



Unit 174 October 2026 Newsletter



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From the Editor

Please visit the Unit 174 [Website](#) to view additional information about the activities in our Unit and at our Clubs.



Lauri Laufman

President's Message

So, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum – or rather, securing an updated masterpoint (MP) list for September. As quite a few members reached out to ask why our list still showed August 7, which confirmed our unit website is getting plenty of use.

Short Answer: ACBL has reworked its reports, including the Masterpoint Races, and the way they are processed and presented. In doing so, they did not fully account for all the needs a district or unit might have. The files we received were generated before the 7th, when masterpoints are updated.

For now, and if MP totals are delayed again, to check your own masterpoints, log in to [MyACBL](#). To view the current list of Top MP Winners, follow these steps:

1. Link: [click here](#).
2. On the left, select ☒ 16, then the > to the left of 16.
3. Unselect ☐ all units except 174.
4. Select ☒ “Exclude Deceased” on the right side of the page.

Bottom Line: Bronia Jenkins, ACBL Executive Director, and others within ACBL have been working to resolve these issues and improve the process. The goal is to have things run more smoothly when next month’s reports are sent out October 8. Fingers crossed.

Speaking of websites, I want to extend a special thank you to our webmaster, Allison Ochsner, who took her laptop on vacation this past month to make sure the site stayed up to date with timely information.

Now that we’ve covered all the techy stuff, let’s move on to the game that while frustrating sometimes, we all love!

Other Stuff

Hotel Reservations can now be made for the upcoming March 11-21 Spring NABC Tournament at the Hyatt Regency Dallas. With this national event in nearby Dallas having games for players of all levels and some really fun evening social activities all taking place at the Hyatt, this tournament will be the place to be in mid-March! Link: <https://acbl.org/dallas/>

I encourage you to take time to read our [September/October District 16 Scorecard](#) as it is chockfull of useful information. Rebecca Brown’s Regional Director’s Update (pages 4-7) is amazing. I loved Patricia Herrera’s article this month (page 9) – so true! And for those of you curious as to how NABC tournament experiences will be changing, check out the FAQs (pages 10-14). Other tidbits include info on North American Pairs (NAP), features on several of our unit players and an article by our unit reporter (pages 37-39).

Bridge Academy of West Houston (BAWH) has moved from the Shrine Center to 9800 Richmond, Suite 120, and [expanded its schedule](#). The Monday Apple game is being taken over by BAWH and the Friday Apple II games that were previously held at Tracy Gee Community Center will now be hosted there as well. Make sure you read both club’s articles in this issue to note the game day and time changes because of this move.

The FLM 99er game held on September 12 had seven full tables. I was delighted to see players who have previously played at BCOH, Kingwood, BAWH, or CLBC, along with at least one newcomer playing in her first official sanctioned duplicate game. Special thanks to organizer Betty Westbrook, FLM Chair Cindy Cox, Director Janice Rush, and Peaches Eads for the wonderful pastries.

The recent 499er Sectional held September 17-19 at BCOH totaled 62 tables with 66 players earning masterpoints. Congrats to all who played, to [overall masterpoint winner, Sandy Tomich and all section top winners](#).

October & November

[Fall Two Tournaments in One Open Sectional and Non-Life Master \(NLM\) 0-750 Regional](#) October 15-17: Although we hope not, this may be our last tournament at the Arabia Shrine Center on Harwin. Come join us and compete for silver in the Open Sectional, or gold and/or red in the NLM Regional. As an NLM, you can play in any event.

[District 16 Fall 2026 Royal STaC Week](#) October 19-25: Held at participating clubs throughout our district, with points listed initially in silver and later converted to 25% gold, red, silver, and black.

[Unit 174 Thanksgiving STaC](#) November 9-15: Held at participating clubs within our unit.

Milton & Betty Freedman Houston Lone Star Regional
Our unit’s annual premier event takes place January 25-31, 2027, at the Marriott Westchase and will be filled with a variety of [bridge games for all levels](#). Want to help support our unit’s efforts? Marsha Bernstein is ready to walk you through [Event Naming Opportunities](#), so give her a call (713-857-6088).

Finale
Thanks for the read, your questions, concerns and feedback are always welcome. May the weather cool down a bit, your bridge game heat up, tricks exceed your expectations at the table, and only treats be received on Halloween.

Lauri Laufman
llaufman@texas2211.com



New Members and Rank Advancement



New Members

ACBL notifies us each month about the members new to our Unit and those who transferred into our Unit. Please welcome the following players to our unit:

New Members: Bc Dr Barkat Charania, Barbara Dipaolo, Craig Leaseburge, Ralph Rubino, Lynn Sottosanti

Transfers: Sharon Statucki

Welcome!



Masterpoint Milestones

Listed below are the Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL as of September 2, 2026. An explanation of ranks may be found on the [ACBL website](#).

Junior Master
Paula Divalerio, Rinaldo Divalerio, Mary Douglass, Charles Li, Pamela Pope

Club Master

Judith Andrews, Gaile Howland, Pamela Richmond

Regional Master

Bruce Carlin, Randall Clements, George Edwards, Sharon Hall, Lorraine Hart, Larry Lawhorn

NABC Master

Tamara Fincher

Advanced NABC Master

Anne Miraglia

Life Master

Lesley Kellet

Bronze Life Master

Beryl Booker, Ronald Randleman

Silver Life Master

Scott Cantor

Ruby Life Master

Elisabeth Cabiness, Charles Newton Jr

Gold Life Master

Jane Boozalis

Platinum Life Master

Ronald Brown

Member Profile



Meet Lesley Kellett

BY SARAH SPRINGER

One of our hard-working board members is the diminutive Lesley Kellet. What she lacks in height she makes up for in personality. She is charming and vivacious and never meets a stranger. Lesley is originally from the UK – she grew up in Yorkshire and summered in the Lake District where her family were founding members of the Motor Boat Racing Club.

Lesley studied in London and lived an active and exciting single life, a “high old time” as Lesley describes it. She landed a job as an interpreter for oil and gas companies in Algeria, working twelve weeks on and three weeks off, with the off time back in the UK or vacation spots near Algeria. She loved the work and was put up in the best hotels and had a rental car to facilitate her adventures. When working in the East side of Algeria, she would vacation in Tunisia, and when working on the West side of Algeria, she would get recreation in Morocco. This adventuresome sprite even drove by herself from Yorkshire to the East Coast of Algeria.

Lesley has many talents. In addition to her language skills (French with a smattering of German and Spanish) she also has theatrical skills. The Ex-Pats in Algeria were from many different countries, so to entertain them she produced and acted in a pantomime, a spoof of “Beauty and the Beast”



Lesley Kellett

called “Beastie and the Beaut”. It was not long before this fascinating young lady attracted beaus, and the one who caught up with her became her husband – he acted fast, charmed her, and got the ring on her finger after six months of dating. He was from Lancashire, a traditional enemy (War of the Roses) for one from Yorkshire, but they managed to overcome any enmity which carried over from that ancient conflict and became best friends and loving spouses.

