



American Contract
Bridge League

Unit 174 Newsletter August 2019



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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

Over a decade ago while playing at a club game against Max Levit, he smiled at me and said "there's no sighing in bridge". Initially I thought of Tom Hanks and his "there's no crying in baseball" quip from A League of their Own and thought it cute. Reflecting later, I realized that in fact an opponent (or my partner) might have taken that "sigh" as being related to the hand being bid or played at the time it slipped out.

We play bridge for many reasons - for fun, the challenge, to learn, the adrenaline rush and to socialize. Cheating would ruin the game for me. Along with avoiding mistakenly "sneaking a peek", I work hard to keep best practices in mind and consciously avoid "sighing", thanks to Max.

At our upcoming Lone Star Regional, we will be screening the 57 minute movie Aces & Knives early Saturday evening. Promotional material states it "is a documentary for and about us—the millions of people who discover the game of bridge and never let it go. It's a tale about why we're obsessed with points, partners, and proving our mettle, told by world champions and mere mortals alike. It's about bruised egos and, yes, cheating in this high-stakes battle of brain vs. brain."

From the trailers and reviews from others, it is not to be missed! Please "sneak a peek" now (of movie trailers) - click here: <https://vimeo.com/200434495> or click here: <https://vimeo.com/305142941>.



If your friends and family have ever wondered why you're so enamored with the game, this movie will show them why. Invite them to join the screening with you and we might even get some new bridge players.

Lauri Laufman, President, Unit 174

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Board Business

GALVESTON EXTRAS

At the [Galveston Fall Sectional, November 1-3](#), there will be lots to do, even for your friends and family who do not play bridge. There will be evening entertainment on both nights. On Friday, Harry Maurer will deliver a Comedy & Magic performance. On Saturday, dinner will be followed by a Casino party. And for us bridge players... Sunday's games will be regionally rated (more silver points than usual per session) and Sunday lunch will be provided free of charge.

LSR 2020 -SATURDAY NIGHT MOVIE AND ZIP KO

At our upcoming [Lone Star Regional \(February 3-9, 2020\)](#), we are planning a FREE screening of *Aces & Knives* at 7pm on Saturday evening, thanks to underwriting by the ACBL Education Fund, District 16 and Unit 174. This film "zooms in on the players, the scandals, and the intense competition inside the world of bridge – the most complex mind sport ever invented." For a sneak peek: <https://www.acesandknavesthefilm.com>. As the movie is just under an hour long and the night will still be young, we invite you to stick around for our Evening Zip KO at 8:30pm! For those of you who have never played, it is a fast-moving knock-out team game and quite fun. Cost to enter will be only \$5 per person.

MEMBER-GUEST EVENT

We would like to have our unit members bring guests (who either play social bridge or are interested in learning bridge) to a social duplicate event. We envision these events taking place at clubs around the Unit.

We recommend a 30-minute introductory class offered to all guests. This class would be geared towards those who have not played. After the class, there will be "hospitality" along with a little social time for all. And then, 90 minutes of bridge in a relaxed environment. If there is a wide range of bridge experience among the guests (from someone who has never played to someone else who has played socially for the last 40 years), the club can divide the group into different sections.



While bidding boxes and boards will be used and hand records provided, this event will be very relaxed with “table-talk” acceptable during bidding and play (and even encouraged for beginners). The number of boards played will be based on the speed of play.

This event is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, September 21. More details will be forthcoming.

UNIT DIRECTORY IMPROVEMENTS

Our friends at BridgeFinesse (they run the Common Game) have agreed to allow us to access photos stored on their site. So... if you have submitted a photo to the Common Game, we will pull it through to your profile in the Unit 174 Directory. If you would like your photo displayed, email your photo and your ACBL number to help@theCommonGame.com

The search function has been enhanced so that you need only provide the first few letters of a last name to return a list of profiles. If you leave the name field blank, the entire directory will be returned. And... once you have displayed the entire directory, you can use your browser's search function (usually Ctrl+F) to search by any part of the name or address.

If you have not yet registered on our website, please do so. Being able to access the Unit Directory is very helpful when trying to chase down that elusive fourth for a Swiss team. And being listed in the Unit Directory allows other players to find you when they need you to be their fourth. [Click here to register](https://acblunit174.org/Register.php) or navigate to <https://acblunit174.org/Register.php>.

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: **Herma Lathon, Paul V Matranga, Benedicta Tung, Courtney Johnson, Kamal Shah, Joe H Broome, Michael Harvey**

RANK ADVANCEMENTS

Listed below are the new Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL for July, 2019. An explanation of ranks may be found at www.acbl.org.

Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

Thomas Dilger, Linda K Drake, Carolyn Elliott, Kim M Franklin, Linda L Hagerman, Jean Hines, Mark J Johnson, Jean L Lara, Ying C Pan, Judy Richeson, Darrell R Westcott, John M Williams



Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Rajni Amin, Jack L Bailey, Mary Bowman, Jo Corry, Daniel Macholan, James W Warren, Elizabeth Wise

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Oscar Chung, Brian R Dudley, Dan E Egner, Diane H Egner, Sylvia M Levin, Ronald K Perkowski, Ingrid L Schulz

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Paddy R Fiorino, Sue C Geller, Laurinda Lankford, Ava Noble, Johara M Nour, Betty Westbrook

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Vera Annenkova, Elizabeth G Giroir, Hau-Ran Wang, Sid C Weiss, Michael L Wexler

Advanced NABC Master (300 Masterpoints)

Jenelle W Chamberlain, Cindy D Hillman, Bruce R Weiner, Twyla J Woody

Life Master (126 in Unit 174)

Rita J Hanlin, Richard McGaughy, Julia E Thompson, Helen M Wren

Bronze Life Master (298 in Unit 174)

Ridley M Ruth

Silver Life Master (187 in Unit 174)

Judy B Carter, Jack M Roth

Ruby Life Master (174 in Unit 174)

Laura L Jones

Gold Life Master (91 in Unit 174)

Ann McDougal

Sapphire Life Master (59 in Unit 174)

Robert E Sandfield, Donna L Sparks

Diamond Life Master (44 in Unit 174)

Marsha Shortt

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!



174 Unit News

AMBITIOUS AUGUST SECTIONAL RESULTS

We had a great turnout at the Ambitious August Sectional, co-chaired by **Daniel Jackson** and **Clif Rice**: 635 players earned a total of 3557.81 masterpoints. The table count was 733. Thank you all for coming out to play. Unit masterpoint winners in the top ten were: **Tom Breed, Joe Quinn, Dan Morse, Jack LaVigne, David Henke, Carolyne Fox, Randall Lake, Phillip Grothus, Gil Micheletti, and W Lease**. [Click here for full results.](#)

The August tournament is Unit 174's annual experimental tournament where the unit board of directors tries out new ideas to improve the experience of the players. The 2019 tournament had two experiments.

The first was an ambassador program for the I/N players, similar to the program offered at some of our clubs. A big thank-you to **Cindy Cox** for this idea and for acting as an ambassador.

The other experiment for this tournament was to have duplicated hands in the bracketed Swiss team events. The pair players could go to dinner and compare hands with the team players. Tournament chairs **Daniel Jackson** and **Clif Rice** thought the event went well.

UNIT MEMBERS WIN GNT FLIGHT B



Unit 174 members made up half of the Rush team that represented District 16 and took first place in Grand National Teams (GNT) Flight B at the NABC in Las Vegas. The field of 41 teams was reduced to 16 at the end of first day. It was very close -- only 16 VPs separated the third from the sixteenth qualifier. Days 2, 3, 4 and 5 were full-day single-elimination matches. The D16 team overcame challenges from Turner (D23), Turcotte (D1) and finally, Lampe (D24) to end up in the final against Pan (D22), whom they beat 145-92.

Team captain **Thomas Rush** describes the experience as fantastic and encourages all to play in the GNTs even if you get only as far as the District Finals. GNT D16 finals are usually played at the Houston April sectional.

Team members, pictured above from left to right: **Wes Peirce, Thomas Rush, Bill McCarty (U172), Suvabrata Biswas, Pawel Hanus (U176) and Ari Sippola (U176)**.



NORTH AMERICAN PAIRS

North American Pairs (NAP) club-level qualifier games wrap up at end of August. There is still time to earn your "Q." The Unit has decided not to hold Unit-level qualifiers, so club-level qualifiers are invited to play in District 16 qualifier events in January.

SPECIAL GAMES - EXTRA POINTS

September has been designated by the ACBL as International Fund Month. Most, if not all, clubs in the Unit are offering Fund games all month. Come out and scoop up some extra points for your success at the table.

[GALVESTON FALL SECTIONAL, NOVEMBER 1-3](#)

We are taking our show on the road, so to speak, down to the lovely Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa and Convention Center. In addition to Bridge sessions, there will be entertainment on Friday night and a Casino night on Saturday. Sunday's games will be regionally-rated, so more silver points will be awarded. Our room rate is \$149 per night. For reservations call 1-888-388-8484. The group ID code is ACBL112019. Tournament chairs **Jack LaVigne** and **Cindy Cox** are hard at work to ensure we all have a great time.

LSR 2020 - START PLANNING

The schedule for the 2020 Lone Star Regional is now available on the Unit 174 website. Or, [click here to view it](#).

