

Southern California

Bridge News

Volume 63, #2

February 2026

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by *Jordan Chodorow*



As your President, I am here to serve you. If I can do anything to enhance your enjoyment of our great game, please let me know at President@D23ACBL.org.

It is with mixed feelings that I announce that District 23 will not hold its Bridge Week Regional in Summer 2026, and the same will almost surely be true in 2028. (As I have previously reported, we have a contract in place for Bridge Week Summer 2027 at the Long Beach Hilton and look forward to its going off without a hitch.)

Our Tournament Committee, led by the indefatigable Carolyn Hannas and ably supported by Alan Flower and John Jones, tried everything in their power to make it work this summer. But the FIFA World Cup and the Summer Olympics are the two largest sporting events in the world, and it would be beyond foolhardy for us to go up against them.

Without going into specific details of contract proposals, suffice it to say that hotel rooms near the prospective host hotels ("at" was not a possibility) are being priced upwards of \$1,000 a night. You might say, well, make it a "locals only" event. But the effects of the World Cup and the Olympics extend far beyond hotel room rates, to traffic, congestion, delays and aggravation. Undoubtedly some of our members would be willing to brave these conditions, but how many?

Thanks to a lot of hard work and some very generous donations from several of our members, our District has finally scraped together a modicum of financial stability in recent years, after profligate spending by certain previous administrations. We simply cannot bet the District's financial life under

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Regional Director's Report

by *Cornelia Gould*



I don't have much new to report this month. I will be attending my first Board meetings as Regional Director later this month in St. Louis. I will let you know what happens there. I have been appointed to the Governance and Bylaws Committees and have begun working on projects in those areas.

You are welcome to contact me if you have bridge-related issues or concerns that might be of interest to the Board. You can reach me at Region11Director@acbl.org.

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these unique circumstances.

Far better to cede the stage to the World Cup this summer and the Olympics in summer 2028, gather information about the World Cup's effects on other organizations and events this summer, and then consider whether (if it is possible) to hold a Regional later in 2026 and/or (more likely, in my opinion) later in 2028.

I don't mind being the bearer of bad news – that's part of the job description - but I couldn't live with myself if we hurtled forward with a regional for its own sake - not knowing what we don't know - and drove the District into financial ruin. I welcome your input at the email above.

On a happier note, I am delighted to announce my appointments to the ACBL Advisory Council, effective immediately, for a term ending December 31, 2026. They are Sharon Beynon, Hemant Lall and Tom Reynolds. I know that each of them will represent D23 very well and offer keen insights to the ACBL Board of Directors on a variety of important issues.

Finally, don't forget to make your plans to attend the D23 STaC, March 9-15. See you at the table!

New Life Masters
by Mike Marcucci and Patti Monroe

Congratulations to those D23 members who have earned the coveted Gold Card since our last update:



Caryn Mason – Apr 25

Unit 551



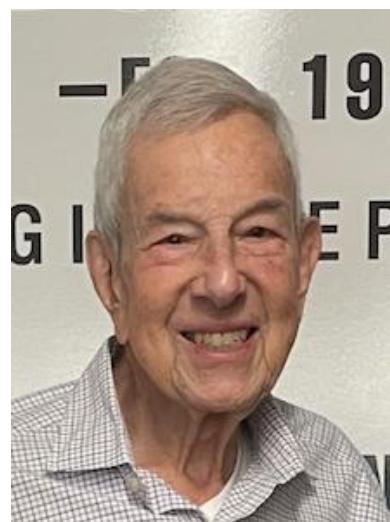
Jean Futami – Aug 25

Unit 568



Michael Schiff – Nov 25

Unit 561



Irving Klasky – Nov 25

Unit 561

The Teacher's Corner

Case for the...Dissenting Opinion on Some Bidding?! by Dan F. Oakes

I'm going to do something special for my first column of 2026. Instead of defense, I'm going to devote some space to a few bidding situation, but I'm also going to break free from my usual mode, which is to provide some of the most useful conventional wisdom out there. Yes, I collect bridge books and magazines (a few hundred of each) in search of the most bang-for-the-buck information I can give you – the stuff the experts advocate that I think will be most useful. But today, rather than do that, I'm going to give you a few thoughts that weigh *against* the majority of expert opinion. You've been warned – take the following with several grains of salt, or buck the pros along with me.

