



American Contract
Bridge League

Unit 174 Newsletter November 2018

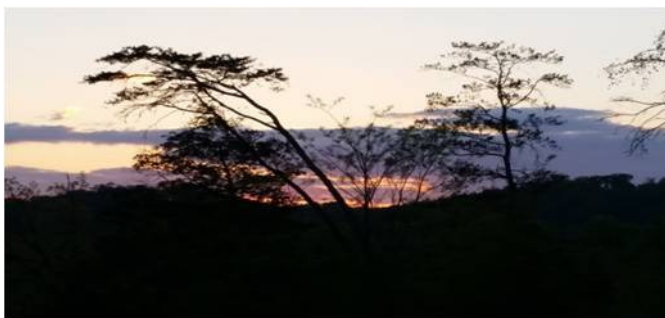


This month's newsletter includes the sections listed below. Click a link to jump to the corresponding section. If your browser does not support these links, scroll down to find a specific section.

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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



Hope to see everyone at the [Fabulous Fall Sectional](#) tournament—it promises to be a wonderful time. Hope also that you are making plans to play in the upcoming 2019 Lone Star Regional that will be held February 4th – 10th. Information on the 2019 LSR is below and the full schedule of events can be found at

http://www.acblunit174.org/Flyers/2019_LSR_Final.pdf.

My wife and I were in Sedona Arizona last month and we went on a Full Moon hike at Sedona State Park. We started at the Visitors' Center about an hour before sunset and were led by an experienced guide through the park and up to the top of a small mountain just before sunset. We were able to see the sun set behind the beautiful red rock mountains and then turn around



and watch the full moon rise in the east. It was spectacular and definitely an "ooh and aah" moment. One of the hikers was from the area and said "we see this all the time..." Well, that got me thinking. How many times do we do or see something all the time and not see the good in the moment? My learning from that comment is to try not to forget the awesomeness all around us and to recognize the good things that are happening. Even on a day when we struggle at the table, there is always something good happening as well. Maybe we learned a new skill (so *that's* an end play...) or made a new friend.

I think if we all focused on the good parts of our experiences, it would make this world a little better place.

Best wishes for a good day at the bridge table!!

Ken Hudson, President, Unit 174

kghudson@comcast.net

Cell: 713-204-5505

Board Business

The Board is continuing to work on ensuring our tournaments exceed our players' expectations. **Jack LaVigne** spearheaded a Unit survey and summarized the information received and the results and information received are below. The Board thanks Jack for taking this on and doing a great job!! The Board found the results informative and taken steps to implement the results.

SUNDAY SURVEY

Almost 400 players responded to the Board's survey on the Sunday tournament games. Tournament schedules are set six months in advance, so the Board is hard at work on the April and June tournaments for next year. Based on the survey results, the Unit will schedule the following Sunday events in 2019:

Election Sectional (April 5-7, 2019): On Sunday, two single session pair games will be offered (instead of one double session) and bracketed Swiss teams will be offered to all (instead of strati-flighted for A/X)

June Sectional (June 7-9, 2019): There will be a short break between the two Sunday sessions.

[Click here for the full survey results.](#)



OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE BACK

Bridge teachers are needed for two bridge in schools classes the Board is taking on led by [Kathleen Malcomson](#) and [Betty Starzac](#). If you would be interested in becoming a teacher, please talk to Betty or Kathleen on how and where to start. There will be a Best Practices Teachers workshop held just before the LSR on Sunday and Monday that will put you well on your way to becoming a certified instructor.

2019 LONE STAR REGIONAL

Please make sure to mark your calendars for the 2019 Lone Star Regional (LSR) tournament to be held at the Westchase Marriott February 4-10. We are heading into the final planning stages – the schedule is in place, speakers lined up, event naming opportunities are available, advertising in our fabulous Daily Bulletin is being sold, and dining options are being finalized. Many thanks to those working so hard to make this LSR the best ever. Please contact [Ken Hudson](#) or [Lauri Laufman](#) if you have any questions, wish to purchase an ad in the daily bulletin or naming event or if you have any questions regarding the tournament.



