North American Pairs 2025-2026

By Marc Goldberg

For the past three months, bridge clubs across the country and online have been running NAP Qualifying games. What does that mean? NAP stands for North American Pairs, and it is an annual ACBL bridge competition conducted each year at the Spring NABC (St. Louis, MO in 2026).

To play in the Spring NABC NAP game, a player must first qualify in their District (Unit 191 is in District 7). District 7 encompasses North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and the eastern portion of Tennessee. To play in the District NAP game, a player must first qualify in their club. That is why our clubs have been running NAP Qualifier games- to give players a chance to qualify. In Unit 191, **281** of our members have qualified to play in the District 7 NAP game. If you want to know if you have qualified, click on this link and scroll down to the Unit 191 section. (or check the list at the end of this article.)

https://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/NAP_Qualifiers/NAP_D7.htm

There are four categories within the NAP competition. Flight C is for non-life master players having less than 750 MP. Flight B is for players with less than 3000 MP. Flight A is for players with less than 6000 MP. And the Championship flight is for open players. For the purposes of NAP Flight eligibility, ACBL uses the June masterpoint cycle, which runs on May 6, 2025. Points won after the cycle cutoff do not affect flight eligibility. So what matters is how many points you had on that date.

District 7 will be holding its District NAP game in Charlotte on September 20-21. Flights A and C will be held on Saturday, September 20th, and Flight B and Championship will be held on Sunday, September 21st. The games will be regionally rated—a morning and an afternoon session, with Gold points awarded. Refer to the NAP flyer accompanying this article.

*Charlotte is not “too far.” You can make the trip and play all in one day, or you can plan to stay over.

*Playing in the District NAP game is a great experience. You play in a Flight against others having your experience level. You will meet other players from our District, many of whom will become friends who you will see at other events.

*You will have the opportunity to win Gold masterpoints.

* It is very possible that you will finish in the top three or four and head to an NABC. Last year, **Ian Cloudsdale** and I attended the District 7 Flight B competition, and we finished in second place. As advertised, we represented District 7 at the Spring NABC in Memphis, and yes, the District wrote us a check for \$900 to cover our expenses. Playing against the top players in our Flight from Districts around the country was a fun and valuable experience.

So call your favorite partner and make plans to go to Charlotte for the District 7 NAP games. Having played bridge against many of our Unit qualifiers, I can tell you this. You are as good as the competition that you will face, so I strongly encourage you to give it a try. You may recall that Ian wrote about his experience in the June Alert. You can access his article here.

https://www.bridgewebs.com/unit191brightleaf/BL_Alert_2025-06.pdf



Modern Bridge Bidding III

The Next Step!

❖ **Slam Bidding Tools**

❖ **Opening & Responding to 2♣**

In this four Friday class, you will learn:

- What tools you need to explore a notrump slam.
- What tools you need to explore a suit slam.
- When to open and how to respond to a strong and artificial two clubs.

September 12 – October 3
9:30 - Noon

\$125

<https://forms.gle/EHbCTYKuRLYsxex16>

Please go to the above website and register

SHOULD WE LISTEN TO WHAT RANDY SAYS

By Kay Joyce

In the middle 1970s, I played a little bridge with Randy's first wife. We were friends in a couples group, and, truth be told, no one much wanted to play with either one of us. I just hated it when she would start a discussion of a hand with "Randy says." I had to listen to that a lot. Times change, and I really had to hear it firsthand.

Turns out, it was excellent advice. Pardon me while I brag that Randy really does read and study bridge more (even now!) than most of us. As we played more difficult opposition over the years, I realized that they thought, "Randy really does know the right stuff."



That brings me to the topic of this article: Jacoby 2NT. Incidentally, the article will reinforce some of the Keycard Blackwood series that has just run in the Alert.

Many times over the years, we have seen our fellow competitors use Jacoby 2NT incorrectly, not at all, without the good result the convention deserved, and without really knowing all the rudiments of playing it. To state the rudiments, here we go.

Jacoby 2Nt is the convention that became popular in the 60's-70's and was named for the one of the Jacobys of Texas. Its purpose was to show a major suit raise, with 4+ trumps and the points of an opening bid or more. It caught on like wildfire, perhaps because, one of the responses to it was show shortness, after responder bid it, and people liked that. It was helpful in bidding slams!

After usage for a few years, the consensus of how to respond to Jacoby 2NT became:

- 1. Bid a singleton or a void at the 3 level**
- 2. Bid a second (good) 5-card suit at the 4 level**
- 3. Bid 4 of the agreed upon major at the 4 level with a minimum hand and none of the above**
- 4. Bid 3 of the agreed upon major with extra values and none of the above.**

Here it gets murky and there is little consensus...

