Southern California **Bridge News**

Volume 62, #5 June 2025 Published by ALACBU

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John Jones



Our summer regional in Long Beach will be June 30 through July 6. See the flyer in this bulletin. The site will again be the Long Beach Hilton. Carolyn Hannas is our tournament manager 424-473-0888. Give her a call for details and parking tips. It's close to the beach, and the tournament is very near Restaurant Row on Pine Street in Long Beach, where fabulous restaurants of many different varieties can be found. See the tournament schedule in this newsletter.

Parking will be easier than last year. See the map of parking lots available on the D23 website. Thanks to Collette Paul and Carolyn Hannas for developing the map.

There will be a free workshop on Monday, taught by Margie Michelin.

We have a great staff for this tournament:

Carolyn Hannas = Tournament Manager
Marjorie Michelin = Tournament Chair
Ken Horwedel = Head director
Matt Koltonow = Director
Brandon Sheumaker = Director
John Coulombe = Director
Kau Kashert = Director
Laura Gastelum = Hospitality
Liz Ryan = Partnership and Hospitality
Tom Lill = Daily Bulletin
Ellis Feigenbaum = Board maker
Lim Wang = Caddymaster
Tommy, Jason, and Sophie return as caddies.
John Jones = District President
Jordan Chodorow = District Vice-President

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Regional Director's Report

by David Lodge



Roll back the clock 5+ years to the February/March time frame of 2020, the end of the period we refer to as pre-pandemic. Within days, all our lives were changed. Two very talented people realized that with the closures of clubs, there would become an extraordinary demand for an alternative approach to playing our game. Bridge Base Online, "BBO", was already an existing and proven platform. Uday Ivatury, a previous principal with BBO, and Jay Whipple, past ACBL president, founder of the Common Game and Hall of Fame honoree, joined forces to create the ACBL Virtual Games. Hence, the landscape of competitive bridge was changed forever. You may remember the evolution that occurred. The opportunity to have an online presence was offered to all clubs. Some clubs didn't want or couldn't afford to have one of their people take over the management and supervision of the online games and as a result, master clubs arose. This led to the development of the

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Stan Holzberg = District Treasurer
Lillian Slater = District Secretary
David Lodge = Regional Director

The D23 General Membership meeting will be Saturday night. There will be dinner for unit representatives and District Officers at 6:30, followed by the General Meeting at 7:00. The meeting will be on Zoom as well as live. Contact Lilllian Slater at 714-287-3184 or lilliands@gmail.com to get the Zoom link. The General Meeting will include the elections for the positions of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary for D23. Terms last for 2 years. To nominate a candidate (self-nominations are allowed), contact Jordan Chodorow at 310-780-1765 or chodorow@stanfordalumni.org.

I am again requesting help in identifying players who were displaced by the LA Fires. We have $1994 in our fire relief fund, thanks to the wonderful help we got. Funds came in in cash, check, Zelle, and from the ACBL Charity game organized by Margie Michelin and Ellis Feigenbaum. Donations came in from La Fetra BC, South Bay BC, Pasadena, and some were mailed directly to Stan Holzberg. We appreciate all the donations! Please contact me at president@d23acbl.org.

DIRECTOR continued from page 1

"consortiums," wherein clubs from disparate parts of the country joined in a master/client relationship. The concept of having a "member list" came about. This was done to protect the clientele of existing clubs from poaching by other clubs through various means including price wars, free games, more points, etc. This was the start of a big Headache. One was assigned to a club as a member if they had played there any time in the 14 months prior to 2020. Some resented being assigned to a particular club when there were competing F2F clubs in an area. In any event, we started off insisting that no more than 5% of the players in a game be guests. More Headaches! Lots of very clever master club operators figured out ways to game the system. The league was spending thousands of dollars monitoring activity and threatening discipline. Then we changed the guest percentage from 5% to 15%. Then we allowed the member list to be updated so if one, for example, could leave San Diego and travel to Palm Desert and play F2F at the Duncan Bridge Center, they would then be a "member" of Duncan and would not be prevented from playing in an online game when there were too many other guests. And life rolled on. And there were more changes, until at last, there are no more restrictions – you can play wherever you want, and the clubs are free to make any kind of arrangement with other clubs.

All this time, BBO has been the 800-pound gorilla. As the landscape has changed for the ACBL's Virtual Games, it has also changed for the ACBL sanctioned 18 board and 12 board game that BBO runs, and for which it pays ACBL "non-colored" masterpoints. The league has a multi-year contract with BBO which is set to expire on June 30, of this year. Under that contract, BBO had virtually exclusive rights vis-à-vis other online platforms to run online games and award ACBL masterpoints (OK Bridge and Swan Bridge also have rights, but they have not been material to the broad picture). For this right of exclusivity, BBO paid the league a substantial annual fee. We have renegotiated the BBO contract. Effective, July 1, of this year, BBO will no longer have the exclusive right to run ACBL sanctioned games. This will open the opportunity for other online platforms to offer games.

Here's what you can look forward to: Funbridge – play at your own pace with a virtual partner who adapts to you (great for new players and free for Junior members; Intobridge – engage with classic and innovative game modes, plus live chat and audio/visual; Realbridge – ACBL club games against real people with live audio/visual; Sharkbridge – Learn with an educational app that includes games with bots or live players. With all the above, you'll still be able to play as before on BBO.

So play online to your heart's content but remember that it has been the social aspect of F2F play that has been so vitally important to many of us and that if we want to continue to enjoy these encounters, we have to support our brick and mortar clubs.

FYI Part 11
Arcane Bridge Points
Some Terminology for Team Games
by Bob Gruber



Away Table [Home Table]: In a Team game the N/S pair plays at the team's Home table. The E/W pair plays at the team's Away table in the complementary/paired section. See *Crossover*.

Blitz: In a team game, a lopsided victory is called a blitz. Often heard as "we blitzed them" and "we got blitzed."

Caddy: Caddies in duplicate bridge are almost a thing of the past. One vestige is tournaments holding team games. When teams at different tables need to exchange boards, a caddy is called to carry out that function. (Each table starts with half the boards for the match and when they finish them, they need to play the other half of the boards that started at the other table.)



Captain: In a team game, one person is listed as the Captain; that person is responsible for reporting results and his/her last name is used as the team's name.

Complementary Table: A team's N/S plays at one table (called their home table) and the E/W pair at a different table (called their away table). These are typically in different sections and the complementary/paired sections are: A & B, C & D, E & F, etc. E/W plays in the complementary section at the same table # as the home table #.

Cross Over: In a Swiss (or Knock Out) team game, at the start of each new round of matches, the E/W pairs are asked to cross over, i.e., go to the complementary/paired table and play E/W against the opponent team's designated N/S pair.

Head-to-Head: A head-to-head match involves exactly 2 teams. Also see Round Robin.

Home Table: See Away Table and Complementary Table.

IMPs & IMP Scale: The common International Match Point (IMP) scale runs 0-24 IMPs. This scale is used in team games to convert raw score differences each pair of a team achieved on each board to IMPs. IMPs may be positive or negative. Reducing very large differences to no more than 24 IMPs, reduces the weight/effect of such a board on the match. Today, IMPs are usually converted to Victory Points (VPs).