New Members and Rank Advancements

ACBL notifies us each month about the members new to our Unit and about those who advanced a rank. Beginning with this (November) newsletter, the listing of rank advancements will include those who advanced during the previous month. Therefore, this listing will no longer match the ACBL *Bridge Bulletin* listing, as the *Bulletin* lags by a month due to its production schedule. For this month only, the listings include two months of rank advancements -- September and October. Below are listed those players who either joined our unit or advanced a rank.

NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome the following players to our unit: **Harry A Bick, Maria Chamberlin, James W Haylett, Paul M Horvitz, Craig P Howard, Vijayan Iyengar, Janet Jordan, Joseph LoCicero Jr, Debbi Nager, Ross Nager, Janet L Redeker, Anne Schaffner, Wayne C Tyson, Judy W Walsh**

RANK ADVANCEMENTS

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



Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

Rajni Amin, Marcus Aquino, Jack L Bailey, Greta Etnyre, Mary Lou Glauber, Penny Grasedonio, Alannah Hallas, Janice Hardcastle, Wolfgang G Horn, Tom Hudgins, Lilah Jensen, Kimberlin Kane, Karel Kriel, Gretchen Y Lindquist, John Magyari, Edward Massin, James W Moore, Rebecca A Ross, Robert M Ross, Jitendra D Shah, Edward J Smith, Charles E Washburn, Deanne T White, Alice Zoerner

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Michael W Abbott, Richard Arnold, Nicole Cox, Jack C Easter, Wayne S Edmonson, Dan E Egner, Diane H Egner, Sherul K Feldman, Paddy R Fiorino, Sudhir R Gejji, Ricky Haikin, Donna P Hanes, Suzanne D Hanks, Naomi S Higgins, Maggie Rose Morrighan, Ava Noble, Cindy Schaefer, Kathleen R Sharman, William E Tanner

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Ram K Agrawal, Mary Ann Boerner, Mary A Bryan, Cindy Cox, Kathleen F McDougall, Christine P Mitchell, Robert A Mott, Patricia C Pipitone, David Senior, Paul Sinsheimer, Carol H Teufel, Miriam S York

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Sherry A Deal, Carolyn Harris, David C Hull, Stormy M Hull, Margarite C Kirk, Sherrilyn Phelps, James C Sells, Larry E Wadler

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Iretha H Spinetti, Rhonwyn B Weissman, Charles L Woody

Advanced NABC Master (300 Masterpoints)

Myra M Marsh

Life Master (124 in Unit 174)

Frederick H Gregory, Marcia J Lindsey, Dorothy P Roper

Bronze Life Master (310 in Unit 174)

Christiane G Deane, Kris Sankaran

Silver Life Master (187 in Unit 174)

Frances A Barclay, Allison B Ochsner



Ruby Life Master (17 in Unit 174)

Geri McKallip, Jack Rawitscher, Rani C Sachdev

Gold Life Master (90 in Unit 174)

Margie Beegle, Harold D Copeland, Paul L Cuneo, Carolyn F Labouliere, Catherine J Prasad

Sapphire Life Master (56 in Unit 174)

William B Daniel III, Patti P Mullendore

Diamond Life Master (40 in Unit 174)

Joyce M Ryan

Emerald Life Master (13 in Unit 174)

Philip G Grothus

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!

174 Unit News

CHARITY GAMES IN DECEMBER

December is U174 Charity month! Most of our clubs are running charity games. A portion of charity game fees are donated to a designated charity. In December, the Unit is supporting the ACBL Charity and [SEARCH Homeless Services](#), the Unit's designated charity. Come out and play on the dates below and earn extra points while doing good:

- ◆ December 9: ACBL Charity
- ◆ December 10: SEARCH Homeless Services
- ◆ December 11: ACBL Charity
- ◆ December 13: SEARCH Homeless Services

FABULOUS FALL SECTIONAL STARTS **TODAY!**

The [Fabulous Fall Sectional](#) will take place November 16-18 at the Houston Marriott Westchase. Guest speakers include Geoff Booth on "Attitude Adjustment" and Timo Erkoc "How to Play Notrump Contracts." Grab a partner or a team and head on over to the Marriott!



LONE STAR REGIONAL (LSR)

The 2019 Lone Star Regional will take place February 4-10, 2019, at the Houston Marriott Westchase. It's not too early to start planning with your partners and teammates. For the first time, the LSR will include two Mini-Soloway events. [A Mini-Soloway is a four-session, two-day event](#) and will replace Bracket 1 of the Bracketed Swiss events on Tuesday and on Thursday.

