



American Contract
Bridge League

Unit 174 Newsletter January 2021



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

PLAY OR WATCH BRIDGE	
Solitaire	
Competitive	
BBO Prime	New
Casual	
Practice	
FEATURED AREAS	
ACBL World	
Robot World	
Virtual Clubs	
Challenges	
Instant Tournaments	

The New Year brings with it the winners of the *Ace of Clubs* and *Mini-McKenney* races. There is also a new kid on the block, the Online Points Race. What is that?

If you win points at a local club, the points won count both for the *Ace of Clubs* and *Mini-McKenny*. The same can be said for points won playing in an ACBL Support Your Club (SYC) game. Points won in an online tournament count only towards the *Mini-McKenney*.

There is another group of events on BBO, individuals with Robots or pairs with humans. One gets to these events by



clicking on ACBL World from the front page or the Instant Tournaments.

Points won playing in these events count towards the Online Points Race, but not towards Ace of Clubs or Mini-McKenny.

For all but the Pair events your partner and opponents are robots. Your true opponents are the other human beings sitting in your seat. Therefore, to succeed at robot bridge, you need to play better than your opponents, and you also need to outwit the robots.

The different types of robot games are:

ACBL **Daylong** tournaments (12/18 boards): Every day there are five tournaments (4 matchpoint and 1 IMP). You can take all the time you want to play 12/18 hands.

ACBL **Robot Duplicate** (12/18 boards): There are two (1 matchpoint and 1 IMP) every hour.

ACBL **Instant** Tournaments (12 boards). You can play any time of the day in a pair or IMP game. You have a limited time to finish the twelve hands.

Below is a snapshot of some of the events on Sunday at 12:27.

Host	Title	Type	Start	Entries	Entry Fee
acbl	ACBL Daylong (MP) 4 - 2021-01-10	Individual	Running	238	1.35 BB\$
acbl	ACBL Daylong (MP) 2 - 2021-01-10	Individual	Running	307	1.35 BB\$
acbl	ACBL Daylong (IMP) 1 - 2021-01-10	Individual	Running	200	1.35 BB\$
acbl	ACBL Robot Duplicate (12 Boards) - IMPs #8333	Individual	<1	15	1.25 BB\$
acbl	ACBL Robot Duplicate (Classic MP) - 12 boards #8368	Individual	3	24	1.25 BB\$
acbl	ACBL Robot Duplicate (12 Boards) - Matchpoints #8394	Individual	6	6	1.25 BB\$
acbl	ACBL Robot Duplicate (18 Boards) - Matchpoints #8220	Individual	8	2	1.75 BB\$
acbl	Pairs ACBL Sun 2pm Speedball #74182	Pairs	36	54	1.25 BB\$

ACBL Instant Tournaments Add your ACBL number About

The premier event is the North American Robot Individual, held at the same time as the three ACBL NABCs.



Congratulations to the winners and top ten finishers. A complete listing for each of these can be found on our unit web site at:

[Online Ace of Clubs Mini-McKenney](#)

Until next month, may your luck peak during the Silver Linings week, Jan 18–24.

Jack LaVigne, President, Unit 174

jacklavigne@att.net

Board Business

ONLINE VOTING

The board voted to start online voting Mar 23, 2021. Members may vote for one, two or three of the six candidates: **Dave Becker, Bill Keihnhoff, Carol Lombardino, Raza Naqvi, Thomas Rush** and **Eric Watson**

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES

The board approved two bylaw changes to be voted upon by the membership at the next annual meeting. Article V1, Section 4 is unchanged but re-worded to clarify that members may vote for one, two or three candidates. Article IX, Section 2 is to be deleted because the disciplinary role is no longer a unit function.

New Members and Rank Advancements

ACBL notifies us each month about the members new to our Unit and about those who advanced a rank in 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: **Kiran Ali, Deborah F Atkinson, Nelson W Brown, Jr, Elizabeth B Callaway, Mina Chesnut, E Edgar Cosman, Daniel J Foelber, John H Foelber, Steve J Hsia, Terry L Orr, Barry Sanders, W Stephen Slavick**



RANK ADVANCEMENTS

Listed below are the new Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL for December, 2020. An explanation of ranks may be found at [on the ACBL website](#).

Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

Daniel J Foelber, Nihat Ovutmen, Jawaid Saeedi

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Juanita M Goss, Judy Richeson, Edward ScottNames

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Gail E Burbridge, Manju Manek, Alan Schaefer, Gloria Ventress

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Marcia Chambliss, Martin J Hrachovy, Sharon Kaplan, Jim R Nicas, David E Vaughn

Life Master (109 in Unit 174)

James E Soller

Ruby Life Master (169 in Unit 174)

Jane E Boozalis, Pamela E Dettmers, Dianne M Kraft, Victoria S Ornowski, Ming Su

Emerald Life Master (14 in Unit 174)

Jim M Hawkins Jr, Betty K Starzec

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!