The murky part is some partnerships use 3M to show 15-17 and 3NT to show 18+ or some variation. Most people don't go that far.

(continued)

A good example hand for using Jacoby 2Nt came up at the Richmond regional this past May:

OPENER: KJ, KQ9783, Q542, J

RESPONDER: AT52, AJ842, A, 875

Randy says that you should always bid Jacoby 2NT when you have it. Think about this for a minute.

Nothing else is tempting here; why look for a spade fit when you already know you have a 5-5 heart fit? Often you have a 5+ card suit that you can make a 2/1 on. This deters people because they say they can have a more natural, better auction. They like getting the message out there: I have an opening bid and we're going to game! Jacoby2NT does the same: I have an opening bid and we're going to game!

When you don't make your Jacoby 2NT bid, partner doesn't know you have it---I think that's why Randy says, bid it. Don't keep secrets from partner; he's on your side.

On the hand in question, you might say, "But I could make a splinter bid of 4D." Noooo, not with a singleton honor (the experts agree) and not with this many controls. What can partner have to get excited about when you have 3 aces?

Do what Randy says and bid 2NT! Opener just barely had an opening bid. He might be inclined to show a minimum with a 4H bid, but that would be doing an injustice to the convention and its potential to help you! Opener must rebid 3 Clubs, singleton club.

Well, that's music to responder's ears! Look at all those controls and 875 of clubs. This is hand Mr. Jacoby was thinking of. You need to explore a bit, but look what you can find out with our buddy Keycard...

Four NT asks partner, and he responds with 5C (1 KC). Well, you weren't expecting much, and you aren't really too worried about the Heart queen with ten hearts, but let's carry on. Responder (always the asker) now asks about the queen of

hearts with the next step, 5D. Opener's got to 'fess up, he has the queen of hearts and the king of spades, so he responds 5S. Now, it looks like to Responder that they might lose a club and a spade, but they are too high to stop, so he bids 6H. When you look at the two hands together, you can see that it is a perfect fit!

Jacoby 2Nt allows you to bid slams like this with 25 highs, rather than 32 or 33. So, let it work for you. Randy says use it, and use it correctly so it can do its job.

The Alert is the official newsletter of Unit 191. Our unit is one of the few units who continue to publish a monthly newsletter. It doesn't happen without the help of so many—**Deanna**, our unit president, writes a message each month; **Randy and Kay Joyce** contribute articles regularly; board members **Ian Cloudsdale, Michael Lavine, and Bill Ingram** write articles telling us what is going on with the board; and **Marc Goldberg** contributes articles about bridge activities and experiences. If you have ideas or suggestions about what you would like to see more articles about, please contact me at barbaramartin-duke@gmail.com

Barbara Martin, Editor

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

JOANNA KARWOWSKA

“Hugon, our son and I emigrated to the USA in 1981. We settled in Bloomington, Indiana. In Poland, I earned a degree in physics but decided to change careers and pursued a degree in computer science at Indiana University. We moved to Chapel Hill in 1984. I got a job in Research Triangle Park and worked there for two different companies until my retirement.

Between my work responsibilities, family commitments here and in Poland, I did not have much time for leisure activities. However, I always enjoyed theater and had a weakness for mystery novels and movies.

After retirement, I sought out new interests and began learning Spanish (which is still an ongoing process). I also started traveling to South America. I’ve visited all the Spanish-speaking countries there except Venezuela and Paraguay. As if that wasn’t enough, I decided to take up bridge. And what a fun ride it has been! I am amazed by the countless mistakes I can make. I feel constantly challenged and humbled, but despite—or perhaps because of that, I enjoy the game immensely.

I definitely prefer playing in person over online, as the social aspect of bridge is as important to me as the game itself.”



Calling All Bridge Mentors and Mentees

Dear Bridge Players,

We are writing to recruit you into Unit 191's mentoring program for the 2025/26 year. We will have a program similar to that in 2024/25, with one big addition, an online game, explained below.

For face-to-face (F2F) games we will again run a two-tiered program.

TIER I — 250 mp mentees; 500 mp mentors

Tier I is to help less experienced players develop their game. You can be a Tier I mentee if you have fewer than 250 masterpoints (mp). You can be a Tier I mentor if you have fewer than 500 mp. Tier I games will be held at Triangle Bridge Academy (TBA) on the fourth Tuesday of each month, starting on September 23. Play will start at 10:00 AM, preceded by an optional lesson from 9:15 to 9:45. (That's different from last year's time.) Each pair will consist of one mentor and one mentee.