Knock Outs [KOs]: A team game in which the loss of a single match typically means the team is out of the event. In Knock Out events (KOs), round robin matches may be used to qualify only 1 of the 3 teams to quickly reduce the number of teams in the event. Conversely, qualifying 2 of the 3 teams keeps a greater number of teams in the event.

Loser Swiss: When there's a Knock Out (KO) Event in the 1st session of the day, the 2nd session often schedules a single-session Swiss Teams event so the players not going on in the KO have an alternative to the side game or going home.

Match: In team games, a match is similar to a round in pairs games. In a Swiss Teams game, the matches are usually 6-8 boards.

Paired Table: A team's N/S plays at one table (called their home table) and the E/W pair at a different table (called their away table). These are typically in different sections and the paired/complementary sections are: A & B, C & D, E & F, etc. E/W plays in the paired section at the same table # as the home table #.

Push: When converting the raw score difference on a board to IMPs, a dead tie or a difference of 10 is called

a push and neither team wins or loses IMPs on that board. On the Team Private Score sheet, the indicator for a push is a horizontal line across both the + IMPs and – IMPs columns.

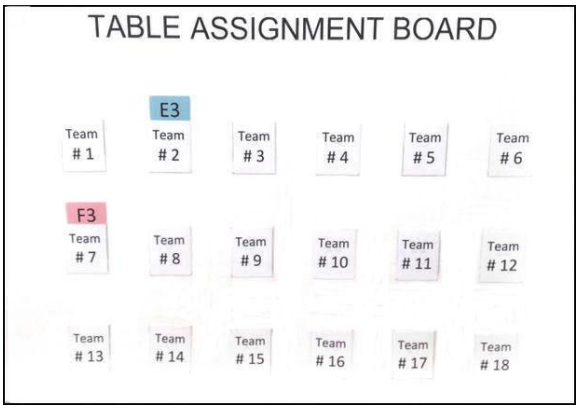
Round Robin: In a Swiss Teams game, an odd number of teams results in three (3) teams playing in a round-robin. Over the course of two regular, head-to-head matches for the rest of the field, the round robin teams play four half matches in two segments, 2 half matches per segment. By spanning two matches, each team in the round robin plays the other two teams the full number of boards. In Knock Out events (KOs), round robin matches may be used to qualify only 1 of the 3 teams to quickly reduce the number of teams in the event. Conversely, qualifying 2 of the 3 teams keeps a greater number of teams in the event.

Stationary (table assignment: Applies to both pairs and team games. In pairs, a stationary table assignment means the pair is stationary but not necessarily fixed, i.e., the pair may play N/S or E/W in a given round. In a team game, 2 pairs of the team play each round. If the team has been granted a stationary table assignment, the N/S pair is stationary and fixed at a particular table throughout the event. The E/W pair for this stationary team plays the entire event at the complementary table, the same table # in the complementary/paired section.

Swiss Teams: In a Swiss Teams event, each team plays at two tables simultaneously, so that's a minimum of four (4) players. ACBL allows one substitute pair, or two individuals, so that's a maximum of six (6) players. This event, in which each team plays for the duration of the event, is setup in such a way that winning teams play teams with approximately equal records. Swiss Teams may be scored in a variety of ways. Three possibilities quickly come to mind: 1) Win-Loss based on raw score, 2) Win-Loss based on International Match Points (IMPs), and 3) Victory Points (VPs).

Table Assignment: Teams (and pairs) are assigned to play at a specific table at the start of the event/game. In Teams, the table assignment is on a round-by-round basis and the Director may receive a request for a stationary table assignment, which will be accommodated if possible. For each team, each round's N/S table assignment is shown on the Table Assignment Board.

Table Assignment Board: A board with pockets where table assignments for all teams in the event are posted at the beginning of each round. The pockets are for inserts that indicate the section and table # within the section. The insert is only for the home table where the



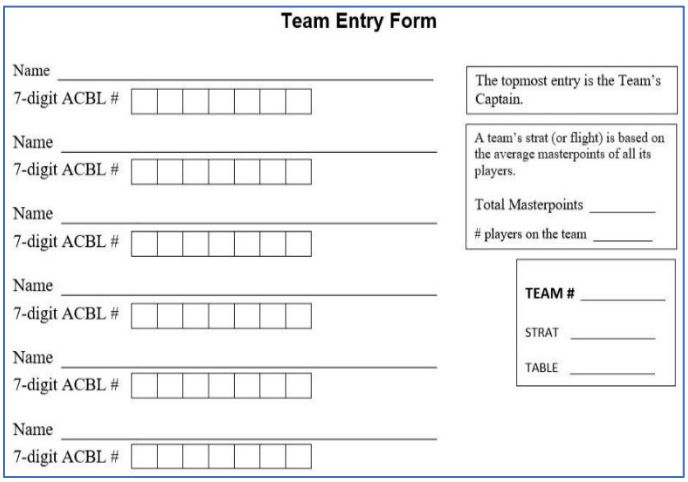
N/S pair will play. E/W's assigned table is not shown, but E/W goes to the away table, i.e., to a table with the same # in the paired section. Often, but not always, the table assignment board is a rectangular piece of canvas with pockets sewn on.

On the (N/S) Table Assignment Board above, Team 2's Home table is E3. Team 2's N/S pair will play there. The complementary/paired table, F3, will be the Away table. Team 2's E/W pair will play there. If we locate F3 on the board, we can identify the number of the team Team 2 will play. In this case, it's Team 7.

This method works for Team 7—and for all head-to-head table assignments. It's more complicated for round robin matches.

Team #: Your team is assigned a numeric number that is your identifier for the entire event.

Team Entry Form: A sample Team Entry Form is shown below. Since Bridgemates are rarely used in team games, an entry form is needed. The topmost entry is the team's Captain. A team's strat (or flight) is based on the average masterpoints of all its players.



Team of Four: A generic term for a team game. Teams are allowed six players on their roster, but only 2 pairs at a time play in a match.

5-bagger: A team that has exactly 5 players is called a 5-bagger.

6-bagger: A team that has exactly 6 players is called a 6-bagger.

Victory Points: Most team games today are scored in Victory Points (VPs) rather than win-lose or IMPs. After the raw score difference the two partnerships achieved on each board is converted to IMPs, another conversion is done on the aggregate IMPs using either the 20-pt Victory Point scale or the 30-pt Victory Point scale. VPs are always positive; basically, the 2 teams split the 20 or 30 VPs depending upon which scale is used. VPs reduce the weight/effect of a lopsided match on the event. The 20-pt scale is most commonly used.

FYI Part 12
Best Bridge Teams Ever

Almost entirely from Wikipedia

by Bob Gruber

Undoubtedly the best Bridge Team ever was neither American nor British, but Italian. The Italian Blue Team dominated bridge in Europe and the World, winning 16 World Championships from 1957 to 1975 while developing the Blue Club bidding system. Twelve of those wins were in the 13 years between 1957 and 1969. Two of the greatest players ever—Benito Garozzo and Giorgio Belladona were on most of those teams.

