



American Contract  
Bridge League

# Unit 174 Newsletter February 2020



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

## President's Message

When recently asked if I recalled my very first Regional, I grinned and nodded. It was January 31, 2005 and I was seated, ready to kibitz **Milton Freedman & Mildred Breed** when an announcement was made looking for a single willing to play. Having under 10 MP at that time, the thought of playing with someone I didn't know, and in the "open game" was quite scary. I still have the trophy presented me that night for winning 1st overall in C with **Eric Watson**.

Lone Star Regional is now in the books. To everyone involved, thank you. We had 3,052 tables with a total of 1,759 individual players attending the tournament. Players came from Bulgaria, Canada, Italy, Mexico, United Arab Emirates and 36 other states in the U.S.

It takes so many to make our Regional the success it was, that I am afraid I'd leave someone out if I tried! Our Unit couldn't begin to host this annual event without the assistance of a cohesive hands-on unit board, past chairs, contract negotiators and other key volunteers. Add to that a fabulous group of coordinators handling Partnership, Hospitality, I/N, speaker



selection and caddies plus over 100 volunteers assisting in every way possible. And then, let's not forget the photographer, speakers or directors. Yes, the list goes on. To everyone involved, thank you!

Your post tournament input (regardless of whether compliments, complaints or constructive comments) help both this and future boards address what is working along with what might need some improving. Know that each comment card and email submitted has been carefully reviewed and considered. We have already started researching how to make our Lone Star Regional (and Sectionals) an even better playing experience for all!

Back to that Regional in 2005, while I bet people commented on the room temp, break time length between sessions and need for more chocolates, my memory will forever be that of playing in the "big game" and making new friends throughout the week.

*Lauri Laufman, President, Unit 174*  
[llaufman@texas2211.com](mailto:llaufman@texas2211.com)

## Board Business

### **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: NEED YOUR HELP**

We are trying something new this year. In an effort to shorten the time between Sunday sessions, we will hold the annual membership meeting before the morning session, rather than after it. However, the meeting will not be official unless there are at least 175 players present (that is the minimum number for a quorum). Free breakfast will be offered at 9:00am, followed by the opening of the meeting at 9:15pm. ACBL Directors will be on hand to sell "early bird" entries between 9:00 and 9:15. Please join us for breakfast and help us make this work.

### **ELECTION SECTIONAL**

We will be playing 26 boards on Friday and Saturday, thus the later afternoon start times on those days. Assuming there is a quorum present for the Sunday morning business meeting, awards and election results will be announced just before the afternoon session.

[District 16 GNT Qualifiers and Finals](#) will again be held at the Westchase Marriott and run concurrently with the Election Sectional.

As of this writing, there is no firm date for the Marriott to begin charging for parking. The



board previously determined to reduce Sectional session entry fees to \$11/person on Friday and Saturday, \$10 Sunday in anticipation of this charge.

## 2020-2021 DIRECTORIES

Directories were delivered late to the Regional this year due to a glitch with the print files and are now being distributed at various clubs around the unit. They will also be made available at the Election Sectional. Let supply chair **Clif Rice** know should you wish to take some back to your club after the Sectional. If possible, please let him know how many you would like to take back.

## NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the U174 Board will take place at Tracy Gee on Monday, March 2, at 9:30am.

# 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: **Mike Arroyos, George L Bryant, Margaret R Curlet, Anne L Davis, Carol S Finkelstein, Janis Hodgson, Rakesh Kapoor, Utkarsh Koshti, Kay McKeough, Michael N Oakes, Maruf Rahman, Bruce F Rutherford, Bonnie B Smollen, Robert W Stevenson, Terri L Swift, Chung Tan**

## 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 [on the ACBL website](#).

Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

**Herbert B Grossman, Mary R Malone, Joan E Scott, Karim Shah**

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

**Pat Baker, Nancy Blackwell, Sherian Bloomer, Gail E Burbridge, Bill Jenkins, Sharon Jenkins, Margaret S Williams, Judy C Wilson-Wise**



Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

John P Doyle, Maureen P Mallory, Anne M Miraglia, James W Moore, Cindy Schaefer, Anju Sethi