Idea #1: Don't rebid 1NT with a singleton. How many times have you picked up this hand:

♦A ♦K985 ♦A7432 ♠KQ6? You open 1♦ (of course you do), and partner responds 1♠ (of course he does). And if you're like 90% of bridge players, you respond 1NT (90% of the other 10%, not understanding reverses, make the horrible 2♥ rebid). Well, your singleton IS an honor, and partner bid spades, so what's the problem? That's a fair objection. Before I get to my objection, let me tell you something I learned as a young man a long time ago (but I repeat myself) with a deal generator. Generally speaking: a 5-3 major suit fit is markedly better than 1NT. A 5-2 major suit fit is about as good as 1NT. A 5-1 major suit fit is markedly worse than 1NT.

That's why even with a really bad hand, you transfer and pass with a 5-card major when partner *opens* 1NT. If partner has a doubleton, your 5-2 fit is just about as good, and if partner has more than a doubleton, the major suit fit will be better. Now let's go back to our 1♦ - 1♠ auction. What should partner do with a weak hand and a mediocre 5-card spade suit? If you routinely rebid 1NT with a singleton in partner's suit, his choices are to rebid 2♠ anyway, and possibly play the contract there with the opponents having more trump than you do, or to pass 1NT and possibly miss a 5-3 fit. If opener can have anywhere from 1 to 3 spades, you're either going to play 5-1 fits, miss 5-3 fits, or both.

If, on the other hand, opener promises at least a doubleton, there's no problem – just as when the

opening bid is 1NT, responder steers it to 2♠ by rebidding his suit. Since responder rebids his 5-card suit, you never miss a 5-3 fit. And since opener promises at least a doubleton, you never play a 5-1 fit. Voila!

In the interest of full disclosure, I have to acknowledge the "trouble hand." What about that ♠J ♥K985 ♦A7432 ♠KQ6 we started with? After 1♦ - 1♠, we can't rebid 2♥; that would be a reverse, promising 17-ish points. If you don't rebid 1NT, what's left? About 27 years ago, I was already committed to this "Don't rebid 1NT with a singleton" idea, and I certainly wasn't going to rebid that crummy diamond suit, so I rebid 2♣ on my 3-card suit at the Las Vegas regional. Partner was taken a bit aback, and complained about the bid. Fortunately, we had a break in the game, so I headed over to get something to drink and avoid arguing with my partner, and I happened to be in line right behind Max Hardy, author of the then-state-of-the-art book on Two Over One (sorry, Mike Lawrence). He was gracious enough to my, "Hey Max, can I give you a hand?" so I decided to go straight to the source (back then, we all played 2/1 per the Yellow Book). I gave him the hand, and he said, "That's an easy one; two clubs." Vindication!

Once or twice a year I play a 3-3 club fit when I have a 4-4 heart fit available, but even when partner has 4 hearts, it's not always a bad board – partner bids again, or the opponents do, or you eke out a plus score or a small minus when the opponents could have made something. Note – with a bad hand, partner should usually take a "false preference" with 2 diamonds and 3 clubs; that will obviate some of the danger. This is good bridge anyway, as opener may have up to about 18 points for the 2♣ response, so the false preference gives him a chance to make a third bid. And when the auction goes 1♦ - 1♠, 2♣, responder should never rebid 2♠ on a 5-card suit. Opener almost certainly has a singleton or void in spades (raise 1♠ to 2♠ with 3-card support and a singleton or void in hearts).

It may seem weird occasionally bidding 3-card suits, but in my experience (and I've been doing this since around 2000), the gains in accuracy when you end up in 1NT or 2 of a major more than make up for the occasional awkward sequences. This ran longer than I thought it would, so...next month: Why 1♣ - (1♠) - X - (P); 2♦ should show extra values (the opinions of the

vast majority of experts I've discussed it with notwithstanding).

**Auction of the Century
a True Story
by Tom Lill**

One night, some years ago, I was directing a game where we had a half-table. (So what else is new at La Fetra?) I had already played this set of deals, so I decided to kibitz. I was witness to this really creative bidding sequence. It seems the pair in question were using 1NT-2♣ as 4-card Stayman and 2NT-3♣ as 5-card Stayman. The bidding proceeded: 2NT pass 2♣! pass (accepting 2♣ without batting an eye) 2NT!!! pass 3♣!!! pass (again calmly accepting the situation as normal).

Opener, who apparently had never discussed this particular sequence with his partner, now went into the tank. Was pard asking for a 5-card major after he had denied a 4-card major? Was he trying to sign off in clubs? Was this a slam try? Eventually he settled on 3NT, which proved to be a standard spot. Everyone passed without a question being raised. But I was very glad no one asked me for a director's ruling.