The second best team ever was probably the Dallas Aces (initially the U.S. Aces, later simply the Aces), who were the world's first professional bridge team, organized in 1968 by Dallas businessman Ira Corn. Corn was determined to return bridge supremacy to America after the domination of the Italians for more than a decade. The Aces, in various formations over the years, featured stars such as Jim Jacoby, Bobby Wolff, Billy Eisenberg, Bobby Goldman, Mike Lawrence, Bob Hamman, Paul Soloway, Eric Murray and Sami Kehela. They won the 1970, 1971, 1977 and 1983 Bermuda Bowls, as well as several other competitions. The team slowly disbanded after Corn's death in 1982.

History of the Aces

Corn recruited Jim Jacoby and Bobby Wolff, then Billy Eisenberg, Bobby Goldman, and Mike Lawrence, paying salaries ($800 per month for single players, $950 for married ones—in 2022 values: $6,400 and $7,600) plus expenses for major tournaments. Bob Hamman at first declined an invitation, but became the sixth team member in 1969. Jacoby paired with Wolff, Eisenberg with Goldman, and Lawrence with Hamman. The team practiced and analyzed hands for long hours. Corn hired coaches and provided a computer from one of his companies to assist analysis and to generate bridge deals to order.

In 1969, the team achieved its first major success, winning the Spingold Knockout Teams at the fall North American Bridge Championships. That year it represented North America in the Bermuda Bowl tournament, the nearly annual Teams world championship. But the Aces placed third behind a team from Taiwan playing Precision—an astonishing upset and the first time that a Bermuda Bowl final match did not include North America or the United States. Meanwhile, the Blue Team won its tenth in a row, and then disbanded. The Aces beat Taiwan in the 1970 final and defended their title in 1971, beating France in the final.

After 1971, Corn paid only expenses, no salaries. The composition of the team began changing. In 1971, Eisenberg departed, replaced by Paul Soloway until 1973, when he in turn was replaced by Mark Blumenthal. That year the Aces, as defenders, lost the Bermuda Bowl final to Italy, with three players from the later Blue Teams on its roster. Lawrence and Jacoby were the next to leave, making way for the Canadian pair of Eric Murray and Sami Kehela. They lost two more Bermuda Bowl finals, in 1974 and 1975, to Italy, which fielded three and two Blue Team members, respectively. Other personnel changes followed. The Aces recaptured the Bermuda Bowl in 1977 with the pairs Eisenberg–Eddie Kantar, Hamman–Wolff, and Soloway–John Swanson (same as 1975). As "USA" in the 1980 World Team Olympiad, the Aces played well and won the silver medal. Corn, who would die of a heart attack in April 1982, assembled one final Aces team in 1981. Now comprising Mike Becker–Ron Rubin and Alan Sontag–Peter Weichsel with Hamman–Wolff, it went on to win the 1982 Spingold and the 1983 Bermuda Bowl. It dedicated the victory to Corn and then disbanded.

The Teacher's Corner

Case for The Defense
by Daniel F. Oakes

This month, we have a defense logic quiz, and an opening leads quiz. Hopefully, they'll be both entertaining and instructive! Let's start with the logic quiz, which only has one question. Here's the set up. N/S have the following uncontested auction: 1♠ – 2♦; 4♠ – P. West was on lead with this very mediocre collection: ♠A4 ♥Q82 ♦K83 ♣J9764 and led the ♥2. The scoring was IMPs, where setting the contract is paramount. Dummy came down, and this is how things looked to West:

(NORTH)
♠J3
♥K63
♦QT754
♣KQ2

(WEST)
♠A4
♥Q82
♦K83
♣J9764

Declarer took partner's ♥9 with the jack at trick 1, then cashed the ace, partner showing an original odd number of hearts. Declarer led a spade, and West hopped up with the ace to switch to a low diamond, lest a diamond loser get pitched on the king of hearts. East won the ♦A and returned the ♦9 to West's king. Situation check: The defense has three tricks (two diamonds and the ace of trump) and needs one more. Declarer is probably out of hearts. One round of trump has been drawn. West correctly deduced that there are two reasonable chances for a 4th trick for the defense: Partner might have the ace of clubs, or, declarer might have the last remaining diamond, meaning that partner can ruff a third round of that suit. Partner's ♦9 return would be consistent with both an original doubleton and also an original holding of three diamonds (higher of the remaining doubleton), so no inference is available from the size of the diamond spot he returned. Before you read on, take a minute and decide whether in West's shoes you would have led a club or a diamond.

West returned a club. Declarer won the ace, drew trump, and made 10 tricks. East had a doubleton diamond, so the setting trick was available in the form of a diamond ruff. Here's the quiz question: Was the failure to set the contract West's fault, East's fault, or bad luck?

Opening lead quiz time! You'll get the auction and your hand; decide what you would lead. Hint: When it comes to opening leads, the auction pretty much always matters. The defenders never enter any of the following auctions; they're just between declarer and dummy.

1. ♠KT3 ♥963 ♦A3 ♣T9863: 1♥–2♦; 2♥–4♥; P
2. ♠5 ♥KJ953 ♦KT5 ♣JT83: 1♠–2♥; 2♠–4♠; P
3. ♠QT43 ♥KJ93 ♦A4 ♣873: 1♥–1♠; 2♣–P
4. ♠J7 ♥A96 ♦J8652 ♣K53: 1♠–2♠; 4♠– P

Time for some answers! First, the "Assign the Blame" question. This one may feel like a guess, and to many partnerships it *would* be a guess, but an expert player should never get this wrong. The position that West is in is foreseeable. That is, East should know that West wouldn't be sure what to return upon winning his (hoped-for) king of diamonds. After all, if East had the ace of clubs and three diamonds, a return of a diamond by West would probably ruin the defense – Declarer would be the one ruffing the diamond, after which he would draw trump and pitch his club losers on dummy's good red cards.

What does that mean for East, after he wins the ace of diamonds? It means that if he has the ace of clubs, *he should cash it before returning the 9 of diamonds*. So, back to West's point-of-view: West should reason that East would have cashed the ace of club if he'd had it; therefore, West should return a diamond and hope East can ruff. This one was entirely West's fault. This hand is adapted from a real-life hand with world-class defenders, except that when the deal actually happened, East had the ace of clubs and the 13th diamond, so no diamond ruff was possible. After winning the ace of diamonds, East correctly cashed the ace of clubs before returning the diamond to West's king. Down 1. On to the opening leads!

1. This is a strong auction, and dummy has a side suit. Declarer's black suit winners may very well get pitched on dummy's diamonds. Clubs, by itself, is a safe suit to lead (because of the sequence), but in the context of the whole hand, it's UNsafe (it's a weak suit, so may take too long to set up). The key card is your ace of diamonds. Lead an apparently risky spade and hope to find partner with the queen, to set up a trick

or two. Once your ace of diamonds is gone, the floodgates may be opened for dummy's diamond winners; you have to set up tricks in a hurry while you still have control of the diamonds.

2. This hand is in direct contrast to the previous one. Dummy has a long heart suit, but you have very good hearts, so there's less risk of declarer's losers disappearing. Make the safe lead – clubs, from your sequence. Leading a diamond is much more likely to blow a trick here (e.g. if declarer has the ace of diamonds and dummy or declarer has the queen).

3. Nobody prefers to play in a minor. So why is dummy passing here, when declarer has 5 hearts? Dummy has a weak hand (won't provide a bunch of pitches) and short hearts (likely a singleton). You have good hearts behind declarer. Declarer's heart losers aren't going to get pitched; he'll lose them if he can't ruff them. Lead a trump, and memorize this auction. If you have any kind of strength in declarer's first suit, it calls for a trump lead.

