



American Contract
Bridge League

Unit 174 Newsletter July 2018



This month's newsletter includes the sections listed below. Click a link to jump to the corresponding section. If your browser does not support these links, scroll down to find a specific section. Note that the club names are now links to the club websites.

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Please visit the Unit 174 Website (www.acblunit174.org) to view updated information about the activities in our Unit and at our Clubs.

President's Message



I am just back from a week stay on Pensacola Beach with 90+ of my favorite cuzins. I was off the grid for 9 days – no email, social media, facebook or phone – it was great to be able to spend time solely devoted to family and fun. This is the reason why the newsletter is delayed and my apologies to the members. But it was time well spent and I highly recommend if you have never been to the Florida/Alabama gulf coast drive over and spend a day or two enjoying the beautiful beaches.



During the week I began thinking about all the things that go into making a big group happen - the planning, volunteering, playing, patience exhibited, cooperation, reuniting and catching up, conversation, and clean-up and how that is so similar to our Unit 174 happenings. All of the unsung volunteers who help make this unit go – there are too many of you to list – but I wanted to let all of you know that your efforts are appreciated and this Unit wouldn't be the best Unit in the country if it wasn't for your help. Thank you all for everything you do and looking forward to seeing all at the August Sectional!

Ken Hudson, President, Unit 174

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Board Business

The Board is hard at work with many upcoming activities, including planning our next few tournaments:

- ◆ **David Henke** and **Betty Starzec** are finishing up the work on the [August sectional](#), which is just around the corner.
- ◆ **Nancy Guthrie** and **Jack LaVigne** are planning the Fall sectional, November 16-18, at the Westchase Marriott.
- ◆ **Lauri Laufman** has worked long and hard to get the [2019 Lone Star Regional](#) schedule put together and approved. We believe that it is the best schedule we have ever had and you will find it outstanding. Check out the [flyer](#) on the [Unit 174 Website](#).

We are working on improving the physical accommodations in our tournaments. Our experiment with switching the playing rooms where the team and pairs games are played was a success and we will continue this layout for our sectional tournaments.

You will see new and improved guide cards at our [August sectional](#) and we are investigating and hope to have new stanchions and timers for our Fall Sectional.

The Board continues to solicit ways to improve how we serve our members – whether it is in our tournaments, new member recruitment or any of the other areas the Board supports. So please let us know what we can do for you to improve your bridge-playing experience.



New Members and Rank Advancements

ACBL notifies us each month about the members new to our Unit and about those who advanced a rank as of the 6th day of the previous month. Below are listed those players who either joined our unit or advanced a rank.

NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome the following players to our unit: Adein Alvarez, Anto S Antony, Antonio F Arguelles, Alexander H Bailey, Ariel S Belmarez, Ben H Bowers, Adrian J Castillo, Gaetano Dona, David Feuerbacher, Paddy R Fiorino, Jack Thomas Foltyn, Marcus S Gafka, Ethan B Glaze, Alamin M Harmouch, Joshua J Juang, Philip F Kang, Santosh Kedia, Aruna Kedia, Casey P Keough, Ronell Kriel, Karel Kriel, Joseph R Lin, Ryan A Lin, Michael Linkins, Barbara A Matuszak, Jonathan Medina, Abigail B Mendyk, Preston C Mills, Roslyn Millstein, Martha Murphy, Husam M Oweik, Ronald K Perkowski, Deckotta A Pham, Helen Roemisch, Nila S Saminathan, Nathan R Samuell, Ismael A Shafi, Janet A Thies, Kaden T Tran, Judy F Treadaway, Patrick B Umali, Evan D Vu, Michael M Yo.

RANK ADVANCEMENTS

Listed below are the new Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL for March, 2018. An explanation of ranks may be found at www.acbl.org.

Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

Mike Bowman, Nancy Bowman, Barbara Craven, Diane H Egner, Ricky Haikin, Mary Matson, Kathleen F McDougall, Jorge L Rodriguez, Dean D Saunders.

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Mary Ann Glunz, Malcolm Goodall, W Clarke Gormley, Gail A Hoffman, William C McCain Jr, David E Vaughn.