174 Unit News

OFF TO THE RACES

With the conclusion of the 2020 calendar year come the final standings in the ACBL masterpoints races. Several Unit 174 members finished in the top ten at the national level. Congratulations to all, especially to **Dolores Aquino**, who finished in the top position for her category of both the Mini-McKenney and Ace of Clubs races, with 854.94 points.



Mini-McKenney (points won both in club games and in tournaments):

- ◆ 50 to 100 **Bill and Debbie Nash (#2/#3)**
- ◆ 300 to 500 **B Haznedar (#10)**
- ◆ 2500 to 3500 **Dolores Aquino (#1), Steve Vaughn (#10)**
- ◆ 3500 to 5000 **James Breihan (#7)**
- ◆ 7500 to 10,000 **Jack LaVigne (#5)**
- ◆ Over 10,000 **Eddie Wold (#8)**

Ace of Clubs (points won only in club games)

- ◆ 50 to 100 **Bill and Debbie Nash (#2/#3)**
- ◆ 300 to 500 **Gregory May (#10)**
- ◆ 1000 to 1500 **Tom Hogle (#7)**
- ◆ 2500 to 3500 **Dolores Aquino (#1), Steve Vaughn (#8)**

There were no top-ten finishers in the overall online points race.

Results of Unit 174 races can be found at these links:

- [Mini-McKenney](#)
- [Ace of Clubs](#)
- [Online](#)

EXTRA EXTRA POINTS! READ ALL ABOUT IT

As you read this, Silver Linings Week is underway at all virtual clubs (vClubs). Double silver points all around. Refer to the Clubs section below for vClub game schedules.

ACBL will award double masterpoints (half-red, half-black) during Valentine's Day Weekend, Feb 13-14.

ACBL is offering a regionally-rated online event, Hollywood Magic, Feb 18-21. [Click here for a session schedule.](#)

ACBL has published the 2021 Online Event Schedule through June, 2021. [Click here for the full schedule of ACBL online events and games.](#)



ALERT! ALERT!

At the November meeting, the ACBL Board of Directors approved changes to the ACBL Alert Procedures. Some changes are described in the Red Alert article on page 35 of the January *Bridge Bulletin*.

[Click here for the BridgeFeed Red Alert](#)

[Click here for the full ACBL Alert Procedures](#)

Changes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◆ In an uncontested auction, no natural jump-shift is alertable.
- ◆ Support doubles and redoubles no longer require an alert.
- ◆ When making a transfer to a single suit, instead of saying "transfer", players now indicate the suit that is shown by the bid. If the bid is a relay to more than one suit, players still say "alert."
- ◆ Instead of saying "could be short" to describe a hand that could be opened with fewer than three cards in the suit bid, players now indicate the minimum number of cards that can be held. For example, "could be two" will be used for a typical short-club opening.

DIRECTOR COURSES AVAILABLE ONLINE

Online director certification courses will now be offered on a quarterly basis. The first ACBL Club Director Course will be taught January 23-24 from 10 am to 7 pm. Cost is \$50. The main emphasis of the course is to be able to direct at the club level. Contact **Melody Euler** (melody.euler@acbl.org) for more information.

TOURNAMENT CANCELLATIONS

Due to the ongoing risk posed by the surging coronavirus and the slow rollout of the vaccine, the ACBL will not staff face-to-face bridge tournaments through April 30, 2021. The ACBL will announce by March 1 whether this moratorium will be extended. The cancellations include the Spring NABC, scheduled for March 11-21, and the Unit 174 Election Sectional, scheduled for April 16-18.



♣ 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.

Most Houston area bridge clubs are currently closed, but several have an online presence (a "virtual club" or "vClub") on Bridge Base Online (BBO). You can support your club by playing on BBO (www.bridgebase.com). If you play at one of the Houston virtual clubs (see list below), a majority of the table fees go to that club and you get black (Club) points.

If your club does not have an online virtual club, ACBL is offering three special daily online pairs game where you can win black (Club) points -- at 9am, 4:10pm and 6:30pm (Central time). And the majority of your table fee will be returned to your local club. Look for the ACBL SYC games on BBO.

Houston vClub schedules are listed below.

Information on face-to-face bridge is listed below the vClub information.

APPLE DBC

Regular schedule:

- ♦ Open Pairs Mon, Wed, Fri at 3:00pm
- ♦ Limited Pairs 299r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 2:45pm

Silver Linings Week: Games every weekday.

