

Pomona-Covina Unit News

December 2023

Individual: December 2, 10 a.m., Ontario

January 6, 10 a.m., TBD

Unit Game: December 9, 11:00 a.m., Ontario

Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

STaC: December 5, 8, 9 (Unit Game)

The November Individual was captured by Tom Cusack, with 63.64%. In second we find, followed by Rose Roberts, then Peter Kavounas, Julianne Curry Linda Tessier, and Stephen Andersen.

In the November Unit Game, Fredy Minter – Amr Elghamry took top honors with a 68.99% effort. In second were Kitty Moon – Tom Cusack, followed by Judy Mogharbel – Yours Truly, and finally Stephen Andersen – Paul Chrisney.

The December game is a week earlier than normal, due to a conflict with the Palm Springs Regional. It's going to be a pot-luck, and we are requesting advance sign-ups so everyone doesn't bring the potato salad. The sign-up sheet is available at all the La Fetra games, or if you plan to come to the Unit game but don't normally play at La Fetra, just let Tom know and he'll add you to the list.

We have only one promotion to announce again this month. Randy Howard is now a Sapphire Life Master

The "big game" list for November features only two different pairs – and one player common to all three. The big score of 70.26% was turned in by Vic Sartor – Bill Papa. The other two big scores were 66.67% by Bill and Vic again, and then 65.97% by Vic and Eddie Rose.

Other winners in November were Fredy Minter, Roger Boyar, Mary Ann Wotring, Judy Mogharbel, and Yours Truly.

I had planned a "Four Is Enough" game for Black Friday, when La Fetra is closed for the Thanksgiving holiday. But someone had reserved BOTH alternate playing sites already! So I scheduled it for Saturday. Unfortunately, only 4 pairs showed up, so, what the heck, we'll run a team game.

And now the fun started. When I uploaded the file to Live for Clubs, no masterpoints showed up. I even got an alert from the League ("please explain") telling me what to do. Didn't work. So after repeated attempts, I called the League. You are going to die laughing when I tell you what went wrong. The EIE instructions tell the Director to enter "+EIE+" into the tournament data name field. Which is exactly what I did. Too bad, so sad. Putting the quote marks in caused the problem. *"The great problem with communication is the illusion that it has taken place."*

Oh, yeah, in case you are interested, the winning team was Bill Papa, Roger Boyar, Paul Chrisney, and Gary Atwell. They are now all 0.72 masterpoints richer.

For this month's interesting (?) hand, we feature ... Board 12, what else? (If you don't know the story behind Board 12, don't ask. You won't like the answer.) It came up in a BBO Open game, and has a few ... interesting ... features.

West deals, N-S vulnerable. You, South, pick up the following hand:

♠ KQ987 ♥ QJ ♦ J1092 ♣ QJ

Yes, you have one of your favorite holdings, QJ tight, twice no less. There are probably worse 12 counts, but only all four QJ combinations comes to mind.

The situation improves markedly when partner opens 2NT. Hey, could be a slam hand! You duly call 3♥, and partner leaps to 4♠! Wow, a super-accept! Since you have nothing to cue-bid, you decide to just ask for controls with RKC Blackwood. Yes, that's usually a poor idea with two fast losers in not one, not two, but all three side suits. But partner's gotta have *something* over there, to open 2NT. And you hold pretty near all the secondary honors, leaving partner rich in Aces and Kings.

Partner goes 5♣, which cannot possibly be only one, unless this deck has 44 HCP in it. Figuring the spades will run and your "small" cards are pretty good fillers, you go 6NT – it is matchpoints, after all.

When partner's hand becomes visible, you are ready to cry:

♠ A3 ♥ AK9864 ♦ AQ3 ♣ A10

Gulp. Not only are two of the promised spades missing, but where did that sixth heart come from? Certainly not a textbook 2NT opener!

However, partner has the luck of 3 rabbits (complete with their feet). The opening lead was the ♠5 (from J1065), and dummy's 7 holds the trick! No lead could have hurt you, considering the minor suit tenaces in declarer's hand, and the diamond suit ready to provide a couple of tricks. 12 tricks roll in after you take the losing diamond finesse.

What happened elsewhere? Take a look:

6NT making, 5 times

6♥ making, 3 times

4♥ making 7, 1 time

3NT making 6, 1 time

So your +1440 was worth 77.8%. With the diamond hook failing and spades 4-2, 6♠ fails unless you peek at East's hand. Better lucky than good!

BTW, where 4♥ made 7, the opening lead was a small club, the ♣K is onside, and declarer has just enough in dummy to establish the fifth spade for a second diamond pitch.

Quote for the month: "Our major obligation is not to mistake slogans for solutions."
(Edward R. Murrow)