TIER II — unlimited masterpoints

Tier II is to help more experienced players develop their game. You can be a Tier II mentee with any number of mp. However, if you have fewer than 500 mp then we ask that you also volunteer to be a Tier I mentor. When we match Tier II mentees with mentors we will give priority to mentees who are also Tier I mentors. You can be a Tier II mentor if you think you are qualified and want to give back to the game. Tier II games will be held at TBA on the second Tuesday of each month, starting on September 9. Play will start at 10:00 AM, preceded by an optional lesson from 9:15 to 9:45. Each pair will consist of one mentor and one mentee.

(continued)

Online mentoring game — 500 mp limit

We hope to recruit enough players to hold an online mentoring game at 7:00 PM on BBO the third Wednesday of each month beginning with September 17. Both Tier I and Tier II mentees are welcome, as well as players who do not attend the face-to-face mentoring games. Each pair will consist of two mentees (we can help you form partnerships) who will be kibitzed by a mentor. The mentor will not be able to comment during the game but will review the hands afterward and subsequently write comments to both mentees.

Fees

The fee for each face-to-face game is \$12 per player. Once again, Unit 191 will subsidize \$5 of the fee for mentors who are playing with mentees from the unit. We encourage mentees to pay their mentors' fees. The fee for the online game will be \$8 per player, with \$5 for administration and \$3 going to a charity of our choice. Since mentors are not playing there is no need for a subsidy.

Sign up now

Now is the time to sign up. Please [email Michael Lavine](#) and say which role or roles you want: mentor or mentee; Tier I or Tier II. Also tell us whether you can play in the online game. We hope that all Unit 191 members will agree to serve as mentors (where appropriate) even if it is only occasionally. Please email Michael and he will add you to the list of substitute mentors if you cannot join the regular program. Also let him know if you are willing to serve as a mentor for the online game by kibitzing and writing comments.

Remember: the first games will be Tuesday, Sept. 9 for Tier II, Wednesday, Sept. 17 for online, and Tuesday Sept. 23 for Tier I.



Bright Leaf Unit 191's Fall Sectional

new location

November 13- 16, 2025

Governor's Village,
40115 Moring (upstairs, elevator available)
Chapel Hill, NC 27517,

THURSDAY, November 13
7 PM STRATIFIED SWISS TEAMS

FRIDAY, November 14
10 AM & 2:30 PM * STRATIFIED OPEN & 749'ER
10 AM 499'er PAIRS

SATURDAY, November 15
10 AM & 2:30 PM* STRATIFIED OPEN & 749'ER PAIRS
10 AM 499'er PAIRS

SUNDAY, November 16
10 AM & TBD STRATIFIED OPEN AND 749'ER SWISS TEAMS
PLAY THROUGH WITH LUNCH AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE
10 AM 499'er SINGLE SESSION SWISS TEAM GAME

*FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
2:30 PM GAMES ARE
REGIONALLY RATED FOR
MORE SILVER POINTS!

**Stratification & bracketing for all
games by average pair/team
masterpoints.**

Open Stratification:
0-1500, 1500 - 3500, 3500+

499'er Stratification
0-199, 200 - 299, 300- 499

749'er Stratification:
0-300, 300-500, 500-750

ENTRY FEE: \$14/PLAYER/GAME
0-20 MP play for free!

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NEARBY LODGING
COURTYARD MARRIOTT CHAPEL HILL
100 MARRIOTT WAY, Chapel HILL, NC 27517
919-883-0700
There is no group rate.

SUMMARY OF 2025 UNIT 191

There were 108 responses to the survey representing a good sample of the active players in our unit. Many thanks to all who took the time to give thoughtful answers to our questions! The Board feels it is able to glean some very interesting and beneficial information from the answers and suggestions we received.

One third of our survey respondents have 100-700 Master Points, another third have 701-2000 MPs with 14% having less than 100 and 20% having more than 2000. Forty-six percent consider themselves intermediate players, 17 percent feel they are advancing intermediate players, 25% are advanced players, and 12 percent describe themselves as advancing beginner players.

Weekly Play

The vast majority of the respondents have been members of the ACBL and/or Unit 191 between more than ten years. Most play in face-to-face games on average 1-3 times per week and once a week in a social game. Roughly 60% play online games only 0-2 times per week.

Preferences for New Games

Less than 25% of the respondents answered the questions about Saturday and limited games, but the answers do reveal a strong preference for: a weekly Saturday morning face-to-face game, a monthly Saturday afternoon face-to-face game, and a limited game evenly divided between morning and afternoon (little interest in an evening game).

Sectional Tournaments

Twenty-nine percent of respondents said they do not participate in sectional tournaments.

Forty-one percent answered that they play in .5-2 tournaments annually.

Nineteen percent attend 2.5-4 tournaments.

The remainder are true tournament goers and attend 5-12 tournaments a year!!