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 and classes:

- ◆ Aug 22 "8 is Enough" Swiss Team
- ◆ Aug 25 [MiniBridge \(FREE\)](#)
- ◆ Sep 2 Hot Diggity Dog game. Meal at 11; game at 12. Bring sides.
- ◆ Sep 5 Daytime Mentor game
- ◆ Sep 7 - [Beginning Bridge with Sam Khayatt](#)
- ◆ Sept 9 - [Conventions You Need with Barbara Phillips](#)
- ◆ Sept 10 - [End Plays with Daniel Jackson](#)
- ◆ Sep 16 Nighttime Mentor game
- ◆ Sep "8 is Enough" Swiss Team
- ◆ Oct 3-6 [499r/NLM Tournament](#)

CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Aug 20 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Aug 22 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Sep 03 3rd Quarter Club Championship
- ◆ Sep 06 3rd Quarter Club Championship

Free classes every Tuesday from 11-11:30. August sessions focus on Major Opening bids in the 3rd or 4th position, the Drury Convention, and responses that do not promise support. The class follows Chapter 4 from *Commonly Used Conventions in the 21st Century*.

KATY DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Aug 21 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Aug 28 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Sep 04 3rd Quarter Club Championship

LAKE CONROE DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Aug 23 Junior Fund



- ◆ Sep 06 Open Swiss Teams (not "8 is Enough") Reservations required

LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Aug 22 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Aug 26 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Aug 29 North American Pairs (NAP)
- ◆ Sep 02 Labor Day Lunch. Food at 11; game at 12.
- ◆ Sep 10 **New Game!** 299r at 10:30am

New Game! LSBC is introducing a **monthly** 299r game on Tuesday, September 10, at 10:30am.

Diamond Life Master **Jeff Kroll** arrives early on days he is playing to answer bridge questions. Players are encouraged to [send bridge questions to Jeff](#) or put them in a box at the club. Future dates of Jeff's free lessons will be announced through the club's email.

WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

Westside Bridge Academy (WBA) announced its July awards for success and participation at the club. The Most Masterpoint winners are **Timo Erkoc** (Open) with 29.59 Masterpoints and **Michael Wexler** (I/N) with 15.97 Masterpoints. The Most Frequent players were **James Sells** (Open) with 25 sessions and **Paddy Fiorino** (I/N) with 23 sessions. Congrats to all!

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Sep 12-15 [499r Tournament](#)
- ◆ Sep 18 Daytime Mentor game, 10:30am
- ◆ Sep 20 "8 is Enough" Swiss Team
- ◆ Sep 24 Nighttime Mentor game

WBA has supervised play Tuesdays starting at 2:15pm and Thursdays starting at 10:30am.



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**

There was a lot of good information in the August *Bulletin*; we chose Problem 3 from the Bidding Box, on page 38. We find that most players like to read about bidding and making grand slams. The rest of our “top ten” is listed below this discussion.

A key point in the play is that you would like to ruff in the hand with the shorter trumps, extending the value of the trump suit. The long trumps were going to be good anyway. If you can identify the ruffing opportunity during the bidding, you should use that information to get to the correct contract.

Playing in spades, you will take 5 spade tricks (it does you no good to ruff the K of clubs as you’re doing it with your fifth spade that would be good anyway), two hearts, and five diamonds: 12 tricks. Fine if you’re in 6S, not so fine if you’re in 7S. Also not so fine if you’re in a tough field where your opponents are in 7D.

Playing in 7D, you can profitably ruff the CK in the hand with the shorter diamonds. Now you take the same five spades, two hearts, five diamonds, and the CK ruff: 13 tricks.

One pair reached the 7D contract, the other arrived in 6S.

The Bridge Bulletin auction:

	West	East	
	1S	2N	Game-forcing raise with four spades
Club singleton or void	3C	3D	Natural suit; at least four
Natural suit; at least four	3H	3S	Slam interest (If not interested, East would bid 4S, fast arrival.)
Club shortness is a void	4C	4H	So, no club loser. I have the HA.
Accepting the slam; we have a double fit: spades and diamonds.	5D	6D	This is our lower-ranking slam; you choose.
I choose diamonds because I can trump your clubs.	7D		



Rounding out our “top ten,” in page-number order, are:

- ◆ Golden Tickets: The second hand described under USA2 final. One East chose to open 3C; the other 1C. This is the kind of hand makes bridge interesting. There is no “correct” call, so what is the best that East can do? (pages 26, 71)

- ◆ A Smaller World: the hand from June 8. Always try to give the opponents to make a mistake; they can’t see through the cards. In this case a defensive mistake, turned a good board into a great board (page 29)

- ◆ Bidding Box, Problem 7: getting out of the auction ASAP on a misfit (page 39)

- ◆ It’s Your Call, Deal 3: avoiding the 4H contract with a terrific self-sufficient heart suit and choosing 3NT as it’s more likely to make 3NT than 4H on this deal (page 41)

- ◆ Parrish on making the best possible bid when all bids are flawed (page 45). This goes nicely with the Golden Tickets hand on page 26.