They continued to work in Algiers for ten years and then came to Houston in 1989. Initially Lesley had an L-2 Visa and was not allowed to work. She originally played bridge in Houston at the bridge studio behind the Sharpstown Mall, but once her green card came through and she went back to work, her bridge was on the back burner until she retired and then started playing duplicate bridge. Lesley loves all of the friends she has made playing bridge and is amazed at how bridge has also brought her back to friends she knew in Algeria. She has gone into a game or tournament thinking she does not know anyone there, and what do you know, here is another old friend from Algeria.

Lesley first played bridge in England as a result of her relationship with a certain gentleman who played duplicate bridge. He discouraged her from the game and told her she would never be any good at it, so she worked hard, beat him at the game, and dropped him as a suitor. She played duplicate regularly in England, and then social bridge in Algeria. She even played bridge in Nice, France.

Cooking, gardening, and singing are other pastimes which enrich Lesley’s life. Gardening has not been in the forefront with the heat and humidity in Houston, but she still enjoys her lovely garden. Her favorite recipes include Roast Beef and Yorkshire pudding – traditional Sunday fare from Yorkshire. The Yorkshire pudding is actually popovers which are served as an appetizer with the au jus from the standing rib roast. The roast is served as the main course with vegetables. Lesley commented that people from Yorkshire are tighter than Scots, and serve the Yorkshire pudding first so the children will fill up on the Yorkshire pudding and not eat so much of the roast beef.

Lesley is a founding member and active participant in the International Voices of Houston which is a choir focused on international songs. Initially the group sang only French music, but when they realized that there were thirty-four different nationalities in the chorus they morphed into today’s international chorus. They perform two times per year, so don’t miss the next performance scheduled for December 13 and 14 at MATCH – Midtown Arts and Theatre Center of Houston (<https://matchouston.org/>).

Lesley is an ACBL Life Master, and works hard to promote bridge in our area. She finds the game intellectual, social, and fun. You will see Lesley volunteering at our tournaments, always cheerful, personable, and kind. Lesley is an asset on our unit board and in our bridge community.



Lesley's Yorkshire Pudding Recipe

The secret to perfect Yorkshire puddings is the cooking technique, so do follow these instructions:

Resting the batter and getting the oven and oil really hot makes all the difference

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil (or beef drippings). Beef drippings make better tasting puddings.

DIRECTIONS

1. In a blender, combine the eggs, milk, flour, and salt. Blend until well combined and place in the refrigerator until ready to use (allow to rest for at least 30 minutes).
2. Preheat oven to 425°F.
3. Put 1 teaspoon of the oil (or beef drippings) into each section of a 12-hole [Yorkshire pudding tray](#) or muffin tray and put into the oven on the top shelf until very hot, almost smoking.
4. As soon as you take the tray from the oven, pour in the batter to three-quarters fill the tins (it should sizzle) and immediately put back into the oven.
5. Bake until the Yorkshire puddings are well risen, golden brown and crisp, 15 to 20 minutes.

Don't open the oven door until the end or they might collapse!

Serve with au jus gravy from the beef roast.

Enjoy!

Sarah Springer is a past Unit 174 president, the Unit 174 Scorecard reporter and a Ruby Life Master. She is a retired Family Law Attorney.



Our Own Lauri Laufman is District 16 2026 Oswald & James Jacoby Service Award Recipient

**Award Winner Lauri
Laufman
&
District 16 President
Jamie Southerland**

The 2026 District 16 Oswald and James Jacoby Service Award was presented to Lauri Laufman at the Dallas Labor Day Regional.

The District 16 Premier Service Award was established in 1982 to honor those volunteers who have worked diligently at the unit level and risen to recognition at the district level after many years of outstanding service to bridge.

Nominated by Houston’s Unit 174, Lauri has been and continues to be an instrumental volunteer in the activities and board of Unit 174 and has proven herself a valuable member of the District 16 Board currently serving as the district’s Marketing and Publicity Coordinator as well as the editor of the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Lauri served on the unit’s board for multiple years in various capacities including president. She is always ready to assist in whatever capacity she is asked. The word “No” is not in her vocabulary when she is asked to assist in an activity. In addition to currently being on the unit board once again [president], Lauri continues her efforts with the Bridge Academy of West Houston in organizing the “Do What You Love” Alzheimer’s event. She has been the organizing force behind this event for numerous years, and her efforts have helped raise significant amounts each year. [D16 Top Fundraiser Club with their 2026 donations at \$16,023.00.]

Even before officially on the district’s board as a key contributor, Lauri was the editor of the monthly *I/N Newsletter* for the newer players in the district for several years. Lauri’s first contribution as an official key member of the board was as Membership Chair. She not only reported on the current status for each unit, but reached out to host online meetings with unit membership chairs to assist with their efforts. She made a concerted effort to assist units to understand the ACBL’s change in how units receive their portion of their members’ dues under the new 5-5-5 program.

Lauri exemplifies the word “volunteer” and we are pleased that Lauri was given the recognition we feel she so well deserves. Congratulations, Lauri on this well-deserved recognition! You are appreciated!



Unit News

Coming Tournaments

Date	City	Unit	Category	Type
October 1-3	Denton [DFW]	183	Sectional	Local
October 5-7	San Antonio	172	Sectional	I/N
October 10-11	Austin	207	Sectional	I/N
October 15-17	Houston	174	Sectional & I/N Regional	Open & I/N
October 15-17	Fort Worth	183	Sectional	Local
October 19-25	STaC D16		Sectional	STaC
October 29-November 1	San Antonio	172	Sectional	Open
October 31-November 1	San Antonio	0	GNT/NAP	NAP District Fi...
November 4-6	Georgetown	207	Sectional	Local
November 4-7	Dallas	176	Sectional	Open
November 9-15	Puerto Vallarta	205	Regional	Open
November 9-15	STaC U174 (D16)	174	Sectional	STaC
November 15-17	Arlington	183	Sectional	I/N
November 21-22	Austin	207	Sectional	I/N
December 5-6	Austin	207	Sectional	I/N
December 7-13	STaC (U173, 176, 183, 205, 254)		Sectional	STaC
December 10-12	Spring [Houston]	174	Sectional	I/N
January 7-10	Austin	207	Sectional	Open
January 13-16	Dallas [DFW]	176	Sectional	Open
January 21-24	San Antonio	172	Sectional	Open

January 25-31	Houston	174	Regional	Open
January 31- February 6	Galveston	172	Sectional	NC Cruise
February 4-6	Denton [DFW]	183	Sectional	Local
February 4-7	Ajijic	205	Sectional	Open
February 6-7	Austin	207	Sectional	I/N
February 10-13	San Miguel de Allende	254	Sectional	Local
February 17-19	Puerto Vallarta	205	Sectional	Open
February 19-21	Fort Worth [Dallas]	183	Sectional	Local
February 25-27	Spring [Houston]	174	Sectional	I/N
February 25-28	Austin	207	Sectional	Open
February 26-27	Arlington[DFW]	183	Sectional	I/N
March 6-7	Austin	207	Sectional	I/N
March 11-21	Dallas		NABC	Open
March 25-27	San Angelo	204	Sectional	Local
April 2-4	Houston	174	Sectional	Open
April 3-4	Austin	207	Sectional	I/N
April 6-10	Longview	225	Regional	Open
April 14-17	San Antonio	172	Sectional	Open
April 17-18	Denton [DFW]	183	Regional	Open

You can find tournament information by clicking [ACBL Tournaments](#).

