



American Contract
Bridge League

Unit 174 Newsletter

October 2019



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.

- ◆ [President's Message](#)
- ◆ [Board Business](#)
- ◆ [New Members and Rank Advancements](#)
- ◆ [Unit News](#)
- ◆ [Club News](#)
- ◆ [From the Editors](#)

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

At our August sectional, our unit tested out utilizing hand records during the team games and received considerably more positive feedback than not. Those providing their concerns and suggestions created learning opportunities for the board.

By way of the compliments, we had many regarding the wonderful instructions provided at each table, that playing many of the same boards as the pair game made it easy for all to review hands, and that by playing many of the same hands it made the competition more equitable.

The primary complaints were related to board movement delays, slow play, and players discussing boards in front of others who'd not played them yet. Some people preferred the way "it's always been" as shuffle and deal to having any record with which their partners and teammates would want to review afterwards.



In the pair games, the question has come up as to how pairs might play more of the same boards to allow for more equity across-the-board based on the number of tables per section. Based on your input, here are two initial ways we are addressing the above in an effort to continuously improve and provide the best experience possible for our diverse membership:

- ◆ At our fall Sectional, we will be running our pair sessions using 26-27 boards and a web movement where appropriate.
- ◆ In 2020, we are considering again using hand records during team games on a limited basis at another Sectional with improvements including time clocks, additional caddy service and reminders to not discuss hands until end of session except when comparing hands with teammates.

As many of you know, board member **Daniel Jackson** has accepted a new job in San Antonio and will be leaving Unit 174. I would like to commend and thank Daniel for his work on the board. He continually brought new ideas to consider implementing for the benefit of our members. He was the driving force behind using the pre-made Swiss Team boards at the August sectional and saw to it that we had the instructions appreciated by so many players. We wish him and his wife Debbie all the best!

Lauri Laufman, President, Unit 174

llaufman@texas2211.com

Board Business

I/N AMBASSADORS FOR FIRST-TIME TOURNAMENT PLAYERS

What is an I/N Ambassador?

This is an ACBL Player with 5-299 Masterpoints who will be available as a one-time partner for games during regional and sectional tournaments. The I/N ambassador is ready to play with a 299er first-time tournament attendee who does not have a partner but wants to begin playing tournament Bridge. We hope that the First-Timer will have a great time, learn a little about tournament Bridge and find a regular partner who enjoys the high energy of these large events!



How the system works

A first-time tournament attendee with fewer than 300 Masterpoints may go to the I/N Table and register for a Free Play (good for one game). If the First-Timer comes with a partner, he or she picks up the Free Play coupon and they proceed to playing area where the Free Play coupon can be used in lieu of cash for one player for one session. If the First-Timer does not have a partner, he or she notifies the I/N Table Staff that a partner will be needed. If another First-Timer shows up, they will be paired together. About 15 minutes before a game is to start, if no other single First-Timer shows up, the Ambassador will partner the First-Timer for that one game.

LONE STAR REGIONAL (LSR) - PLANNING UNDERWAY

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.

Tournament chairs **Lauri Laufman** and **Jack LaVigne** are hard at work securing speakers and sponsorships. If you would like to honor someone - a fellow player, teacher, director, partner, opponent - please contact Jack at jacklavigne@att.net.

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: Dave Becker, Mary D Bicknell, Joseph E Blankenship, Lori Cheek, Kyle Dahlem, Bill De George, Betsy E Himmel, David D Hindman, John C Hoffman, Kathleen C Hubbard, Art Jacikas, Marcie Jacikas, Linda Lewis, Joyce Long, Peggy E Ratcliffe, Michael A Reynolds, Marylinn Schwanitz, Michael J Siciliano, Corinne L Smith, Karen S Sponsel, Billy Tiger, Tom Washenfelder

RANK ADVANCEMENTS

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

Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

Randall E Rollins, Carol B Royer

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

David S Good, Mary Jaffe, Artie Lane, Samuel Levin, Dorothy Lee Levinson, Edna A Rice, Walt T Thome, Donna Wassr

