



Unit 174 Newsletter March 2021



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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

I would like to invite and encourage all members of Unit 174 to take the 2021

Add a New Player challenge.

What is the Add a New Player Challenge?

Do a favor to yourself and others – reach out to family, friends and/or member of other groups who have never played duplicate bridge and ask them to try it out. The act of trying is all that is required.

Why is there an Add a New Player Challenge?

At the ACBL level, the attrition rate had been been 1% annually through 2019. Last year it accelerated to 7%.

Unit 174 membership grew 1% from 2016 through 2019, but declined 3% in 2020 and has further declined 7% so far in 2021.

Imagine, if you will, that if one member out of 10 in Unit 174 were successful in bringing a new player. That would represent approximately 240 new members and completely reverse the negative trend.

What's Next?

Assume that you succeed in getting a new player. What is the next step?

Contact our local 0-20 group leader Mary Ellen

Vail at Mevail48@gmail.com or

(678) 910-6402. Alternatively, the ACBL has a wonderful website for new players: [New To Bridge](#).

Take The Challenge

Remember how exciting bridge was when your first started playing

and help your friends find the same fun.

Until next month, if you bid 4♠ holding AK432 opposite 8765, may trumps break 2-2. If you stopped in 1♠, may they break 4-0.

Jack LaVigne, President, Unit 174
jacklavigne@att.net

Board Business

MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULED

A special membership meeting will be held on Sunday, April 18, at 1:00pm.

The meeting will be held via Zoom. Members will be notified on how to join the meeting via email and instructions will be posted on the Unit Website as well.

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: **Jennifer S Armstrong, Valerie Baker, Forrest J Gray, Donna J Hettick, Bert T Potter, Evelyn D Schmidt**

RANK ADVANCEMENTS

Listed below are the new Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL for January, 2021. An explanation of ranks may be found [on the ACBL website](#).

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Emilee G Ahern, Marcus Aquino, Michelle J Clary, M K Drinnan, Daniel J Foelber, Kim M Franklin, Herbert B Grossman, Nicki R Lamey, Judy A Willig

Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Scott B Cantor, Sunny M Smith, Pamela White

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Gloria L Bazer, Kathy F Dickson, Jeffrey Lehner, Michael Linkins

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Shirley A Duble, Cindy A Skeels, Lunette V Stacy, Sarah S Stephens

Advanced NABC Master (300 Masterpoints)

Vera Annenkova, Babs Clingo

Life Master (104 in Unit 174)

Paddy R Fiorino, Kenneth G Hudson

Bronze Life Master (263 in Unit 174)

Paddy R Fiorino, B Haznedar, Karen M Jones, Harry R Price

Ruby Life Master (169 in Unit 174)

Robin A Johnson, Kas Rangan

Gold Life Master (96 in Unit 174)

Linda A Brending, Bill Kiehnhoff

Diamond Life Master (42 in Unit 174)

James E Breihan, Harry S Elliott

Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!

174 Unit News

EXTRA, EXTRA POINTS! READ ALL ABOUT IT

Go for the gold March 22-28

March 22-28 has been designated by the ACBL as a Stardust Week. All virtual club games will award double points, 75% black and 25% gold. Come play and go for the gold! Check your club's website for special games scheduled this week.

Win Double Points AND Help Others!

Join us for Charity Foundation Week to earn double black masterpoint awards while also supporting charitable causes. From April 12-18 (Monday to Sunday), part of each Virtual Club entry fee will be given to the ACBL Charity Foundation, a non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of life in all our communities through charitable grants.

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

FUTURE LIFE MASTERS PROGRAM BLASTS OFF

Special games are on deck for FLM games next week...Stardust Week!

Apollo Game: 0-20 Masterpoints

It is an Assisted Play game offered at 4:00 PM, Tuesday March 23
Search BBO's ACBL Virtual Club games for: U174 0-20 FLM Apollo Assisted Play 4:00 PM
(We hope this game will become large enough to schedule every week.)

