



American Contract
Bridge League

Unit 174 Newsletter July 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

A few years ago, I called my partner at work to ask her if she wanted to go to the big dog show in town that weekend. She replied, "No, I don't really want to go to a 'big dog' show. I only like little dogs."

After wiping the tears resulting from my laughter, I explained it was a big show with a lot of dogs, not just big ones. We went and had a terrific time, especially enjoying the agility competitions which, yes, included both small and larger breeds.

This made me start thinking about organized duplicate bridge and how we might work to make it appeal to more people. The number of dogs tends to increase annually; the number of tournament bridge players... not so much.

In fact, if you take time to read **Paul Cuneo's** most recent report ([click here to view it](#)) presented at the July 6 District Board Meeting, you will learn about how the numbers nationally have dropped and that a good portion of that drop is players having fewer than 500 masterpoints. He suggests that there is an overall "enthusiasm problem" with newer members that needs to be addressed. Paul, thanks for providing such a fabulous report along with your insights.



As your board recognizes that new members are our future, we have been working hard to develop and implement ways to recruit, welcome, support and encourage our I/N players. We want to help them learn, participate and - most importantly - not just feel like, but actually become, part of our bridge family.

Check out [Board Business](#) for a few of the new things underway and how YOU, too, can help.

Lauri Laufman, President, Unit 174
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Board Business

BRING A BUDDY

Do you know someone who has been reluctant to play bridge at a regional or sectional tournament? We would like to reward you for bringing your buddy to his or her first tournament, introducing that player to the fun and exciting world of tournament bridge.

Unit 174 is launching a new program designed to encourage bridge players to attend our sectional and regional tournaments...and we are hoping to engage all our unit members as "Recruiters"! Both you, as the Recruiter, and the first-time attendee, your buddy, will each receive a free entry coupon to be used at any session during that tournament.

Meet your buddy at the I/N Desk - the one with the red balloon. Both of you will sign in and receive your free entry coupons. First-time I/N players will also receive a welcome packet. If you are partnering your buddy, off you go to your session.

If your buddy has a partner other than you, the I/N team will help guide them to the right place for the game in which they are playing. It is helpful for first-time attendees to play with someone they already know -- there is enough unfamiliarity in the process as it is. However, if that doesn't work, the I/N team will match the first-time attendee with another first-time attendee or with an ambassador.

I/N AMBASSADOR PROGRAM AT UNIT SECTIONALS

At the Awesome August Sectional, we are introducing an Ambassador program for our Intermediate/Newcomers. Similar to that offered at some unit clubs, we will begin offering an Ambassador program for our Intermediate/Newcomers so that if a partner is not available, we will have one on hand ready to fill in at the August Sectional for daytime sessions on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.



If you are a Unit 174 member with fewer than 299 masterpoints and are interested in becoming an Ambassador, we have six slots to fill at the August Sectional (Thurs, Fri, Sat – morning and afternoon). If needed, the Ambassador plays for free and if not needed, the Ambassador will receive a free play good for one session during that tournament.

Please contact **Cindy Cox** if interested in volunteering:bridgecindy5@gmail.com or text/call (832) 985-8734

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 & Knaves* 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.

Stay tuned for more details.



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 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: **Marylee Benedict, Gulten Burdett, Randall L Burdett, Billie G Dalton, Charles E Dattalo, Elizabeth B Fischer, Linda F Hall, Keith Jensen, Patricia D Leavesley, Klinka Lollar, Cynthia Macholan, Daniel Macholan, Edward P McKee, Vasant K Patel, Roy D Pendergraft, Declan M Reid, Joaquin M Reid, Luke Stein, Klaas Tadema, Dianze D Thompson**

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)

Sharon D Edwards, Richard Napientek, Christine M Pillow



Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Teresa Becker, Harry A Bick, Steven Bowman, Randall Clements, Barbara Craven, Dru Dalton, Alannah Hallas, Dianne Hilke-meier, Francie Knox, Michael Linkins, Gail Lungaro, Theresa C McWilliams, Alan Schaefer, Richard J Wasser

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Jennifer J Boaz, Lynne T Bonham, Mike Carswell, Paula M Daly, Kay M Dildy, Phyllis L Maier, Mary Shamma, Lennie Woodford

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Joy Cowan, Mike Cowan, Bettina S Dusel, Annette D Griffith, Jean J Jardine, James L Kelly, Scott Koehler, Amy W Puchot, Thomas D Russell, Cissy Wortham

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

William D Bonham, Steven Gordon, Arvis G Williams

Advanced NABC Master (300 Masterpoints)

Gregory May, Ede R Weiner

Life Master (129 in Unit 174)

David A Badertscher

Bronze Life Master (301 in Unit 174)

Marguerite R Crowl, Nancy Ann Hill, Carol Meade

Silver Life Master (190 in Unit 174)

Bert Sheldon, Gary J Winston, Shari M Winston

Ruby Life Master (177 in Unit 174)

Kenneth F Cole, Joanna C Heebner, Tomi W Porterfield, Paula S Wissman

Gold Life Master (89 in Unit 174)

Dolores C Aquino, Karen Tabak Nussbaum

Diamond Life Master (42 in Unit 174)

John T Lindsey

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!



