

Pomona-Covina Unit
by Tom Lill

Unit Game: Saturday, May 19, 11:00 a.m., Glendora
Individual: Saturday, May 5, 9:30 a.m., Chino

The April Individual was captured by Roger Boyar. Clint Lew was second, Richard Patterson third, and Linda Tessier fourth.

Unlike last month, the April Unit game was closely contested. Indeed, it went down to the last score to come in. Kiran Kumar – Mike Marcucci edged Bill Papa – Vic Sartor by just ½ matchpoint. Clinton Lew – Patricia Radamaker were third, with Kerry Sartor – Barbara Papa in the fourth spot.

Lots of winners this month. More competitive, too, which is always a blessing to Those of Us Down in the Trenches. The top game was “only” 72.5%, by Ken Bloomfield – Kurt Trieselmann, but it was the lone 70%+ effort. Other winners: Karen Olin, Mary Miller, Joe Unis, Clint Lew, Herb Stampfl, Richard Patterson, Sofi Kasubhai, Claudia Cochran, Penny Barbieri, Fredy Minter, Lulu Minter, Hanan Mogharbel, visitor Fred Fairbanks, and Yours Truly all found themselves atop the leader board at least once.

No promotions to report this again this month. I believe that’s the first double blank we’ve had, at least since I’ve been writing this column. Better news next month, perhaps.

Reminder: we will be hosting Longest Day games on Thursday, June 21, at the Knights of Columbus. Two sessions are planned, and if interest warrants Roger will hold the usual Thursday evening game at La Fetra.

The Bridge41 club will host a North American Pair qualifying game on Saturday, August 11 at 9:30 a.m., at the Chino site. Due to limited playing space (and ... sad to say ... limited interest) reservations WILL be required. If you’ve never tried it, give NAP a go. At worst, maybe you’ll pick up a few red points. Maybe even a little gold, if you can get out of the semis.

Our Hand of the Month is, hopefully, a bit of a challenge. It’s matchpoints, and no one is vulnerable. East deals and opens 1♦. Sitting South, you pick up this semi-balanced hand (6-5 majors, 1-1 minors. “Semi-balanced.”):

♠ KJ10865 ♥ AQJ83 ♦ 7 ♣ 8

You might make a Michaels cue bid, but the playing strength makes this hand too strong, really. Let’s try 1♠. LHO calls 1NT (oh thrills, the spades are behind you) and partner raises to 2♠. RHO passes. Well?

Not too hard to construct a deal that will produce 10 or 11 tricks – and also one that will produce only 9 in spite of partner’s raise. Well, let’s try 3♥, a long suit game try.

Partner signs off in 3♠. The opening lead is a small club, and partner produces this dummy:

♠ Q743 ♥ 1042 ♦ 432 ♣ KJ5

Hmmmm. Good news, bad news. Partner’s sign-off was surely correct. (“And stop calling me Shirley!”) Partner has no real help in hearts, and the two club pictures are probably waste paper. On the other hand, there’s no wastage in diamonds, and only one trump loser. When LHO produces the ♠A and ♣K, you know the ♥K is on side and 10 tricks roll in. Game on an effective 13 HCP. Did you bid it anyway? If so, nice going. But just picture this dummy:

♠ 9743 ♥ 1042 ♦ KJ2 ♣ KJ5

A better hand in terms of high cards ... but you rate to take only 9 tricks unless the opponents are kind enough to cash just one minor suit ace then let you in for a discard. Maybe it’s the kind of game you

bid when you find yourself 20 IMPs behind in a match? Just shows to go you, shape trumps power in this game.

Quote for the month: “If you are playing bridge with your husband, your wife, or your significant other, don’t.” (Eddie Kantar)