

District 16 Newsletter for Future Life Masters

Volume 2 Issue 8

From the Editor

San Antonio is hosting the District's first Non Life Master Regional Aug. 3- 6. You can find the flyer here: <http://web2.acbl.org/Tournaments/Ads/2016/08/1608107.pdf>

Since this is the first NLM Regional, the tournament sponsors would like to get a feel on attendance. Please send an e-mail to Debbie Schweiss and let her know if you plan to attend.

debschweiss@satx.rr.com

Last year the ACBL Board increased the Gold Point award percentage for these NLM regionals from a maximum of 10% to 25%. To win any Gold points the following criteria must be met:

1. Events must be 2 sessions or more as in Open regionals. NO Gold for single sessions.
2. For pairs or traditional Swiss teams, you must finish in the overall awards in the "A" strat. Or at pairs by having a Section Top.

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3. Bracketed Swiss with be as for an Open event, but the Gold points will be capped at 25% of the award.

I'm interested in your feedback, so please send your comments to paulcuneo@sbcglobal.net.

Paul Cuneo

District 16 Education Chair

Unit 174 Sheryl Thomas

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From the Editor

Congratulations to San Antonio for a very successful NLM Regional with more than 400 tables over 4 days!!!

In this Issue

Better Bridge Habits:

Anticipate

Eddie Kantar's Tip:

Opener bids 2 suits

Lots of red and gold points were awarded.
Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to all
who played in the tournament!!!

From Martha Young, Unit 176 President:

Alert All 299'ers Attending the Dallas Regional

You are cordially invited to a reception in your
honor. The Toast to 299'ers reception will be held on
Thursday Sept 1 from 6-7PM in the VP Suite of the
Renaissance Hotel on the 11th floor.

As the reception will be held over the dinner hour,
there will be plenty to keep your energy up for the
evening sessions. So make your regional experience
even better by having some informal fun & food with
your fellow players, Unit 176 & District 16 board
members.

I'm interested in your feedback, so please send your
comments to paulcuneo@sbcglobal.net.

Paul Cuneo
District 16 Education Chair

Declarer Play:

Card Combinations

Demon Defense:

Third Hand Play

Better Bidding

Responding with 4-4 or
5-5 in majors to 1C or !D

It's the Law:

Use of the STOP card

From Unit 174 - Sheryl Thomas

Hi Everyone,

It's that time again for our monthly report on what's happening with the 299rs! I'm happy to
report something is always going on, but not happy that summer is coming to a close.

The Westside Bridge Academy (WBA) hosted a 499r tournament, July 21-24th. What a great

tournament and turnout!! Lets take a look at the overall winners. You really had to bring your "A" game to just place!! Whew!!

Thursday AM - 14.5 tables - Ronnie Klein & Jack Adams 65%

Thursday PM - 12.5 tables - Charles Dalton & Deborah Reed 64.32%

Friday AM - 28.5 tables - David Petkus & Patricia Harley 64.2%

Friday PM - 17 tables - Johnnie Gills & Judith Glasco 71%

Saturday AM - 20 tables - Alok Bhargava & James Cauble 63.75%

Saturday PM - 16 tables - Johnnie Gills & Judith Glasco 69.58%

Sunday Swiss - Ten teams - 1st Place with 4 Wins -David Freedman & Sheryl Thomas
Ian Sachs & JoAnne Knodel

I'm excited to report that David Freedman and I had a 81.7% game the following night at WBA!!! Again, congratulations to all of the winners! Go to WBA's website for a summary of the tournament, complete with pictures.

It's time to highlight one of our own, Myra Marsh. Gerald and I are both native Houstonians. He was my Lamar High School sweetheart and we celebrated our 55th anniversary this summer!! We raised a son and a daughter and the proud grandparents of 2 adult granddaughters.

I retired from Cooper Industries after a 35 year career as executive assistant to the Chairman & CEO. In the early years at Cooper, a few of us would play bridge during our lunch hour. A fellow Cooper retiree, and Unit 174 Board Member, Dan Leightman, joined us for the occasional noon game.

I learned to play bridge at my grandmother's knee, but did not venture into duplicate bridge until a few years ago. The first time I played was at the Houston Bridge Studio in 2010. My partner was Anne Gorry, whom I had just met. She encouraged me to join the ACBL and obtain my membership number. Well, we played the following week and won overall in A, B &

C and were awarded 1.5 MPs. Beginners' luck in full force!! I told anyone that would listen that I was the proud recipient of a master point!!

At the July Regional in Austin last month, I earned the rank of Regional Master with my partner of 2 years, Julia Thompson.

Thanks so much for sharing your story Myra.

Until next month all!! Happy Bidding!! ♣♦♥♠

Better Bridge Habits

Anticipate

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. This month I want to focus on anticipating the play. A common example is that you are defending a contract and declarer is running a 5 card suit. You follow with your two cards in the suit and watch as partner follows as well. You know that declarer will continue to run the suit. Have you estimated declarer's distribution and likely number of tricks? Partner's? Have you planned your 3 discards and the messages you want partner to receive from them? Learning to think about these questions early let's you make a planned response, which is always better than just reacting at the time.