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Robert Boshara, Kathy F Dickson, Jean J Jardine, Philip E Macdonald, Carol D McCaffrey, Jennifer A Reichek.

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Gregory Andrews, David A Badertscher, James Bettis, Dena H Bright, Daryl L Dunn, Barbara N Graham, Gregory May, Dottie M Steverson, Cecilia Tse.



NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Ian W Fetterley, Ronnie T Martin, Ede R Weiner.

Life Master (120 in Unit 174)

Barbara Glass, Victor P Tong.

Bronze Life Master (313 in Unit 174)

John W Caudill, Charles Dalton, Kathleen A Malcolmson, Arlene Rawitscher.

Silver Life Master (187 in Unit 174)

Jane E Boozalis, Jack C Manderscheid, Jim T Middleton.

Ruby Life Master (177 in Unit 174)

Courtney Coffman, Judith B Ensor, Thomas Rush.

Gold Life Master (92 in Unit 174)

Al Cupps.

Sapphire Life Master (52 in Unit 174)

Yin L Choo.

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!

174 Unit News

AWESOME AUGUST EXPERIMENTS

The [Awesome August Sectional](#) will take place August 9-12 at the Westchase Marriott. The August tournament is where we try out new concepts to see how our members like them. This year's experiments include:

- ◆ A \$5-per-session horizontal Swiss team event on Friday and Saturday nights.
- ◆ A 499r NLM Swiss Team event on Sunday.
- ◆ A single-session open pairs/team game on Friday afternoon. You will receive the higher of your pair score or your team score.

Light bites will be served in the Hospitality Suite between the afternoon and evening sessions on Friday. On Saturday, also between the afternoon and evening sessions, Daniel Jackson will run a "bridge lab." And... morning coffee will be offered at no charge!



Speakers and their topics include:

- ◆ "The Match Game" by **Betty Starzec** on Thursday
- ◆ "Splinters" by **Vinh Tran** on Friday
- ◆ "Range Stayman" by **Bob Morris** on Saturday

GRAND NATIONAL TEAMS

Best of luck to the Unit 174 players who will be competing in Grand National Teams at the NABC in Atlanta:

- ◆ Superflight: **Dan Morse, Thomas Peters**
- ◆ Flight A: **Daniel Jackson**
- ◆ Flight B: **Wes Peirce, Thomas Rush**
- ◆ Flight C: **Robert Burridge, Jack and Jeannette Dean, Marsha Doyle**

ROBOT ROUNDUP

Just in time for the [Summer NABC Online Individual](#) event, **Daniel Jackson** has begun a mailing list of tips and resources to help online players succeed against the BBO robots. Daniel is currently 7th in BBO Masterpoints list for 2018 – pretty impressive! Contact Daniel at djackson3789@hotmail.com to be added to his mailing list.

Club News

Below please find information reported to us by the clubs in our Unit. Please send your club's news to Jeff Kroll at texas.blue.hen@gmail.com. Information on all our clubs is available on the [Unit 174 website](#). Check there for the most up-to-date schedules, results and other news.

BRIDGE CLUB OF HOUSTON

Upcoming special games at BCOH include the following:

- ◆ "Eight is enough" games on July 26 and August 23 at 10:30am
- ◆ Mentor games on August 2 at 10:30am and August 20 at 7pm

CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

Lots of news this month from the Cypress Bridge Club:

- ◆ They now have a dealing machine and hand records for their weekly game.
- ◆ There is now a Tuesday sanctioned game. Be there by 11:45 to start at noon.
- ◆ Jeanne Phelps is running an "Introduction to Duplicate Bridge" session from 10am - 4pm on the first Thursday of each month at the Richard and Meg Weekly Community Center. You must sign up in advance; do so by sending an email message to Jeanne at jsfphelps@gmail.com.



KINGWOOD DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

The Kingwood club will celebrate its 10th anniversary on August 8 with a barbeque dinner. The club will provide the barbeque; please bring something that goes with barbeque (and what doesn't?).

LSBC

The August 2 game will be held at Incredible Pizza. The cost for the game fee and the "Incredible" lunch buffet will be \$10.00. Reservations are required. Contact Mary McDonald at 936-890-8593 or maryemcdonald22@yahoo.com.