**A Bridge Sonnet
by Arthur Weinstein**

(with apologies to William Shakespeare
and Audrey Grant)

How do I MAKE this 4♠ contract?
Let me COUNT the ways.
If ♦s are divided 3-2, I make the most;
If not, the contract's toast.
I can ruff a ♥ in the dummy, that would be fine.
But still the trick total is only 9.
The ♣ Ace and King are easy for me, but the
Queen is not, and I can see
The defender's ruff will do me in, much to my
chagrin.
Aha, I see a way to thrive; pull the trumps,
promote the ♣s,
And win with the ♣5.

District 23 Rank Changes February 2026

Junior Master

Marion Darling
Robert Forst
Barbara Hart
Samuel Leonard
Liz Musch
Babu Shankar
Janice Tori
Ellen M. Yurko

Club Master

Ann O. Devlin
Meera V. Kumar

Sectional Master

Jason M. Howard
Lawrence D. Morse
Louis N. Sterling

Regional Master

Robert G. Mossler
Justin M. Ryan

NABC Master

Susan Morishita

Advanced NABC Master

Jan van Lierop
Paul S. Chen
Ming Hu

Bronze Life Master

Lynne R. Finley
Patti Monroe

Ruby Life Master

Lynn J. Danielson

Gold Life Master

Theodore R. Maki

Emerald Life Master

Carolyn R. Cohen

St. Patty's Day Local Sectional*



Fri-Sun, Mar 20-22, 2026

Upland Women's Club

590 N. Second Ave. Upland, CA 91786



PARKING PERMIT is required on Friday and Saturday.

Pick up your parking permit when you arrive, or

email Caryn Mason in advance: cremingtonm@gmail.com

Tournament Chair/DIC

Tom Lill (909) 518-6403
thomasmlill8@gmail.com

Partnership Chair

Caryn Mason (909) 588-8699
cremingtonm@gmail.com

Restaurants: Variety of choices within 10 minutes

Hospitality: Free coffee and snacks every day. Lunch included Sunday!

Fee All sessions: \$15 TEAM GAME: \$150 per team**

Friday,

10:00 a.m. / 3:00 p.m.

Open Pairs, single sessions

10:00 a.m. / 3:00 p.m.

749er Pairs, single sessions

Saturday,

10:00 a.m. / 3:00 p.m.

Open Pairs, single sessions

10:00 a.m. / 3:00 p.m.

749er Pairs, single sessions

Sunday,

10:00 a.m. / TBD

Stratified Swiss Teams, 2 sessions

Strats for pairs games: 2000+/750 (open games); 750/500/150 (749er games). Stratification for all games based on attendance and team average.

* Co-hosted by Units 516 & 551. Sanction# 2603372

** Unpaid ACBL Members \$19 per session.

The Puzzle Page

Bridge Jeopardy

by John Jones

(Solutions to Bridge Jeopardy are on page 11. No peeking!)

Category: Places Which Are Also Bridge Terms

And the answer is ...

\$100 – A southwestern state which is also a 4-level transfer after a 1NT or 2NT opening.

\$200 – Located about 600 miles east of North Carolina it is one of the 4 countries which makeup the ACBL. Its name is included in the most prestigious zonal championship to determine the world champion.

\$300 – The largest city in Illinois, also a four handed rubber bridge variant in which the vulnerability is preset.

\$400 – The capital and largest city of Austria, also a bridge play of unblocking a high card to allow a squeeze to run.

\$500 – An island and famous prison off the coast of San Francisco, or declarer's intentional and unethical attempt to locate a finessable card by revoking. Even if unintentional, it is subject to an adjustment.



Submitted by Tom Lill



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:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>President</u>
551 – Pomona – Covina	Eileen Finlay
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

Around the Units in District 23



Pomona – Covina by Tom Lill

www.acblunit551.org

La Fetra Games: Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:45

Claremont Bridge Club: Thursdays 9:30

Individual: March 7, 10:00 a.m., Ontario

Unit Pairs Game: February 21, 11:00 a.m., Ontario

Unit Pairs Game: March 14, 11:00 a.m., Ontario

Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

STaC: March 10 and 13, La Fetra

UNIT 551 Sectional: March 20-22 at the Upland Women's Club

In the January Unit Game, we had another nice turnout, enabling us to run another Mitchell – 7 tables, this time. The overall winners were Mary Ann Wotring – Vic Sartor, with 61.56%. Second overall, and first E-W were Steve Andersen – Art Weinstein. Next in the overalls: Kiran Kumar – Judy Mogharbel, then Tom Lill – Amr Elghamry, and finally Tim and Eileen Finlay.

