

American Contract Bridge League District 16

SCORECARD

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The full Scorecard is temporarily suspended due to lack of tournaments to report, announcements, pictures of winners and a general lack of activity. In the interim we will do our best to keep up with any activity we can with “extras”. All bridge activity is online and may be so for many months. We have several articles on online play to help those new to online along. The most important message is that eventually the worst will pass. These pandemics are really not new. Many clubs are running online daily games at nominal fees and it is imperative that we support them so they will survive.

We all forward when we can meet again at a tournament. The friendships developed over the years are sure special. Please stay healthy.

Brave New World Part 2

1/ The ACBL announced that all face-to-face tournaments, including the Tampa Fall NABC, have been cancelled through 2020.

2/ NAP and GNT qualifiers have been cancelled

3/ District 16 NAP final scheduled for Austin in 2021 has been cancelled.

4/ The 2020 NAP qualifiers who qualified in San Antonio in January 2020 will be qualified for the NAP national final at the spring NABC in 2021

5/ There will be online tournaments sponsored by the ACBL.

6/ There were regionals sponsored by the ACBL online. April 30 to May 3 and June 25-28 played on Bridgebase Online. Keep checking ACBL website for future regionals.

7/ The ACBL will host a KO in July limited to 256 tables. Word has it that they plan to use state of the art safeguards, including video cameras for later rounds, to deal with security issues.

8/ District 16 will hold their regular meeting online. If you have any suggestions or comments please let your Unit Board representative know.

Help Spread News

Any contributions and suggestions are most welcome. Please send all ideas and information about any bridge activity to scorecardd16@gmail.com

Support Local Clubs

Nancy
Strohmer



District 16
President

YOU can help support your local clubs by playing in the **Virtual Club** and **Support Your Club (SYC)** games in BBO. Virtual Club games are the same as the regular games held at the club, and they are

similar to the Support Your Club (SYC) games (just at your club's typical game time). Playing in BBO games supports BBO and ACBL. So, robot games, speedball and the 18 board BBO games are not helping our clubs. ACBL and BBO continue to do a great job providing lots of online bridge opportunities such as regionally rated tournaments and “silver linings” games (games that award triple masterpoints in silver). If you are not playing online, please give it a try—you will be glad you did!

Statistics and trend lines about the Coronavirus are raising alarms on many levels. Fortunately, we have online bridge so that we can stay safe and well during these unprecedented times. All of you probably feel as I do...I miss seeing my bridge friends face to face!!! But we will have to wait until 2021. Even though Face-to-Face (F2F) bridge is on hold for now, the ACBL is working hard on every level to keep our game going.

A task force chaired by Jay Whipple has been created to develop a strategy for online and F2F bridge in the future. District 16 has two appointees on this task force, Donna Compton and me. We are serving on a subcommittee, Long-Term Bridge, with a mission to determine the best approach for incorporating F2F and online bridge to ensure the longevity of the competitiveness of bridge and awarding of masterpoints through ACBL.

I hope that all of you, your family and friends are staying healthy and safe! Please be aware of what local authorities and the CDC are recommending.

*Wishing all of you good health ~ Let's play more bridge...
ONLINE!!!*

District Director Update

Paul Cuneo

District 16



I hope all of you are healthy and still taking precautions against contracting and spreading the coronavirus. When I look back, it seems like face-to-face play and tournaments were a long time ago

and I long for their return. Each day I remind myself that I need to be careful and not contribute to the spread of the virus, so I wear a mask when I'm in stores and other businesses and try to maintain social distance where possible at all times. So far, I believe few bridge players in my area have contracted the virus and hope that's true in your area as well.

Virtual club play has continued to expand and with the special events such as the regionally rated tournaments and silver linings games, ACBL should finish the year near break-even.

The number of members playing online has increased each month, but it's still less than 1/2 of the number of people that played in clubs in 2019. I'd like to encourage each of you to reach out to someone you know who's not playing online and help them through the process or if you are not playing online consider reaching out for help. There are great videos by Donna Compton and others to guide you and I'm sure some of your partners will help as well. Whether we like it or not, I believe online play opportunities will be much greater than face-to-face for many more months.