174 Unit News

SUCCESS IN SAN ANTONIO

Unit 174 players made a fine showing at the Fourth of July Regional in San Antonio. The following Unit members were in the top ten masterpoint winners: **Thomas Peters, Stephen Toplansky, Dan Morse, Sally Wheeler, and Buddy Hanby**. Well done, all!

REACH FOR EDUCATION

ACBL has scheduled an exciting opportunity for its members to win gold or red points at participating local clubs during regularly scheduled games. This special "Regional Event At Club House" (REACH), benefitting the ACBL Educational Foundation, takes place from July 29 to August 3.

The REACH event runs on top of, not instead of, the regular club game. Any club masterpoints won during the REACH game are yours to keep, regardless of whether or not you are participating in REACH. However, REACH participants have an extra chance to win additional red or gold overall points, based on their performance when compared across the entire REACH field.

Pre-registration (one-time \$30 fee) is required by July 28 at midnight and players must play in a minimum of two sessions during the REACH week.

Click here for more information, answers to frequently asked questions and to register: https://www.acbl.org/clubs_page/special-events/reach/

For a list of participating clubs, use the following link and then you can search by State (TX) or our Unit (174): <https://cloud.bridgefinesse.com/RAC/EligibleClubs.html>

NORTH AMERICAN PAIRS (NAP)

North American Pairs (NAP) club-level qualifier games have begun and run through August. 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.

[AMBITIOUS AUGUST SECTIONAL, AUGUST 8-11](#)

The August tournament at the Houston Westchase Marriott, is our "experimental" tournament, where we introduce something new to the tournament experience. This year, the bracketed Swiss Team events (daytime only; all except the bottom bracket) will be played with the same duplicated boards used in the pairs games. Swiss Team participants will have hand records and can compare results with their pairs-playing friends. Tournament chairs **Daniel Jackson** and **Clif Rice** have arranged for terrific speakers and topics:



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- ◆ Thursday, 2pm: **John Zilic**, "Opening Leads"
 - ◆ Friday, 2pm: **Thomas Rush**, "Good Bridge is Habit-Forming"
 - ◆ Saturday, 2pm: **Daniel Jackson**, "The Gambler"

GALVESTON 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 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.

♣ 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:

- ◆ July 20: Member Appreciation Game (\$5 for members)
- ◆ July 25: Swiss team "8 is Enough"
- ◆ Aug 1: Daytime Mentor game
- ◆ Aug 19: Nighttime Mentor game

CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

In Memoriam

The Cypress NW Club lost a long time member, friend, and gentleman. **Joe Shirey** passed away on May 16. Joe and his wife **Sallie** were fixtures at the Bear Creek Bridge Club for more than 30 years. More recently, they were founding members of the Cypress Northwest Bridge Clubs. Sallie described Joe as a "happy man," and he was definitely happy playing bridge. Appropriately, he and Sallie came in top scorers on the last time they played (the week before his death,) and Joe was tickled to be the "Champ." This kind gentleman will be missed.

Free classes on Tuesdays!

Throughout the month of August we will be covering Chapter 4 of the ACBL's Commonly Used Conventions in the 21st Century: Major Suit Openings and Responses, Part 2. While you do not need the book to attend the class it is available online from Baron Barclay www.baronbarclay.com/ for



\$19.95. You get a discount if you use your ACBL number. Classes will begin at 11:00 and end at 11:30 so there will be plenty of time to get a spot in our Tuesday game.

New to Duplicate?

Email **Jeanne Phelps** at jsfphelps@gmail.com. You will receive a free copy of the "Introduction to Duplicate Bridge" by Bob McConnell (owner and director of ACBL Unit 533, Palm Springs, CA). The book is your guide to playing in the duplicate format, which is how organized, competitive bridge is played all over the world.

Club Information

Looking for a partner? **Darrell Way** is ready to help. Email him at darrellway@yahoo.com Have questions? Contact Club Owner **Jim Warren** at jwarren760@gmail.com or 832-851-4745. Keep an eye on our webpage -www.bridgewebs.com/cypressnw/ - for more details about the classes.

Special Games

There are no special games in August but its not too early to mark your calendar for Tuesday, September 3 and Thursday, September 5 - 3rd Quarter Club Championships. An opportunity to earn extra points.

LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

Diamond Life Master **Jeff Kroll** will continue to give free lessons at 9:30 am before the 10:30 am game; but after August 1, they will no longer be weekly. Future dates of Jeff's lessons will be announced through the club's emails.