Clear Lake Bridge Club Fast Pairs Open Game

**FAST PAIRS
OPEN BRIDGE GAME
(5 Minutes / Board)**

**TUESDAY EVENINGS
6:30 PM**



**CLEAR LAKE BRIDGE CLUB
16614 SEA LARK RD
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77062
(281) 480-1911**

BCOH Online Mentor/Mentee Games

BRIDGE HOUSTON

*Do You want to Improve Your Bridge Game?
Those Mentored must have less than 300 Masterpoints.
Mentor's must have greater than 300 Masterpoints.
Everyone in the ACBL with these qualifications can join the*

BBO MENTOR GAME



First and Third Monday nights monthly at 7:00 p.m. Central Time

18 Boards

On BBO, go to "Competitive"

"ACBL e-Clubs" & click "Choose Houston"

You invite your mentor by checking appropriate box on BBO,
saying you will pay for both games, a total of \$10.00.

- You get individual feedback from your mentor however & whenever the two of you decide.
- A Diamond Life Master discusses the boards you just played immediately after the game on Zoom.

Need help finding a mentor? Or would you like to mentor?

Email Mike: mlinkins@swbell.net



Two Tournaments in One
Open Sectional & I/N Regional



TWO TOURNAMENTS IN ONE!

OCTOBER 15-17, 2026

ARABIA SHRINERS

10510 Harwin Dr., Houston, TX 77036



Open Sectional **AND** Non-Life Master Regional

GOLD/RED Points awarded in NLM Regional

SILVER POINTS awarded in Open and Bracketed Swiss

Thursday, Friday, Saturday Oct 15-17

Open Pairs	Single Sessions	10:00 & 2:30
Non-Life Master Pairs	Double Sessions	10:00 & 2:30
Bracketed Swiss Teams	Two Sessions	10:00 & 2:30

STRATIFIED OPEN PAIRS

A: 4000+
B: 1500-4000
C: 0-1500

- **Box lunches \$10**
- **Cash only for Lunch**
- **\$1 Coffee & Sodas**

Non-Life Master Pairs

A: 500-750
B: 200-500
C: 0-200

- I/N Regional is Limited to Non-Life Masters under 750 MPs
- Single Session Entries are Allowed
- Single Session Open Pairs Pay Overall Points Each Session
- Pair Average Used for All Events
- Strats May Be Adjusted by the Director to Balance for Strength of Players
- Session Fee \$17
- Credit Card Only
- Addt'l \$4 for lapsed members

Tournament Chairs:

Lesley Kellet 713-852-7198 lellybean@msn.com
Judi Whaling 832-661-1644 judiwhaling@gmail.com

Open Partnership Chairs	I/N Partnership Chair
Marilyn Leiman	Maria Luzia Turner
713-478-3802 marilyn.leiman@gmail.com	832-633-9433 jturner102@att.net



D16 NAP Finals



October 31 - November 1, 2026
(Saturday & Sunday)

Jewish Community Center

12500 NW Military Highway San Antonio, Texas 78231

Two-Session Qualifying Event on Saturday
Two-Session Final Event on Sunday
Saturday Game Times: 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.
Sunday Game Times: 10:00 a.m. & TBD

If eight or less tables are in a Flight, the
two-session Final Event is on Saturday.

\$14.00 / Person / Session on Saturday
\$18.00 / Person / Session on Sunday
Free Coffee & Refreshments
Free Meal on Sunday for Those Qualifying

Please Note: This event is held in conjunction with the
Diane Olson Election Sectional.

Event Chair: Larry Davis (larrysdavis@att.net, 512-343-6942)

**2027 Betty & Milton Freedman
Houston Lone Star Regional**



Betty & Milton Freedman

HOUSTON LONE STAR REGIONAL

January 25-31, 2027



Marriott Houston Westchase

2900 Briarpark Drive, Houston, TX 77042
(713) 978-7400

- \$135 Special Bridge Rate
- Reservation Deadline: January 4, 2027
- Scan the QR Code to book instantly
- Direct online booking by clicking [HERE](#)
- Call 1-800-452-5110 and ask for the ACBL Bridge Rate



- ▶ Welcome Gift
- ▶ Awards at Hospitality Desk
- ▶ Hot Dog Lunch on Friday
- ▶ Expert Lecturers Daily Mon-Sat between Sessions

Tournament Chairs

Lauri Laufman
(281) 235-8777
llaufman@texas2211.com

Gary Kerr
(281) 543-8712
madk86@aol.com

Partnership

Linda McReynolds
(713) 819-7812
lindamcreynolds@comcast.net

Hospitality

Maria Luzia Turner
(832) 633-9433
jturner102@att.net

I/N

Lesley Kellet
(713) 852-7198
lellybean@msn.com

Event Naming

Marsha Bernstein
(713) 857-6088
marshabernstein@att.net

- ★ Bracketed Round Robin Teams
- ★ Gold Rush Pairs
- ★ Side Series Games
- ★ Newcomers 0-20 Game

Complimentary ACBL labels

- Houston 174 is happy to print ACBL labels for you!!
- However, to do so you **MUST MAIL your info by Saturday, Jan 23!!**
- Email to: LSRLABELS@gmail.com
- Include Name, City, State, ACBL #
- Pickup at Hospitality Desk
- No labels can be printed during the tournament

Future Life Masters



The FLMers are players with **0-99** MPs..

- ▶ 99er games Mon-Thu & Sat
- ▶ **FLM Day** is Tuesday, Jan 26
- ▶ Prizes for **FLM Day** Winners
- ▶ FLMers can play in **GOLD RUSH**
- ▶ **GOLD RUSH** Monday - Friday
- ▶ **0-20** Game on Friday, Jan 29

The Fun is Just Beginning!



Betty & Milton Freedman

HOUSTON LONE STAR REGIONAL

January 25-31, 2027



Monday, January 25

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	10 & 2:30
ACBL Educational Foundation Open Pairs	10 & 2:30
GOLD RUSH Pairs	10 & 2:30
Morning Side Series (1 of 6)	10
299er Pairs	10 / 2:30
99er Pairs	10 / 2:30
Afternoon Side Series (1 of 6)	2:30
Evening Side Series (1 of 6)	7:00

Friday, January 29

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	10 & 2:30
Top-Flight Pairs	10 & 2:30
Mid-Flight Pairs	10 & 2:30
GOLD RUSH Pairs	10 & 2:30
Morning Side Series (5 of 6)	10
299er Pairs	10 / 2:30
0-20 Pairs	10
Afternoon Side Series (5 of 6)	2:30
Evening Side Series (5 of 6)	7:00

Bracketed Round

Robin Teams are based on the team's combined masterpoint averages. Each team plays against every other team in their bracket.