The ACBL Board has held two special meetings in May and June. Key decisions and actions from those meetings were:

The Board supported management's request to cancel face-to-face tournaments for the remainder of 2020. District 7 had announced their intention to hold two regionals during the summer months and this precipitated the discussion and the decision. Protecting the health and safety of our employees and members is the highest priority and since many tournament directors and the vast majority of our players are in the most vulnerable demographic for Covid 19, we felt strongly that cancelling is the right thing to do.

A new Online Ethical Oversight Committee was created and has been staffed to deal with allegations on online cheating. Three cases were reviewed by Appeals and Charges in May and many more are in the pipeline. It's important for everyone to realize that the **only** communication allowed during a hand is to chat to the entire table. BBO has extensive online monitoring tools but ACBL needs help from players and online directors to curb cheating. If you notice very unusual play that indicates improper communication by partners, please report it to the virtual club manager. The play can be reviewed and a recorder form filed if needed to trigger a more thorough investigation.

The Board approved a motion to create a Guest Membership. We had taken the action to do this in 2019, but that mo-

tion required eliminating temporary membership. Management had delayed implementation due to technical issues and asked for permission to have both membership options until the technical issues are resolved. The urgency came about because about 7000 non-members are playing in ACBL sanctioned online games. Without a membership number they are excluded from master-point limited games and are assigned to the "A" stratification for unlimited games. Management wants to enroll them as guest members and then try to convince them to buy a full membership.

A taskforce was created to develop a strategy for online bridge in the future. It is headed by Jay Whipple and has two D16 members Nancy Strohmer and Donna Compton.

A motion to allow districts and units to run regional and sectional tournaments was defeated. The primary reasons were:

ACBL and Clubs need the income during this time much more than units and districts that have minimal fixed costs.

There are many technical difficulties and manual processes for running two session events using BBO. Management does not want to incur the programming and training expense needed to allow units and districts to perform these operations so the players would have a good experience. BBO currently has no facility to charge entry fees for team games and to play either Swiss or Knockouts requires a lot of work by the director to set up matches. A large tournament could overwhelm BBO's abilities in this area.

The Board supported management's plan for online special events for the rest of 2020. These include additional regionally rated opportunities, silver linings weeks, club championships and a club appreciation week in October. Watch your e-mail for announcements.

I received notice that I have been elected to continue in the District Director position for three more years as no one filed to contest the election. Thanks to all for your support and encouragement.

In closing, these are very trying and unprecedented times for the world, our nation and for us as individuals. I want to encourage you to do everything you can to be helpful to others and to limit the spread of Covid 19. Best wishes for your health and safety and good times at the tables!

Paul Cuneo

Playing Bridge Online

By Ira Hessel

There are several online sites to play bridge online: Bridge Base Online (BBO), OK Bridge, Swan Games and FunBridge. I am not experienced enough to comment on any but BridgeBase Online. BBO is very popular. From 10000 to 20000 players daily before the pandemic to often 60,000 plus now.

I have used it for many years but have never actually played in tournaments as I greatly preferred the live games. I have been able to practice partnerships and watch National Qualifiers, NABC and World Championships from my office. As it is we will have to wait for face to face games to resume. But in the present time the online sites serve a great function. Clubs all around the ACBL are running daily matchpoint games, many close to pre-pandemic attendance. Typically you play 18 hands and have 6-7 minutes a hand. Chris and Donna Compton wrote a nice piece for the May Scorecard to help get acclimated and I will summarize how to get active here.

The ACBL ran an online regional April 30 to May 3 that attracted 4985 players and 5278 tables. There is another scheduled June 25-28.

There are many ways to play online.

First login to BBO at <https://www.bridgebase.com> If you are not yet a member you can request a user name. After you log in you will see near the top of the page a green banner titled "PLAY OR WATCH BRIDGE" You can explore several areas. Clicking on competitive bridge gets you 5 choices. The main ones you will normally go to are "Competitive" and "Casual". Clicking on competitive gets you several choices

ACBL Master point Tournaments. Here for \$1-2 dollars you can enter with your partner 12-18 board tournaments throughout the day.

BBO Points Tournament-similar for BBO points.

Free Tournaments No points

ACBL Virtual Clubs Here you will find your regular club sponsored tournaments.

I can't say enough about playing at your regular clubs. For a modest \$5.00 (or similar) charge you help both the ACBL and \$4.00 goes to the club. This is a fantastic way to support your local club. They have been the backbone of ACBL and have

rent to pay. And here is where you will find many of your friends. Pickup games on BBO can be disappointing.

