

Pomona-Covina Unit News

December 2018

Unit Game: Saturday January 19, 11:00 a.m., Glendora

Individual: Saturday, January 5, 9:30 a.m., San Dimas

The top finisher in the December Individual was Roger Boyar, at 64.21%. Richard Patterson and Penny Barbieri tied for second; Yours Truly was fourth.

The December Unit game was won by Claudia Cochran - Hanan Mogharbel, with a 63.56% game. Hot on their heels, tying for second we find Margie Hall - Linda Ananea and Gino Barbieri – Penny Barbieri only ½ matchpoint behind. Stephen Dorse - Gail Leroy rounded out the leader board.

Attendance was light in December, what with the holidays approaching. Only one pair – and two Individual efforts – reached the magic 65% mark this month. In the pairs game, Roger Boyar and Linda Stuart were tops with a 66.0% game. Hanan Mogharbel had the best Individual score, 69.05%. Clint Lew hit 66.07%.

Other winners were, Linda Tessier, Kurt Trieselmann, Ken Bloomfield, Penny Barbieri, Vic Sartor, Bill Papa, Richard Patterson, David Ochroch, and Yours Truly.

We had one player go to the NABC in Hawaii and do rather well. Clint Lew racked up 30.51 points, with his best effort garnering 10.96 in a stratified pairs game.

Our Unit did rather well in the recent Palm Springs Regional. 13 players brought home 84.96 points, with Amr Elghamry topping the list with 17.62, with a first place finish in a bracketed Swiss. This placed him 404th out of 2086 players. Hanan Mogharbel brought home 14.59, including a second place finish in a bracketed KO. David Ochroch picked up 13.51, including TWO 1st place finishes in bracket Swiss. One team included Yours Truly. (Don't ask which bracket we were in.) Margie Hall picked up 12.61, mainly from the 2nd place KO in conjunction with Hanan. Other point gatherers: Kai Liu, Tim and Eileen Finlay, Don Nakasaki, Bridget O'Sullivan, Darleen and Tom Sessions, and Gail Leroy.

29 players won club-level masterpoints in December. Topping the list was Clint Lew, with 6.47. Next were Roger Boyar, 5.02; Penny Barbieri, 4.09; Linda Tessier, 3.90; and Hanon Mogharbel rounded out the top five with 3.81.

Three promotions to report: Steve Mancini and Dale Quasny are now Sectional Masters; and Sofi Kasubhai is a Regional Master. Congratulations, all, and keep up the good play.

In other news: David Ochroch, an ACBL TAP Certified bridge instructor will be teaching a series of Bridge Fundamentals classes (beginning / intermediate / advanced, aka Intro to Bridge I, II, III) at the Joslyn Senior Center in Claremont and at the Gibson Senior Center in Upland, starting January 8, 2019. He also holds drop-in play practice sessions for those reviewing basic conventions (Stayman, Jacoby Transfers, Neg Doubles, etc.) on Tuesdays at 1pm at Joslyn thru Feb 26. For more information, please see CLAREMONT: www.claremontrec.com or call (909)399-5490, and UPLAND: apm.activecommunities.com/upland/Home or call (909)931-4280. If you are a member of The Claremont Club, he is also holding a learn to play bridge class over two Saturdays: Jan 19 and Jan 26th, 2019.

For our Hand-of-the-Month, we submit a problem that probably has no “right” answer. First in hand, at matchpoints, you find yourself looking at this impressive collection:

♠A10 ♥A8 ♦AKJ9863 ♣A5

“Only” 20 HCP ... but a 4-loser hand (at most!) and 10 playing tricks in either notrump or diamonds, assuming the diamonds behave. Otherwise, “only” nine tricks. So: these seem to be your

choices: 1♦, 2♣, or an offbeat 2NT. Let's speculate on what can happen, before we examine what DID happen (in one case).

If you open 1♦, it might be passed out. If not, you risk a lot of interference in your short majors. And supposed it goes 1♦ – 1♥/1♠, or maybe 1NT. Now what? Too strong for 3♦; 5♦ is a yuck bid (in our opinion, at least!), and 3NT ... well, unless you have a diamond slam, you were going there anyway.

Opening 2NT risks a major-suit transfer, which unless it is a Texas, probably winds you up in 3NT again.

2♣? Not exactly classic. If it goes 2♥ (bust), now what? 3NT and damn the torpedoes? 3♦ (leaving partner with the dirty diapers)? And if it goes 2♦ (whether waiting or promising a control), now you bid 3♦, and again partner has an unpleasant decision to make.

OK, we've rejected *everything*. Here's what happened at the table of Your Correspondent. Fasten your seat belt, you won't believe it. It started off 2♣ – 3♥! We play that 2♥ promises no Ace or King, and 2NT shows a trick-and-a-half and a good heart suit. So what in %&*! is 3♥? Turns out pard has

♠K93 ♥KQ9763 ♦102 ♣96.

You have some idea that this is the situation – it has happened before, the time you picked up 10 solid spades and a heart void – so you have visions of sugar plums, and call 4NT. Is this Blackwood, or a value bid (28-29 HCP)? Who cares? If partner responds 5♣ (one key card), you'll ask for the ♥Q and bid 7NT if you find it. If partner takes it as a value bid, she will either bid 6NT or do something else. No?

No. Partner, on an off day, passed, and 13 tricks rolled home. (The ♦Q is stiff, the hearts are 3-2, and the opening lead is from ♠QJxx, so there you are.)

Well, believe it or not, +520 was a tie for top! Amazingly enough, no one got to even the frigid small slam. Go figure!

Quote for the month: “The most exciting phrase to hear in science, the one that heralds new discoveries, is not “Eureka!” (I've found it!), but ‘That's funny...’” (Isaac Asimov)