Practice and you'll improve tempo and partnership communications!!!

Eddie Kantar's Tip

When partner bids two suits and you have an equal number of cards in each suit, take partner back to the first suit even if it means increasing the level.

Just do it!

You hold: S- Axxx H-K10x D-Jxx C- xxx

Partner	You
1D	1S
2H	?

Bid 3D. Raising hearts or passing partner's reverse, a one round force, is not to be discussed in mixed company. www.kantarbridge.com

Improved Declarer Play

Card Combinations

As declarer, many times the ability to make our contract depends on playing one of the suits in a way that maximizes our chance to take tricks. The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge by ACBL has a section on playing card combinations. Here is a combination from the Encyclopedia that I had in a recent club game:

A 10 x x x

K x x

Play the K and then finesse the 10 unless an honor appears. You have an 82% chance of 4 tricks. If you play K and then A, there is a 7% chance of 5 tricks with the QJ being a doubleton.

Demon Defense

Third Hand Play - Eddie Kantar writes in his book “Modern Bridge Defense” about what to do when you are third hand and play before the dummy. “When forcing out a higher card from dummy, play the lower of equals.”

N – A 8 4 (Dummy)

W – K 10 9 (you) E – Q 5 3 2 (Partner)

S – J 7 6

Partner has won a trick and switches to this suit by playing the 2 and declarer plays the 6. Don't even think about playing the 10! If you do, you deny the 9.

www.kantarbridge.com

Bidding Tips

A book worth owning and reading is “**A Treasury of Bridge Tips**” by **Eddie Kantar**. In it he offers the following advice:

“With 4-4 in the majors, respond 1H to a minor suit opening bid. With 5-5 in the majors, respond in the higher ranking suit (spades) first.” www.kantarbridge.com

I was playing in a club game recently when an experienced player violated this rule and bid hearts first with 5-5 in the majors. They ultimately played in 3NT going down 2 when 4S was cold. His partner could not believe he had 5 spades when hearts was the first response.

Its the Law

Use of the Stop Card

Newer players may wonder about the use of the STOP card, which is called “the skip bid warning”. They see some players using it while others do not.

This is from Duplicate Decisions: “The ACBL has authorized the use of the skip bid warning. A player should either use the warning all the time or never use it. Nonetheless, when a player skips one or more levels of bidding, the next player should pause about 8 to 10 seconds, even if the warning was not given, and he should appear to be thinking about his next call.”

The “always or never” phrase is so that partners are not accused of using improper methods of communication. For example, it would be illegal for a partnership to have an understanding that “when I use the STOP card it means stop bidding and if I don’t continue bidding.”

Law 73 addresses these issues as follows from Duplicate Decisions:

Inappropriate Communication Between Partners

“Partners shall not communicate through the manner in which calls or plays are made, through extraneous remarks or gestures, or through questions asked or not asked of the opponents, through Alerts and explanations given or not given to them. To do so is an infraction of the Laws.

The gravest possible offense against the Proprieties is for a partnership to exchange information through prearranged methods of communication other than those sanctioned by these Laws. A guilty partnership risks expulsion from the sponsoring organization.”

Hi Everyone,

June is here and summer is right around the corner. No better time to stay in out of the heat and play bridge!

Well, let's recap what we did at Bridge Club of Houston (BCOH) during its 4 day event, May 19-22, 2016.

Here are the overall winners for each daily session:

Thursday AM - 15 tables

Laurie & Bob Babb 65.72%

Thursday PM - 13 tables

Ronald Randleman & Karen Parks. 64.02%

Friday AM - 20 1/2 tables

Scherry Sprague & Polly Sowell 62.5%

Friday PM - 16 1/2 tables

Laurie & Bob Babb 68.95%. (WOW!!)

Saturday AM - 14 tables

George Mecurio & Clydene Jones 63.07%

Saturday PM - 12 1/2 tables

Robert & Gale Vilyus 64.35%

Sunday Swiss - 11 teams

Evita Rduch

Julia Hill

A. J. James

Mike Graham

The Masterpoint race was very competitive with the Vilyus team victorious. A grand total of 6.59 MPS!!! Way to go!!

Again, many thanks to Beverly Cheatham along with her staff for being first class hosts. The

food was plentiful and just delicious  . I finally had to yell I give. I can't eat

anymore!! Many thanks to the chefs for providing us with a grand feast!!

We had one happy person join the rank of Life Master, Lavita Christiansen. We are ecstatic for you!!!

Until next month!!

Happy Bidding ♣♦♥♠

Better Bridge Habits

Be Kind to Partner

Developing good habits at the table is an important part of learning bridge. The most important person in the game is your partner. From Dummies.com: "Most bridge players value a reliable, happy partner above anything else. It's important to the success of your partnership that you work together as a team. You both want to win, so you can't gain anything from getting upset when play doesn't go exactly as planned. It seldom does!