In the February Individual, top honors went to Art Weinstein, who dominated the field with a 75% game. In second was Steve Anderson, followed by Ramona Hernandez, with Cici Mougharbel and Dan Robinson tying for the final spot on the leader board.

Thanks again to Patrick Finley, for collating the masterpoint statistics for January. But first – Your Correspondent inexplicably overlooked one of the leaders for 2025. Well, I've only known Vic for 25+ years, so the omission is understandable. Here are the CORRECT La Fetra standings for 2025:

1	125.51	Fredy Minter
2	125.43	Patrick Finley
3	119.66	Caryn Mason
4	118.08	Lulu Minter
5	115.58	Vic Sartor
6	82.63	Mary Ann Wotring
7	72.10	Ramona Hernandez
8	69.66	Nona Stokes
9	66.36	Steve Andersen
10	63.07	Tom Lill

The January figures:

At La Fetra:

1	9.53	Vic Sartor
2	8.62	Caryn Mason
2	8.621	Patrick Finley
4	6.45	Lulu Minter
5	5.52	Mary Ann Wotring
6	4.85	Kurt Trieselmann
6	4.85	Duane Woodman
8	4.82	Clint Lew
8	4.82	Linda Tessier
10	4.34	Fredy Minter

And at the Claremont Bridge Club:

1	1.80	Patrick Finley
2	1.52	Steve Andersen
3	1.28	Patrick Rogers
4	1.25	David Ochroch
5	1.00	Marjorie Preston

At La Fetra, two pairs topped the magic 65% benchmark: Fredy and Lulu Minter had a monster 73.46% game, and Vic Sartor – Caryn Mason had a nice 65.10% outing. Other winners: Durane “Woody” Woodman, Kurt Trieselmann, Patrick Finley, Clint Lew, and Linda Tessier.

That 73%-er illustrates why I don't care to run a Mitchell movement even with seven full tables. Because the field has to be as balanced as possible, often there's only one very strong pair in each direction. Oh well.

Over in Claremont, three of the four winning scores topped 65% - but just barely! Steve Andersen – Marjorie Preston had the best game, at 66.14%. Next were Tim and Eileen Finlay, 65.63%. Finally, we find Patrick Rogers – Patrick Finley at 65.08%.

There were no promotions again last month.

For our Hand of the Month, I have an (I think) interesting one for you, played at La Fetra. I present first just my hand – I was East, West dealt, and only N-S were vulnerable:

♠ A K J 9 8 ♥ A J 8 6 ♦ none ♣ 9 8 6 4.

Partner opened 1NT (15-17), North passed, and it seems obvious to use Stayman, right? No problem so

far. South passed, and partner showed her spade suit. Now what?

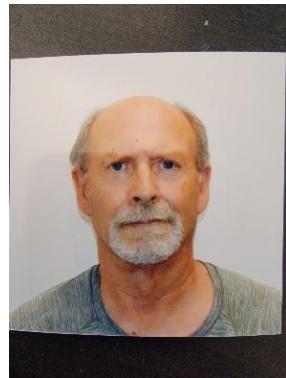
The choices seem to be 3♥ (partner would no doubt read that as 5-5 in the majors); a 3♦ advance cue bid (which partner would no doubt take as a second suit), 5♦ (Exclusion Blackwood, which unfortunately we do not play), 4♠ (and give the man a white feather), and ... what's left? I decided that using science would just help the defenders so I blasted 6♠! (Another advantage of that kind of bid is enjoying the look partner gives you!) The full deal was:

North	
♠ 10 3	
♥ 10 7 5	
♦ 10 9 7 6 3 2	
♣ 3 2	
West	East
♠ Q 7 6 5	♠ A K J 9 8
♥ 9 4 3	♥ A J 8 6
♦ A K J	♦ none
♣ A Q 5	♣ 9 8 6 4
South	
♠ 4 2	
♥ K Q 2	
♦ Q 8 5 4	
♣ K J 10 7	

North made the obvious lead of the ♦10, after which partner rolled home with all 13 tricks. Bridge Composer says 6♠ can be made even with a heart opening lead; if you can see how, I'd like to partner you sometime.

Oddly, no one else even bid the slam. One other pair did make 12 tricks. Oh well, nothing venture, nothing gain, I guess. This one almost made up for some of our more fatuous results.

