

Pomona-Covina Unit
by Tom Lill

Unit Game – Saturday, December 10, 11:00 a.m.

Individual – Saturday, December 3, 9:30 a.m., La Verne Site

That's right, the Unit game is a week early this month. We wanted to avoid competing with the Palm Springs regional ... giving you the chance to play both games. Aren't we just wonderful?

The December game is our annual Christmas party ... some good eats will be supplied, although we don't expect Alton Brown to attend. The famous Nuclear Powered Punch will flow, which of course won't affect the high standard of play at the game. If you have a favorite dish you'd like to bring and share, please feel free!

In our annual two-session championship event, Vic Sartor - Bill Papa took top honors. Roger Boyar - Richard Patterson were second, followed by Michael Marcucci - Clint Lew and Yours Truly - Penny Barbieri. Genise Hasan - Kiran Kumar also cracked the overalls, placing third in flight B.

In the November Unit game, Tim and Eileen Finlay placed first, followed closely by Lulu Minter - Amr Elghamry and Kiran Kumar - Xingping Kang, who tied for second. Rounding out the top five were Richard Patterson - Roger Boyar and Penny Barbieri - Rosalie Roberts.

In the November Individual, Roger Boyar took for the top spot. Looking up were Sofi Kasubhai, Linda Tessier, Claudia Cochran, and Al Lax.

In Board of Directors news ... we could not find any fresh meat to serve, so it's the same fine crew that serves now. Clint's term as president has expired, to Yours Truly is taking another term, with Vic Sartor backing him up as V.P. We'd love to have YOU on the board ... it costs you nothing (and pays the same, of course) but a little of your time, and you help set policy. Want to give it a go? It's not too late. Contact any Board member if you are interested.

The top score this month was a whopping 72.4% posted by Clint Lew – Linda Tessier. They beat out the Minters, who could only manage a 68.3% game. How the mighty have fallen? (I wouldn't count on it ...) Other winners: Claudia Cochran, Richard Patterson, Clint Lew, Sandy Jones, Penny Barbieri, Walt Otto, Hanan Mogharbel, Joe Unis, Genise Hasan, John Barrow, Mary Miller, Vic Sartor, Bill Papa, Kurt Trieselmann, Ken Bloomfield, Karen Olin, Karen McCarthy, and Gino Barbieri.

One promotions to report this month: Daniel Sonner is a Sectional Master. Congratulations, Daniel.

This month's Hand-of-the-Month is a lulu (but not a Minter). It's anyone's guess whether it falls into the "better lucky than good," "trust your partner," or "never give up" category. Maybe it is all three. Here goes. It's unfavorable vulnerability. Your hand is reasonably nice, but not spectacular:

♠ A9743 ♥ AJ9 ♦ K432 ♣ T.

All set to open 1♠, you are somewhat dismayed to hear RHO (the dealer) open 2♠! After a proper pause for the skip bid, you pass, LHO passes, and partner balances with 3♦. RHO passes, and you ... ?

Hmmmm. The opponents are solid defenders, if that helps. No? You could raise to 4♦, passing the buck to partner, who will likely decline the invitation. Or you could bid 5♦. Did you consider 3NT? You certainly have the spades under control. Let the clubs fall where they may.

OK, you grit your teeth (mentally) and go 3NT. All pass, and the opening lead is the ♠J. Dummy flops with a somewhat disappointing

♠ none ♥ KT62 ♦ QJT975 ♣ KQ4.

Grrrrr! Where's that ♦A you were counting on? Well, at least you know the spade layout, so you duck the first trick, and win the continuation. Now what?

You can see 9 tricks (5 diamonds, a spade, 2 hearts, and a club), so it's not hopeless. Can you take them all? If RHO has a minor suit ace, you are history, so let's clear the diamonds and hope. It turns out that LHO has the perfect hand (for you): both minor suit aces and the ♥Q, no less. So 3NT rolls home. Everyone else was either -100, -140, or +100. So I guess we can add a fourth zinger to our list: fortune favors the bold.

Quote for the Month: "As scarce as truth is, the supply has always been in excess of the demand." (Josh Billings)

Until next month ...