UNIT BRIDGE TEACHERS INVITED

All Unit 174 bridge teachers are invited to a "meet and greet" with **Barbara Seagram** at the home of **Betty Starzec** on Friday, November 30, from 4 - 7 p.m. This is a unique opportunity to meet Barbara, who will share some of her winning teaching techniques and marketing tips. Those attending who are not members of the American Bridge Teachers' Association will be eligible to receive a free one-year membership in that organization. Door prizes will be given and light bites will be served. Please let Betty know if you will attend by emailing her at Lstarzec@comcast.net.

UNIT STAC WEEK, DECEMBER 3-9

Earn silver points in the comfort of your home club! December 3-9 is STaC Week. "STaC" stands for Sectional Tournament at Clubs. Games during this week are tournament-rated, so masterpoints points awarded will be silver rather than the usual black.

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:

- ◆ November 19: Nighttime Mentor game
- ◆ November 20: Thanksgiving Party. Reservations required.
- ◆ November 15: Swiss team "8 is Enough"
- ◆ November 29 - December 2: [299r Tournament](#)
- ◆ December 13: Daytime Mentor game



LAKE CONROE DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ December 7: STaC game
- ◆ December 14: Club Championship game, Holiday Party at the April Sound Country Club. Reservations required.
- ◆ December 21: Club game.
- ◆ December 28: Junior Fund game.

LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

New location: April Sound Church. Upcoming games:

- ◆ December 13: Club Appreciation game
- ◆ December 17: Club Appreciation game on *third* Monday, not fourth (due to Christmas Eve).

LSBC

Games are Mondays at noon and Thursdays at 10:30am at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Conroe. There is a 199r game directed by **Rani Sachdev** on the third Thursday of each month.

Diamond Life Master **Jeff Kroll** gives a free lesson every Thursday at 9:30 am. Current and upcoming topics include strip and end plays, keeping the dangerous hand off lead, reevaluating a hand as the bidding progresses, how to respond to partner's preemptive bid when you have a strong hand, and cue bids. Problem hands from the students are always welcome.

Contact **Anita Rothfuss** (larryandanita@gmail.com) for partnership help.

Upcoming games:

- ◆ November 15: 199r and open game
- ◆ November 19: Unit Championship
- ◆ November 22: Club closed for Thanksgiving
- ◆ December 3 and 6: STaC game
- ◆ December 10 and 13: ACBL Charity game
- ◆ December 17: Christmas Party

WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

Westside Bridge Academy (WBA) announced its October awards for success and participation at the club. The Most Masterpoint winners are **Joe Quinn** (Open) with 61.36 Masterpoints and



James Sells (I/N) with 16.55 Masterpoints. The Most Frequent players were **Betty Freedman** (Open) with 23 sessions and **James Sells** (I/N) with 23 sessions. Congrats to all!

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ December 9: Holiday party #1, STaC game, Double-session open, double-session 499r Swiss. Reservations required.
- ◆ December 12: Daytime mentor game
- ◆ December 18: Nighttime mentor game
- ◆ December 21, 7pm: Swiss Team "8 is Enough"
- ◆ December 21: Holiday party #2. Reservations 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](#).

We are fortunate this month to have the benefit of guest columnist **Buddy Hanby**. Buddy is an Emerald Life Master whose other accomplishments include a fifth place finish in the World Mixed Teams in Lille, France in 2012, at least thirteen top ten finishes in North American Championships, and lots and lots of Regional wins. Buddy and wife **Sally Wheeler** spend a fair amount of time responding to bridge questions from newer players. Their responses are both informative and entertaining. The Doubles piece below is the result of several of those questions.

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

We like **Mike Lawrence's** "What is partner doing?" piece (page 51). How many times has that thought crossed your mind? In this scenario, partner (North) has bid 1H over your double of 1D (by East) and a redouble by West. East has passed 1H and it's back to you (South).