BBO Search Term: **Apple**



BRIDGE CLUB OF HOUSTON

Regular schedule:

- ◆ Open Pairs Mon–Fri at 10:20am
Sat, Sun at 12 noon
Tue, Thu, Sat at 7:00pm

- ◆ Limited Pairs 99r: Thu at 10:00am
199r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 10:00am; Sun at 11:50am
299r: Tue at 10:00am

Mentor games are offered on the first and third Monday evenings during the month. Please contact **Roxie Walker** (roxie_w@hotmail.com) if you would like to play in one of them.

BCoH welcomes its new board members **Bill Farrar**, **Gretchen Lindquist** and **Bob Matlock**. They will join returning members **Naomi Rogers Higgins**, **Mike Linkins**, **Debbie Nash**, **Andy Remson**, **Bill Riley** and **Charles Woody**.

The 2021 officers are: **Bill Riley** – President, **Debbie Nash** – Vice President, **Andy Remson** – Treasurer, and **Mike Linkins** – Secretary.

As a team, they will work together to meet any challenges 2021 may bring. Keeping bridge available to all in a fun, positive and safe environment is a top priority. When openings are permitted BCoH looks forward to face-to-face playing, but until then we hope to see you online in our many games.

BBO Search Term: **BCOH**



CLEAR LAKE / GALVESTON

The Clear Lake and Galveston clubs have combined to form an online "virtual club".

Regular Schedule

- ◆ Open Pairs Mon–Fri at 10:00am
 Sat 1:15pm

- ◆ Limited Pairs 49r: Wed at 9:45am
 99r: Mon, Fri at 9:45am
 199r: Tue, Thu at 9:45am; Sat at 1:00pm

The mentor game takes place at 2:00pm on the third Wednesday of each month.

Silver Linings Week

CLBC-GBC has added the following games for Silver Linings Week:

- ◆ Open Pairs Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat at 6:30pm
 Robot: Tue, Thu, Fri at 2:15pm
 Sun 1:15pm

- ◆ Limited Pairs 99r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 9:45am
 199r: Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat at 6:15pm, Sun at 1:00pm

BBO Search Term: **CLBC-GBC**



WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

Regular Schedule

- ◆ Open Pairs Mon–Sat at 10:15am
Sun at 2:30pm
Wed at 7:00pm

- ◆ Limited Pairs 99r: Wed, Sat at 10:05am
199r: Tue, Fri at 10:05am
299r: Mon, Thu, at 10:05am; Sun at 2:20pm
499r: Wed, Fri at 12:45pm
749r: Mon at 12:45pm; Tue, Thu at 3:15pm; Sat at 1:00pm

Free Mini-Lesson

Bert Onstott gives a FREE 30-minute mini-lesson every Tuesday morning from 9:30-10:00 via Zoom. It's open to anyone, but geared to newer players.

Bert sends out an email invitation every Tuesday morning; if you would like to participate, please send an email to bertonstott@comcast.net asking to be added to the invite list.

It will be over in plenty of time for you to play in the Tuesday morning 299r game.

Mentor/Mentee Games

WBA holds Mentor/Mentee games twice a month on the second Wednesday morning at 10:15 and on the second and fourth Monday evenings at 7:00 pm. Both games last about two hours.

Mentees are those with less than 300 masterpoints, Mentors have over 300. If you would like to be included, let **Katherine Onstott** know (email kjonstott@comcast.net) and she will pair you with a suitable partner.

The entry fee is \$10 for the pair, which the Mentee is encouraged to pay.

For more information, visit <http://www.westsidebridgeacademy.com/Mentor-Mentee.php>.

BBO Search Term: **WBA**



CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

The Cypress NW DBC is still in hiatus due to Covid. The club manager, **Jim Warren**, is hoping to reopen in the April time frame.

FORT BEND COUNTY DUPLICATE BRIDGE

The following was received:

I have had my first vaccine shot for Covid-19

Once there are at least 30 players who have had BOTH shots of the vaccine, we may open the Tuesday game with approval from Sugar Land Parks and Recreation.

I expect this will be as early as April or as late as June.

Eric Watson

ewat2004@aol.com

832-287-9107

KATY BRIDGE CLUB

The following was received:

Game Day on February 17, 2021

I am pleased to announce that we will resume normal play at noon on Wednesday, February 17, 2021.

With the availability of a vaccine to the covid virus I feel we can safely restart our game. I urge all members that want to play to take advantage of the vaccine before coming to play.

I ask all members that plan to play to contact me. I will be generating a list of players and our game location in next few weeks.

Bob Lee

Relee321@gmail.com

TEXT 713 557 4077



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

The January, 2021, *Bridge Bulletin* article of the month is Mike Lawrence's "Who do you believe" on page 52. Lawrence walks through the inferences a defender uses to determine (1) the likelihood that partner has an entry and (2) whether or not to hold up when his suit is led. This situation comes up frequently.

