

Pomona-Covina Unit News

September 2018

Unit Game: Saturday, September 15, 11:00 a.m., Glendora

Individual: Saturday, September 1, 9:30 a.m., Claremont

Club game results from La Fetra are now being posted on the Unit web site. What dat? Hint ... see above. We'll try to update the site weekly. Sometimes that becomes "weakly," of course, due to apathy, sloth, and distraction of the Webmaster.

The top finisher in the August Individual was Steve Mancini, at 64.6%. We had a three-way tie for second: Penny Barbieri, Sofi Kasubhai, and Yours Truly.

The August Unit game was won by Joe Viola – Amr Elghamry, 61.75%. Finishing second were Bill Papa – Vic Sartor, followed by Roger Boyar – Richard Patterson, and Penny Barbieri – Rosalie Roberts.

The top game this past month was 72.5.1%, posted by Vic Sartor and Paul Chrisney. Since most pairs topping the leader board are over 60%, we will raise the bar for "special mention" to 65%. This month, those meeting that standard were Clint Lew, Bill Papa, Kurt Trieselmann, Ken Bloomfield, Richard Patterson, Roger Boyar, and Hanan Mogharbel. Other winners: Don Logsdon, Herb Stampfl, Sofi Kasubhai, Claudia Cochran, Margie Hall, Linda Ananea, and Joe Unis.

Top master point earners this month: Vic Sartor, 5.77; Roger Boyar, 5.40; Hanan Mogharbel, 5.16; Richard Patterson, 4.47; Clint Lew, 4.16;. These totals include our Unit game, La Fetra games, and the monthly Bridge41 game, but not points earned in "foreign" venues or at tournaments.

Four promotions this month: Gail LeRoy is now a Junior Master; Vinay Gupta is a Club Master; and Stephen Dorse and Douglas Hess are Sectional Masters. Congratulations, and keep up the good play, ladies and gentlemen.

This month we present a little defensive problem for you. You hold your usual trash:

♠ 642 ♥ 85 ♦ 10873 ♣ A853

and have to find a lead after this auction (RHO opens the bidding): 1NT – 2♣; 2♦ – 3NT. Well?

The traditional lead, "fourth best from longest and strongest," is possible, but really has little to recommend it here. The auction simply *screams* for a major suit lead. Either hearts or spades is possible.

If you do lead a major suit, hats off. To see why, let's look at the entire deal:

♠ KJ10	
♥ Q972	
♦ J2	
♣ K974	
♠ Q953	♠ A87
♥ AJ64	♥ K103
♦ A6	♦ KQ954

♣ Q62 ♣ J10
 ♠ 642
 ♥ 85
 ♦ 10873
 ♣ A853

Let's say you do follow traditional wisdom (?) and lead a club. Declarer will win the third round and play on diamonds ... setting up your ♦10, but you no longer have the ♣A as an entry. After discovering the unfortunate (although normal) diamond break, he will probably now lead up to the ♠Q, losing to partner's ♠K. But now what? A heart costs your side its heart trick, so a spade return is probably best. Declarer wins, and has lost 3 tricks. The ♠9 stops the suit, so he can now lead a spade, hoping for a 3-3 break here. That's what happens, so declarer makes 3 diamonds, 2 spades, 1 club, and ... 3 hearts, because partner is endplayed after taking her spade trick, unless she was good enough to unblock the ♣9. If so, very well done.

Let's go back to the beginning, and say you lead the ♠6 (top of nothing). Whether or not declarer holds up, partner can get the same two spade tricks. Declarer plays on diamonds as before, discovering the 4-2 break. Declarer now must either play on hearts, where partner has a sure trick, or on clubs, letting you in to cash the ♦10. 2 spades, 2 clubs, and a diamond (or a heart), at least, down one. Well done.

A heart lead – also a good choice on this auction when leading from a poor hand – also works, because partner has the vital ♥9 (you do lead the ♥8, right?) and also the ♥Q. Again, well done.

One last thought. Returning to traditional wisdom ... if partner has the guts to duck the club lead, declarer can still make the hand by playing partner for the ♥Q. He'll take four diamonds, a club, a spade, and four hearts for a top. And if you trade your ♦10 for declarer's ♦9, the hand is cold for 9 tricks if partner ducks. (5 diamonds, 2 hearts, 1 club, 1 spade.) The duck is not a play that I would find! (Which is perhaps why I've never been invited to the Cavendish ...)

Quote for the month: “Clarke’s Law of Revolutionary Ideas: Every revolutionary idea – in science, politics, art, or whatever – evokes three stages of reaction. They may be summed up by three phrases:

1. “It’s crazy – don’t waste my time.”
2. “It’s possible – but not worth doing.”
3. “I *said* it was a good idea all along ...”
 (Arthur C. Clarke)