When asked how many of the **Durham** tournaments would they attend, most answered one or two tournaments, 29% answered three, and 27% said they would not attend any.

Regional Tournaments

Forty-five percent answered that they do not attend regional tournaments annually.

Forty-four percent attend up to three regional tournaments.

The remaining 11% love to play bridge (and to travel?) and attend up to eight regionals a year!

Few have played in National Tournaments annually; only 13% reported having done so.

Unit Website: <https://bridgewebs.com/unit191brightleaf/>

Eight-nine percent answered that they have been to the unit website, most often to read the Alert, for information about face-to-face games and tournaments, and to look up members' phone numbers and/or email addresses.

The suggestion most often made was for the **website to somehow assist in finding partners!!!** Some would like to see a **"Tips & Tricks"** feature or a discussion of interesting hands. Some requested information that is answered on the site already, so a **"how-to-find"** or a FAQ section might help people if they have trouble navigating the site. There seems to be little time during games, both open and mentor-mentee to discuss hands. A request was made for a section to be added to the website where a **question about a specific hand** could be sent in, and one or more of the mentors would respond.

Board Support

To reiterate: the overwhelming request here was to implement an easy way to find partners via the website to include descriptions of their level of experience and their bidding system.

The next most requested items under Board Support were to hold mini-lessons and/or workshops before the face-to-face games and to aggressively sell the mentor-mentee program and limited games in order to get more people in the game.

General Suggestions

Mentor-Mentee should each pay \$10 not have mentee pay for both.

Have better refreshments; food attracts players

More Special Events; fun awards

Bring a Newcomer: both get a free play.

We are grateful to the many people who responded to this survey and especially to those that said they will volunteer to help with our local sectional tournaments. As you can imagine, now that we no longer have the Triangle Bridge Academy as the host site, it will take a great deal more effort to make our tournaments as fun as they are known for and as successful as they are. Please, please answer the call for volunteers for our November 13-16 tournament when it comes.

Unit 191 Response to Survey

Overall, given the demographics of our Unit membership, it is clear that there is a strong need for a limited game in our Unit, for a Saturday game and for a method to find partners. We are working on that.

In the coming months, the Board is hoping to develop an online partner search process where people can visit a list of available partners to contact regarding a certain date. We are considering something like a Google List-serv. If anyone is interested in helping with this, please contact a board member.

We have also implemented a limited (0-750) masterpoint game (currently on the morning of the third Thursday of the month). We would love to expand that to more than once a month but we need attendance to pick up before we can do that. We are looking into a Saturday morning game as well.

Just know that the Board of Directors hears you and we are trying to respond accordingly. So if you can help with this, please contact a Board member. All hands on deck to support our bridge community!

SEPTEMBER 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6
9-11 am Online Play & Learn (RSVP) 12:30 PM Potluck and Unit Championship Game (RSVP) 6:30-8:30 Social Bridge	1:00-4:00 PM Nuplicate Barometer	10:00 AM – Noon Newcomers Nuplicate 12:30 PM International Fund Open Game	Noon ABA game Private	12:30 PM Championship Open Game	TBA Closed
8	9	10	11	12	13
9-11 am Online Play & Learn (RSVP) 12:30 PM Club Championship Open Game 6:30-8:30 Social Bridge	9:15 AM Tier II MM Lesson (optional) 10:00 AM Tier II MM Game 1:00-4:00 PM Nuplicate Barometer	10:00 AM – Noon Newcomers Barometer 12:30 PM International Fund Open Game	Noon ABA game Private	9:30-Noon Slam Bidding class 12:30 PM International Fund Open Game	TBA Closed
15	16	17	18	19	20
9-11 am Online Play & Learn (RSVP) 12:30 PM International Fund Open Game 6:30 Social Bridge	1:00-4:00 PM Nuplicate Barometer	10:00 AM – Noon Newcomers Nuplicate 12:30 PM Club Championship Open Game 7:00 PM BBO Online Game (further details to come)	9:30 AM Limited Game (0-750 MPS) 18 boards Noon ABA game Private	9:30-Noon Slam Bidding class 12:30 PM Unit Championship Game	10:00 AM 8 Is Enough Swiss Teams
22	23	24	25	26	27
9-11 am Online Play & Learn (RSVP) 12:30 PM International Fund Open Game 6:30-8:3 Social Bridge	9:15 AM Tier I MM Lesson (optional) 10:00 AM Tier I MM Game 1:00-4:00 PM Nuplicate Barometer	10:00 AM – Noon Newcomers Barometer 12:30 PM International Fund Open Game	Noon ABA game Private	TBA Closed (Raleigh Sectional)	TBA Closed
29	30				