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Bill F Farrar, Judy Farrar, Martin J Hrachovy, Hasin F Jinna, Valerie J Salle, Ned Stuart

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Ann L Johnson, Sue L McCulley, Mary T Vagnoni

Advanced NABC Master (300 Masterpoints)

Chie Yen

Life Master (129 in Unit 174)

Richard H Labouliere

Bronze Life Master (296 in Unit 174)

Deborah L Jackson, Michael Kern, John P Montgomery, David B Richard, Carole P Samuels, Helen M Wren

Silver Life Master (184 in Unit 174)

Byron Fackenthall, Tonya S McNabb



Gold Life Master (91 in Unit 174)

Thomas Rush

Diamond Life Master (45 in Unit 174)

L W Laird

Emerald Life Master (13 in Unit 174)

David P Henke

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!

174 Unit News

GALVESTON FALL SECTIONAL

The Galveston Fall Sectional, November 1-3, is just around the corner. There will be lots to do, even for your friends and family who do not play bridge. There will be dinner followed by evening entertainment on Friday and Saturday. On Friday, Harry Maurer will deliver a Comedy & Magic performance. On Saturday, there will be a Casino party. **Reservations** for dinner and entertainment are **required** (\$20 per person per event) **by Tuesday, October 28**. Please make out and mail checks to **Dianna Gittelman** at 2027 Drexel Drive, Houston, TX 77027. Please email Dianna at frogus2@gmail.com so she can give the hotel an accurate number.

Tournament chairs **Jack LaVigne** and **Cindy Cox** have arranged two wonderful speakers. On Friday at 2:30 pm, **Thomas Rush** will present "Defend Better. Win More." On Saturday at 2:00 pm, **Gary King** will speak on "Declarer and the Trump Suit."

On Sunday all games will be regionally rated (more silver points than usual per session) and lunch will be provided free of charge.

We are again providing ambassadors for first-time I/N attendees. Please refer to the [Board Business](#) section for more details.



UNIT STaC RESULTS

The Unit STaC tournament took place October 7-13. "STaC" stands for Sectional Tournament at Clubs. Games during this week are tournament-rated, so masterpoints points awarded were silver rather than the usual black. We had a nice turnout: 811 players won 2104.64 masterpoints. There were 670 tables in play. The top ten masterpoint winners were: **Eddie Wold, Georgiana Gates, Linda Sutton, Jack La Vigne, Stephen Reichel, Linda Rensi, Vinh Tran, Buddy Hanby, Carol Winograd and Sally Wheeler.** [Click here for tournament results.](#)

SOCIAL-DUPLICATE SUCCESS



On Saturday, September 21, Clear Lake Bridge Club became the first club to try out this event with excellent results. Including the members, guests and club volunteers, there were 11 tables filled plus 8-10 additional volunteers on hand to act as greeters and table hosts.

Everyone had time to meet and make new friends while chatting and enjoying a table full of delicious finger foods before being split into two groups. **Evvie Gilbert** and

her table hosts ran a supervised duplicate style bridge game which included 21 social duplicate guests at the 7 tables that played in the main room.

In the smaller room, **Dave Glandorf** introduced 12 new players to the basics of bridge in such a way that at the end of his interactive class, they were able to bid, play and score a few hands! At the conclusion of the event, most everyone agreed that they would return for another event like this with many picking up club calendars and membership information before leaving.

Hats off to event coordinator **Evvie Gilbert**, bridge instructor **Dave Glandorf** and Clear Lake Bridge Club members who all banded together to deliver a terrific event!





Everyone had time to meet and make new friends while chatting and enjoying a table full of delicious finger foods before being split into two groups. Evvie Gilbert and her table hosts ran a supervised duplicate style bridge game which included 21 social duplicate guests at the 7 tables that played in the main room.

SPECIAL GAMES - EXTRA POINTS

During the week of November 18-24, many Unit clubs will be running extra-point games to raise money for the Austin NABC in the fall of 2021. Support our District's NABC and pick up lots of extra points!