Tuesday, January 26

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	10 & 2:30
Open Pairs	10 & 2:30
GOLD RUSH Pairs	10 & 2:30
Morning Side Series (2 of 6)	10
299er Pairs	10 / 2:30
99er Pairs	10 / 2:30
Afternoon Side Series (2 of 6)	2:30
Evening Side Series (2 of 6)	7:00

Saturday, January 30

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	10 & 2:30
Open Pairs	10 & 2:30
GOLD RUSH Pairs	10 & 2:30
Morning Side Series (6 of 6)	10
299er Pairs	10 / 2:30
99er Pairs	10 / 2:30
Afternoon Side Series (6 of 6)	2:30
Evening Side Series (6 of 6)	7:00

Gold Rush Pairs are offered every day Monday thru Saturday. Pairs are stratified but both players must have fewer than 750 masterpoints.

Wednesday, January 27

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	10 & 2:30
Top-Flight Pairs	10 & 2:30
Mid-Flight Pairs	10 & 2:30
GOLD RUSH Pairs	10 & 2:30
Morning Side Series (3 of 6)	10
299er Pairs	10 / 2:30
99er Pairs	10 / 2:30
Afternoon Side Series (3 of 6)	2:30
Evening Side Series (3 of 6)	7:00

Sunday, January 31

A/X Swiss Teams	10 & 2:30
0-3000 Bracketed Round Robin Teams	10 & 2:30
Open Pairs*	10 & 2:30

* May play one session only.

Double session events are indicated by **&** and Single Session events by **/**.

Thursday, January 28

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	10 & 2:30
Open Pairs	10 & 2:30
GOLD RUSH Pairs	10 & 2:30
Morning Side Series (4 of 6)	10
299er Pairs	10 / 2:30
99er Pairs	10 / 2:30
Afternoon Side Series (4 of 6)	2:30
Evening Side Series (4 of 6)	7:00

Bridge for Everyone!

Stratification & Flighting

Top-Flight Pairs:	A: 6000+	B: 0-6000	A/X Swiss Teams:	A: 6000+	B: 0-6000
Mid-Flight Pairs:		B: 1500-3500	C: 0-1500	Bracketed Teams:	Bracketed by attendance
Open Pairs:	A: 3500+	B: 1500-3500	C: 0-1500	299er Pairs:	Stratified at Director's discretion
Side Pairs:	A: 2500+	B: 750-2500	C: 0-750	99er Pairs:	Stratified at Director's discretion
GOLD RUSH Pairs:	A: 500-750	B: 300-500	C: 0-300	0-20 Pairs:	Stratified at Director's discretion

- Strats are determined by MP average, but no player may exceed event limit.
- Strats may be adjusted by the director to balance for strength of players.



Visit us at
ACBLUnit174.org

2027 Betty & Milton Freedman Houston Lone Star Regional Event Naming



EVENT NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

BETTY AND MILTON FREEDMAN

2027 HOUSTON LONE STAR REGIONAL

January 25-31, 2027



The Lone Star Regional provides an excellent opportunity for you to honor a friend, a loved one, another player or someone significant who has left us. You can purchase an event or an entire day to honor your person. There will be a poster at the playing site with your honoree's photograph and a write-up. The same information will be in the Daily Bulletin on the day of the named event. Your honoree's name will be the name of the event. For example: "Winston Churchill Open Pairs" and the FastResults will report the named events.

Monday, January 25, 2027 (\$1000/all)

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	\$250
ACBL Education Foundation Open Pairs	\$250
GOLD RUSH Pairs	\$250
299er Pairs	(2) \$125 each
99er Pairs	(2) \$125 each

Tuesday, January 26, 2027 (\$1000/all)

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	\$250
Open Pairs	\$250
GOLD RUSH Pairs	\$250
299er Pairs	(2) \$125 each
99er Pairs	(2) \$125 each

Wednesday, January 27, 2027 (\$1000/all)

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	\$250
Top-Flight Pairs	\$250
Mid-Flight Pairs	\$250
GOLD RUSH Pairs	\$250
299er Pairs	(2) \$125/each
99er Pairs	(2) \$125/each

Thursday, January 28, 2027 (\$1000/all)

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	\$250
Open Pairs	\$250
GOLD RUSH Pairs	\$250
299er Pairs	(2) \$125/each
99er Pairs	(2) \$125/each

Friday, January 29, 2027 (\$1000/all)

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	\$250
Top-Flight Pairs	\$250
Mid-Flight Pairs	\$250
GOLD RUSH Pairs	\$250
299er Pairs	(2) \$125/each
0-20 Pairs	\$125

Saturday, January 30, 2027 (\$1000/all)

Bracketed Round Robin Teams	\$250
Open Pairs	\$250
GOLD RUSH Pairs	\$250
299er Pairs	(2) \$125/each
99er Pairs	10 / 2:30

Sunday, January 31, 2027 (\$750/all)

A/X Swiss Teams	\$250
0-3000 Bracketed Round Robin Teams	\$250
Open Pairs	(2) \$125/each

Monday-Saturday Side Pairs Series

Morning Side Pairs Series	\$250
Afternoon Side Pairs Series	\$250
Evening Side Pairs Series	\$250

Please provide a photograph and a write-up of about 100 words about your honoree.

If you name an entire day, all events on that day are included in the package. Sponsoring Corporate or other promotional gifts for hospitality will be handled on an individual basis.

Make checks payable to: ACBL Houston Unit 174

Event Naming Coordinator:

Marsha Bernstein 713-857-6088
marshabernstein@att.net

Tournament Chairs:

Lauri Laufman: 281-235-8777
Gary Kerr: 281-543-8712

99er Nite Club



THE 99er Nite Club East

**GREAT PLAY, LESSONS
& LOADS OF FUN!**

And...It's only for you, New Players!

District 16 now has a BBO game just
for the 0 to 99 players
the "99er Nite Club East"!

When: 6pm, 7 days a week
Where: ACBL Clubhouse*

Perks:

- ✓ **More Masterpoints**
(cross club scoring)
- ✓ **Mini-Lessons**
by Lynn Berg at 5:30 pm

*Check to make sure your club is participating.
If your club has questions they should
contact Janice Rush at:
janice_hardcastle@hotmail.com



199er Nite Club

199er Nite Club East

*Ready to Graduate from
the 0 to 99 Game?*

D16's 199er NITE CLUB EAST GAME ON BBO IS YOUR NEXT STEP!