East, who opened, has 12+ points; you, who doubled, should have 12+ points; and West's redouble shows at least 10+ points. Partner (North) has somewhere between zero and six points. His 1H promises only four, though he could have five. So why is he bidding? In this case he is bidding to suggest that, from his perspective, hearts is the safest place to be. South will rarely take any action after 1H. Although with a five-card heart suit and nice distribution, North might bid 2H just to get in the way. If North had no preference among the unbid suits, he would pass and let South decide.



We also like **Adam Parrish's** column (page 45) on evaluating potential slam hands. He explains what it takes to bid slam without 32-33 HCP.

Lynne Berg's column (page 47) is a good read for those who like to play a short club, which guarantees four diamonds in a 1D open. She steps the reader through why it is rare that a 1D opener has only three, even if the opener is not playing a short club. We will provide some statistics on this next month.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TAKE-OUT DOUBLES

By Buddy Hanby

A recent question suggested to me that some of our readers might want a tutorial on the bizarre, often confusing, and possibly irrational terminology surrounding the various doubles that ask partner to bid rather than pass. For those who want to know why it is this way, an answer was provided by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. in 1921 in the not-so-famous case of *New York Trust Co. v. Eisner*: "A page of history is worth a volume of logic." However, another writer who is more famous than *New York Trust Co. v. Eisner* and, perhaps, more famous than Justice Holmes was acutely aware of the problem: "Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn and caldron bubble." (*Macbeth*, 4.1.10–11)

Take-Out Double

Originally, all doubles were for penalty. However, before Contract Bridge was even invented, Auction Bridge players realized that a penalty double of a one-of-a-suit opening was very, very rare. According to *The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge* (1984), in 1912 or 1913, Charles Patton of New York and Bryant McCampbell of St Louis independently had the wild idea of using double of a one-of-a-suit opening to mean something else. The "take-out double" was born! At times and places not mentioned by *The Encyclopedia*, the term "take-out double" was gradually expanded to include doubles after opponents open and respond and doubles after opponents open with a preempt. Today, "take-out double" can be narrowly defined as any double that (1) requests partner to bid; and (2) is the first non-pass made by the partnership. Note that doubles made after partner had taken a positive action remained penalty for many years. This is because penalizing the opponents is more likely when partner has promised some values. Of course, the term "take-out double" can also be broadly defined as simply a double that requests partner to bid, including all of the other doubles I'm going to discuss. (Yikes! More confusion! But, I've learned something from writing this! *The Encyclopedia* informs us that the "take-out double" was originally called [oh, no!] a "negative double," then an "informative double." The term "take-out double" did not become the norm until after 1930).



Balancing Double

The terms "balancing double" and "re-opening double" are sometimes used as synonyms. They are both doubles made when passing would end the auction. However, a balancing double is more narrowly defined as a double in pass out position by the partnership that did not open the bidding. The 1934 edition of Culbertson's *Blue Book of Contract Bridge* has a brief discussion of what would now be called a "balancing double" by the non-opening side, and I imagine they were invented fairly soon after the take-out double itself. I haven't been able to find any reference for when or where the term "balancing double" came into use.

Re-opening Double

As noted, the term "re-opening double" is also used in different ways and can be used as a synonym for the broad definition of "balancing double." The narrow meaning of "re-opening double" is a double made by the opening bidder after an overcall is passed back to him, for example: 1D (1S) P (P) | X. Note that it is almost inconceivable that you would want to double for penalties in this situation. The 1934 edition of Culbertson's *Blue Book* does not mention this type of double. The 1951 edition of Goren's *Contract Bridge Complete* does discuss this type of double, and the text leaves the impression that use of a double by the opening bidder as take-out to reopen the auction was somewhat novel at that point.

Responsive Double

This is a double made after: (1) an opponent opens a suit bid; (2) partner overcalls *OR* makes a take-out double; and (3) opener's partner raises opener's suit. This was the first type of double to be treated as take-out even though partner has shown some values. However, a penalty double is still unlikely to be of use when opponents have shown an opening bid, a response, and a fit. An article by Dr. F. Fielding-Reid describing responsive doubles was published in *The Bridge World's* February 1953 edition. The name "responsive double" may have originated with an article by Alexander Spencer entitled "The Responsive Double" in *The Bridge World's* June 1953 edition.