Quote for the month: Part of the secret of success in life is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside." (Mark Twain)



Santa Clarita-Antelope Valley by Don Dachner

The Santa Clarita Bridge Club has games at the Newhall Community Center on Fridays and Wednesdays at 10

AM.

The Friday game is an open game, and the Wednesday game is mainly for people in the learning stage, but all are welcome. You can take back your bid, for example, or ask any question about what's happening. There are mentors at all the tables to help out. We usually have 6 tables, and both games are free.

On Wednesdays at 9:30, there is a half hour lesson, taught by Ruth Baker, covering various introductory topics usually attended by 20 people or so. She is currently covering forcing bids.

Also, on Wednesdays from 10-12, I'm teaching beginning bridge to real beginners. I'm using Audrey Grant's Bridge Basics 1 with coded cards. There are currently 6 students.

January results:

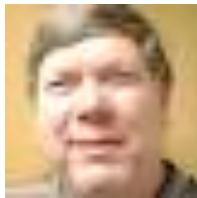
1/3		
N	Saime – Barry Parikh	69%
S	Alan Nueman – Harry Randhawa	58%
1/10		
N	Sara Seely – Jacky Moor	62%
S	Alan Nueman – Harry Randhawa	66%
1/16		
N	Bernard Seal – Ruth Baker	76%
S	Alan Nueman – Harry Randhawa	63%
1/23		
N	Carole Provost – George MacDonald	65%
S	Saime Parikh – Barry Parikh	61%
1/30		
N	Hani Abraham and May Abagi	62%
S	Doug Nogle and Pierre Yemenidjian	61%

Ted Maki has 2494 Master Points and is on the verge of becoming Gold Life Master so we'd like to hear from him and a few others about him as this event approaches.

I asked Ted a few questions. "Ted, when did you first learn to play bridge?" Ted: "In college at the University of Minnesota, I majored in engineering, and got very interested in bridge. I've never taken a formal bridge class, but rather I learned from reading books and talking to people. I've got a rather large collection of books at home."

George MacDonald: "Ted has probably been playing bridge for 60 years. We became bridge partners in around 2010 and played for 8 years. We're both pretty quiet people so when we'd take 3-4 hours drives to a tournament, hardly a word would be spoken. Towards the end of our partnership, we put country western on the radio and he knew the names of almost every artist and song. Really surprised me. As far as bridge agreements, there was no discussion. We'd just state it and write it down. That was it. I'm 6 weeks older than Ted and he'll be 90 years old in July"

Rand Pinsky: "I met Ted at the Bridge Academy in Tarzana when I was the director there in the 1970s. Al Desosto was his partner then. I also played at the Litton Industries where he worked and played, but I was never his partner. He was always very quiet, and very thorough, and very diligent in his play. Even today he's extremely sound and plays a very disciplined game."



Long Beach by Leo Dittemore

www.acblunit557.org
www.LongBeachBridge.com

Unit 557 continues to thrive as our 12:30 PM games roll on six days each week, consistently drawing 10 or more tables. The energy in the room has been terrific, and we're grateful for the steady turnout that keeps our schedule vibrant and competitive.

Our spring calendar is already taking shape as we prepare for two major events in May:

- The Non-Life Master Sectional, offering rising players a welcoming and encouraging arena to shine.

- The District GNT Finals, where our local teams will once again represent Unit 557 with skill and pride.

We also celebrate outstanding performances at the club. Congratulations to Alan Flower & Jon Baclavic, Ed&Michael Piken, Bill McClean & Jon Yinger, and newer players Jim Werner & Vince Vilkrr for posting a 70% game, a remarkable achievement that reflects sharp partnership play and disciplined card sense.

Unit 557 moves into the coming months with enthusiasm, strong attendance, and a full slate of opportunities for every level of player.

San Fernando Valley by Alan Curtis

The EasyBridge class for new players being run by Jay and Toni Hansen is now entering its 5th week! There remains 20 enthusiastic students in the program of which 8 have already joined the ACBL. Jay and Toni are fairly new players themselves but have done an incredible job with the organization, teaching and overall running of the class far exceeding my expectations!

Our last UNIT game was held on Sunday, January 25th which featured 9 tables and yielded our first 70% game of 2026 - congratulations to Sheila Bozin and Mike Prcic! Not to be outdone, the following week, Gil Stinebaugh and Ellen Anten and posted a whopping 75% game!

Our next UNIT game will be held on Sunday, March 22nd at noon for lunch and awards with the game to begin at 1pm! Please come join us!