4. This is the ambiguous one. Although anything could work, the best chances are a diamond or a club. A club is more aggressive and riskier, and on this auction, not as good an idea. If we give a low diamond a score of 10 for being the best possible lead (though far from clear), a club is worth about 7 or 8. Remember dummy is weak on this auction, so aggressiveness is not really indicated. A trump is about a 2 or 3. Because you have the jack, a trump lead could easily blow a trick if partner has anything in the suit. The ace of hearts was led at the table and cost the contract when dummy had QT3 of hearts and declarer had K84. On any other lead, declarer will finesse you for the jack of hearts, leading to dummy's T and losing to partner's jack. Declarer gets 1 heart trick, and the defense gets 2. Down 1. When you lead the ace of hearts, you get 1 trick, and declarer gets 2. Making 4. Aces were made to take king and queens. When you toss them out on opening lead ("to get a look at dummy"), they capture threes and twos. The ace of hearts lead is worth 1 point, and a low heart is worse.

Until next month!

Bridge Is My Second Language
by Ed Piken

As our planet has evolved, what has clearly separated human mankind from the other inhabitants is our ability to reason, our hand dexterity and our ability to communicate. This third quality is generally our most important attribute. When we look at the great bridge pairs their ability to play the cards is overshadowed by complete and definitive communication in bidding and defense.

Throughout bridge history, whether pairs played Goren, Roth/Stone, Kaplan/Sheinwald, Walsh, the Italian blue team system or more recently the Polish club, great communication with their nuances has always been the key to success.

In this column, we will be examining the art of communication, what our partner says, and frequently, more importantly what our partner does not say. Frequently even the pass can impart as much information as a forward going bid. On defense, the art of signaling often separates the great from the good player. Partnerships in sympatico will find their game reaching expert levels as they direct each other to the proper defense.

Today, we will start with a simple example that holds true for every bidding system, and where each bid holds its own inference. Each bid will be communicating what you and partner have, and more importantly what your side does not have.

You pick up a mundane ♠Kxx ♥Jx ♦AQ10xx ♣Kxx and black vs black open one diamond. What has partner learned? Yes. you have an opening hand, yes 82% of the time you have at least four diamonds, and for most pairs probably no five card major, and you do not have a balanced hand with 15 to 17 points. Your LHO places down the one heart card and we look for partner to bid. In the meantime, LHO told his partner he has 7 to 16 points at least five hearts (most of the time) and most likely not a five card spade suit, and probably not a four card spade suit as well. (The latter is most likely, but not guaranteed). Wow, so simple, but so much information already conveyed.

Partner doubles, and the bidding proceeds. But wait what did the double mean? Yes, we play negative doubles, so he has at least six points, but, what doesn't partner have? No five spades or longer, and probably not a hand looking to collect penalty points in hearts at the lowest level. Their hand holds numerous possibilities At this moment pard anxiously awaits more information from you. Who is the captain in this auction? You have exactly your most predictable hand, their hand is unknown except for its four card spade suit and six or seven-plus points. It is now your job to describe your hand at a low level both in shape and strength. RHO's turn could bring a number of responses, i.e. a raise in hearts, a pass, a new suit, or

even a no trump bid. You wait with bated breath. RHO passes, requiring a bid from you. I would favor two diamonds and if the opponents bid two hearts, coming back two spades. Hello partner, I have five diamonds and three spades and will be able to take the tap with short hearts. My two diamond bid also showed that, I don' have four clubs, probably), don' have four spades and don't have heart strength or I would have bid no trump. My point count is also now confirmed. So much information conveyed, most of it by negative inference.

Partner holds ♠AQJx ♥xxx ♦Kxxx ♣Qx and they proceed to bid 4 spades, playing a Moysian fit. So simple yet so clear. Knowing my hand, they confidently proceeded to bid four spades, the only makeable game. The key to the bidding, the information and inferences imparted. My good partner Stevie Cohen will remember this hand, from the day we won a national event playing five Moysian fits.

Stay tuned for next month's article on communication, and always remember bridge is our second language.

District 23 Rank Changes June 2025

Junior Master
Kay L. Brown
Colleen Foley
David Foos
Sherna Foucher
Sivan Gartiez
Beth Howard
Jeffrey Krane
Kris Penner
Lina Sanossian
Steve Snively
Deke Thomas

Club Master
Kathleen Carter
Bruce Fleck
Loren Giorgio
Michael L. Goldberg

Sectional Master
Salino lo
David M. Anthopoulos
Kerry Goldstone
Mark Maltzman

Regional Master
Cindy Barth
Paul Barth
Marcia O'Connor

NABC Master
Jay Hansen

Advanced NABC Master
Michael Vernia

Life Master
Maurice W. Parker
Angela N. Peters

Bronze Life Master
Wayne Fang
Maurice W. Parker
Angela N. Peters

Silver Life Master
Nina Huang

Ruby Life Master
Richard S. Orandle
Mira Rowe

Diamond Life Master
Jacqueline G. Yockey

89th Annual BRIDGE WEEK IN LONG BEACH CALIFORNIA

JUNE 30 – JULY 6

TOURNAMENT HIGHLIGHTS

MONDAY JUNE 30 Reception for Workshop 11:30 AM
Special gifts – Bring your Q & A
"FREE WORKSHOP"12:00 – 1:30 "Power up your Game"
Presented by Marjorie Michelin – Grand Life Master

Guest Speakers Tuesday – Saturday
GOLD RUSH PAIRS
MINI SOLOWAYS
SWISS TEAMS

Tournament Manager: Carolyn Hannas 424-473-0888
carolynhannas1952@gmail.com

Hospitality : Laura Gastelum lauralgastelum@gmail.com

Partnerships: Liz Ryan eryan311@icloud.com

SIGN UP GENIUS
Look up partnership possibilities or add Your name to an event you want to play in.
Scan the code

Director in charge: Ken Horwedel

District 23 President : John Jones
Regional Director: David Lodge



HILTON LONG BEACH
701 West Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, CA

Room Rates

$158.92 Double
$167.18 King
Use code 905
1-800-774-1500
Price includes mandatory stay charge Excludes taxes

Parking at hotel $17.50 limited spaces
Valet $40 Additional parking info:
carolynhannas1952@gmail.com

Monday June 30, 2025

Reception for Workshop	11:30AM -12:00PM
Marjorie Michelin WORKSHOP	12:00 -1:30PM
299er Pairs	2:00PM
Aft. Side Series (1 of 6)	2:00PM
Strat. Charity Pairs(1 sess)	2:00PM
Charity Bracketed Teams	2:00PM & 7:00PM
Strat .Charity Pairs (1 sess)	7:00PM

Tuesday July 1 2025

AM Side Series (1 of 5)	10:00AM
Gold Rush Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Stratified Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
BCD Bracketed Teams	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Mini Soloway (4 session)	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Qualifying event top 4 play Wednesday	
Guest Lecture	2:15PM
Aft. Side Series (2 of 6)	3:00PM

Wednesday July 2, 2025

AM Side Series (2 of 5)	10:00AM
Gold Rush Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Stratified Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Bracketed Teams	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Mini Soloway Finals	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Guest Lecture	2:15PM
Aft. Side Series (3 of 6)	3:00PM

