

Pomona-Covina Unit News

August 2018

Unit Game: Saturday, Aug. 18, 11:00 a.m., Glendora
Individual: Saturday, August 4, 9:30 a.m., San Dimas

Change is inevitable (except from a vending machine, of course). The big news this month is that Roger is retiring as manager of the La Fetra Bridge Club. Taking his place will be ... guess who? (Hint ... check out the picture above.) Richard Patterson will continue on as the Capable Assistant. Roger will (so far as we know) be discontinuing his web site ... but game results will get posted online, have no fear. For now, look for La Fetra game results under the Unit 551 area ("Glendora") on the ACBL web site, and also on the Unit web site. Stay tuned to this station for further developments.

The July Individual resulted in a tie between Clint Lew and Your Correspondent, with a nice (but hardly overwhelming) 64.3% effort. Finishing third was Richard Patterson. Attendance suffered from the summer doldrums, so that's it for finishers.

The July Unit game was captured by Fredy and Lulu Minter, whose 69.2% game edged out Joe Viola – Amr Elghamry's 66.4% effort. Stephen Dorse - Gail Leroy tied for third with Susan Emminger - Steve Koller. Patricia Radamaker - Clinton Lew rounded out the top 5.

Unit members did pretty well, if not spectacular, at the Bridge Week Regional. 14 players brought home 67.01 masterpoints, although the only one who actually won an event was David Ochroch, who topped the Sunday Bracket 4 Swiss. (No, it was not the bottom bracket.) Topping the chart was Your Correspondent, with 12.32 points. That's less impressive than it seems, as it took a whopping 15 sessions to earn those points. Once again, a triumph of persistence over skill. In contrast, Clint Lew captured 9.50 points in only four sessions, one of which was the Pro-Am. (Yes, Clint plays as a pro!) Next in line we find Penny Barbieri (6.98), David Ochroch (6.91), Susie Emminger (6.05), and Linda Tessier (5.02).

The top game this past month was 76.85%, by Roger Boyar – Sofi Kasubhai. Others topping the 60% mark this month included Vic Sartor, Penny Barbieri, Richard Patterson, and Yours Truly.. Also topping the leader board at least once were Clint Lew, Chuck Lohr, David Ochroch, Claudia Cochran, Linda Tessier, Linda Stuart. We note that attendance at club games was down this month due to Bridge Week and summer vacations.

The League seems to have some timing issues with the promotion announcements. Although the monthly membership report shows no new rank advancements this month, if you backtrack to the Rank Changes page, you'll find a couple of our members there. Just for consistency, we'll leave well enough alone and go by the membership report. So look for those names here next month.

The theme of our Hand of the Month is "Don't Panic!!!" With a side dish of "Think Outside the Box." No one is vulnerable (not that it matters). Since this is a play problem, not a bidding or lead problem, we'll give you both hands:

North: ♠ AKJx ♥ AJ10xx ♦ x ♣ AQx

South: ♠ Q98x ♥ 7 ♦ AKQ ♣ J10xxx

You are South. North opens 1♣, you bid 1♠, partner leaps to 4♠, and RHO doubles! How ya gonna play this thing, chief?

Without the double, you'd really like to be in 6♠, no? And you'd certainly play for 12 or 13 tricks. But think: what does RHO have for his (somewhat shaky) double? Well, at a minimum, probably ♥KQ and all the trumps. Let's find out. The opening lead is the ♥9. You win the ♥A and cash the ♠A, getting the bad news: RHO has ♠107xxx. Phooey. What now?

If you try another round of trumps, kiss this one goodbye. Your only hope is to take 3 aces and 7 trump tricks. RHO has 5 spades and no doubt 5 hearts – maybe 6 – because that ♥9 looks a lot like top of a doubleton, or maybe a singleton. If RHO is 5=6=1=1, you have no hope at all. So you need him to be 2-1 in the minors. Which is more likely to be his singleton?

Well, there are 5 clubs outstanding, and 9 diamonds, so let's play RHO for a singleton club. (You need him to have two diamonds, for a reason which will soon become clear.) At trick three you must ruff a heart in hand, play up to the ♣A (taking the finesse is just plain silly – if RHO wins he will return a trump, and again you are toast), ruff a heart, cash the ♦A, and ... ruff the ♦K in dummy! Sounds counter-intuitive, but what useful discard can you make on the ♦K? Ruffing a diamond in dummy is your only safe dummy entry, allowing you to ruff another heart with your bare ♠Q. You've taken the first 8 tricks, and the ♠KJ sit there in dummy for two more. The opponents are welcome to the remaining three, and you chalk up a welcome +590. Well done!

Quote for the month: “When a man takes the road to destruction, the gods provide ready transportation. (Aeschylus: *The Persians*, 490 BCE)