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Aug 1: Charity for ACBL
- ◆ Aug 5: Charity for St. Paul
- ◆ Aug 12: NAP Qualifier game
- ◆ Aug 15: NAP Qualifier game
- ◆ Aug 19: NAP Qualifier game
- ◆ Aug 22: NAP Qualifier game
- ◆ Aug 26: Club Championship
- ◆ Aug 29: Club Championship

For Partnership help, contact **Anita Rothfuss** at larryandanita@gmail.com.
For more information, visit our website at www.lonestarbridge.org.



WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

Westside Bridge Academy (WBA) announced its June awards for success and participation at the club. The Most Masterpoint winners are **Timo Erkoç**(Open) with 43.76 Masterpoints and **Sid Weiss** (I/N) with 8.86 Masterpoints. The Most Frequent players were **James Sells** (Open) with 23 sessions and **Barbara Fagan** (I/N) with 13 sessions. Congrats to all!

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Aug 14 Daytime Mentor game
- ◆ Aug 16: Swiss team "8 is Enough"
- ◆ Aug 27: Nighttime Mentor game

Supervised play Tuesdays at 2:15 pm and Thursdays at 10:30 am.



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 were many of good reads this month; we chose "Mike Lawrence's Bridge Lesson" on page 51. He writes about declarer evaluating the combined assets before playing to the first trick. This advice applies to defenders, also.

We declare 4S and get a spade lead. Cross-ruffing the hand won't work, as opponents will win a diamond and play another spade. That will limit us to five spades in declarer's hand, two ruffs, and the two rounds (hearts, clubs) As: nine tricks, not ten. While it is sometimes said that "down one is good bridge," it is generally not the case when the contract is cold to make.

The key to making this hand is not to ruff the diamonds, but to set up the diamond spots. They contain two tricks that we don't want to waste.

To come to ten tricks (at least), we pull trump in two or three rounds, whatever is necessary. Now we still have five spades tricks and the two aces. If we play diamonds, the best they can do is take the A and Q. We will have established the two remaining diamonds, bringing our trick count to nine, and we will be able to ruff a heart (maybe more than one if we don't have to pull three rounds of trump), giving us at least ten tricks and the contract. Also, given the heart holding, we might get another heart trick if the defenders attack hearts and at least one heart honor is in front of the A.



Other columns you might want to peruse:

- ◆ Berg on responding with 5-5 and 5-4 hands (page 47)
- ◆ Helms on 1NT- DBL -RDBL (page 48)
- ◆ Boehm on reverses (as opener and as responder) (page 54)
- ◆ Cohen on setting up a long side suit (page 55)
- ◆ Kantar on taking all your chances (page 57 and page 58)
- ◆ Lawrence on not taking a finesse he can't afford to lose (page 60)

DECEIVING THE DECLARER

S Deals	♠ QJ762	15
N-S Vul	♥ K762	
	♦ 32	
	♣ K8	
♠ 3		♠ K985
♥ J9843		♥ 10
♦ 95		♦ K1084
♣ AJ642		♣ Q1073
	♠ A104	
	♥ AQ5	
	♦ AQJ76	
	♣ 95	
	9	
	6 8	
	17	
NS 5♠; NS 3♥; NS 3♦;		
NS 4♣; E 2♣; W 1♣;		
Par +650		

With 17 HCP, a five card suit and all those As, South rates this hand stronger than 17 and opens 1D. North bids 1S and South bids 2N, showing 18-19. 3C by North is new minor forcing, looking for three spades or four hearts in the South hand. South shows the three spades and North raises to game.

1D - 1S | 2N - 3C! | 3S - 4S

East led the HT. It's not usually best to look for a ruff when you have long and decent trumps, but leading from a minor suit KT or QT is not attractive. Declarer won the HK and played a small spade to the T. He then led the C5 toward the CK. West rose with the CA, thinking that it was likely that East had led a singleton heart and planning to give East a heart ruff.

When giving partner a ruff, the value of the card you lead is a suit preference signal. A high spot card suggests a return in the higher of the other two non-trump suits; a low spot card suggests a return in the lower. In this case, diamonds is the higher-ranking and clubs the lower-ranking.

West led the H9. The nine is generally considered to be a high spot card; why does West want a diamond? Were we kibbitzing the hand (and seeing only the dummy) we would assume that West was either void in diamonds (unlikely) or held the DK behind the AQJ. Looking at the hand record, we know that neither is true. *The lead of the H9 is a deception play.*

West is not likely to be getting in, no matter what is led. However, there could be an extra trick for EW if EW can convince declarer that West holds the DK. The extra trick will happen if East holds the DK. If East doesn't hold the DK, then declarer has it, his diamonds are solid and EW will get only two tricks.



East, of course, sees the DK in her own hand and understands what West is trying to do. East takes her ruff and dutifully plays along, returning a diamond, as "preferred" by West.

Declarer is now in a tough spot. If he puts in the DQ, it looks like the finesse will fail and West will give East a second ruff, for down 1. So, like most would do, he went up with the ace. Declarer made the contract, but did not get the overtrick to which he was entitled, as there was no way not to lose the DK.

In matchpoints, those overtricks are important.

Jeff Kroll & Sam Khayatt
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