Thursday July 3, 2025

AM Side Series (3 of 5)	10:00AM
Gold Rush	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Stratified Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Bracketed Teams	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Mini Soloway (4 session)	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Qualifying event top 4 play Friday	
Guest Lecture	2:15PM
Aft Side Series	3:00PM

Friday July 4, 2025

AM Side Series (4 of 5)	10:00AM
Gold Rush Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Stratified Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Bracketed Teams	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Mini Soloway Finals	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Guest Lecture	2:15PM
Aft. Side Series (5 of 6)	3:00PM

Saturday July 5, 2025

AM Side Series (5 of 5)	
Gold Rush Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Stratified Pairs	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Bracketed Teams	10:00AM & 3:00PM
Special Show	2:00PM
Aft. Side Series (6 of 6)	3:00PM

Sunday July 6, 2025

Fast Pairs	10:00AM and TBA
Bracketed Teams	10:00AM and TBA

Gold Rush – No one over 750

Stratified Pairs 0-2500/2500-5000/5000+

Director Determines Final Strats

Mini Soloway 4 Sessions 2 Qualifying Top 4 teams in each bracket play finals,

Card Fees $18 per Session
Except Sunday $46 for all games
Includes Buffet Lunch

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District 23 Unit Presidents

The Presidents of our nine Units in District 23 do a lot to make *your* bridge experience better. They seldom get any thanks or even recognition. To help redress that imbalance, here is a list of the current incumbent Unit Presidents:

Unit	President
551 – Pomona – Covina	Tom Lill
553 – Glendale-Verdugo	Adam Barron
556 – Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley	Paula Olivares
557 – Long Beach	Leo Dittemore
559 – Pasadena – San Gabriel	Lisa Walker
561 – San Fernando	Joan Rubin
562 – West Los Angeles	Jordan Chodorow
564 – Downey-Whittier	Kent Burrell
568 – Torrance-South Bay	Carol Decordova

* Kent has resigned, but the election to replace him has not yet been held.

2025 JOHN WAKEN SECTIONAL
PASADENA SAN GABRIEL UNIT 559

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Partnerships: Morris Jones (626) 247-4457 mojo@pasadenabridgeclub.com

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• Saturday, August 23 10:00 AM • Open Pairs and 499er Pairs* 3:00 PM • Open Pairs and 499er Pairs* *No player over 500 Masterpoints	• Sunday, August 24 10:00 AM • Two Session Open and 499er* Swiss Teams 2nd Session Immediately After Lunch

Fees: (Cash or Credit Cards) ACBL Members **$15.00** per person/per session (Unpaid/Inactive members -$19 per player per session) and Swiss **$120.00** per team (Unpaid/Inactive members -Additional $4.00 per person)

Stratifications are based on the average of players' masterpoints and may be adjusted at game time to optimize playing conditions.

Space is limited! Make reservations early online using:

https://www.rsvpbridge.com/join/PasadenaSectional2025.

ACBL.ORG

Sanction No. 2508358

ZERO TOLERANCE OBSERVED

The Puzzle Page

Bridge Jeopardy
by John Jones

Category: Famous Old Time LA Bridge Players

And the answer is …

$100 – A TV producer who had directed "Mission Impossible" and "Mannix," he had 35,135 Masterpoints, and 15 national championships when he was murdered in 1985 at his Studio City home. The masterpoint king, he once characterized himself as, "mean, petty, malicious, vindictive" and he would blow smoke in the face of opponents.

$200 – Described by opponent Allan Graves as "gracious and kind," she was well liked by virtually everyone. She won 14 national championship, the Women's Wagar Teams 10 times, and at least 4 world championships (mostly in partnership with Marilyn Johnson). Her second husband Jules Farell was my favorite doubles tennis partner.

$300 – This Canoga Park Real Estate broker was once the ACBL President. He had a world championship and 19 national titles. *Sports Illustrated described* him as "gruff and unpredictable", and in another edition called him a "one-man team in a partnership game". He changed partners frequently, but Charles Goren noted he won with all of them. He is credited with the convention in which a double of a big club shows the majors and 1NT shows the minors.

$400 – This race horse owner was a great Pasadena area player who accumulated 26,180 masterpoints. He was at one time married to Kerri Sanborn, twice won the Truscott Senior National Swiss, was an expert in squeeze technique and considered by many to be the best declarer in the LA area.

$500 – This Long Beach player joined Bob Hamman, Eddie Kantar, Don Krauss, Lew Mathe, Erik Paulson and Eddie Taylor in winning the 1963 Sports Illustrated Trophy. Professionally he was a sports agent and football executive for the LA Rams and the New Orleans Saints. He was the first sports agent to set up deferred payments for his clients. Sportscaster Jim Healy always referred to him by his bridge nickname "Squeezer", making him sound like a mobster.

(Solutions to Bridge Jeopardy are on page 16. No peeking!)

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Submitted by Tom Lill

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Around the Units in District 23



Pomona – Covina by Tom Lill

www.acblunit551.org

La Fetra Games: Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:45
Individual: NO Individual in July
The Longest Day: June 20, La Fetra ($7)
Unit Pairs Game: July 19, 11:00 a.m., Ontario
Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

In the June Individual, Judy Mogharbel led the field with 64.13%. Tom Cusack was 2nd, Clint Lew 3rd, Peter Kavounas 4th, Linda Tessier 5th. There was an interesting occurrence in this game. If you watch the scores of all our games, you know how rare a completely flat board is, even with established partnerships. In this month's Individual, we did have one flat board in our 3-table game. That's only the mildly surprising part. The scores on that board were what is astonishing. Believe it or not as you like: there were three scores of +230! Go figure.

Thanks again to Patrick Finley, for collating the masterpoint statistics for May:

1	15.94	Fredy Minter
2	13.68	Patrick Finley
3	13.31	Vic Sartor
4	11.45	Caryn Mason
5	12.04	Lulu Minter
6	8.84	Mary Ann Wotring
7	8.09	David Raymond
8	7.85	Ramona Hernandez
9	7.95	Nona Stokes
10	7.71	Steve Mancini

These totals include all La Fetra and Unit games, but don't include points won at outside tournaments or clubs, or in online games.

Lots of winners in May – perhaps helped out by the increased attendance lately. We've even been able to run few Mitchell movements! Anyhoo, here are the top scores from last month. The very top score was turned in by Caryn Mason – Vic Sartor, 75.56%. Wheee! Next up were Fredy and Lulu Minter, 73.33% and 71.35%, followed by Caryn Mason – Patrick Finley, 70.97%, the Minters again (hey, leave some matchpoints for the rest of us!), 69.70%, and last a pair of 67.19% games by Vic Sartor – Mary Ann Wotring, one of which was only good for a second-place finish!

Other winners not topping the magic 65%: Peter Kavounas, Richard Parker, Gary Atwell, Steve Andersen, Carl Silsbee, Dan Robinson, Roger Boyar, David Raymond, Karen McCarthy, and Yours Truly.

There were no promotions again last month. Better luck next month! Of course, we have the Bridge Week Regional in Long Beach coming up in July.

For our hand-of-the-month, it's back to my favorite theme – the old "semi-balanced" Wonder.