Discovery Game: 0-99 Masterpoints....an EVENING GAME on March 25

A joint effort between FLM and Bridge Club of Houston
Search BBO's ACBL Virtual Club games for: BCOH 0-99 FLM Discovery 6:30
(Special for Stardust Week)

These games are the combined effort of the Unit 174 Board, the Club Managers, and the FLM Group Pilots:

Mary Ellen Vail, Apollo Group (0-20 masterpoints)

Janice Hardcastle, Gemini Group (21-50 masterpoints)

Betty Westbrook, Discovery Group (51-100 masterpoints)

Find out more about the Future Life Masters Program at:

www.flm174.com

One of our most important missions: Helping you find a partner!

We are just a 'click away'! Email the appropriate Group Pilot and we can begin the process to help you find bridge partners.

ONLINE VOTING BEGINS MARCH 23



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**. Click [Meet the Candidates](#) on the unit website to read the candidates' statements.

Once voting opens, click the **Click to Vote** button to cast your votes. You may vote for one, two or three of the candidates. You may also write in a name.

TIMO IS TERRIFIC

Congratulations to **Timucin Erkoc**, better known as Timo, for placing second in the North American Bridge Championship (NABC) Robot Individual.

Timo had an overall score of 70.04% and narrowly lost to **Fred Chang** who won the event with 70.35%.

ACBL PHASED PLAN FOR RETURN TO F2F

ACBL has canceled the sanctions for all tournaments through July. This decision was announced as part of a phased plan for the return to face-to-face (F2F) bridge. Phase 1 is the return of F2F when it is safe to do so and with safety protocols in place. In Phase 2, expected to begin in August, sanction requests for Sectional tournaments will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In Phase 3, expected to begin in October, sanction requests for Regional tournaments will be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is expected that the Fall NABC will be held in Austin, as currently scheduled. These dates are subject to changes as the year progresses.

♣ 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 immediately 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

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

Extra games for Stardust Week (Mar 22-28)

- ◆ 199r Tue, Sat at 6:50pm
- ◆ 99r Thu at 6:30pm (not 6:50 pm)
Free lesson at 6:00pm via Zoom
Hand review afterwards

Mentor games

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.

Reopening

We know many are ready to get back to face to face play. In planning for our reopening, we have put together a survey to gather input and feedback to ensure a safe and smooth transition to get back to the tables. May is our goal and your feedback is important. We are asking anyone who plays at BCOH to go to the website and complete the survey.

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 199r: Tue, Thu at 9:45am; Sat at 1:00pm

- ◆ Open Swiss Sun at 2:30pm

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

For the SPECIAL Stardust Week schedule which includes additional games, please check:

<https://clearlakebridgeclub.org/game-schedule-clbc-gbc-virtual-club>

BBO Search Term: **CLBC-GBC**

WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

Regular Schedule

- ◆ Open Pairs Mon-Sat at 10:00am
Updated Sun at 2:30pm
Wed at 7:00pm
- ◆ Limited Pairs
Updated 99r: Sat at 9:45am
199r: Tue at 9:45am **NEW!**
299r: Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri at 9:45am; Sun at 2:20pm
749r: Mon-Fri at 3:15pm; Sat at 1:00pm
- ◆ Open Swiss Sun at 6:00pm

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 99r game.

Mentor/Mentee Games

WBA holds Mentor/Mentee games on the second Wednesday morning at 10:15am and on the second and fourth Monday evenings at 7:00 pm. All three 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

Cypress Bear Creek Duplicate Bridge Club Will Open For Face To Face Play On Tuesday, April 6, 2021.

Games will play every Tuesday and Thursday starting at noon, with sign-up beginning at 11:30 am. The cost will remain the same \$3/per person.

- ◆Coffee (regular and Decaf) and Ice Tea, along with individually wrapped snacks, will be available
- ◆Everyone must wear a mask
- ◆Partners are required and need a 5 table minimum, so please come out and play.
- ◆The game is open to everyone until your club opens up for face to face play

For questions, please call **Jim Warren** at 832-851-4745

KATY BRIDGE CLUB

The following was received:

I have scheduled our first game for April 14 at our new location the Harris county Clay road community center 18650 Clay Rd, Houston, TX 77084. You must have completed COVID vaccination to play. If you want to play, but are not on the list please contact me so I can update the list. If you need a partner let me know and I will try to find one.