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Karen E Burnley, Penny L Griffis, Martin J Hrachovy

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Paddy R Fiorino, David M Freedman, Tom Russell, Baijanti Shrestha

**Bronze Life Master** (296 in Unit 174)

Lynda M Kornbleet, Sandra J McMinn, Evita J Rduch, Titia A Smulders, Peggy P Wyatt

*Silver Life Master* (185 in Unit 174)

Shyam Bhatia, Mercedes Snyder

**Ruby Life Master** (176 in Unit 174)

Mary Jane Kinnebrew, Patrick R Tourais

**Gold Life Master** (92 in Unit 174)

Phyllis G Timko

*Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!*

## 174 Unit News

### LONE STAR REGIONAL RESULTS

We had a great turnout at the Lone Star Regional, co-chaired by **Lauri Laufman** and **Jack LaVigne**: 1653 players earned a total of 19,688.65 masterpoints. The table count was **3052!** Thank you all for coming out to play. Unit masterpoint winners in the top ten were: **W Lease, Mike Doyle, Ralda St Pierre, Dolores Aquino, Buddy Hanby, Sally Wheeler, Eddie Wold, Robert Morris, Shari Winston** and **Gary Winston**.

Unit 174 members were recognized in both District 16 award presentations. The District 16 Star award is presented for work done at the Unit level to promote bridge and further Unit activities. The 2020 winner is our own **Dianna Gittelman**. And two Unit 174 teachers, **Julie Halperin** and **Sam Khayatt**, were named as finalists for the District 16 Teacher of the Year.



## VOTE!!!

Save effort and time and vote online from March 9 through March 31! It's easy... go to [www.acblunit174.org](http://www.acblunit174.org), place your mouse over "MyUnit174" on the right side of the menu bar, click on "BOD Election" and follow the instructions. Your last chances for in-person voting will be one hour before each session of the Election Sectional on Friday and Saturday and then on Sunday morning. View candidate statements and voting rules [here](#).

## SPECIAL GAMES - EXTRA POINTS!

February has been designated by the ACBL as Education Foundation Month. Most, if not all, clubs in the Unit are offering Fund games all month. It's not too late to scoop up some extra points for your success at the table.

## 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](mailto: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

BCOH had a great turnout at the 499r in January and is aiming for 100 tables at the 499r in March. Come get your silver points while you practice for the Election Sectional.

Upcoming special games:

- ♦ Feb 23 [MiniBridge](#)
- ♦ Feb 27 "8 is Enough" Swiss Team
- ♦ Feb 29 Class begins: [Beginning Bridge](#) with **Sam Khayatt**
- ♦ Mar 5 Daytime Mentor game
- ♦ Mar 16 Evening Mentor game
- ♦ Mar 19-22 [499r Tournament](#)
- ♦ Mar 26 "8 is Enough" Swiss Team

### CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

Cypress NW DBC hosts a free class – Every Tuesday from 11:00 to 11:30.

In February **Dan Egner** will start a new class series from the ACBL Bridge Series: *Defense in the 21st Century*. Many of the greatest players in the game have said that the opening lead can make the difference between winning and losing a world championship. In February he will



cover "Opening Leads against Notrump Contracts." Dan has copies of the book for you to borrow - **When he says free, he means free!**

Details about our location, getting questions answered, or finding a partner can be found at the club website: <http://www.bridgewebs.com/cypressnw>

## FORT BEND DBC

The Monday game has moved from Rosenberg to Sugar Land.

Open game every Monday at 10:15 AM.

Open game every Tuesday at 9 AM.

Clyde & Nancy Jacks Conference Center

3232 Austin Parkway

Sugar Land, TX 7747916

Please contact **Eric Watson** in advance, either at [ewat2004@aol.com](mailto:ewat2004@aol.com) or at 832-287-9107.