7 DAYS A WEEK AT 6:00 PM CST

- ✓ Recent graduates of the 0 to 99 group can play in a game with players of the same ability.
- ✓ Work during the day? Graduates continue go grow skills at a time that's "worker friendly".
- ✓ Safe environment where no sharks are allowed, because the game is limited to 199 mpts.
- ✓ Clubs benefit too and continue to receive payments for their participating players.

Clubs must be signed up to participate, just like for the 99er NITE CLUB game.

Contact Janice Rush for details:

janice_hardcastle@hotmail.com

New Game in Town



D16 Teacher of the Year Nominations



District 16 Teacher of the Year

Is there a bridge teacher who has inspired you? Now is the time to reward that individual’s enthusiasm, passion and patience! Celebrate your teacher! Nominate your teacher for the D16 Teacher of the Year award.

The nomination process works like this:

- 1. You ask your teacher if he/she would like to be nominated.
- 2. Your teacher agrees.
- 3. You send an email to district16TOY@gmail.com with your teacher’s contact information.
- 4. We take it from there.

Please submit nominations by November 30, 2026, so that your teacher has time to put together a portfolio by December 31, 2026.

The winner will be announced at the 2027 Lone Star Regional.

Club Table Counts

Yearly Totals:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Table Count</u>	<u>Number of Clubs in Unit 174</u>
2019	32,137.00	30
2020	30,401.00	28
2021	30,365.00	24
2022	20,451.00	24
2023	18,183.00	25
2024	16,900.00	24
2025	16,840.00	21

2026 Table Counts by Club:

Club	Jan 1- Aug 27, 2026 Table Counts
Clear Lake BC	2,725.00
BC of Houston	2,128.50
BA of W. Houston	2,074.50
Lone Star BC	1,067.50
Star DBC	484.00
Apple DBC	443.50
Apple II DBC	420.50
Northside BC	376.00
Cypress N/W DC	334.50
Kingwood DBC	258.50
Pebble Creek DBC	207.00
Sugarland DBC	197.50
Forest Club	136.00
Houston Raquet Club	120.50
Gulf Coast	106.50
La Grange BC	102.50
Galveston DBC	82.50
Houston Country Club	64.00
Les Match Bridgeurs	60.00
Lakeside Country Club	47.50
River Oaks Country Club	37.50
Buckingham DBC	4.50
Total:	11,478.50

Club	Jan 1- Sep 23, 2026 Table Counts
Clear Lake BC	3,041.50
BC of Houston	2,370.00
BA of W. Houston	2,272.50
Lone Star BC	1,179.00
Star DBC	541.50
Apple DBC	483.00
Apple II DBC	482.00
Northside BC	425.00
Cypress N/W DC	377.00
Kingwood DBC	293.00
Pebble Creek DBC	231.00
Sugarland DBC	219.50
Forest Club	155.50
Houston Raquet Club	120.50
Gulf Coast	120.50
La Grange BC	115.50
Galveston DBC	91.00
Les Match Bridgeurs	67.00
Houston Country Club	64.00
Lakeside Country Club	63.00
River Oaks Country Club	37.50
ABC Bridge	18.50
Buckingham DBC	4.50
Total:	12,772.50

Unit 174 still has two of the top three clubs in District 16: Clear Lake Bridge Club with 3,041.50, Bridge Center of Austin with 2,605.5 and Bridge Club of Houston with 2370.



Below please find the information reported by some of the clubs in our unit. Please send your club news to: unit174news@gmail.com.

Additional information about all of the clubs can be found on the [Unit 174 website](#). Or, click a club name to jump to their website.

Apple II Club

Our games begin at 11:30 a.m. Please plan to arrive by 11:20 a.m. All games are \$10.00 / person. The increase is due to the higher rent.

Beginning October 2, the Friday Apple II club game will now be held at 9800 Richmond with the Bridge Academy of West Houston. We said our final farewell to Tracey Gee Community Center on September 25.

The new BridgeMate® III score pads are a big hit! They are much easier to use for the everyone. For example, the round timer is on the pad itself. Therefore, it is much easier for players to keep track of the remaining time in a round. It is also much harder to make errors when entering the data, and much easier for the players to fix mistakes without the director. Once the players get accustomed to using BridgeMate III pads, they go more smoothly when entering the scores allowing for more time to play. Feedback so far is that they universally preferred. I have heard of no one who does not like this change. Several players even expressed that the change was well worth the money.

October Game Schedule

- October 2 Club Appreciation
- October 9 Club Appreciation
- October 16 Closed for the Unit 174 Two Tournaments in One Sectional at Shriners
- October 23 D16 Royal STaC
- October 30 ACBL Charity

Watch our [website](#) for further updates and the usual closings as they may arise.

Also Note: The scores from Fridays at Apple II can now be viewed on the [Unit 174 website](#). Click on scores and look at Fridays. Every Friday will have a space, but only those dates that a game is held will have scores. When posted, the color will be blue. If a scoring change required re-posting, the color will change to purple.

For more information, please contact:

Tom Jahnke
tomtomj211@yahoo.com - 713-777-0333

Results and additional information [here](#).



Bridge Academy of West Houston

Lauri Laufman receives Jacoby Service Award

Congratulations to our very own Lauri Laufman, the 2026 recipient of the District 16 Oswald and James Jacoby Service Award. If you missed the article about why she was recognized, make sure to go back and read more.

9800 Richmond

By the time you read this newsletter, many of you will already have had the opportunity to play at our new location at 9800 Richmond, Suite 120. At the time of this writing, we have not yet made the move, but we are excited

about our new home and look forward to welcoming everyone.

Our new facility is conveniently located on the first floor, with a deli and lounge available for our players to enjoy.

As you might expect, moving to a new facility comes with increased costs. Our rent is approximately three times what we paid at the Shriners, making it necessary to increase the entry fee from \$7 to \$10 per person.

We hope you will come play with us, enjoy our new surroundings, and, most importantly, continue to share in the game we all love.

U P C O M I N G . . .

Mentor/Mentee

Our monthly Mentor/Mentee game is held on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. The next game will be on:

October 6 – Mentor/Mentee

If you have not signed up and would like to participate please contact our coordinator Bert Onstott by clicking [here](#).

Mentees must have fewer than 300 masterpoints and Mentors greater than 300 points.

8 is enough Swiss Teams

With the move, the 8 is Enough Swiss Teams games are *changed*. This game will now be held on the last Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The next game will be held on:

October 31 – 8 is enough Swiss Teams (Come in Costume!)

The stratifications for the Swiss Teams game are:

- Level 1** – 0 to 1000 masterpoints
- Level 2** – 1000 to 3000 masterpoints
- Level 3** – 3000+ masterpoints

For example, a Level 3, Level 1 and two Level 2 players would add up to eight, as would four Level 2 players.

Another example would be one Level 1 and three Level 2 players. That adds up to seven; it is okay to be less than eight.

