

FOR THE NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK.....

Resolved: to play more bridge in 2010

- Start out the New Year with a bang! Play in the Lone Star Regional at the Houston Westchase Marriott. Play will begin on Monday, February 1, at 7:00 PM and continues morning, noon, and night throughout the week. The morning sessions begin at 9:00a.m., the afternoon at 1:15, and evening at 7:00. Come early for the afternoon and evening sessions and enjoy the free bridge lectures from bridge pros as well as local bridge teachers. The lectures will be excellent!
- Thursday will be a very special day at the Regional. Lynne Graham and Mary Lee Bentley Teacher appreciation day will be celebrated immediately after the morning session. Join the new players for coffee, cake, and a salute to Lynne Graham whose life will be celebrated by her students and friends.
- On Saturday a new event is coming to the Houston Lone Star Regional. We're calling it Gold Rush Pairs because it gives newer players an unprecedented opportunity to earn gold points in a pairs event. Players will earn gold points by either placing 1st in their sections or by finishing in the overall awards in the **two** session event in the "B" stratification. Two things make this event unique. First is that it is "stratiflighted". That means that all players who enter and have master points above the "B" stratification will play in their own sections and win their awards separately. The second is that the "B" stratification is set with a master point limit of 750. In all other pairs events at the Regional, "B" is 750 to 2000 master points. New England introduced the Gold Rush Pairs event this summer at their Regional Tournaments, and it has been very popular with their newer players. The Gold Rush Pairs will be played on Saturday, February 6, beginning at 1:15 pm. The second session will start at 7 pm. So get your partners and join the Gold Rush!

It's a Partnership game (This is from Marty Bergen, Champion Bridge Player)

- If you feel the urge to be nasty, sarcastic, critical or loud – excuse yourself and take a walk.
- When there is time between hands, do not discuss bridge.
- When you want to consult another player about a disaster, ask about your hand, not your partner's.
- Do not ever criticize or embarrass your partner in front of others.
- Remember that bridge is only a card game.

Back to the Basics---It's not only for school children!

Remember these suggestions when you are getting ready to play a hand.

- Think about the bidding during the auction and use it as a guide during the play of the hand. Notice the opening lead. It may tell you something about the holdings in the opponents' hands. Watch the opponents' signals. They'll give you valuable information.
- When playing a suit contract, count your losers and count your winners at no trump. Let this information help you plan your play.
- Draw trump right away if you do not need them for trumping losers in the dummy.
- Wait to draw trump when you need to get rid of losers by trumping in the dummy.
- Set up the needed long suit as early as possible.
- Don't play too fast!

Defense--you do it half the time

- Avoid leading out your high cards. Your king is intended to take jacks and queens and your aces should take kings. If you lead out an Ace, it will catch three little cards.
- Lead toward you honors and honor sequence.
- With 4 trumps, it is usually a good idea to lead your long suit. Do not lead trump.
- When partner leads a K and you have Q x, do not play the Q because your partner will think you have a singleton.
- Leading when partner has bid:
 - Lead the **top** of a doubleton such as K from K 5 , 10 from 10 5
 - from 3 or more cards headed by an honor lead low, i.e. from Q 7 5 lead the 5
 - Lead the top of two or more touching cards headed by an honor, i.e. Q from Q J x and 10 from 10 9 5 4
 - Lead low from 3 or 4 cards headed by an honor, i.e. A 8 4 lead the 4 and from K J 6 3 lead the 3
 - From 3 low cards there is no standard agreement so you and your partner need to agree on one of the following: Lead the top of nothing, lead the middle card MUD (middle up then down), or lead the low from 3.

Director Please

Is an opponent being rude, intimidating, or badgering to someone at the table? Call the director. Unit 174 has a zero tolerance policy and the director will handle the situation.

Lord of the Manners

Do not let your partner or the opponents know by any mannerism or comment how you feel about your contract.

Never stare at opponents or your partner at the bridge table.

Save the discussions for the end of the game.

Do not express your glee if you win a cheap trick.

Play your and dummy cards in turn.

Do not snap your cards.

Do not bend your cards.

Do not ask for an explanation of the opponents' bidding until the bidding is over.

Compliment your opponents as well as your partner occasionally.
Thank your partner as soon as he/she lays down the dummy.
Be courteous and polite and ethical.
Take 10 seconds time before you bid over a jump bid.
Whatever you do, enjoy and help others enjoy this wonderful game!

Volunteer opportunities within the unit

The big Houston Regional tournament is coming up in February 1st through the 7th. It will be run by volunteers. Help is always appreciated. To help in the new player area, contact Kathy Hughes at 281-437-1339. Get involved—it's fun!

Please send comments regarding this newsletter to jryan9620@sbcglobal.net. If you would like to be added to the mailing list just give ACBL your e-mail address and you will get it automatically.

See you at the tables

Joyce Ryan