- ◆ Berg on responding to a 1NT opener with 5-5, and 5-4 hands (page 47)

- ◆ Bergen on hand evaluation. He makes many of the same key points that we make on hand evaluation. Counting high card points is just the beginning of hand evaluation. Players need to move beyond that to be a strong player. (page 57)

- ◆ Kantar’s second Test Your Play deal: make use of East’s 3H preempt to help you count the hand as declarer and play him for a singleton club. That club needs to be an honor for you to make your contract, so play for it (page 59)

- ◆ Lawrence on timing. Declarer should always try to make his 6C contract by taking all his chances. In this case, that means trying to set up the long heart (the best chance anyway), before resorting to a 50%/50% spade finesse. (page 60)

- ◆ Golden Tickets: The second hand described under USA2 final. One East chose to open 3C; the other 1C. This is the kind of hand makes bridge interesting. There is no “correct” call, so what is the best that East can do? (pages 26, 71)

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CONFUSING THE DEFENSE



You often have opportunities both as declarer and as defender to mislead the opposition for your benefit. This is not done through illegal and unethical means but by playing your cards to create a picture of the hand you want your opponents to believe you hold rather than the one you actually hold.

A common technique when playing against the robots on BBO is to discard in the suit that you want the robots to attack, especially if you are weak in another suit. The robots typically believe that you are discarding a weak suit rather than a strong suit. You've created a picture of the hand that misled the robots.

The same concept is available when playing against live players. Don't give up too easily when you anticipate what could happen. It doesn't mean that it will. Your opponents can't see through the cards.

When we chose our column of the month from the April 2019 *Bridge Bulletin*, we chose Eddie Kantar's first problem on page 65 for his creative use of deception.

As declarer, you want to mimic the defense's carding. If they are playing standard (high means continue), you also play a high card to encourage them to continue. If they are playing upside down (low means continue), you play a low card to encourage them to continue. You are using your spot card to make the opponent's spot card look higher or lower than it actually is.

Below is part of a hand from the Four Seasons Bridge website (www.fourseasonsbridge.com). You are declaring a spade contract and the lead is the C3.

The layout of the club suit is as follows:

Dummy: K J 8 4 2

Declarer (you): Q 10 9

You first try to figure out what the C3 represents. A small card usually promises an honor (BOSTON – Bottom Of Something, Top Of Nothing), but you can see that Lefty doesn't have an honor unless he made the against-the-odds play of under-leading the ace. Good players rarely under lead an A on the opening lead. You know it's not a doubleton; you're looking at the C2, so it's not a high low. It could be a singleton.

It is common to lead a singleton against suit contracts and 1-4 or 4-1 splits happen about 28% of the time. So to you, it sure looks like the singleton C3. Your job is not to help Righty figure that out. You want to give him another option. Make him guess. Sometimes he'll guess right and sometimes he'll guess wrong. But if you make it obvious, he should never get it wrong.

You don't want it to be clear to Righty that Lefty led a singleton and wants a ruff (or two). If Righty does read the singleton, this becomes a suit preference situation. If Righty has a second entry, he should lead a high club for the higher of the non trump suits (hearts in this case) for Lefty to return,



and a low club for the lower of the non trump suits (diamonds in this case) for Lefty to return. Righty can then get in again and give Lefty a second ruff.

So, even though you “know” the C3 is a singleton, you can make it look like Lefty might have led from Q T 3 or Q 9 3. Probably Q 9 3 as that is a more likely holding from which to lead. That would make the C3 a reasonable lead and you would be presumed to hold the stiff T.

So, your first move would be to call for the K (if you don't, it won't look like you're the one with the singleton, and it will suggest that you have the Queen).

Of course, Righty will win his ace.

Then you must play in tempo. If you stop to think things over now, your opponents will know you don't have a singleton. It is illegal and unethical not to play a singleton in tempo.

Don't unblock the Queen! Yeah, it doesn't matter to you, but remember you are trying to create the picture of Lefty having the Q 9 3. So, you will play the T. Now before he leads back, Righty has to guess whether or not your T is a singleton. What he leads back will be determined by what he thinks partner needs to know.

Maybe he'll guess right and maybe he won't. But you made it hard on him. Some of the time you will be rewarded.

Jeff Kroll & Sam Khayatt
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