The Swiss Team has become an extremely popular event. To find teammates, please use the Team-Matching service. It is a two-step process:

1. Register and provide

- Name:
- Email:
- Phone:
- Masterpoints
- Please email to lavignej@me.com

2. Request

If you are looking for a team, send an email to lavignej@me.com indicating whether you are:

- A single player looking for a team
- A pair looking for another pair
- Three players looking for a fourth

As requests are received, we will do our best to put teams together. Please send requests early, two weeks before the event or earlier.

Mini-lesson

Before each Wednesday and Thursday games there is a mini-lesson beginning around 10:00 a.m. taught by Joe Quinn.

Game Schedule

Monday, Tuesday & Saturday - Open
Tuesday - Mentor/Mentee
Wednesday - Open & 299'er
Thursdays - Open & Beginner Pairs

10:30 a.m.
Last Saturday - 8 is Enough Swiss Teams
9:30 a.m.
9800 Richmond
Suite 120

- \$10.00 per person
- Coffee & Snacks are provided
- Tom Jahnke, Janice Rush & Marty Hrachovy, directors

Game Calendar

Thu-1 10	Club Appreciation Game	Tue-20 10	Royal STAC
Mon-5 10	Club Appreciation Game	Wed-21 10	Instant Matchpoint Game
Tue-6 10	Club Appreciation Game	Thu-22 10	Royal STAC
Wed-7 10	Club Appreciation Game	Sat-24 10	Royal STAC
Thu-8 10	Club Appreciation Game	Mon-26 10	Club Appreciation Game
Mon-12 10	Charity Game	Tue-27 10	Charity Game
Tue-13 10	Club Appreciation Game	Wed-28 10	Charity Game
Wed-14 10	Club Appreciation Game	Thu-29 10	Club Championship
Mon-19 10	Royal STAC	Sat-31 10	Charity Game

Need a Partner?

Contact Linda or Tom Martinsen at 713-398-4907 martinsens@comcast.net.



Bridge Club of Houston

Please consult our monthly calendar online for updates and complete listings: [BCOH Calendar](#).

Lessons

- Tuesday Tidbits – Build a solid foundation with Susan Banks-Johnson, Life Master and ACBL Teacher. Enjoy a free lesson for all from 9:30-10:10 a.m. A game follows at 10:30 a.m. Email Susan at sisbjohnson@gmail.com for more information.

Practice for Intermediate/Newcomers

- FLM 0-99 Game – Sundays at 1:30 p.m., \$5 fee. For more information, please contact BridgewithCarol@gmail.com, 936-650-8180.
- F2F Mentor Games – 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. To be matched with a mentor, for 2nd Tuesday call or text Judy Cupps, 713-320-5592, for 4th Tuesday call or text Bob Ziegler, 713-829-6928.
- Online Mentor Game – 1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:00 p.m, (Protege should invite and pay for game of mentor.) Make sure to check out the flyer in this issue if you missed it. Contact Mike Linkins if you have any questions: mlinkins@swbell.net
- Online 0-99 Game – 2nd Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. (usually). See [FLM website](#).
- F2F 399er Game – Saturdays at 12 p.m. (noon), for a partner or to register contact Kas Rangan, kas.rangan@gmail.com, 539-210-1333
- I/N Game less 1000 – 5th Tuesday of any month at 10:30 a.m.

For more information about the games, please see [BCOH website](#).

F2F Open Pairs Games

- Mondays 10:30 a.m.
- First Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.
- Wednesdays & Fridays 10:30 a.m.
- Saturdays – 12:00 p.m. (noon)

399er Pairs

- Saturdays – 12:00 p.m. (noon)

99er Pairs

- Sundays – 1:30 p.m.

Mentor/Mentee Pair

- Second & Fourth Tuesdays – 10:30 a.m.

Limited Pairs

- Fifth Tuesdays – 10:30 a.m.

F2F Swiss Teams

- First Sunday 1:30 p.m.
- Third Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.



October 2	ACBL Membership Game
October 3, 7	Grass Roots
October 4	Team Club Appreciation
October 5-6,9-10, 28	Club Appreciation
October 6	\$5 Member Game
October 10	Rank LM Party – Lunch provided at 11:15 a.m., Game at noon
October 11, 14	ACBL Charity
October 16-18	BCOH CLOSED
October 19-25	D16 Royal STaC
October 26	Local Charity
October 30	Pizza Friday
October 31	Halloween Party Potluck

Good Times with Good Friends



499er Fall Sectional at BCOH

Check the [BCOH Website](#) for more including details, potlucks and points each week.



CHOOSE HOUSTON BASIC SCHEDULE - [BBO®](#)
ONLINE GAMES

Online Games for all levels every day! These dates will change if the ACBL has approved special games online so please check the Bridge Club of Houston and Clear Lake Bridge Club for updates.

Mentored Pairs

1st & 3rd Monday @ 7:00 p.m.

Open Pairs

Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

[SE Carolina Consortium](#)

Future Life Masters

2nd Saturday (0-99) @ 9:00 a.m.*

*Usually - See [flm174.org](#) for dates.



Clear Lake Bridge Club

Clear Lake Bridge Club (CLBC) is located at 16614 Sea Lark, Houston, Texas 77062.

The game fees are \$6.00 for members and \$7.00 for guests. Games are held every day of the week. The club closes for Christmas and Thanksgiving. You can reach us by phone at 281-480-1911.

Weekly Game Schedule:

Open Games: Monday - Wednesday & Friday at 10:00 a.m.,
Thursday & Saturday at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m.

0-50 Games: Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. (Played in Conjunction with 0-499 Game.)

0-299 Games: Saturday at 10:00 a.m. (Free lesson starting at 9:30 a.m. with a Q&A after the game.)

0-499 Games: Monday & Wednesday at 2:00 p.m.

0-499 Games: (Played in Conjunction with Open Games.)

Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. &

Thursday at 1:00 p.m.

Swiss Teams: Sunday at 1:00 p.m.

To start games on time, registration closes *15 minutes before game start time*. Late arrivals are not accepted. If you are coming to a game and find that you cannot arrive on time, please call the club to alert the director to hold your seat.

Teams Stratification & Registration

The B players' upper limit is 2000 - 2500 masterpoints. If you are interested in playing in a Sunday afternoon Teams Game, please register *at least one day prior* so that the director can have the set up done on time. Plan to arrive no later than *10 minutes before game start time*.

8 is Enough Swiss Teams

Game is held on the Sunday following the Mentor/Mentee game each month unless otherwise identified. Check the club's bulletin board to find out when the next game will be held.

The 8 is Enough Swiss Teams stratifications are:

Level 1 – 0-749 masterpoints (1)

Level 2 – 750-1999 masterpoints (2)

Level 3 – 2000+ masterpoints (3)

For example one Level 3, two Level 2 and one Level 1 players total 8 as would four Level 2 players. Another example would be three Level 2 and one Level 1 players whose team total is 7 and it is OK to be less than 8.

Mentor/Mentee Game:

The Mentor/Mentee game is held on the third Wednesday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. The next game will be held on October 21. Reservations must be made in advance by noon on the prior Monday.

Sandwiches are served for lunch prior to the game.

