

Pomona-Covina Unit
by Tom Lill

Unit Game: Saturday, March 10, 11:00 a.m., Glendora

Individual: Saturday, March 3, 9:30 a.m., San Dimas

Yes, this month our Unit game is a week early. We will be presenting the 2017 Ace of Clubs and Mini-McKenney awards before the game. If you won your bracket (and if you have, you've already been notified by Our Hard Working Membership Chairman), we hope to see you at the game. A partner can be found for you, **if** you contact us not too close to game time.

The February Individual was captured by Steve Mancini. Richard Patterson was second, followed by Clint Lew and Margie Hall.

As many of you know, our usual Individual host, Lois Snowden, took a couple of bad falls last year, and is still out of action. So our other three hosts – Penny Barbieri, Clint Lew, and Yours Truly, will be holding the games for the next several months, and possibly indefinitely. You can always find the game's location on our web site, not to mention the header of this column. Lois is doing well during her recovery, but isn't up to snuff just yet.

The February Unit game was a squeaker. With two rounds to play, the eventual winners – Fredy and Lulu Minter – were solidly in second. After the final round, they were still in second, but wait. There was a late play. Even though neither of the top two pairs were involved – after the late play was completed, the Minters had squeaked into first by ½ match point. Go figure! Following them were Kiran Kumar – Yours Truly (mumble mumble grrrr), and Roger Boyar – Richard Patterson.

The race for the top score this month was so close, I'll list the three top contenders. Three crushers this month! On top – barely – were Roger Boyar – Richard Patterson, with 75.0%. Right behind were Fredy and Lulu Minter, with 74.38%. And Joe Unis – Roger Boyar's 73.7% effort is nothing to be ashamed of, either.

Three promotions to report this month. James O'Dowd moves up to Club Master, as does Tom Sessions. And Gayle Ginsburg is now a Regional Master. Congratulations, all.

Our Hand of the Month merely demonstrates why this is such a whacky – and frustrating – game. As South, both vulnerable, you find yourself holding

♠ J52 ♥ QJ10953 ♦ A ♣ K74.

RHO deals and opens 1♠. Well, your suit is pretty solid, and you have some shape. Do you call 2♥?

If you do – and it certainly seems reasonable – you are in for a very rough ride. The auction continues pass – pass – double – all pass. The opening lead is the ♠Q, and dummy comes down with

♠ 643 ♥ 2 ♦ K87653 ♣ Q62

Not much there for you, and it's down 2 for -500. LHO was sitting there with

♠ Q7 ♥ AK76 ♦ 942 ♣ J1053.

Frustrating, isn't it? Swap LHO and partner's hand, and you'll scramble 8 tricks at least.

Quote for the month: The most damaging phrase in the language is: "It's always been done that way." (Rear Admiral Grace Hopper)