New rankers for UNIT 561:

Saphire - Alan Golden
 Ruby - Lynn Edelson
 Life Master - Michael Vernia
 Club - Roland Crim
 Junior - Michael Jackson-Polek
 Junior - William Kilbanow

Happy Bridging!

Downey-Whittier

by Daniel F. Oakes

Apologies...we've missed a couple of reports, but let's get caught up in a hurry. Going back to November 5th, John Jones and Nancy Stebbins squeaked out a tight one on the E/W side of the field, with three teams bunched within a matchpoint and a half. Raj Ramchandani and John Dobson were 2nd E/W, and Dan Oakes and Mike Ventri were 3rd. Gabby Sill and Steve Hough were three boards clear on the other side of the field to take 1st overall. Jon Yinger and Bob Rubin were 2nd E/W, and Bill Skupen & Jack Rainsberry were 3rd N/S and 1st B N/S.

On November 12th, Yinger paired up with Alan Flower to turn in a sizzling 72.50% game, relegating Tom Lill and Stephen Andersen to 2nd N/S (and 2nd overall) with an excellent game of their own – 66.88%. Nancy Stebbins and Tom Hoffman were 3rd N/S and 2nd B overall. Rainsberry and Skupen were 1st E/W ahead of Avice Osmundson and Kiran Kumar. Ramchandani and Dobson were 3rd E/W.

Larry and Kathy Wagner stopped by the club on November 19th to take 1st N/S and come within half a matchpoint of 1st overall (Rainsberry and Skupen, sitting E/W, captured that honor). Mike Ventri and Dan Oakes were 2nd N/S ahead of Bob and Linda Krause. Kent and Liz Burrell were 1st C N/S – if you're keeping score at home, that's three married couples out of four point-winning pairs. No rumors of Oakes and Ventri getting hitched, as of press time. Let's keep it that way. Chasing Rainsberry and Skupen, in order, were Stebbins and Jones, Ramchandani and Dobson, and in 4th E/W (and 2nd C overall), Anita Frost and Toni Hoffman.

The arrival of Thanksgiving brings us up to December 3rd, when Yas Takeda and Jeff Strutzel took the honors, ahead of Sill and Hough. Rainsberry and Skupen tied with Kumar and Osmundon for 3rd. Dobson and Ramchandani were 2nd B.

On December 10th, Ventri and Hough squeaked out a close one over Ramchandani and Dobson. Rainsberry and Skupen were 3rd, just ahead of the Krauses, who finished 4th overall and 2nd B. Frost and Hoffman were 2nd C.

Ventri and Oakes tied for first with Sill and Hough on December 17th, with both pairs posting a 64.88% score. Ramchandani and Dobson finished 3rd, and Kiran Kumar teamed up with Ivan Claman to capture 2nd B honors.

Back to back holidays bring us up to 2026, and on January 7th, Dobson and Ramchandani got into the winners' circle in the first game of the year. Ventri and Hough were 2nd, and Sankar Reddy and Jon Yinger squeaked into the bronze medal (Olympics reference there) half a matchpoint ahead of the Krauses.

On January 14th, Jones and Stebbins were 1st overall (and 1st E/W), ahead of Claman and Ventri. Frost and Hoffman were 3rd E/W, and Ramchandani and Dobson were 4th E/W. Skupen and Rainsberry were 1st N/S (and 2nd overall). Yinger and Flower were 2nd N/S, and the Krauses were 3rd.

There was a very tight game on January 21st, with Jones and Stebbins finishing just one matchpoint ahead of Sill and Yinger, with Rainsberry and Skupen just another matchpoint behind them, in 3rd. Claman (on a tear!) paired up with Terry Binns for 4th, and Ramchandani and Dobson rounded out the point winners.

Finally, on the 28th of January, it was Kumar and Frost pairing up and turning in a blistering 64.29% game to finish comfortably ahead of Skupen and Rainsberry. Ramchandani and Dobson were 3rd, and the Krauses took 1st B.

I want to belatedly recognize the passing of La Habra regular and diamond life master John Petrie, who along with regular partner Sankar Reddy made almost weekly appearances in the column's point-winners recognitions. John passed away over the holiday break following an illness that many were unaware of, as when he was at the club or tournaments, he focused on enjoying the bridge rather than dwelling on his troubles. As our regular club director John Jones noted, "John was explosive, but fun to be around. If he misbehaved, he apologized and meant it." R.I.P.

West L.A

by Elisa Leonelli

The historic Beverly Hills Bridge Club currently hosts five games a week.