Mentees must be Non-Life Masters with less than 500 masterpoints. The Mentee pays the game fee for the Mentor. For information and to submit a contact form, please visit the [CLBC MM site](#). You can alternately contact Susan Hanna at s.l.hanna@gmail.com if you are interested in becoming a mentor or a mentee.

Bridge Labs (Supervised Play):

Sunday and Tuesdays from 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Bridge Lab table fee is \$8.00.

Check out www.clearlakebridgeclub.org/bridge-education for new classes offered in 2026.

U P C O M I N G . . .

Club’s Saturdays for 0-299ers (9:30 a.m.)

This game offers:

- A Q&A Opportunity
- Tips on Convention Cards
- Post-game review using hand records
- Review of Problem Hands
- Class input into Lesson Topics

Bring a partner, bring a gang of friends, or come alone. Everyone is welcome. Everyone plays!

Fast Pairs Open Evening Game

The Fast Pairs Open Evening Game introduced in September has had its start time changed from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday evenings. Fast Pairs allows 5 minutes / board (normal play is 7 minutes / board). This means that you will be able to play 24 boards in just two hours! Please come join the fun.

The Common Game

CLBC began using the Common Game for our pre-dealt hands. Although it required a lot of teamwork to complete the transition, it has been a smooth and satisfactory change.

0-50 Wednesday Afternoon Game

Beginning on Wednesday, October 7, a 0-50 game has been added to our schedule. It will be played at the same time as the Wednesday 0-499 game. As long as there are three tables of 0-50 players, they will have a separate game. If there are not enough tables, these players will be merged into the 0-499 game. Either way, they will be playing in a sanctioned game and will be eligible for masterpoints.

Judith Rebmann
secretary

P.S.

For more information, please visit our [website](#).



CYPRESS NORTHWEST DBC

Cypress NW DBC meets at the Richard and Meg Weekley Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Rd, Cypress, TX, and games are played every Tuesday and Thursday starting at 11:30 a.m., with sign-up beginning at 11:00 a.m.

Coffee, tea, and snacks are provided. Games are \$3.00
For more information, contact Jim Warren at **832/851-4745** or jwarren760@gmail.com.

KINGWOOD DUPLICATE BRIDGE



CLUB

Games:

Wednesday 10:00 a.m. at the Kingwood Community Center, 4102 Rustic Woods Drive, Kingwood, TX 77345. Entries are still \$2 and \$3 for upgraded games.

For information, contact any of the following:
Bill Riley at (832)289-3833 or ichibanbill@yahoo.com
Sam Khayatt at kwbridge1430@gmail.com
Kingwood Community Center Phone: (281) 348-2570
Or Visit our [website](#).



LONE STAR BRIDGE CLUB

Lone Star Bridge Club (LSBC) in Conroe, Texas, plays at St Paul Global Methodist Church, 1100 Semands Street, Conroe; the church is located within easy access from Interstate 45. Directions to our game may be found on our [website](#).

Open Games:

Mondays at 11:45 a.m.
Thursdays at 10:30 a.m.

Snacks, coffee & bottled water are provided.
Game fee is \$5.00.

Upcoming Events...

Monday, October 5	Jeff Kroll's Free Lesson at 10:50 a.m. Jeff's lessons can be viewed on our website or on Youtube
	October Birthdays Celebrated - Cake will be served.
Thursday, October 8	Free Pizza Lunch
Tuesday, October 13	Mentor Mentee Game at 10:30 a.m. Lesson on Weak Twos given by Terry Sucher at 9:30 a.m.
Monday, October 19	District 16 Royal STaC Game
Tuesday, October 20	District 16 Royal STaC Game
Thursday, October 22	District 16 Royal STaC Game
Thursday, October 29	Halloween Party - Bob Lane will serve his Gumbo!
Monday, September 7	Labor Day Celebration - Pot Luck Salad Luncheon at 11:00 a.m. September Birthdays celebrated - Cake will be served.
Tuesday, Sept. 8	Mentor Mentee Game at 10:30 a.m.
Thursday, September 10	Free Pizza Lunch
Monday, September 14	Jeff Kroll will give a free lesson at 10:50 a.m. Jeff's lessons can be viewed on our website or on Youtube

Youtube

October Games

Oct. 1 - Thursday Club Masterpoint
Oct. 5 - Monday Charity Club Championship for ACBL
Oct. 8 - Thursday Charity Club Championship for St. Paul
Oct. 12 - Monday Club Appreciation
Oct. 13 - Tuesday Club Appreciation (Mentor Mentee Game)
Oct. 15 - Thursday Club Appreciation
Oct. 19 - Monday District 16 Royal STaC
Oct. 20 - Tuesday District 16 Royal STaC
Oct. 22 - Thursday District 16 Royal STaC
Oct. 26 - Monday Club Appreciation

Oct. 29 – Thursday Club Appreciation

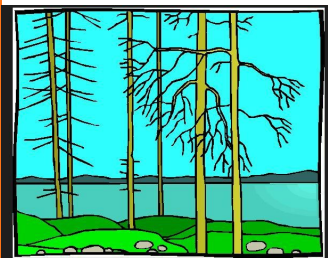
Mentor/Mentee Information

For information about the Mentor-Mentee game, please contact Chair Anita Rothfuss at larryandanita@gmail.com or 936-537-5039.

Need a partner?

Contact our partnership chairman Sandra Maalouf at 832-283-1674 or smaalouf@icloud.com

Please visit our website by clicking [here](#). You may also contact Mary McDonald, club manager at maryemcdonald22@yahoo.com or 281-964-7212 for more information.



NORTHSIDE BRIDGE CLUB LLC

Northside holds stratified open games Fridays starting at 10:30 a.m. and ending no later than 2:30 p.m. Game fee \$5. Games are held at Restoration Church, 107 Fish Creek Thoroughfare, Montgomery.

We take a short mid-day lunch break so bring your lunch. There is a microwave, ice maker and refrigerator available.

October Game Schedule:

- October 2 Club Appreciation
- October 9 Club Championship
- October 16 Club Appreciation
- October 23 District STAC
- October 30 Charity Club Championship

If you need a partner, contact Carol Meade at 281-543-4541 or email her at meadecm@icloud.com and she will do her best to assist you in getting a partner.

We are blessed with volunteers who are generous with their time and scrumptious food offerings and we are proud to continue the decades-old tradition of a friendly duplicate bridge club in the April Sound area.

For further information, contact Norm Gautier (281-795-6665) or Joyce Gautier (713-249-8767) or email at gautier39@comcast.net



**PEBBLE CREEK DUPLICATE
BRIDGE CLUB**

Face-to-face games are held on Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. For further information, please contact Richard Duble at 979-324-8421 or richard.duble@yahoo.com or visit our [website](#).



STAR DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Games are on Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 am and ~~are~~ \$5.00 per person.

You must have a partner.

For more info, contact Richard Duple at 979-324-8421
or richard.duble@yahoo.com or visit our [website](#).