With no one vulnerable, you, East, see this rather interesting collection:

♠ J ♥ 5…♦ Q1092 ♣ AQ109432

Well, OK, it's not quite semi-balanced; in fact, it's a "Cologne," i.e., 4-7-1-1 shape. (It's not funny if I have to explain it.)

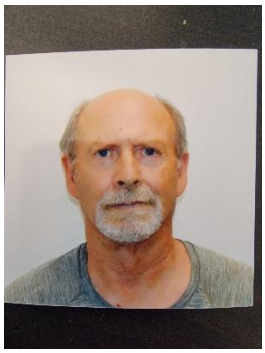
Anyway, the dealer, on your right, opens 1♦. It's a bidder's game, to be sure, so 2♣ looks about right. Maybe 3♣, but I went the low road, allowing for partner to have some stuff. LHO passed, and partner came in with 2♠. Not what I wanted to hear of course. RHO ventured 3♦, and smelling a massive misfit, I placed that red X on the table. Gotta be business, right? Well, LHO passed and partner pulled to 3♥. Again, *just* what I was looking for! Fortunately (for my side!), RHO went 4♦, and this time partner got the message when my red X hit the table. My opening lead was the ♠A, followed by the ♣A and then the ♥5, and declarer did *not* have fun, for the full deal was (see next page):

That's right: not only did I have a "Cologne," partner had a "Hastings" (1-0-6-6). Declarer made 7 tricks for -500, a clear top for E-W. According to Bridge Composer, no one can really make much of anything on this deal: it says, for possible (and of course double-dummy) results: E-W 2♥ or 2♠; E-W 1NT (yes, both East and West have notrump-oriented hands, to be sure); E-W 2♣; and N-S 1♦.

	♠ KQ102 ♥ 8 ♦ AKJ763 ♣ K7	
♠ J876534 ♥ AKQ962 ♦ 5 ♣ none		♠ A ♥ 5 ♦ Q1092 ♣ AQ109432
	♠ 94 ♥ J10743 ♦ 84 ♣ J865	

Quote for the month: "The mass media is (*sic)* supported and sustained by commercial entities. And corn flakes and Shakespeare are simply not kissing cousins. Leonard Bernstein and living bras are incompatible. And you cannot sustain probing, meaningful drama when the proceedings are interrupted every twelve minutes by a dozen dancing rabbits with toilet paper." (Rod Serling)

[We should *be* so lucky nowadays to get twelve uninterrupted minutes of programming!]



Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley
by Don Dachner

We have Bridgemates! No more travelers! Wow! Thanks to David Khalieque and Alan Nueman who set it up and managed the server.

Also, we're on the verge of understanding our dealing machine. Next week, on June 21th, will be our next game, and we might have the dealing machine in action to pre-duplicate the hands.

In mid-August, we will have a new sanctioned game on Wednesdays. It will be a 12 board game and it will also be a slower game (more time between rounds) in order to accommodate our newer players who have graduated from Ruth Baker's beginner bridge class. They're now ready to get the feel for passing boards, scoring and getting new opponents after each round.

Thanks, Ruth, for bringing new players to our club. The Wednesday game is a nod to the newer players, but it's also an open game so please join us and maybe even give some friendly and fun advice.

Ruth Baker had an interesting hand at the Camarillo Sectional last weekend. She got into a 6NT contract and on the opening lead, just laid down her hand and claimed all the tricks. You don't see that every day. ☺

There is no game this Friday the 13th and the games will move to Saturdays starting on the 21st where they will remain until mid-August.

Our f2f game is on Saturdays (until mid August) at 10AM at the Newhall Community Center in Santa Clarita. The game is free but reservations are strongly recommended so contact either Ruth Baker (rbaker1243@sbcglobal.net) or Paula Olivares (paula@pacbell.net)

Friday morning bridge results.

May 2

NS	Bill Langlois – Donna Davidson	66.32%
EW	Mark Brifman – Susan Strassner	59.52%

May 9
NS Bill Langlois – Donna Davidson 66.84%
EW Alan Nueman – Harry Randhawa 50.4%

May 16
NS Ruth Baker – Bernard Seal 64.09%
EW Tomoko Stock – Paula Olivares 57.74%

May 23
NS Don Dachner – Kathleen Howell 63.37%
EW Ruth Baker – Bernard Seal 65.77%

May 30
NS Jan Ladd – Roy Ladd 64.77%
EW Ruth Baker – Bernard Seal 61.22%

This cute story was sent in by Bill Langlois.

*THE FULL STORY (WHICH JIM ASSURED ME IS FACTUAL). Jim was playing against two world class opponents, but there was a stark difference. His LHO was one of the fine gentlemen of the game. I'll call his RHO VOE because there were those who considered him a Very Obnoxious Expert. In first seat VOE picked up a big red two-suiter. He opened 1♦, intending to reverse into hearts but, to his surprise, Jim, who held a bad hand with a long black suit, preempted 2♥. This was followed by two passes. VOE knew his partner couldn't even scrape up a negative double, and RHO might well be lying in the weeds. With great reluctance, he passed. A diamond was led, dummy came down, Jim, who was 6'10" tall,

sat up to his full height, studied the board for a few seconds, and said "Gentlemen, I claim down eight." VOE then raked his partner's cards to the table, finding the rest of the heart suit. With blood pressure soaring he said "Jim, why do you DO these things to me?" Jim calmly replied "Because I don't like you."



Long Beach
by Carolyn Byrnes

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com

Sorry, nothing from Long Beach this month.

Pasadena – San Gabriel
by Morris "Mojo" Jones

bridgemojo.com



The big news this month is that the John Waken Pasadena Sectional tournament is ON for 2025. Our tournament dates are **August 23-24**, and the location will be the Pasadena Bridge Club. See elsewhere in this issue for a tournament flier.

We plan to hold two matchpoint pairs games on Saturday at 10:00 and 3:00. Each game will have an Open section and a 499er section. Sunday will feature all-day Swiss teams, again with an open section and a 499er section.

It's a great way to get some silver points! The location has great lunch options and plenty of parking.

A new Bridge Introduction class is starting on Wednesday evening, July 2, at the Pasadena Bridge Club. This is the course for your friends or family who haven't yet discovered bridge. Registration is through Pasadena City College Extension. The link to register online is at the top of the Pasadena Bridge Club web site: https://pasadenabridgeclub.com.

The Popular Conventions course will be offered on Thursday evenings starting July 10, and Improving Your Judgment - Doubles will be offered during the Wednesday afternoon schedule at 3:00 PM starting July 9.

The **bridge club will be closed** for the Bridge Week regional from Thursday, July 3, through Sunday July 6. Zachary, Mojo, and Lisa all want to play in the regional! Come say hello to us there.

The bridge club will be offering North American Pairs qualifying games for a week during each of June, July, and August. Plan to play in any of the Open Pairs games during the third full week of each month. You can earn your qualifier to the district final. The NAP flights have been overhauled this year to make more opportunities for players under 6,000 points! Well worth your time and effort.

On Saturday June 21 we'll be hosting two games for the benefit of Alzheimer's Association, it's the annual "The Longest Day" event. Card fee is $13.

And we'll be featuring "club championship" games during the final week of June. It's a great way to pick up lots of good black masterpoints. No extra card fee!

