

Pomona-Covina Unit
by Tom Lill

Unit Game – Saturday, January 20, 11:00 a.m.

Individual – Saturday, January 6, 9:30 a.m., San Dimas

In the December Unit game, Penny Barbieri – Rosalie Roberts took top honors with a nice 67.4% effort. Right behind them (well, maybe a board and a half aren't exactly "right behind") were Pat Rademaker and Yours Truly. Bill Papa and visitor Charly Kao were third. Margie Hall – Steve Mancini took 1st in C.

In the December Individual, the two-time defending champ who missed the November game returned to the top spot. Ahem. (Look it up, We Don't Like to Blow Our Own Horn Too Much.) Roger Boyar was second, Steve Mancini third. Unfortunately, our usual host, the fabulous Lois, fell and injured herself pretty seriously last month, and so won't be able to host this month's game. Penny Barbieri will be filling in as host.

Thus month, the battle for the top score was so close ("How Close Was It?) that we'll give the top four. The top two were a virtual tie between Fredy and Lulu Minter, and ... themselves. They posted a 69.0% game and one of 68.9%. Not much to choose between those two. And narrowly missing out on the top spot with their 68.76% game were Karen Olin – Mary Miller. Finally, the fourth spot, with "only" 68%, were Kurt Trieselmann – Ken Bloomfield. Other winners: Richard Patterson, Penny Barbieri, Paul Chrisney, Claudia Cochran, Roger Boyar, David Ochroch, Chuck Lohr, Charly Kao, and Yours Truly.

One promotion to report this month. David H Van Fleet is now a Junior Master. Keep up the good word, David.

For our Hand of the Month, we have a real puzzler for you. All depends on your methods ... and your nerve! At matchpoints, not vulnerable, third to speak you pick up this semi-balanced collection:

♠ 2 ♥ none ♦ AQJ842 ♣ J107542.

Well, you are 1-0 in the majors, and 6-6 in the minors. "Semi-balanced." Partner opens 1NT (15-17), RHO passes, and you well? Speak up!

If you are playing in the style of 50 years ago (Goren!), you can bid 3♦, forcing. If partner signs off in 3NT, you bid 4♣, also forcing, asking partner to choose. Too bad, 3♣/3♦ over 1NT is treated as invitational by most these days. (Or even as Puppet Stayman, at least for 3♣.) Minor suit Stayman – if you are using it – might work. What are the odds of partner having a four card minor? Who knows?

As it turns out, 3NT wins the day. Partner's hand is

♠ QJ10 ♥ KQ109 ♦ K765 ♣ A3.

Making 4. Clubs are 3-2 with LHO having ♣Qx. 5 of either minor will make (due to the favorable club division), but it IS matchpoints. If 3NT was your call, well done!

Quote for the Month: "Never go out to meet trouble. If you will just sit still, nine times out of ten someone will intercept it for you." (Calvin Coolidge)

Until next month ...