## LAKE CONROE DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

A special game will be held at Lake Conroe Duplicate Bridge Club Friday, February 28 starting at 10:30AM to honor the memory of **Jody Henry**. The club's games are held at April Sound Church, 67 1/2 April Wind South, Montgomery, TX. 77356. **Reservations will be required** no later than **Friday, February 21**, as lunch will be provided and space could be somewhat limited. Sign up at the club or email **Norm and Joyce Gautier** at [gautier39@comcast.net](mailto:gautier39@comcast.net) or call one of them at 281-367-6244 to reserve your spot. If you need N/S seating or prefer a vegetarian lunch, please so indicate.

## LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

Open games are offered Mondays at noon and Thursdays at 10:30 am. A 299er game is offered at 10:30 am on the second Tuesday of each month.

March is "Membership Month." The membership fee is \$5. Voting for the election of three board members will take place during the last two weeks in March.

On March 10 at 9:45am, DLM **Jeff Kroll** will offer a free lesson that covers the following topics:

- ◆ Light third-seat opening and Reverse Drury
- ◆ Why, on the opening lead, it's usually wrong to lead or under-lead an unsupported ace in against a suit contract



- ◆ When to open 1 NT and when to open one of your major when you have 15-17 points and a five-card major
- ◆ General review of the Notrump Opening Bid section of the Convention Card

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Mar 2 Club Championship
- ◆ Mar 5 Club Championship
- ◆ Mar 9 D16 Grass Roots
- ◆ Mar 10 D16 Local Charity (299er)
- ◆ Mar 16 ACBL Charity
- ◆ Mar 19 Local Charity: St. Paul UMC

## WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

Westside Bridge Academy (WBA) announced its January awards for success and participation at the club. The Most Masterpoint winners are **Joe Quinn** (Open) with 39.17 Masterpoints and **Paddy Fiorino** (I/N) with 12.58 Masterpoints. The Most Frequent players were **James Sells** (Open) with 21 sessions and **Paddy Fiorino** (I/N) with 16 sessions. Congrats to all!

WBA is hosting two seminars by **Robert Todd**:

- ◆ Mar 6, 3-6pm, Defensive Strategies
- ◆ Mar 7, 9am-Noon, Modern Preempt

To reserve your spot email [jimmybreihan@comcast.net](mailto:jimmybreihan@comcast.net). Make check payable to WBA. \$60 for one session or \$100 for both.

Upcoming special games:

- ◆ Mar 11 Morning Mentor game
- ◆ Mar 24 Evening Mentor game
- ◆ Mar 27 "8 is Enough" Swiss Team

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

Upcoming classes (start date):

- ◆ Mar 4 Learn to Play Bridge with **Gary King**
- ◆ Mar 21 Supervised Group Study for the Flight B Player with **Gary King**
- ◆ Apr 1 Beginning Bridge with **Terry Currie**
- ◆ Apr 2 Play of the Hand with **Terry Currie**
- ◆ Apr 8 Competitive Bidding with **Joe Quinn**



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

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

We often are asked about whether to open a major or notrump when holding a balanced hand, a five-card major and a number of points appropriate for a notrump bid. Two of February's "Bidding Box" problems illustrate this question.

#### **Problem 3, page 38**

We hold 16 HCP, a fifth card in a good heart suit and 3-5-3-2 distribution, as flat as it gets when you have a five-card suit. Both contestants and the *Bridge Bulletin* auction chose to open this hand 1N as opposed to 1H. The reasons for the 1N opener are:

- ◆ **Rebid**

Opening 1H sets up a rebid problem. What would we do over a likely 1S or 1N bid from partner? Over 1S, we would be forced to bid 2H as 1N shows about 11-14 points and 2N shows 19-20 points. Over 1N we would bid 2D which is an awkward bid: if we end up in notrump, it will be played from the wrong side – the weak hand. We need to think about our next bid before making this one.

- ◆ **Spade holding**

We have three spades; we are happy to have partner transfer us to spades.

- ◆ **Tricks**

Most of our points are face cards (as opposed to aces), which lends the hand to notrump. We have only 2 ½ quick tricks; most of our tricks will be slow and sure, once the opponents' high cards are out. This type of holding is better for notrump, since we can run our winners once they are set up.

