

Pomona-Covina Unit News

February 2022

Individual: February 5, 10:00 a.m., Ontario
March, 5, 10:00, Upland
Team Games: February 15 and 18, La Fetra
Club Championships: February 8 and 11, La Fetra
Unit Game: Saturday February 19, 11:00 a.m., Glendora
Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

Please note, to participate in the team games, you must sign up in advance. Otherwise, it takes a miracle to get an exact multiple of four players for the games.

I got word from the ACBL too late to do anything in January, but this year I will be able to run 6 more Club Championship games, in addition to the 4 we are already entitled to, and 2 Upgraded Club Championships. I figure on running the 10 ordinary championships 1 per month, skipping January and December. One idea the little grey cells (warning, I've been rereading my Agatha Christie collection) came up with is to alternate pairs game and the team games as championships. I'll work the upgraded games in somehow. I can't really give a firm schedule yet, since I don't know (yet) when the STaCs will be scheduled. I could run a team game during STaC week, which would upgrade the paltry payout the ordinary team game gets.

Non-bridge observation: in rereading my Christie collection, I continually run across amusing sentences. Remember, Ms Christie published her first novel in 1920. Here's a good one (not an exact quote) from an early novel: the girl (remember, back then, "girl" was an acceptable synonym for "young woman") was wearing a daringly short skirt, providing a good view of her ... ankles! Wheeeeeeee!

Winner of the January Individual was Roger Boyar. Donald Logsdon was second, Clint Lew third, and Dan Robinson tied for fourth with Peter Kavounas.

The flyer for our upcoming (let's *hope*) Bridge Week Regional next July is now available at acbl.org. Watch for the flyer to appear in an upcoming SCBN.

In another very competitive January Unit game, Clint Lew – Milt Kalikman took top honors with a 60.42 effort. Bill Papa – Mary Ann Wotring were second, Amr Elghamry – Lulu Minter third, Peter Kavounas – Dan Robinson fourth (but 1st in flight B), and Yours Truly – Hanan Mogharbel wrapped up the honor roll.

Three rank advancements this month, a rarity! Richard Parker and Art Wallace are now club masters, and Caryn Mason has reached Sectional Master status. Congratulations, all. You may recall, these three scooped up some nice points in Rancho Mirage.

The top game at La Fetra in January was ... wait for it ... believe it or not ... posted by Karen McCarthy and Yours Truly, with a 68.75% effort. (I'm pretty sure, in all the years I've been writing this column, that I've *never* before topped the monthly leader board. Oh well, blind squirrels and acorns, as you know.) Other top finishers in the pairs games were Caryn Mason, Mary Ann Wotring, Lulu Minter, Fredy Minter – Roger Boyar, Vic Sartor, and Bill Papa. Winners of the January team game (we had only one due to a scheduling foul-up) were Caryn Mason, Art Wallace, Richard Parker, and new ACBL member Patrick Finley.

BTW, if you missed the reference to a “chair” last month, here’s the story. I was playing in a Sectional tournament with a visitor. Towards the end of a long session, I opened in fourth seat with 1♠. Partner bid 2♥. Hmm. I had a doubleton heart and a sturdy 14-count, so if partner has anything reasonable, 3NT may be in the cards. Maybe even 4♥! So I plopped 2NT on the table. All pass. I don’t recall the opening lead, but when dummy hit the table, so did my jaw:

♠ xx ♥ KJxxxx ♦ xx ♣ xxx.

The contract, needless to say, was not a great success. After the session, I was jawing with the Director, the late, great George Winter. When I related this sad story to him, he gave me some sage advice: “Never make invitational bids when playing with a chair.” *C’est ça, par exemple.* (I *did* warn you about my recent reading.)

Here’s an interesting hand submitted by former Unit member Ho Ming Yim:

West deals, neither side vulnerable

<u>Ho Ming</u> ♠ 5 4 ♥ A 10 8 6 5 4 ♦ void ♣ A K 9 7 2	<u>North</u> ♠ A J 10 8 6 ♥ 3 ♦ A 9 8 7 6 ♣ 10 5	<u>Robot</u> ♠ K Q 2 ♥ J 2 ♦ 10 5 3 ♣ Q 8 6 4 3
	<u>South</u> ♠ 9 7 3 ♥ K Q 9 7 ♦ K Q J 4 2 ♣ J	

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	1NT	2♥
pass	2♠	pass	pass
3♣	3♠	4♣	pass
4♥	pass	pass	X
all pass			

Yes, I’m afraid it’s another of those semi-balanced hands I’m so fond of.

In Hi Ming’s words: The only “interesting” thing about this hand is the distribution. Bidding and defense by NS were both horrible. I assumed 2♥ was a limit raise in spades. If North leads ♠A, then the spade entry to the dummy is already established for two hooking two rounds of trump. However, if North leads any diamonds, it forces the declarer to trump twice on the diamond and equalizes the length of the trump stack. Declarer loses control of trump and will eventually lose the contract. To defeat the contract, it needs to be a diamond from the start. Also, I wonder if North lead clubs because he misread South’s double as Lightner double, i.e., lead the dummy’s second suit.

And now I will chime in.

I'm not too sure N-S's bidding was "horrible," but it could have been better. North has a perfectly reasonable 2♥ (Michaels) bid available. That would allow them to find either 4♠ or 5♦, which if doubled go for only 100 or 300, respectively. And if they were going to defend as they did ...

It's the defense I strongly object to. First of all, a Lightner double (usually) calls for the lead of dummy's *first* suit. But dummy has not shown a suit, really; he (well, OK, "it") has only shown support for clubs and tolerance for hearts. And, leading a doubleton rarely leads to a good result when the leader doesn't have trump control. And did North really think E-W had 11 clubs between them?

So, what should North lead? It really boils down to "which ace?," right? South's limit-raise-or-better did *not* promise the ♠K; indeed, unless the robot is suffering from a severe under-voltage, *it* should have the King. So the ♦A seems clear. No? Your comments are invited. (But I have a sufficient quantity of rotten tomatoes, thank you.)

I have another one for you ... but since it is also a semi-balanced hand, I'll save it for another time.

Quote for the month: "Results! Why, man, I have gotten a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won't work." (Thomas Edison)