

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

### *September and October Tournaments for Silver Points!!*

**Three** tournaments are coming up in September and October. The first one is a 299er tournament at the Bridge Club of Houston at 1609 Spring Cypress Road near the intersection of 2920 and I-45. Play will begin Friday at 1:00 and 6:30 and the Saturday games are at the same times. Sunday Swiss starts at 1:00. A Sectional Tournament at Clubs (STaC) will take place October 4-10th and you can earn silver points right at your local club. It starts October 4<sup>th</sup> and continues throughout the week ending on Sunday. The third opportunity is at the Humble Civic Center on October 29<sup>th</sup>-31st. This is the October Halloween Sectional and it awards silver points too. The idea of playing in a tournament need not frighten you. In fact, playing in a tournament in the novice area will allow you to compete against other new players who have the same number of points as you! Come out and see your friends from classes and meet some new friends. Tournaments are a lot of fun. To find out about the tournament schedule go to [www.acblunit174.org](http://www.acblunit174.org). Need a partner? Use the online partnership desk!

### *It's a Partnership Game*

Do you know the Four Commandments of Bridge?

1. Thou shalt love thy partner.
2. Thou shalt not criticize thy partner.
3. Thou shalt not criticize thy opponents.
4. Thou shalt not give bridge lessons at the table; that's the teacher's job!

Be nice to your partner or you will have **three** opponents at your table!

### *Defense—You'll play it half the time!! Leading a singleton Ace:*

The opening lead is sometimes critical in defeating a contract so you'll want to get off to the right start. Don't be seduced by the "ruffing reflex"! On the opening lead, it may be tempting to lead a singleton Ace, but it is usually not a good idea for the following reasons:

1. Aces are meant to capture kings and queens. Leading an ace a Trick 1 usually gets you a 2, 3 and 4.

2. Leading a singleton ace could set up the enemy's king and/or queen.
3. When leading a singleton in hope of getting a ruff, you need the expectation that partner will get the lead to return the suit for you; but add up the points around the table. Often they just are not there if you have many points at all.
4. Leading other singleton honors is usually not a good idea unless partner has bid the suit. Declarer does not know that your card is a singleton and might finesse for it! You can score many of your singleton kings and queens on defense.

### *After a Weak Two Bid:*

Many new players have difficulty when their partner overcalls a weak 2 bid with 2 no trump. It is **never** the Unusual no trump. The bid shows a good no trump hand with up to 18 points rather than the usual 17 maximum. Discuss with your partner whether 3 clubs is Stayman or a cue bid of the opponent's suit is Stayman. Transfers should be on.

### *The Unusual No Trump Bid:*

As a general rule, an Unusual NT bid is a jump bid. If your right hand opponent opens 1 spade and you overcall 1 no trump, your bid is natural and shows 15+ to 18 high card points. If you jump to 2 no trump over a one spade bid, you have bid the Unusual No Trump showing at least 5/5 in the minors. It is rare for a non-jump No Trump bid to mean the Unusual No Trump. It usually occurs when the person who is bidding NT has already passed, presumably denying opening bid values. In other words, it makes no sense that the person bidding NT is making a natural bid.

### *Director Please—When to call the director*

Tricks Won or Lost: Neither the dummy nor the defenders may call attention to **previous** tricks which partner has **incorrectly** signified as won or lost. Each defender and the declarer is responsible for keeping track of tricks won or lost. You **may** call attention to the trick just quitted (competed) if partner has it wrong. Procedural penalties may be assessed for improperly calling partners' attention. **After** the hand is over, the correct number of tricks won or lost may be ascertained. During the play, neither the dummy nor the defenders may call attention to the number of tricks currently needed to defeat or fulfill the contract. Do not say things like "just one (or two) more trick(s) partner"

### *Lord of the Manners:*

Duplicate bridge is a timed event. It is improper and impolite to discuss a hand after the hand has been played and it delays the game. Play the boards without discussion and take the opportunity to learn after the game when the hand records are available.

*Advice from the Expert, Larry Cohen:*

“On any level, players should cut back on the methods conventions and ‘science,’ and concentrate on basic bridge logic and not making mistakes.”

“Many new players clog their brains with so much memorization that they don’t have any brain power left for the beauty of the game.”

*A memorable quote:*

“Bridge is such a sensational game that I wouldn’t mind being in jail if I had three cellmates who were decent players and who were willing to keep the game going 24 hours a day.” Warren Buffett

Please send your comments, questions, and suggestions regarding this newsletter to [jryan9620@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jryan9620@sbcglobal.net).

**See you at the tables!**

*Joyce Ryan*

*St. Martin’s Bridge School*