Bob Lee

Relee321@gmail.com

TEXT 713 557 4077

SPRING BRANCH DUPLICATE

The following was received:

Spring Branch Duplicate Club will begin holding live games on Monday, April 5th, at Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Road. Schedule is every Monday and Thursday at 12:15pm. Center requires face masks.

Judith Hoffing, Club Manager



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 March, 2021 *Bridge Bulletin* article of month is Michael Berkowitz's "Lessons Learned" on page 48. It describes a common situation where many nervous players make the wrong choice on defense.

The defender makes the natural lead of the ♥Q (top of a sequence).

Partner signals with the ♥8 (showing the king) and declarer wins the ace.

Dir: South		♠ K43	
Vul: None		♥ 543	
		♦ KQ86	
		♣ 943	
♠ 72		N	♠ J8
♥ QJ109		W	♥ K86
♦ A7542		E	♦ J103
♣ Q5		S	♣ KJ1076
		♠ AQ10965	
		♥ A72	
		♦ 9	
		♣ A82	
West	North	East	South
Pass	2♠	Pass	1♠
All Pass			4♠

Declarer then plays the ♦9 toward dummy. It's a singleton, but the defender does not know that for sure. Many players get nervous and rise with the ace. When the ♦9 turns out to be a singleton, they are happy that they took the ace when they could. They shouldn't be.

After taking the ♦A, the defense gets two hearts, but that's it. The contract makes. Declarer pulls trump and then pitches his two losing clubs on the ♦KQ.

The proper play is to duck the ace. The ♦K wins. But now there is no way for declarer to get a second diamond trick, so down he goes. He will lose two clubs and two hearts.

Other articles

Other articles that were considered:

- ♦ "The Bidding Box" by Josh Donn (p. 37-38). The Bridge Bulletin auctions on the problems below are worth a read:
 2. Problem Using natural bid to get to 7♣. Bidding past 3N in search of a minor-suit slam.
 3. Problem Getting out early before the auction spins out of control.
 4. Problem Finding all the cards to bid 7♦.
- ♦ "Ask Jerry" by Jerry Helms (p. 51). The need to describe your hand's strength and shape to allow partner to reach the best contract. When limiting the hand is difficult, the need to keep the bidding open when game is possible
- ♦ "Chalk Talk" by Eddie Kantar (p. 53). In the second deal, a neat unblocking play secures the contract.
- ♦ "The Challenge of the Month" (p.55) demonstrates making the contract by ruffing high.

CREATING AN ENTRY

The interface shows a bridge hand with the following details:

- North (Robot):** ♠108, ♥AQ10763, ♦J63, ♣72
- West (Robot):** ♠K954, ♥J9, ♦Q97, ♣KJ63
- South (texashen):** ♠AQJ72, ♥K, ♦A52, ♣A1095
- East (Robot):** ♠63, ♥8542, ♦K1084, ♣Q84
- Bidding:** WEST: Pass, NORTH: 2♥, EAST: Pass, SOUTH: 2♠. A subsequent bid of 3♥ is shown under NORTH.
- Score:** 3NT South, NS: 0, EW: 0.

	North	South	
<i>Standard weak-2 bid.</i>	2♥	2♠	<i>Five+ spades, 14+ points, forcing;</i>
<i>Minimum hand; fewer than three spades</i>	3♥	3N	<i>Should have a bit better hand, but passing would be cowardly</i>

West makes the normal ♣3, fourth best, we win the ♣Q with the ♣A. We cash the ♥K at trick 2.

We need an entry to the hearts, and spades is the only possibility. We could play the ♠Q from our hand and hope a sleepy opponent grabs the ♠K, making the ♠T an entry.

However, when we have a legitimate play to make the hand, we prefer to play it that way rather than count on a charitable opponent. So, we low spade toward the ♠T8, hoping the ♠K is in front of the ♠T and the ♠T will be an entry.

West grabs the ♠K; we now have our entry. West cashes two high clubs, but that's it. We have 10 tricks: four spades and six hearts (we save the unneeded ♦A and the high club for the next deal)



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