Pasadena Unit Games are usually held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month. The competition is stiff, the pizza is free, and the card fee is only a nostalgic $10 cash for each event. Note that the unit game **will not meet on Sunday July 6**. Come back for the game on July 20. Unit game results are found on the results page for the Pasadena Bridge Club.

Congratulations to our new rank changes for June: Junior Master **Roberta Preskill**, Club Master **Robert Hunt**, NABC Master **Tracee Dezzutti,** Silver Life Master **Lisa Walker**.

Rank changes for July include new Junior Masters **David Foos**, **Sherna Foucher**, **Lina Sanossian**. Life Master and Bronze Life Master **Angela Peters**. Bronze Life Master **Wayne Fang**, and Silver Life Master **Nina Huang**.

Downey-Whittier
by Daniel F. Oakes

Raj Ramchandani & John Dobson led all players in the May 7th unit game with 62.50%, beating out Dan Oakes & Mike Ventri as well as Jack Rainsberry & Bill Skupen, who tied for second on the E/W side, by about a board and a half. Gabby Sill and Steve Hough had a much narrower victory in the N/S field, taking top honors by half a matchpoint over John Petrie & Sankar

Reddy. 3rd N/S (and 1st B N/S) were Ruth Salisbury and Shelby Oakes.

One week later, Petrie and Reddy made it to the winner's circle – 1st E/W (and1st overall) ahead of Rainsberry & Skupen by half a board for the E/W honors. Gabby Sill & Bob Rubin were 2nd B E/W, and Anita Frost & Jim Gorin were top C. On the N/S side, John Jones and Larry Lee were 1st by half a matchpoint, and just one matchpoint behind Petrie and Reddy for 1st overall. It was Ventri & Hough chasing them down and falling just short. Dobson and Ramchandani were 1st B.

On May 21st, Petrie and Reddy were 1st E/W with 70.31%, which score would normally take 1st overall honors as well, but Ventri and Dan Oakes had a 72.36% game on the N/S side. 2nd N/S were Jones & Jon Yinger; Salisbury & Shelby Oakes were 1st B. Rounding out the E/W awards were Rainsberry & Skupen (2nd A and 1st B) and Frost & Gorin (1st C).

Jones & Lee returned to the winners' circle on May 28th, taking both E/W and overall honors. Rainsberry & Skupen were 1st B and 2nd A E/W, and Ramchandani & Dobson were 1st C. 1st N/S were Kiran Kumar & Avice Osmundson, a full board ahead of Ventri & Hough. Bob & Linda Krause were 2nd B and 1st C.

The club owes a big thank you to Kent and Liz Burrell, who announced that they'd be stepping down from their longtime leadership roles in the club. John Dobson will be stepping up as club manager, and can use all the help he can get from anyone who can arrive up to a half-hour early to set up.

It was announced that week that I'm on a team that will be going to Philadelphia for the Grand National Teams flight B. My partner and I had an opportunity to get some IMP practice last month in the Huntington Beach sectional. Here's how that went:

We had a keycard mishap in our first match.

After working all week via phone and email on our system, we got one particularly intricate sequence worked out. On Wednesday, I emailed my partner and said, "Now remember, after [sequence], we do [sequence]." On Friday, I forgot the agreement I not only reminded him about, but created, losing 10 IMPs.

I voluntarily bid 6♥ and went down after getting doubled by the opening leader, who had the ace and king of hearts.

Defending 4♥ with three tricks in the bag, my partner watched declarer ruff a club back to his hand from dummy at trick 11. Declarer then cashed a heart at trick 12, and my partner pitched the king of diamonds to keep a club (remember, declarer had just ruffed a club). Declarer then cashed a cashed a small diamond for his 10th trick. The third-seeded team by masterpoints, we finished 8th in our section of 9. This game will humble you!

San Fernando Valley

by Alan Curtis

Nothing from the San Fernando Valley this month.

Bridge Jeopardy Questions

100 – Who was Barry Crane?

200 – Who was Mary Jane Farell?

300 – Who was Lew Mathe?

400 – Who was Mike Shuman?

500 – Who was Harold Guiver?

Problem Solvers' Panel

Mark Bartusek, Ellis Feigenbaum, Lynne Feldman, Ross Grabel, Mister Mealymouth, Margie Michelin, Rick Roeder, Mike Shuster, and Jon Wittes are panelists.

As always, panelists are playing 5-card majors, 15 - 17 NT, and 2/1 GF. Beyond that, except where indicated, panelists may use any reasonable methods.

1

IMPs
Neither Vul

West	North	East	South
3♣	X	pass	???

You, South, hold: ♠KQ6 ♥AJ6 ♦AJ105 ♣Q76

What call do you make?

Shuster: 4♣. This is a very challenging problem. 3NT would be all but guaranteed to end the auction, for better or worse. It could go down when we are cold for slam, too. 4NT is better on values, but if partner passes, it is again not safe. No number of diamonds is right. And my choice, 4♣, gets me by only this round, with no guarantee of clarity moving forward. However, if partner bids 4♦, as he should when holding four or more of them, (4♣ looks for strain, not necessarily a major) then at least I have found a trump suit. If partner bids 4 of a major, I'll pass and wish him luck. If the opponents were vulnerable, I'd try 4NT instead, as the chances of the top club honors both being with the preemptor would go way up.

Next up is a panelist who hopes he knows something about the preemptor's style.

Bartusek: Pass / 4♣. Depends upon West's preempting style. With the crappy 6-card suits some people have I like passing at this vulnerability. Dummy will probably be broke without an entry. But against a respected member of the bridge community we'll try for slam. The problem is finding our best fit (possibly even a Moysian diamond fit). Partner will bid 4♥ with 5=4 in the majors, catering to a red 2-suiter, since with the pointed suits I'll always pull 4♥ to 4♠.

Feigenbaum: 4♣. I need to show strength; I'm not sure where it leads us, but 3NT is likely to be passed out on a hand where we might be cold for slam in 3 or 4 places.

The 4NT bidders believe that 4NT is quantitative in this auction. I agree.

Mealymouth: 4NT with an unknown partner. But if I'm stuck with Danny Kleinman as a partner, I can cue-bid 4♣ intending to bid 4NT next, as he doesn't play Blackwood and will take it as slam invitational. Then he can bid six of a five-card suit when he has a singleton club.

Michelin: 4NT. 3NT is a reasonable call but I think we may have too much so; if 4NT is a quantitative call inviting a slam, that is the call I am making.

Feldman: 4NT.

Wittes: 3NT or possibly 4NT. Toughest problem in this set in my opinion. If partner has a club honor or even maybe a small doubleton, I would probably want to play 3NT or more. However, the way people preempt these days, a 6-card broken suit is a definite possibility. 4♣ would show my strength, but would probably get us to a 4-3 major fit, which might even be all right. If partner has a stiff club and four or five diamonds, we could belong in 6♦.

Roeder: Pass. Why speculate when you can take the cash?

Grabel: Pass. We should score somewhere between a game and a slam as dummy is unlikely to have an entry and there is no guarantee that West has a 7-card suit.

2 IMPs Neither Vul	East South West North 1♦ ??? You, South, hold: ♠AKJ10865 ♥K5 ♦K9 ♣J10 What call do you make?

I'll start with the panelists who think this call is easy.

Feldman: 1♠.

Shuster: 1♠. A non-problem.