NAP-qualifying games will be held on the August 9, 13, 20 and 23.

Congratulations to the club's winners at the Austin Regional:

- ◆ **Wes Peirce** 35.45 gold
- ◆ **Janelle Frusha** 28.24 gold
- ◆ **Mavis Warren** 28.24 gold

WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

Westside Bridge Academy (WBA) announced its June awards for success and participation at the club. The Most Masterpoint winners are **Ariel Leibovitz** (Open) with 33.92 Masterpoints and **James Sells** (I/N) with 17.33 Masterpoints. The Most Frequent players were **Dolores Aquino** and **Betty Freedman** (Open) with 20 sessions and **James Sells** (I/N) with 17 sessions. Congrats to all!

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Mentor/Mentee games on August 8 at 10:30am and August 28 at 7pm
- ◆ "Eight is enough" team game on August 17 at 7pm

Upcoming classes:

- ◆ "Learn to Play Bridge" with **Gary King**, Wednesdays, 7-9pm, starting September 5.
- ◆ "Commonly-Used Conventions" with **Terrie Currie**, Wednesdays, 2-4pm, starting August 9.

Barbara Seagram, one of the ACBL's most popular and successful teachers, will present "Defensive Strategy and Signaling" on Saturday, December 1. The \$50 registration fee includes both breakfast and lunch. Attendance will be limited to 160 individuals; reservations will be required.



From the Editors

We are excited to have the opportunity to send out the Unit 174 Newsletter. We have worked together for several years, identifying information that from the ACBL *Bridge Bulletin* that may be useful, especially to I/N players. The last two years of these monthly summaries are available [here, on the WBA website](#).

***Bridge Bulletin* ARTICLE OF THE MONTH**

Our favorite column in the July *Bulletin* isn't a column at all; it is Problem 2 in the "Bidding Box" (page 37). It shows that playing in the 4-4 club suit is the proper slam. 6C is a great contract, as you can pitch a heart and a spade on the long diamonds (and ruff a spade). Playing 6D in the 6-4 fit is hopeless. You will lose a spade and a heart. Playing 4-4 fits as opposed to 5-4 or 6-4 fits is usually best, as you can pitch on side long suit.

That said, we also like "Mike's Bridge Lesson" on page 52. **Mike Lawrence** makes these useful points:

- ◆ West's 1S bid showed five or more spades (as he would have doubled with four).
- ◆ East's club play demonstrated the concept of trump promotion.
- ◆ East's hand was worth an opening bid, even with only ten HCP.

TEN DOs and DON'Ts AT THE BRIDGE TABLE

– 1 –

DON'T lead unsupported high cards. Defenders occasionally make an opening lead of an unsupported A because "they want to see the dummy." Sometimes it works, but it's against the odds. More often than not, the lead sets up declarer's king or queen. Aces are meant to capture kings or queens, especially when they are sitting behind the honor card.

There are, of course exceptions. Leading an ace against a slam contract is sometimes the right thing to do. If the opponents have bid three suits and settled on a five-level minor suit contract, leading the A of the unbid major is often the right thing to do. If the opponents had that suit stopped, they would have been in 3N rather than five of a minor.

– 2 –

DON'T continue to bid hands with no fit. When the bidding indicates that there is no fit between your hand and your partner's, stop bidding as early as possible – preferably before you get doubled. No trump is not usually the answer to a misfit, as there may be no transportation between the two hands. Without transportation, declarer has to play the contract entirely out of one hand and usually goes down.



– 3 –

DON'T overcall with a weak suit. Do not feel obligated to make an overcall just because RHO has bid and you also have opening points. Do take the following actions, if appropriate:

- ◆ Double with 13 support (dummy) points and at least three cards in all the unbid suits.
- ◆ Double and then bid your suit with a big hand (17+) and a good suit.
- ◆ Bid 1N with a 1N opener and their suit well-stopped.
- ◆ Over call in a good suit, one that you want led. Part of the overcall is lead direction. A good suit is at least five cards headed by AJ, KJ, QJ9 or better. You and your partner should have some agreement as to the quality of the suits in which you overcall.