2020 D16 TEACHER OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

District 16 proudly honors and supports its bridge teachers. New players, many of whom become our students, are the lifeblood of the game, and the teachers who nurture and prepare them deserve our appreciation. In this spirit, the Teacher of the Year award is given annually to an outstanding District teacher.

Nominations are now being accepted; any District member may submit a nomination (or two or three...). To nominate a teacher, submit the following information by email to **Buck Buchanan** at rcb722322@gmail.com:

- ◆ Teacher's name
- ◆ Teacher's contact information
- ◆ A brief statement describing why this teacher deserves the honor

Nominees will be asked to provide by December 31 a more complete description of their teaching activities. The 2020 District Teacher of the Year award will be presented at the 2020 Lone Star Regional.

We encourage you to promote our Unit educators.

♣ 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:

- ◆ Oct 24: Swiss team "8 is Enough"
- ◆ Oct 31: Halloween party and costume contest. Bring snacks!
- ◆ Nov 7: Daytime Mentor game
- ◆ Nov 18: Nighttime Mentor game
- ◆ Nov 21: Swiss team "8 is Enough"
- ◆ Nov 28: Club closed for Thanksgiving

CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Nov 5: 4th Quarter Club Championship
- ◆ Nov 7: 4th Quarter Club Championship
- ◆ Dec 3: STaC
- ◆ Dec 5: STaC

Free Class – Every Tuesday from 11:00 to 11:30

The Cypress NW DBC series for the rest of the year uses *Commonly Used Conventions in the 21st Century*. You do not need to purchase the book to participate.

November class sessions focus on Chapter 7: Weak Two Bids. In the December class, we will cover the final Chapter 8: Strong 2 Club bids.

If you have an idea for the next set of classes, please contact **Jeanne Phelps** at jsfphelps@gmail.com.

LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Oct 21: Club Appreciation
- ◆ Oct 24: Club Appreciation
- ◆ Oct 28: Club Appreciation
- ◆ Oct 31: Club Appreciation, Halloween Party, Costume Contest
- ◆ Nov 4: Club Masterpoint
- ◆ Nov 5: 299r Game,
- ◆ Nov 7: ACBL Charity
- ◆ Nov 11: Unit Club Championship. Veterans play FREE.
- ◆ Nov 14: Club Championship
- ◆ Nov 18: Club Championship



DLM **Jeff Kroll** arrives early on days he is playing to answer bridge questions. Players may also send in bridge questions to Jeff at texas.blue.hen@gmail.com or place them in a box at the club. Future dates of Jeff's lessons will be announced.

WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

Westside Bridge Academy (WBA) announced its September awards for success and participation at the club. The Most Masterpoint winners are **Joe Quinn** (Open) with 33.81 Masterpoints and **Sarah Springer** (I/N) with 9.59 Masterpoints. The Most Frequent players were **Chris Kollenberg** (Open) with 23 sessions and **Linda Drake** (I/N) with 23 sessions. Congrats to all!

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Nov 1-3: CLOSED for the Galveston Sectional.
- ◆ Nov 7-10: 299r Tournament
- ◆ Nov 13: Morning Mentor game
- ◆ Nov 15: Swiss team "8 is Enough" (7pm)
- ◆ Nov 26: Evening Mentor game
- ◆ Nov 28: Club closed for Thanksgiving

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 several years of these monthly summaries are available [here, on the WBA website](#).

Bridge Bulletin ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

We chose Robert Todd's column on page 46 as the article of the month. Todd discusses how the shapeliness (or lack of it) should be factored into the decision to open with a pre-empt. Many players end their analysis on preempts after looking at the length and quality of their long suit. That is only a starting point.

How the rest of the hand is distributed is also a factor as to how many tricks you will take. The trick-taking ability of the hand is an important factor when preempting. The flatter your hand, the worse it is. Conversely, the more shapely your hand, the better it is.



In the first two columns, Todd compares two hands where the distribution differs by only one card, but that one card makes all the difference. The first hand is 6-2-2-3, the worst possible distribution of a hand with a six-card suit. The second hand is 6-1-3-3, a better distribution. This hand is a better trick taking/preemptive hand than the first hand, as it allows for a possible ruff of the third diamond in dummy.

