

Pomona-Covina Unit News

December 2025

La Fetra Games: Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:45
Claremont Bridge Club: Thursdays 9:30
Individual: January 10, 10:00 a.m., Ontario
Unit Pairs Game: December 20, 11:00 a.m., Ontario
Unit Pairs Game: January 17, 11:00 a.m., Ontario:
Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

Special Note: not many have expressed interest in playing at our club on the days after Christmas and New Year's Day, so the games scheduled for December 26 and January 2 are CANCELLED. Sorry about that. If I had my druthers But it is not to be.

Also, of course, there will be no games at the Claremont club on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

And another BIG ANNOUNCEMENT: after a hiatus of more than two decades (we held our last Sectional, a 299er affair, in 2003), we are going to try again. This will be a joint effort with Unit 516, the High Desert unit. It will be held at the Upland Women's Club (in Upland, if you had not guessed that), March 20-23. It will be a "Local Sectional," and guess who will be the DIC? Nope. Guess again. Details will be announced as they become available. The flyer is not ready yet, but should be soon.

In the November Unit Game, we had our best turnout in quite some time – enabling us to run an 8-table Mitchell! Perhaps the fact that it was our annual Holiday Party had something to do with it? Anyway, the overall winners were Art Weinstein – Nancy Stebbins, with 62.20%. In second we had a tie, Ramona Hernandez – Nona Stokes and Tim and Eileen Finlay. Next came Judy Mogharbel – Yours Truly, and finally Wendy Wanderman – Rosalie Roberts.

In the December Individual, Serene "Cici" Mougharbel took first with a nice 65.91% game. She's been playing less than a year ... her teacher must be something else. (Ahem.) Yours truly was second, Nony Bernal third, Tom Cusack fourth, and Kitty Moon fifth.

Thanks again to Patrick Finley, for collating the masterpoint statistics for November. At La Fetra:

1	5.58	Gary Atwell
2	5.51	Vic Sartor
3	4.49	Mary Ann Wotring
4	4.23	Steve Andersen
5	4.10	Tom Lill
6	3.73	Richard Parker
7	3.63	Ramona Hernandez
8	3.58	Lulu Minter
8	3.58	Fredy Minter
10	3.24	Nona Stokes

The totals are rather low because between election day and Black Friday, we lost a couple of games – we held only six games at La Fetra all month.

And at the Claremont Bridge Club:

1	1.59	Gary Atwell
1	1.59	Duane Woodman
3	1.30	Steve Andersen
4	1.26	Patrick Finley
5	0.97	David Ochroch
5	0.97	Kitty Moon

At La Fetra, only one pair topped the magic 65% benchmark: Vic Sartor – Mary Ann Wotring, with 67.36%. But there were lots of winners in very competitive games: Fredy and Lulu Minter, David Raymond – Gary Atwell, Caryn Mason – Vic Sartor, Nona Stokes – Ramona Hernandez, and Karen McCarthy – Yours Truly.

Over in Claremont, two of the three game-winners topped 65%. David Raymond – Gary Atwell had a monstrous 73.96% outing, and Peggy Diller – Steve Andersen turned in a nice 69.44% game. The other winning pair was David Ochroch – Kitty Moon.

There were no promotions last month, but we had quite a few players attend the Palm Springs Regional, so no doubt we'll see some promotions next time.

11 Unit members attended the Palm Springs Regional, and brought home a total of 85.92 masterpoints. Top winner was ... ahem ... Yours Truly, with only 10.17 of that total. Right behind was our rising Junior star, Cici Mougharbel, with 9.32. Then came Judy Mogharbel, 9.03; Carl Silsbee, 7.73; and Steve Andersen, 7.51. That rounds out the top five, but there were seven players right behind, between there and 4.27 points.

The best individual efforts:

Cici Mougharbel, 1st in bracket 5 of the Sunday Teams.

Carl Silsbee, David Ochroch, Art Weinstein, and Steve Andersen, first in bracket 7 of the Saturday teams.

Richard Parker, 2nd in bracket 4 of the Monday teams.

Sofi Kasubhai, 2nd in bracket 8 of the Friday teams.

And Yours Truly with Judy Mogharbel, 2nd in bracket 5 of the Saturday teams.

For our hand-of-the-month, here's a TANJ (There Ain't No Justice) hand for you. Sitting South, as dealer, I picked up

♠ A 10 8 7 3 ♥ K 8 ♦ 8 ♣ A Q 9 7 4

Certainly, a normal enough 1♠ opening. LHO butted in with 3♥ (don't they always?), and partner, *never* shy at the table, chimed in with a 1430 Blackwood 4NT. I duly showed my two key cards, and partner placed the contract at 6♣. The opening lead was the ♠2 (!), and I found myself presented with these assets to work with:

North
 ♠ Q 9 6
 ♥ Q 3
 ♦ A K Q J 5 2
 ♣ K 8

South
 ♠ A 10 8 7 3
 ♥ K 8
 ♦ 8
 ♣ A Q 9 7 4

Oh, happy days, not only am I short two key cards, but the ♠J is out there, too. I like my partners to have faith in my dummy play, but not *that* much faith! Time to lie back and think of England, I guess.

But, as I say, when you have two chances – slim, and none – try for slim. If LHO has three diamonds in addition to his announced seven hearts, I can pull this one off, perhaps, discarding my two hearts on those luscious diamonds in dummy. RHO cooperated by playing the ♠J as I played low from dummy, and that’s one hurdle overcome. I won the ♠A (not having bet on the opponents to win), and played the top three diamonds. On the ♦Q, LHO showed out (oh, no), but *didn’t ruff*. It turned out that Slim had brought his little brother along: LHO had led his singleton trump! Away went my two hearts, and now that I know the trump position, 6♠ rolled home for an uncontested top.

This hand was played on BBO, and when the round ended I asked my partner (privately) what the story was, bidding slam *knowing* we were off two key cards? She replied: “my kibitzer urged me into it!” Where does TANJ come in? For the opponents, of course: the contract is pretty much hopeless, but the opening lead gave me a chance, and I grabbed it gratefully. The lead of any minor suit card, or the ♥A, gives me no hope whatsoever. (OK, on a minor suit lead, if I guess that LHO has a stiff trump and cash one round finessing the 10 (or covering RHO’s card), it goes the same way – with some very inspired guessing. What are the odds?)

Better lucky than good!

This isn’t exactly a hand of the month, but it’s a story too good not to tell. Believe it or not, as you like. Last year, playing a team event, in round 2 I shuffled and dealt only board 17. When I picked up my cards, I held a lone 10, and 12 smaller cards. Oh well, you pick up awful hands from time to time. Next round, at a different table, I again shuffled only board 17. I picked up my cards ... and again found only a lone 10. Partner henceforth forbade me from ever again shuffling that board. Quite a coincidence, but the best is yet to come.

In Palm Springs, in the Sunday teams, while waiting for the last few boards from our teammates, we got to chatting. Before the boards came, I related the “board 17 story” to my table mates. I got a few chuckles. When I then picked up my cards for board 17: you guessed it! I had one lone 10 and 12 smaller cards! I’m glad I told the story *before* getting the board, as no one would have believed it otherwise. (I still don’t believe it!)

They say that once is happenstance, twice is coincidence, but the third time, it’s enemy action! Oooch.

Quote for the month: “It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles: the less they have in them, the more noise they make in pouring it out.” (Alexander Pope)