If none of these conditions applies, pass and trust your partner to make a balancing bid if LHO (partner's RHO) passes.

– 4 –

DO make a balancing call in the pass-out seat. In Britain, balancing is called “protection.” If the opponents will play a low-level contract when you pass, make every effort not to pass, even if you have only a mediocre hand. Borrow a king from partner (add an imaginary three points to your hand) and, with 8+ points, take some sort of balancing action – a bid or a double. It is quite possible, for reasons noted above, that partner could have full opening points, but no bid after his RHO opens. It is your responsibility to protect partner's hand by balancing. And if you are responding to a balancing call, remember that your partner may not be acting with full values. Downgrade your hand by about three points when you respond.

– 5 –

DO understand a reverse and consider its effects. A reverse is a bid which forces partner to the three-level in order to support your first-bid suit. For example (silent opponents): 1D – 1S | 2H - ?? If partner wants to support diamonds rather than hearts, he must do so by bidding 3D because your 2H bid has taken away the opportunity to bid 2D. Note that 1D – 1H | 1S - ?? is not a reverse because partner can still bid 2D.

Because a reverse may force partner, who could have as few as six points, to the three-level, you should have at least 16 points to reverse. A reverse is forcing for one round; partner should not pass. A reverse is not a convention; it is a natural part of the game. Larry Cohen noted that he has heard players say they “don't play reverses.” This, to him, is unacceptable. It's like saying “I don't play rebids by opener.” Therefore, you do play reverses, whether or not you think you do. So you should try to play them properly.

– 6 –

DON'T be afraid to double. Many players do not double unless they are sure the opponents are going down. Even when they are sure the opponents are going down, they don't double because they think the opponents will run to another spot. In general, opponents are supposed to make their doubled



contracts about a third of the time. If you are setting more than two-thirds of the contracts you double, you are not doubling enough. If you hesitate to double because you think the opponents will run, figure out how likely it is that they will run and if they actually do have a better spot. Often, if they run, they end up going down even more.

Bridge is a statistical game; you should make bids and plays—including doubles—that work most of the time. And should the percentage play work out poorly, as it might some of the time, shrug it off. Don't let it affect your next play or bid.

– 7 –

DO adjust your game based on the type of scoring. Your strategy for match point games (usually pairs) should differ from your strategy for IMPs games (usually team games). These are significantly different games with different objectives. At match points, your goal is get a higher score than as many other pairs as possible, even if that score is higher by only 10 points. Risking a contract when you are reasonably sure that you can make a valuable overtrick is part of match point strategy. At IMPs, it is more important to bid and make your contracts; an overtrick does not impact the result that much. Do not risk your contract for an overtrick. At IMPs, it's very important to bid and make your games – particularly vulnerable games. Do not miss the opportunity for a game bonus; missing those will impact the results.

– 8 –

DO consider your position at the table when pre-empting. In first and second position, you are pre-empting your partner as well as your opponents. In second position, you should be most conservative, as your RHO has already shown weakness by not opening. It's likely that your partner has something. In third position you should be most aggressive. You are pre-empting the only player at the table who could have a strong hand, since everyone else, including partner, has already passed. A pre-empt in fourth seat should be to make the contract you are bidding. Larry Cohen suggests 10 – 13 points and a good six-card suit for a two-level pre-empt and the same point range and a good seven-card suit for a three-level pre-empt.

– 9 –

DO pause before playing to the first trick. As declarer, take a minute to examine the dummy and make a plan to take your tricks. Figure out your transportation. Identify your losers and when to lose them (earlier rather than later is usually recommended). If you play too quickly, you may find that you have burned a needed entry or won a trick that you should have ducked.



- 10 -

DO trump on the short side. Long trumps are usually winners; using one to ruff does not add to the number of winners. However, ruffing with a short-side trump does add to your winners because that winning card would likely have fallen uselessly under another while you were drawing trump. Ruffing with long trumps can risk losing control of the hand and not being able to prevent the opponents from cashing their winners.

There are some exceptions to this guideline; sometimes you may need to be in the hand with the long trump. If you are in a dummy reversal situation (where you eventually make the dummy good, instead of the closed hand) you may need to trump on the long side.

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