In the third column, he discusses 6-4 hands. We teach the same thing he does: many 6-4 hands are so good for preempting that you should consider treating them like a seven-card suit. This is typically true when your long suits are where your high cards are. The first hand, which has 6-1-4-2 distribution, a strong six-card suit and a decent 4 card suit, should be opened 3S.

He concludes with a discussion of 7-2-2-2 hands. A 7-2-2-2 hand with three worthless doubletons can be opened 2S instead of 3S.

Two other columns we considered were:

- ♦ Boehm on when to unblock (page 54)
- ♦ Kantar's nifty end play (page 59, first deal)

UNBLOCKING

Unblocking—purposefully ridding a hand of high cards—is a technique used so that

1. Partner's hand, which contains length, can win more tricks. A suit is said to block when the short hand wins a trick with its last card in the suit and is unable to return the lead to partner who has established winners in the blocked suit.

OR

2. Partner can get on lead make a lead that works well only from partner's side.

Being able to reach partner's hand is referred to as "keeping communications open."

We are defending a notrump contract. Partner leads the K in a suit where our holding is Ax. Now what?

The first thing we would do is to make a note to tell partner afterwards that it's poor bridge to lead the K when we hold Ax. A good partner should magically be able to see our Ax through the backs of the cards and know to lead low (yes, we are just kidding).



To play decent defense, we have to trust partner. So if partner leads the K against a notrump contract, he should have a suit headed by the KQJ or the KQT. The standard play for us is to overtake the K with the A and lead it back.

Course it wouldn't hurt to look at dummy. If dummy has the Q, it would be foolish to play the ace. If dummy has Jxxx it would also be foolish to play the ace as we would be turning three tricks into two.

Similarly, when partner leads a Q against a notrump contract, he is promising a suit headed by QJT or QJ9. Holding Ax and assuming we don't see the K in dummy, we play the A and return the suit, through declarer's K.

And if partner leads a Q, dummy has the A, and we have Kx, the correct play is to drop the K under dummy's A. The idea is the same: keep communications open with partner.

However, these are general guidelines that work most of the time, but not all the time.

<p>♠2 ♥A5 ♦AKQJ1087 ♣KQJ</p>	
	<p>♠QJ9876 ♥K2 ♦94 ♣1087</p>

Consider this Larry Cohen deal. You are sitting East, defending 3N by South in an IMPs scoring event. Partner leads the HQ, the dummy is faced and, you are looking at the cards pictured at left.

You can see that NS has eight tricks off the top in the North hand: seven diamonds and the HA. If South has either black ace, NS will have their ninth trick and the contract cannot be defeated. So you must play partner for both black aces. Partner is doing a similar exercise when dummy is faced. He counts the same eight tricks in dummy. From partner's perspective, if South has the HK, NS will have their ninth trick and the contract cannot be defeated. So he must play you for the HK.

The winning defense is this: when declarer lets partner in with one of the black aces (likely the CA, as dummy's holding is solid after that), partner leads low to your HK. You return the SQ and it's curtains for the declarer.

Aren't you glad you didn't play the HK at trick 1? It's your only entry.



Here is the full deal:

Vul: NS Dir: East	♠2 ♥A5 ♦AKQJ1087 ♣KQJ	
♠A3 ♥QJ108 ♦65 ♣A9532		♠QJ9876 ♥K2 ♦94 ♣1087
	♠K1054 ♥97643 ♦32 ♣64	

FAREWELL TO DANIEL AND DEBBIE JACKSON

We, also, would like to acknowledge our loss and San Antonio's gain when **Daniel and Debbie Jackson** move to San Antonio. Debbie has introduced many Houston players to the game of bridge through her classes taught at Lone Star College.

Daniel has been a successful player at the national level; as a flight B player, he won Red Ribbon pairs, NAPs and GNTs. He is a brilliant BBO robot player and was second in the ACBL last month. Daniel is terrific teacher and presenter, generous with both his time and expertise.

We will miss them both.

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