Now under the green banner you will also see "Casual Games". Here you can set up private games where you can arrange team and matchpoint games with friends. We often play headup games with friends scored as IMPS.

What I like most about playing these days are the tools computers provide. It was quite an improvement way back when we had hand records available for after game discussions. The next evolution was provided with online summaries where a nice multi color display of the hand record accompanied with results from all tables. No bidding or play and in some places the opening lead. Now BBO has taken this to the next level. All your hands complete with animated bidding and play are recorded and stored. You can access your results from the history tab but there is also another way.

In Google Type in: "hand records bridgebase online". Actually just. Hands bridge base will do. Click on "Hand Records Bridge Base Online" in the results. Then enter your user name and password to get to the login screen. You enter a day and indicate how many days to search forward and back. Once you get your list you can click on movie to see all the bids and plays of a hand by clicking "next". If you want to see how the hand develops if you choose a different play or defense you can click on "play" and choose cards from every hand. Nice way to improve your game.

As all new computer programs it is best just to futz around. Quickly things get easier.

BBO has shown many matches and you can access them on vugraph. You can use the search feature by entering a player name or an event like Spingold.

A favorite of mine is Bridge Master to practice declarer play. Go to Practice and then Bridge Master. There are 5 levels and you can purchase 3 sets of 30 for each one. Great help for mastering declarer play. Again just go there and sample the free hands and you will get the idea.

District 16 Membership

These are only the Texas Units We will update
with the Mexican Units Next Issue

			Feb 2019	June 2019	Feb 2020	June 2020
172	San Antonio		601	595	583	568
174	Houston		2,619	2,616	2,569	2,519
176	Dallas		1,587	1,618	1,664	1,670
183	Fort Western		932	914	878	875
187	South Texas		161	156	147	148
197	Llano Estacado		134	134	128	123
201	Sabine Neches		172	170	162	159
204	Fort Concho		125	122	123	124
207	Texas Capital		1,068	1,061	1,098	1,084
209	Greater Permian		120	120	115	110
224	Fort Phantom		85	83	79	78
225	East Texas		356	350	345	343
233	Central Texas		184	173	156	154
237	Magic Valley		95	84	104	88
353	Wichita Falls		84	86	78	72
			8323	8282	8229	8115

In Memoriam

Bernie R. Lange, Wichita Falls
Dr. Wesley H. Archer, Greenville
Jeffrey P. Burkett, Bellaire
Eugene L. Hanson, Houston
John C. Nettles, Houston

This is a very small number for 2 months,
especially considering the pandemic

We thank those that report passings to us
but we can only report those that have con-
firmed with ACBL.

The Longest Day

The longest day has just passed and as usual District 16 has supported it fully. That support should continue and we thank our good friend Lauri Laufman for the following contribution.

Good morning.

The following is not an easy email for me to write.

As many of you know, the fight against Alzheimer's is near and dear to me. So far, I've lost two very close family members both on my mother's side, my nana years ago and more recently my aunt. And many of those dear to my friends, including Cindy Cox's dad just this past week.

This debilitating disease robs not only the victim but everyone they love as it

reeks its havoc along the way. If asked, I am guessing we each have a story... and sadly for us, the memories of those journeys are rarely happy. Suffice to say, no one or no one's family should have to go through in the process of dying.

I made a donation a few weeks ago to the Alzheimer's organization but wanted to be able to do more, especially in light of our clubs not being able to fundraise as in past (raffles, auctions, special events).

Yesterday, I called Bert Onstott to see if he would mind my putting an effort forth to help raise funds during The Longest Day through his club. He said yes. And this brought me joy, knowing that maybe with the help of my friends, family, and our bridge community this

might make a difference.

I've since created a fundraising page via Alzheimer's/ACBL, <http://act.alz.org/goto/OurMemoriesMatter> provided a little of my own seed money, and posted it on Facebook. All donations made to the Alzheimer's organization via this link should be credited towards what is raised by District 16 via Westside during ACBL's Longest Day.

Although it would be super if you decide to donate, what I'd appreciate just as much is your forwarding this or something regarding The Longest Day to a few of your friends.

Warm regards, Lauri

Lauri Laufman 281-235-8777