Negative Double

This is a double used to show the unbid suits (particularly, any unbid major(s)) after partner opens and an opponent overcalls. *The Encyclopedia* states that this type of double was invented in 1957 by Al Roth of New York City. The *Bridge World's* November 1957 edition does, indeed, contain an article by Al Roth entitled "The Roth Stone Negative Double." This double was quickly dubbed "Sputnik," after the Russian space probe that was launched that year. The idea was that this double was the latest and greatest scientific innovation. However, the term "negative double" eventually prevailed. This is a non-penalty double made when partner has shown values (opened the bidding, my gosh!) and the opponent who overcalls has no assurance of a fit or that partner has any values at all.



Unlike all earlier take-out doubles, the negative double replaced a penalty double that does come up more than once in a blue moon. As a result, they were very controversial. A typical complaint from some conservative members of the expert establishment was something like: "What?? They can walk into *OUR* auction, and I can't double for penalties? Ridiculous!" As late as the 70s, many players still refused to play negative doubles. However, the expert community eventually became convinced that: (1) this type of double is very useful, particularly for finding 4-4 heart fits; (2) this type of double comes up quite a bit more often than a penalty double; and (3) not all penalties are lost because opener can often make a re-opening double. As a result, almost everyone now plays negative doubles.

Re-negative Double

This is the second double in this auction: 1m (1S) X (2S) | X. This double can be used either to: (1) show four hearts and distinguish a "real" 3H bid from a merely competitive one; or (2) to show three hearts and find the 5-3 fit when partner doubled because she was too weak to bid 2H. Note that a penalty double is unlikely in this situation. Opponents have a fit and are only at the two-level. I can remember Sally & me using this double in the 70s. We first used version (1) but later switched to version (2). Sally thinks that she may have invented it, but I suspect that it was around before then.

Maximal Double

This is a double used as a game invitation in auctions such as 1S (2H) 2S (3H) | X. If playing maximal doubles, opener's double invites game in spades. 3S would be merely competitive. This double is described in the 1984 edition of *The Encyclopedia*, but the article does not say who invented it or when.

DSI Double

This could be considered an extension of the balancing or reopening double. "DSI" is a shortening of "Do Something Intelligent." This type of double can be used by any player when a pass would end the auction. This double is the rough equivalent of: "Partner, I think we should either be competing higher or doubling them for penalties, but I have no idea whether we can actually beat them or in what suit to compete." This type of double achieved almost fad status in the 80s when it was called an "action double."

Snapdragon Double

This is a double that can be used to show the fourth suit plus "tolerance" for partner's suit when auction starts with three different suits. For example: (1C) 1H (1S) X. If playing Snapdragon, this double shows five or more diamonds plus "tolerance" for hearts. The partnership must agree on what constitutes "tolerance." Some treat two small as enough;



others require something like Qx. Neither the 1984 edition of *The Encyclopedia* nor *Bridge Conventions Complete* published in 1990 by Amalya Kearsse contains an article on Snapdragon, so I assume that it was invented within the last 30 years.

Support Double

This is a double used by the opening bidder to show three-card support for partner's suit. For example, playing support doubles: 1D (P) 1H (1S) | X shows three-card heart support. A raise to 2H shows four-card support. Support doubles are normally played only to a level where it is possible for responder to bid two of her suit, but a small minority of players uses them at a higher level. I have read somewhere that **Eric Rodwell** says that he invented support doubles in the 1970s, but the 1984 edition of *The Encyclopedia* does not contain an article on them. As far as I can determine, the earliest publication of support doubles was in 1990 in *Bridge Conventions Complete*. Like the negative double, they were quite controversial. An overcall by fourth hand between a known strong hand (opener) and a possibly strong hand (responder) is dangerous. Thus, a support double replaces a sometimes quite useful penalty double. There is still a significant number of expert players who do not play support doubles, but the majority now plays them.

The Double with No Name

After the auction 1m (1other suit) 1NT, a penalty double of 1NT is fairly rare, so some now play a double of 1NT to show the two unbid suits. I do not think that I heard of this double until about 10 to 15 years ago, and I am not aware that it has been published anywhere. It's sort of an extension of the responsive double, but I don't think it has a name. Perhaps we should call it a "take-out" double?



Jeff Kroll & Sam Khayatt
texas.blue.hen@gmail.com