

## Pomona-Covina Unit News

March 2021

I'm afraid there isn't much news this month, and what there is, is rather depressing. In spite of vaccinations being well underway, the League has put the kibosh on our Bridge Week regional again. Sigh. No word on when our Unit Game site will reopen. Ditto the La Fetra center ... although, I believe I heard (or read) that Senior Centers are going to be among the *last* things to reopen. Keep your BB\$ account filled a while longer, friends.

The League did send out an email – in theory to all members, but maybe you have your personal settings set to “no” for receiving these, so I'll reiterate here. The tentative schedule for restarting tournaments calls for sectionals to restart in August, so perhaps our joint sectional can happen after all. I'll work on this and keep you posted. Face-to-face club play is of course up to each individual club. But with our playing site closed, not much we can do until it reopens. Since our Individual playing site is fluid, I'm hopeful we'll restart this in April.

Once again, we have one rank change to report: Sofi Kashubhai has reached the status of NABC Master. Keep up the good work, Sofi.

No doubt, some of you were impressed by Ho Ming's 3NT hand last month. Especially noteworthy is that not only do both North and West hold the ♥A, but North holds 17 cards. Well, last month my co-editors were Charlie the Chimp and the Rueful Rabbit. While this hand was being recorded, R.R. was wondering where he had parked his car (or, had he come up by taxi perhaps?), while C.C. was of course concentrating on the previous hand. Sorry! Here's the REAL hand. I think! (see next column)

Although I've played a fair amount of bridge this past month, I don't recall any really good hands to share with you. Of course, there's the one where not only did my trumps break 5-0 offside (mathematicians

<u>North</u>	
♠ J 10 4 3 2	
♥ Q 8 6 2	
♦ J 6	
♣ 7 3	
<u>West</u>	<u>East</u>
♠ none	♠ A K Q 9 8 7
♥ A K 7 5 4	♥ 10 9 3
♦ 9	♦ 7 2
♣ K Q 10 8 6 5 2	♣ J 9
<u>South</u>	
♠ 6 5	
♥ J	
♦ A K Q 10 8 5 4 3	
♣ A 4	

be damned, that's about 30% when I'm declaring), but my key side suit *also* broke 5-0 ... offside. Nah, let's try this one. It was once again submitted by Ho Ming Yim, along with commentary:

♠ Q 9 6 5	
♥ A Q 10 9 6 3 2	
♦ none	
♣ 3 2	
♠ K	♠ 8
♥ J 8 5 4	♥ K 7
♦ A J 3	♦ K Q 10 9 7 6 2
♣ K Q 10 6 5	♣ A 9 7
♠ A J 10 7 4 3 2	
♥ none	
♦ 8 5 4	
♣ J 8 4	

“This hand showed up today whilst playing on BBO. East opened a diamond and I was sitting North and bid 6♠ over 6♦.

“On a ♦A lead, with double-dummy declarer play, South can ruff the first diamond, cash ♥A to pitch a club, ruff the ♥K on the second round of hearts, play the ♠A dropping the ♠K, then cross-ruff hearts and diamonds to set up two more heart pitches for the clubs, making 13 tricks. Conversely, although East is missing two aces, South has transportation issues to get to North’s ♥A, so East would also make 6♦.

“Although it’s not a true small slam swing (6♦ is cold whereas 6♠ makes on anything but a club lead), it’s still close enough for me to call it a small slam swing in practice. I don’t recall the last time I held a hand this distributional where both directions can make a small slam. I thought I’d share this fascinating hand with you to cheer you up.

7♠ makes on a spade lead as well. Ruff a heart two times and the entire heart suit sets up, and you still have three diamond ruff entries to the board. The bidding at my table was 1♦-3♠-5♦-5♠-6♦-P-P-6♠-X-P-P-P. The bidding almost guarantees a void in diamonds in one of the hands. So a club lead is the winning opening lead. The opponents misread the auction and lead the top diamond. I wish I could tell you my partner declared 6♠ correctly but the result was 6♠x-3. This was a team game and the other table also misplayed it and was 5♠x-1. I really wanted to see a double small slam swing on both boards. 6♠x+1 for +1310 and 6D= +1370, that’s +2680 on one board for a 21 IMP swing. I would pay good money to see that happen...

“With 11-card fit, go for the drop. The mnemonic I use is “11-9-7, drop the K-Q-J respectively. 10-8-6, finesse the K-Q-J respectively.”

Finally, every time you think you’ve run into every conceivable situation at the bridge table – and some you couldn’t conceive of in your worst nightmares – a new one comes along. This isn’t a biggie, and no doubt those of you who play in the top KO brackets will say “big deal, what’s the problem,” it’s the first time it’s happened to me. Here’s my hand:

♠ K2 ♥ QJ9 ♦ 1083 ♣ J8432.

Ho hum, right? Partner opens the bidding 1♥, your RHO calls 2♦, and you raise to 2♥. Partner now makes a help suit game try with 3♣. Well? In all the books I’ve read, you accept such a try with a maximum hand, or with either shortness or high honors in the help suit. But nobody says what to do with a mess like ♣ J8432 and a mediocre 7-count. I reckoned, we must

have most of the club suit, so if important biggies are missing, they should drop. So 4♥ it was for me.

Fortunately, partners clubs were KQ96 and the game rolled home. What if his suit had been Q965? Or even Q96? Ugh. Hate to think about that!

Quote for the month: “In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm, and three or more is a congress.” (John Adams)