Contributors



A Hand from the World Bridge Series Championship

BY **THOMAS RUSH**

Janice and I had the pleasure of playing bridge in Katowice, Poland during the first week of this year's World Bridge Series. People from literally all over the world came to play for world championship class events. Most years entry is by qualification, but every fourth year, entries are open to all, so we were able to sneak in.☺

The playing area was spacious. All tables had screens in place so North and East could see each other, but not their respective partners. Each table had a camera that covered that table's playing area; the videos were monitored and directors could refer to the video to help with questions like, "Was it a played card?" or "Was East's bid out of tempo?". Computer tablets were used for the bidding and also to display opponents' system cards. The screens and tablets cut down on a lot of 'goofs' that happen in F2F bridge to which we're all accustomed: There were no bids out of turn, no insufficient bids, no unauthorized information from grimaces, etc.



Katowice Playing Site

I had several interesting hands during the seven days I played. I'd like to share one. Follow this one with me:

You pick up:

♠AKQ43 ♥8 ♦2 ♣KQJ986 as South, with East dealing. No one is vulnerable.

You're probably thinking about what you're going to bid, when dealer at your right opens 1♥. What do you do?

Here's an important tip: At an important decision point, don't just stop thinking when you think of the first bid that "might work". Instead, remember that one, and keep thinking to if you can find a bid that better describes your hand. Here, several calls are possible: 1♠, 2♣, 2♥ Michaels Cue Bid, or Double.

Which would you select? Here's my thinking. First, I ruled out 1♠. I think the playing strength of the hand is too good for this call. Also, if I bid 1♠ now and later bid clubs, I'll be distorting my shape, implying longer spades than clubs.

I've got the wrong shape for a takeout double; in terms of playing strength it's okay if I plan to double and then bid a suit... but what do I do if partner bids and insists on diamonds or No Trump? Partner will never think I'm 6-5 when I've made a takeout double (and if I can only bid one suit after the double, it's quite likely we land in our second-best fit if I take this path). (By the way, I think that in most cases, doubling and then cue-bidding the opponents' suit is how you show a huge fit for your partner's suit or possibly a try for 3NT, not some kind of delayed two-suited takeout!)

That leaves Michaels or 2♣. I considered a Michaels Cuebid (2♥), but this hand has so much playing strength, I'm not sure I can ever convince partner how good I am if I start with 2♥. There's also the chance that we land in the wrong spot, when partner has equal length in the black suits, or even one more club than spade. Still, I like Michaels better than Double or 1♠; at least it gets both my suits in and doesn't distort my length.

What about 2♣, then? Note that there is a useful general principle that if you have the choice of two calls both showing the same strength, you should choose the one that shows more of the cards in your hand; on its own this principle suggests the Michaels call over 1♠ or 2♣. But do Michaels and an overcall really show the same strength? On normal hands, sure... but this hand is a monster!

Here is where thinking about the whole auction and planning past your first call becomes important. My experience or table feel told me that the opponents are likely to have a big heart fit on this hand, and I was expecting them to really 'bid it up' because of their fit... so I don't think for a moment that the auction is going to stop at a low level. I've got spades, the boss suit. I've got a huge hand in terms of playing strength (three losers by Losing Trick Count!). All the reasoning you see above tells me that I can best describe my hand by overcalling clubs and then bidding my spades at whatever level necessary.

I'm not surprised when the auction goes

1♥	2♣	4♥	Pass
Pass			...and it's my turn to bid again.

I'm feeling pretty smug about my decision to overcall 2♣ here; I'm thrilled to be able to bid 4♠ to show a two-suiter with massive playing strength. I think partner should read me for at least five spades to introduce the suit at the 4-level, and uneven length in the black suits (longer clubs since I bid them first) since I started with an overcall and not a Michaels Cuebid.

1♥	2♣	4♥	Pass
Pass	4♠	5♥	5♠
6♥	6♠	7♥	??

I'll assume that you and your partner have never had this auction before, so you've not discussed what partner's calls might mean: Pass, Double, 7♠. Well, okay, 7♠ would be to play. But now we are into the rarefied levels of bidding theory, and experts do discuss these things.

First, let's assume you and your partner are having a constructive auction, that is, you bid to the 5-level or above with the expectation of making your contract, not as a sacrifice.

On this auction, partner must play you for a real monster of an offensive hand, so let's call it a constructive auction, where your side bid to 6♠ with the belief you'd make it. Then, in general, doubling says you have too many losers in the opponents' suit (here, that would be one!) to bid on, or a bad hand for your previous bidding with a flaw that should warn you off bidding on.

Passing shows your willingness for partner to bid on (that is, you don't have "too many" losers in the opponent's suit, but you don't have the values to know that you can make your next contract; you need something from partner that he hasn't yet shown). Last, bidding on (7♠ here) says you believe you're making your contract.

At the table, partner doubled the 7♥ bid, and I passed – after all, if partner has a heart loser and not both minor aces, I can't make 7♠.

The whole hand is below (rotated from the original):

D

N North

♠ J1076

♥

♦ A10765

♣ A742

W West

♠ 985

♥ QJ76532

♦ 94

♣ 10

W N E S

4♥ Pass

5♥ 5♠ 6♥ 6♠

7♥ Dbl Pass

E East

♠ 2

♥ AK1094

♦ KQJ83

♣ 53

S South

♠ AKQ43

♥ 8

♦ 2

♣ KQJ986

As you can see, 7♠ is an easy make.

Should partner have bid 7♠ with first-round controls in three suits? Or should partner pass 7♥ around to me, knowing that I had a very strong 6-5 or better? Should I have bid differently? I'm not going to pass judgement, but it's an interesting hand to think about.

My team didn't do well in terms of wins in Katowice. But bridge is so exciting at this level of competition! I played against Fred Gitelman, Boye Brogeland, Brian Senior, Eddie Wold, and a host of other great players you read about in the Bridge Bulletin. Maybe we'll see you there in four years.

Thomas Rush is a regular contributor to the newsletter, served on the unit 174 board and is a bridge teacher who lives in the Houston area and teaches across North America using the internet and online bridge. His specialty is coaching partnerships to the next level of bridge: making sure your agreements and understandings are synchronized so that you get the maximum results when you play together. If you'd like to take your personal game or your partnership to the next level, contact him at PlayBridgeWithThomas@gmail.com, or 832-228-7835.



In Memoriam

* Faye Baker, Houston

* Benjamin Klein, Houston

Ruth Gilman

*Life Master



From the Editor

Thank you to all of the people who contribute to the Newsletter. It takes a team of fellow bridge players to



bring this information to you. Unit 174 runs on volunteers' energy.

If you are interested in volunteering for Unit 174 events and activities, please contact Lauri Laufman, Unit 174 Board President - llaufman@texas2211.com.

If you would like to have your club information or an article of interest published, or if you have a bridge accomplishment for which you are proud and would like to share in the Unit 174 Newsletter, please send your name, phone, email, and subject title to unit174news@gmail.com.

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