

Pomona-Covina Unit
by Tom Lill

“Unit” Game – Saturday, March 18, 11:00 a.m.

Individual – Saturday, March 4, 9:30 a.m., La Verne

Once again, our “Unit” game this month will be a club game – no word yet on how things are developing in Horn Lake regarding the uncalled-for increase in Unit game sanction fees. Next month we plan to resume normal Unit games.

In the February Unit game, Vic Sartor – Bill Papa were the winners, followed by Roger Boyar – Richard Patterson, Genise Hasan – Tom Lill, and Timothy and Eileen Finlay.

In the February Individual, Donald Logsdon took the top spot. Roger Boyar was next, then Paul Chrisney, and Steve Mancini.

It’s awards time again. We will be presenting the Ace of Clubs and Mini-McKenney awards to the Unit winners at our April game, which will be a week late (April 22) due to the Easter holiday. If you won your bracket, you’ll be receiving a notice from our Membership Chairman – email, snail mail, or something.

The top score this month was an 80% whopper posted by Roger Boyar and Herb Stampfl. However, this is somewhat tainted by being the result of a 2 ½ table Howell, where anything can happen, and usually does. The next best effort – in a “real” game” – was by Vic Sartor and Bill Papa, who fell from last month’s monster to “only” 70.8%. As for the rest of us, the winners were Walt Otto, Clint Lew, Linda Tessier, Fred and Lulu Minter, Pat Radamaker, Claudia Cochran, Hanan Mogharbel, Linda Stuart, Susie Emminger, Joe Unis, Kurt Trieselmann, Ken Bloomfield, and Yours Truly.

Five promotions to report this month. In ascending order, Nicholas Koskelo and Tom Sessions are now Junior Masters, Darlene Sessions is a Club Master, Wendy Wanderman is a Sectional Master, and Margie Hall is now a Bronze Master. Way to go, all.

Although our Unit was reasonably well represented at our District’s Winter Regional (I counted 14 members attending), no one brought home very much in the way of wins. In toto, the Unit came home with only 33.44 masterpoints. Top scorer was Yours Truly ... truly a triumph of persistence, since it took 14 sessions (that’s 392 boards, folks) to score 14.15 points. In second was Penny Barbieri with 7.09, then Genise Hasan with 4.13. Sadly, attendance at the tournament was disastrous – down around 150 tables from 2016. The comments heard were almost universally variations on the theme “where did this yucky schedule come from???” Well, for what it’s worth, we won’t be going back to the Four Points Sheraton next year (as of this writing – stay tuned!), and the Bridge Week schedule is back to the 10 a.m. / 3 p.m. version. See you there!

And ... stay tuned: our District has garnered the sanction vacated by Reno, and is hosting a Regional in Glendale (at the Hilton) from December 26 – 31. So make your plans now, as rooms will be at a premium (should you need one). Plans for a New Year’s Eve bash are uncertain, as there is already one scheduled that night at the Hilton. (ESPN will be taking over the hotel that day ... gee, I wonder what else might be going on then?)

Advance notice: our Unit plans to participate once again in the Longest Day. This falls on Wednesday, June 21 this year. We will be holding games at the Knights of Columbus, at 9:00 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. (And if enough players want to hang around, we can have an evening session starting at 6:00 p.m.) All entry fees and other donations go to the Alzheimer's Association, and are tax deductible.

Our Hand-of-the-Month is a bit different. No freak, no rock crusher, just a run-of-the-mill hand ... sort of!

You are South, and find yourself looking at:

♠ A9x ♥ JTxxx ♦ KTxx ♣ x

The auction is straightforward:

<u>LHO</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>RHO</u>	<u>Pard</u>
1♠	pass	2C	pass
3♠	pass	4♠	all pass

Partner leads a high heart spot, dummy comes down with

♠ QJ ♥ x ♦ Qxxx ♣ AQTxxx

and declarer wins in the closed hand. Declarer leads a trump, you win the ♠A, and ... well? Are you going to beat this contract?

Well, let's think. If declarer has ♣Kx or better, the answer is "no." Declarer surely has the ♦A and can get back to his hand to draw trumps and run the clubs, finessing if necessary. What if declarer has a stiff club, and has red-suit losers?

Returning your stiff club into that major tenace turns out to be a killer. Declarer has the stiff ♣K, which he wins. He leads a trump to dummy and tries to cash the ♣A. You ruff and get out safely, and it's two down. Any other return, even ducking the trump ace, lets the contract through (declarer will end-play you in a red suit). Nice going!

Quote for the Month: "A committee is a group that keeps minutes and loses hours." (Milton Berle)

Until next month ...