Roeder: 1♠. The reason for this problem is above my pay grade.

I'll follow with a panelist who reluctantly is in concurrence, wishing that 2♠ described this hand.

Mealymouth: 1♠, my second choice. Not good enough to gamble 4♠, my third choice. Culbertson and Goren were right to teach strong single-jump overcalls. This is a maximum strong 2♠ jump, showing an expected seven or eight playing tricks. But if I were to bid it, a "modern" partner would play me for a trashy hand, begging to be doubled and beaten three (the Uranium Rule of 235). Sorry, I pawned my Geiger Counter.

Several panelists think that this hand is too strong for 1♠.

Grabel: Double. This hand is too good for an overcall although one could make a case for 3NT.

Bartusek: Double. With the red suit aces likely to be with RHO this hand is strong enough to double and then bid spades. Partner needs very little for me to make game, and a 1♠ overcall will often get little cooperation from partner.

Wittes: Double. I'll then bid spades over whatever partner bids. Maybe a little light in high cards, but I have a lot of tricks in my own hand.

Feigenbaum: Double. Then I'll bid spades. This is a little bit of an overbid but not as much as 1♠ would be an underbid.

Michelin: Double. I am a little heavy for a 1♠ overcall and my kings are in the right place. I am going to double and then bid spades.

There are two bids worth mentioning that didn't get discussed. While the hand is too strong for a normal 4♠ preempt, 4♠ will occasionally give the opponents a problem, and it's unlikely that it would cause us to miss a slam. Another bid which I play in a couple of partnerships is 4♦, a Namyats overcall. This shows an excellent spade suit with a hand too good to bid 4♠. If I had this bid available, I would choose it. If not, I'm with the 1♠ bidders.

3

Matchpoints
E-W Vul

North	East	South	West
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
2♥	pass	???	

You, South, hold: ♠AK765 ♥void ♦K764 ♣Q1076

What call do you make?

Now for a major misfit! How optimistic are we?

Some go high and force to game.

Michelin: 3♣. I play 3♣ here is like new minor forcing and does not imply or deny clubs. We probably have a misfit and I am going to get us too high. On a pessimistic day with my heart holding, I'll just bid 2NT. But I am going to bid 3♣ and see what partner bids to decide the final contract.

Wittes: 3♣. Forcing and will get partner to show three-card spade support if they have it. If partner bids 3♥, I will bid 3NT, but 4♥ could still be right.

Feigenbaum: 3♣. I'm not prepared to commit to 3NT. Partner may have diamond cards or still hold honor doubleton in spades.

Some panelists take the middle road and try an invitational 2NT.

Mealymouth: 2NT. I'm too cowardly to pass. I might be accused of conservatism and labeled as slightly to the right of the Donald and the Ronald. Did I hear anybody say "An opening bid opposite an opening bid produces bupkis?" Will somebody please tell me how many points to subtract for a void in partner's six-bagger?

Bartusek: 2NT. With such a terrible misfit (and the horrible hands some panelists open with) a non-forcing 2NT is sufficient. Is this problem catering to the treatment some people play where 2NT is a 1-round force here?

Feldman: 2NT.

Roeder: 2NT. Time to go low if partner has a dog. Passing could be right but is pessimistic. What if partner has three spades or a 4-card minor?

Finally, some panelists take the low road and pass, wanting nothing more to do with this misfit.

Shuster: Pass. It's matchpoints, so I'll try to go plus when the field gets to game and goes down. Some hands with a six card-major and extra values improvise a 3-card minor in this auction. At least that's what I'll tell him when it turns out 3NT is cold.

Grabel: Pass. Go for the plus?

Given how light opening bids can be these days, I am with the passers. At least I am ready for anyone who balances!

4

Matchpoints
Neither Vul

West	North	East	South
1♣	X	1♥	???

You, South, hold: ♠Q65 ♥K ♦Q9853 ♣K1064

What call do you make?

There are three schools of thought here. Bid 1NT, 2♦, or 3♦. This is a problem from an Eastern panel and that panel had some other answers, including 2NT, pass and double. Double is wrong in the sense that it is normally played as penalties in this situation.

I'll start with the 1NT bidders.

Roeder: 1NT. I'm seduced by the club 10 and the matchpoint conditions.

Grabel: 1NT. I'm not worried about hearts yet. If West raises and partner passes, I will try 2♠.

Michelin: 1NT. 1NT should show 8-10. In IMPs I might bid 2NT with my double stopper in clubs and a side five-card suit.

Feldman: 1NT.

The rest of the panel opts for 2♦.

Shuster: 2♦. I will try 2NT next if someone competes to 2♥, but it is best to get my long suit in first so that partner can contribute to the decision-making.

Bartusek: 2♦. I'm afraid to jump to 3♦ with the soft values and knowing that partner would double 1♣ holding a 4=4=2=3 pattern. I will usually be able to follow this up with 2♠ on the next round. A decent second choice is actually 1NT at matchpoints expecting to balance with 2♠ if the opponents compete to 2♥.

Mealymouth: 2♦. At first, I thought of bidding 1NT, but maybe I'll be able to bid notrumps later.

Wittes: 2♦. I have a pretty good hand, but my clubs are poorly located, and my suit is nothing to write home about.

Feigenbaum: 2♦. If partner bids anything over this we can try NT later. If I was playing with someone north of the Mason-Dixon line, double might be possible.

5

IMPs
Both Vul.

East	South	West	North
pass	1♦	X	1♠
pass	???		

You, South, hold: ♠Q65 ♥6 ♦AKQ876 ♣K106

What call do you make?

There are two important variables here: strain and level. On the strain issue the question is whether I raise spades knowing that my LHO made a takeout double of 1♦. On the level question, do I rebid at the 2-level or have enough strength to rebid at the 3-level? Raising to 3♠ would normally show four spades.

We'll listen to the spade raiser first.

Roeder: 2♠. If partner cannot act further, game seems unlikely. 3♦ is OK on values but makes 4♠ very difficult to reach when desirable.

Now for the 2♦ bidders.

Bartusek: 2♦. After LHO's double I'm less optimistic about getting to 4♠ and prefer to emphasize my great diamond suit. It's very likely that I'll get a chance to bid spades on the next round. Without the double I'd bid 2♠ immediately to encourage partner. I don't think this hand is good enough to make a stronger call with LHO's black suit honors behind me.

Feigenbaum: 2♦. Anything could be right but unless partner promised five spades, I am happy to bid where I live.

Grabel: 2♦. If the diamonds were weaker and there had not been a double, I would raise spades, but the double and failure of East to want to bid suggests that West will not be selling out or that North will bid again.

Feldman: 2♦.

And now the 3♦ bidders.

Mealymouth: 3♦. Only slightly pushy. 2♦ is a close second choice, preparing to bid 2♠ over an opposing 2♥. I can rebid diamonds first and then bid spades over an opponent's hearts, but I don't want to bid spades first and hope to rebid diamonds later.

Michelin: 3♦. Partner can still show me a five-card spade suit if he has one and a hand worthy of game after my jump. 3NT or 4♠ may make or 3♦ could be the extent of the hand or even going down!

Wittes: 3♦. A little light, but my suit is good, and my spade holding might be valuable if partner has a five-bagger.

Shuster: 3♦. With LHO advertising majors, this is not the time to raise on three.