Two games on Saturdays and Sundays at 1pm: Open Pairs and Limited 750 ACBL points. Mondays at 12.30 Open. Thursdays 7pm Open. Every other Thursday a free expert lesson at 6:30pm. 2/26 - Bruce Altshuler: "Don't Be Afraid to Pass - Part 2." 3/12 - Susan Somogyi: "2/1."

Most exciting is the increased number of new players attending beginner classes on Saturday and Sunday mornings 10am-12pm, taught by Dawn Lee, our newly elected club president.

Supervised play for Intermediate players Saturdays 10am-12pm by Nancy Heck, Board member for Education.

Zero tolerance policy for undesirable conduct.

Card fees: \$15 or 10 coupons for \$135. First time players free.

Website: www.bridgewebs.com/beverlyhills/

Email: beverlyhillsbridgeclub@gmail.com

Address: 325 S La Cienega Blvd. Beverly Hills CA 90211

Congratulations to club champions Lee Hausner & Joan Oliver (1/12, 70.42%), Nancy Heck & Danny Kleinman (1/15), Rion Porter & David Segal (1/17, Open), Sue Tewksbury & Bryan Caluwe (1/17, 750), Susan Lava & Renee Wishengrad (1/18, Open), and Michelle Redston & Bryan Caluwe (1/18, 750, 71.88%).

Bridge Jeopardy Questions

\$100 – What is Texas (Transfer)?

\$200 – What is Bermuda (Bowl)?

\$300 – What is Chicago?

\$400 – What is Vienna (Coup)?

\$500 – What is Alcatraz (Coup)?

Problem Solvers' Panel

John Jones is moderator. Mark Bartusek, David Chechelashvili, Jordan Chodorow, Kitty Cooper, Ellis Feigenbaum, Lynne Feldman, 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.

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IMPs
N-S Vul

South	West	North	East
1♠	pass	2♦*	pass
2♠		3♦\$	pass
???			

* = Standard American 2/1, 10 + HCP

\$ = Non-forcing, showing a game invite

You, South, hold: ♠ Q108642 ♥ AQ10 ♦ A ♣ Q107

What call do you make?

This hand comes down to bidding 3NT, knowing it may have problems, versus passing to preserve the plus score. The scoring, being vulnerable at IMPs was significant in the minds of several panelists. So, did all the ten-spots which may have distracted one panelist!

Roeder: 3NT. Bo Derek was a 10. So, how can I argue with three 10s?

Bartusek: 3NT. KQTxxx and a side-entry rates to be a reasonable shot at game. It's a vulnerable game at IMPs. Additionally, the opponents sometimes make the wrong opening lead.

Chechelashvili: 3NT. It's a red game at IMPs.

Chodorow: 3NT. There are hands that I would pass; this isn't one of them.

Cooper: 3NT. This is the most likely game to make.

Wittes: 3NT. Depending on partner's hand we may have a play or no play for 3NT, but I think I have enough cards to give it a try.

Feigenbaum: 3NT. 3NT at IMPs, although it's close and probably a clear pass at match points.

Feldman: Pass.

Shuster: Pass. Yeah, I have a queen more than I might, but the diamond blockage is likely to doom 3NT.

I'm not always conservative, but I think I am with the passers on this one. Communication might be difficult, and partner might not have good enough diamonds for the suit to run.

2	North	East	South	West
IMPs N-S Vul	1♦	1NT	pass	pass
	X	pass	pass	2♣
	pass	pass	???	
You, South, hold: ♠ J1064 ♥ Q864 ♦ Q2 ♣ 1065				
What call do you make?				

I'll start with those that double.

Bartusek: Double. Apparently, this N-S pair doesn't play the double like I do with partners (a light takeout for the majors). Assuming partner's double shows 18+, that means we're in a forcing auction. Double is my best guess. I'm leading a trump.

Chechelashvili: Double. At least if it makes, it's not a game.

Chodorow: Double. My double is not strictly for penalties. It's takeout-oriented but partner may choose to pass with some frequency. Even a worst-case scenario is NBD (*No Big Deal*).

Next, we have the passers.

Roeder: Pass. Real men double and laugh off -180 (or -280). We likely have an 8-card major fit but how to find?

Cooper: Pass. Partner did not open 2♣ so I don't think we have a game. Likely partner was doubling with 18-19 since they have not bid 2♦, in which case this is as good a spot as any. At pairs I would feel obliged to do something, probably double.

Feigenbaum: Pass. I might have acted the first time. Once I didn't, I am committed to passing.

Shuster: Pass. I have a decent hand, but where are we going?

And finally, those that bid.