Here are a few tips on keeping your partner one happy camper.

Treat your partner like your best friend

Even if you don't know your partner well, treating her with respect improves her play. Treat your partner like your best friend, and you'll be repaid in "spades." Be a pleasant, courteous opponent, and you'll win everyone's "hearts."

Tolerate your partner's errors

Don't keep harping on your partner's errors — just forgive and try to forget (at least until after the game). After all, do you want to be reminded of all the mistakes you've made? (Everybody makes mistakes, including you.) If you have constructive criticism, save it for after the session, when you'll both be calmer. Expect (demand) that your partner show you the same respect.

Keep a poker face

Never make any facial or body mannerisms that indicate whether you're pleased or displeased with a bid or play. You'll lose the table's respect. Facial and body mannerisms can be construed as illegal signals.

Deal well with disaster

A truly good partnership handles the inevitable disaster with a touch of humor. If your partner doesn't have to worry that you'll have an apoplectic fit whenever something goes wrong, he'll play better.

Play conventions you both want to play

Don't force your partner to play your favorite conventions. A partner worried about a convention inevitably makes more errors in the bidding, play, and defense, not to mention screwing up the convention if it comes up.

Pick up the slack for the weaker player

The better player in a partnership should make the weaker player feel at ease. Make your bids, leads, and signals as simple and clear as possible, and don't give an inexperienced partner tough contracts to play. When you judge that it's going to be a tough hand to play, bid conservatively.

Own up to your own errors

Avoid the human tendency to lay your own errors at your partner's doorstep. It makes a weaker partner feel good to know that you, the stronger player, make errors as well — and are a big enough person to admit them.

Offer words of encouragement

Give your partner a few words of support after the hand is over, particularly if he doesn't make his contract. "Tough luck" and "Nice try" go over better than "My great-grandmother could've made that hand in her sleep."

Treat your partner the same whether you win or lose

When the session is over, win or lose, tell your partner how much you enjoyed playing with her (no matter how you feel). Kind words mean the world to a player who knows that she

hasn't played well. It also shows class.

Know when to have fun

When all is said and done, you play bridge to have fun, and so does your partner. You've done your job if your partner leaves the table happy.”

<http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/being-kind-to-your-bridge-partner.html>

Eddie Kantar's Tip

Takeout Double by a Passed Hand

A takeout double by a passed hand shows 9-11 HCP with shortness in the opener's suit. If the opponents have bid two suits, the double promises at least four-card support in the other two suits.

You hold: S - AJxx H - xx D - KJ10xx C - xx

South (you) West North East

Pass 1C Pass 1H

Dbl. (Your double shows diamonds and spades. A 2D bid might lose a spade fit.)

www.kantarbridge.com

Improved Declarer Play

Card Combinations

As declarer, many times the ability to make our contract depends on playing one of the suits in a way that maximizes our chance to take tricks. The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge by ACBL has a section on playing card combinations. Here is a combination from the Encyclopedia that I hate to have as declarer:

K x x x
J x x x

Lead Low to the King hoping West has the A Q doubleton. If it is covered, return to dummy and lead to the Jack. Only a 3% chance of 3 tricks. To maximize chances for 2 tricks, Lead low to the King. If the Q fails to appear, duck, When you regain the lead, return to hand and lead low to the King. 50% chance of 2 tricks.

Demon Defense

Third Hand Play – Eddie Kantar writes in his book “Modern Bridge Defense” about third hand play. We’ve all heard the axiom “third hand high”, but that is not always correct.

When partner leads a trump and you have an honor that might be used to overtrump dummy, save your honor.

S – 985
H - K
S – K4 S – J32 (you)
H – Q10972 H – J3
S- AKQ107
H – A8654

Eddie Kantar writes: “Partner anticipating heart ruffs in dummy leads a trump. You can “see” that you can overtrump the third round of hearts with the Jack, if you keep it.” www.kantarbridge.com

Bidding Tips

Reopening after opponents bid and raise

In his book “The Complete Book on Balancing” Mike Lawrence states “On sequences where your opponents have shown a fit and limited values, your attitude on reopening should vary from

strongly inclined to obsessive. It is almost inexcusable to let your opponents play at the 2 level when they want to do so.

The sequence: 1S pass 2S pass
Pass

This is the only sequence in this family which is often passed out. This is because you must reopen at the 3 level and all suits are dangerous in that either opponent may have a long, strong holding. " www.michaelslawrence.com

Its the Law

Alerts As a part of Law 40 which discusses partnership understandings, both partners are required to have filled out identical convention cards. All conventions marked in Blue on the card require and announcement. All conventions marked in Red and all unusual treatments require an alert.

To assist players, the ACBL has published an "Alert Chart":

<http://cdn.acbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/AlertChart.pdf>

The chart is supplemented by a document on alert procedures that must be followed: <http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/AlertProcedures.pdf>

Please note that while a player's bids above 3NT at their second turn to bid or later are not directly alerted, there is a requirement to provide a delayed alert or explanation of the calls at the end of the auction before the defender has selected their opening lead.