<p>♠ J754 ♥ Q64 ♦ 653 ♣ QJ9</p>	<p>N W + E S</p>	<p>♠ AK10 ♥ K752 ♦ 7 ♣ K8765</p>	<p>♠ Q32 ♥ J108 ♦ AK9842 ♣ 2</p>
<p>♠ 986 ♥ A93 ♦ QJ10 ♣ A1043</p>			
West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	1♦	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Like any good partner, West leads the ♦3, partner's suit. East knows that West can't have a doubleton diamond, or West would play high/low. The only card lower than the 3 is the 2 and West is looking at that card in this own hand.

East plays the ♦K, and declarer plays the ♦J. Now what?

Sure, if declarer has a doubleton diamond, East can run all six diamonds. Although possible, that's unlikely as it supposes that South did not have a diamond stop for his 2N call after the 1♦ overcall.

South's 2N bid shows 10-12 points, so NS has about the 23-25. East has ten points. That leaves about 5-7 points in the West hand. That makes it likely that West has an entry in hearts or clubs (East can see the AKQ of spades between dummy and his own hand).

So, the proper play is a low diamond, letting declarer win. Then East waits for partner to get in (or maybe East himself gets in with the ♠Q). When partner gets in, knowing the ♦A was not cashed, partner will return his third diamond, setting the contract two.

The defense gets one club (West's entry) and five diamonds.



Other articles

Other articles that were considered:

- ◆ "Understanding Restricted Choice, by Dan McGuire (p. 26). When you are missing touching honors (often QJ) and one of them drops under your A or K, it decreases the likelihood that the opponent who dropped the honor has the other missing touching honor.
- ◆ "The Bidding Box", Problem 2 (p. 37). The Bridge Bulletin auction shows a natural bidding sequence to get to the top scoring partial contract missed by both expert pairs.
- ◆ "It's Your Call", Problem 2 (p. 40). Almost all (14 of 15) the expert panelists choose the cheapest forward-going bid to give partner room to cue bid the diamond control needed to bid slam.
- ◆ "Lessons Learned" by Michael Berkowitz (p. 48). Michael Berkowitz, shows the correct bidding sequence to bid the good slam. Then shows the need not to pull a second round of trumps to conserve the necessary entries to make the slam.
- ◆ "Better Bridge with Bergen" by Marty Bergen (p. 57). In the 18th part of the "Secrets of Hand Evaluation" series, Bergen explains how to determine whether or not to upgrade a hand to a 2N open.
- ◆ "Test Your Play" by Eddie Kantar (p. 61). In Deal 1, the bidding shows that East has a near yarborough, making the play easy. Deal 2 demonstrates the need to keep the dangerous hand off lead.



GETTING BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY... OPPTS

The screenshot shows a bridge game interface with the following details:

- Score:** 9
- West (Robot):** ♠4, ♥KJ8, ♦KJ1097, ♣9632
- North (Robot):** ♠AKQ102, ♥1097, ♦543, ♣A7
- East (Robot):** ♠J9753, ♥Q643, ♦8, ♣K84
- South (texashen):** ♠86, ♥A52, ♦AQ62, ♣QJ105
- Bidding:**
 - West: 1♠
 - North: Pass
 - East: Pass
 - South: 2♦
 - West: Pass
 - North: Pass
 - East: Pass
 - South: 3NT
- Contract:** 3NT South
- NS: 0, EW: 0**

Sometimes we must depend on the kindness of the opponents.

	North	South	
	1♠	2♦	2/1 game-force
<i>Sometimes you have to rebid a five-card suit as opener as the other choices are worse.</i>	2♠	3N	<i>Not looking to play in a minor, don't want to bid clubs now and advertise that I don't want a heart lead.</i>

West leads the ♣2, not wanting to lead from a tenace. I'm happy a heart wasn't led. I duck; East wins the ♣K.

Not being a good sport, East returns a heart. I duck. West wins the jack. West now plays a club to the ♣A.

That uses up my only non-spade entry. I can play a low spade, let them win and hopefully then take four spades. I decide to play the spades from the top, hoping they will split 3-3 or the jack will come down doubleton. On the second spade, I get the bad news. So, I just cash my third high spade.

Well, the spades didn't work, but West pitched two diamonds on the high spades, making his holding shorter than mine. I now take the diamond finesse. It fails; West wins the ♦K.



West is persistent and continues with a club (again, I silently thank him for not playing hearts). I win the club. After I give West a diamond, my hand is now good. The contract makes - three spades, one heart, two diamonds (thank you, West), and three clubs) - for a 96.4% board.



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