- ◆ **Suit Quality**

Our hearts are solid, they are likely to take the same number of tricks in notrump as hearts, and we need only nine tricks in a notrump game as opposed to ten in a heart game.





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#### Problem 4, page 38

We hold 20 HCP, a fifth card in a good spade suit and 5-2-4-2 distribution – could be flatter. Both contestants and the Bridge Bulletin auction chose to open this hand 1S as opposed to 2NT. The reasons for the 1S opener are:

♦ **Rebid**

We have an easy rebid; our hand is strong enough to jump shift into diamonds and the diamonds are strong enough to mention if need be.

♦ **Tricks**

With two aces and 5 ½ quick tricks, this hand will play better in a suit. Quick tricks are often better in a suit, while slow tricks are often better in notrump.

♦ **Flaws**

We have two flaws for a notrump bid. The first is a wide-open suit (clubs). The second is the two doubletons. We subscribe to Ron Klinger's guideline that it's OK to have one flaw for a notrump bid but not two.

The articles below were also considered:

"Parrish the Thought," page 45, on how bidding affects the play of the hand

"Reasoning with Robert," page 46, on fit-based slams and fourth-suit forcing

"Startup Bridge," page 47, on not drawing trump if you need to cross-ruff

"Ask Jerry," page 48, on passing with an opening hand in a competitive auction

"The Real Deal," page 52, on not wasting entries

"Chalk Talk," page 53, on identifying a singleton lead

"Boehm on Bridge," page 54, on putting partner in slam

"Better Bridge with Bergen," page 57, on upgrading or downgrading a hand

"Mike's Advice," page 60, on dummy reversals



**Board 31**  
 South Deals  
 N-S Vul

♠ 3	♠ J 5 2	♠ 10 9 4
♥ K J 10 7 6	♥ Q 9 4 3 2	♥ 8 5
♦ K Q 3	♦ A 10 7 4	♦ J 8 2
♣ K 10 9 7	♣ Q	♣ J 8 6 4 3

N
E  
W
S

♠ A K Q 8 7 6
♥ A
♦ 9 6 5
♣ A 5 2

NS 5♠; NS 3N; NS 4♦; EW 2♣; NS 1♥;  
 Par +650

## VULNERABILITY MATTERS

Vulnerability can affect our first call in a standard auction. Consider the hand diagram at left. The auction proceeds as shown below. What action do we take with the North hand?

1S – 2H - ??

We have two options: Pass or 2S.

### Pass

Pass does not necessarily show weakness, it just means we don't have a better bid right now. We fairly sure East will pass. Partner (South) has an opening hand; West should have an opening hand or close to it and we have nine. There are not a lot of points left for East.

When East passes, South must reopen to protect our hand. We hope South will reopen with a double (take out) which, looking at five hearts to the Q9 and the DA, we will convert to a penalty double.

### 2S

The North hand is not quite strong enough for a limit raise; the CQ is not really working. If the CQ were the SQ and there were a club void, a 3H cue-bid limit raise would be easy. Even with QJx in spades and a club singleton, it would be close enough for a limit raise. The actual holding does not merit a limit raise.

So, how do we evaluate these two options? We look at the vulnerability and the scores associated with each outcome.

We do expect to beat 2H, but can we beat it enough to get a better score than our spade game? We are vulnerable; they are not. Our vulnerable spade game (assuming it's there) is worth 620. We would have to beat 2HX by four tricks–100, 300, 500, 800– to get a good board. That's a tall order. We would bid 2S. At this vulnerability, it's more important to find our game, if it's there.



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Were the vulnerability reversed, we would pass, hoping partner will re-open with a double, which we will pass and convert to a penalty double. If they are vulnerable and we are not, we have to beat 2HX by only two tricks—300, 500—to get a score better than the 420 we would get for our non-vulnerable game.

As the cards lie, EW is likely to take six tricks, for down two. So only the most favorable vulnerability, they vulnerable, we not, allows NS to profit by playing defense on this hand.

### **CORRECTION**

**James Zhan** was left off the list of Flight B NAP qualifiers. We regret the omission.

*Jeff Kroll & Sam Khayatt*  
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