Wittes: 2♥. I think I would have bid 2♥ over partner's first double rather than pass, but I'll bid it now.

Feldman: 2♣. If they bid 3♣, I'll show hearts.

West	North	East	South
1♦	2♣	pass	???

3

Matchpoints
None Vul

You, South, hold: ♠ Q1097 ♥ KJ102 ♦ 874 ♣ AJ

What call do you make?

This problem was suggested by a panelist, Rick Roeder. I'll start with him.

Roeder: 3♣. Not quite good enough for 2♦. Missing a close game in matchpoints is no disaster.

Shuster: 3♣. This is a mild underbid, but does help with finding 3NT.

The majority tried 2♦. I agree with that bid.

Wittes: 2♦. If partner bids 2 of a major (unlikely), I'll raise to game. If partner bids 2NT, I'll bid 3NT. If partner bids 3♣, I'll pass.

Bartusek: 2♦. Hopefully partner has a 4-card major. If not, then 3♣ should be OK. How else can we find our 8-card major fit?

Chechelashvili: 2♦. We need to find a major fit - or a diamond stopper.

Cooper: 2♦. I have a good hand but no diamond stopper so I can't bid NT. I will pass partner's rebid of 3♣ but raise any other call.

Feigenbaum: 2♦. I expect partner to bid a 4-card major if they have one.

Feldman: 2♦. This is a one round force.

Chodorow: 2♦. Leaving room for 2M, which I'll bump (especially happily if West has doubled 2♦, increasing the value of all my stuff). Partner gets some leeway for 2♣ over 1♦ because, as Sabine Auken discussed in "I Love This Game," this auction and 2♦ over 1♣ can give the opponents irresoluble problems finding major fits. If she rebids 3♣, I am passing.

4

Matchpoints
None Vul

North	East	South	West
1♣	X	???	

You, South, hold: ♠ AK107654 ♥ 109 ♦ 1086 ♣ Q

What call do you make?

This hand comes from an Eastern panel in which there were votes for redouble, 1♠, 3♠ and 4♠.

Feldman: 4♠. With a stiff club, I'm bidding 4♠.

Shuster: 4♠. It's game. It's a short auction. I'm sold.

Wittes: 3♠. This should show an opening 3♠ bid. I wish I had better texture in my suit, but starting with AK isn't bad.

I'm with the 1♠ bidders.

Cooper: 1♠. Too good to preempt with AK of my seven-card suit. Some days I might bid 3♠ but I would prefer better intermediates

Chodorow: 1♠.

Bartusek: 1♠. I'm not afraid of competition since I have the boss suit. It doesn't seem the right hand to bid 4♠.

Chechelashvili: 1♠. What else?

Feigenbaum: 1♠. Mundane!

Roeder: 1♠. Curious as to the alternative. This should be a 1-round force.

	East	South	West	North
5 IMPs None Vul.	pass	???		

You, South, hold: ♠ Q10986 ♥ void ♦ QJ10943 ♣ K10
What call do you make?

Chodorow: Pass. Such freak hands are best bid up later, having limited and not misdescribed the hand originally.

Shuster: Pass.

Bartusek: Pass. Second seat should be more disciplined. I'll have an easy entry into the auction later. Let's not confuse partner.

Cooper: Pass. I plan to show a 2-suited hand later if I get the chance.

Feldman: Pass. I pass for now but with spades, I can bid later.

Chechelashvili: Pass. I don't have a good opening bid, but at least I have spades, so I can cheaply bid Michaels if the level for my next bid allows.

Wittes: Pass. I plan on bidding aggressively when the bidding comes back to me, but if I bid something now, partner is going to have a hard time reading me for the hand I have.

Feigenbaum: Pass. It still might be right to open, but most partners won't work it out or stop. I pass, but if I was playing a losing trick count system I would open.

Roeder: 2♦. I do not intend on burying spades later. The Confederacy felt that firing the first shot was important. Yet another great advertisement for a Multi 2♦ opener which frees up a 2 of a Major opener as a Polish 2 bid (that suit and a minor with less than opening bid strength).

This hand was played in the 1993 Vanderbilt semifinals. Eric Kokish, reporting for International Popular Bridge Monthly, wrote "There are countries in which no South would be caught dead passing in second seat. America is not one of them." All four Souths, David Berkowitz, Steve Sion, Russ Arnold, and Chip Martel, passed. Like Rick, I would prefer to be playing Polish Two-Bids (which I do play with Rick in team games). If that wasn't available, I'd try 2♦ or 1♦, six-five come alive for me.