



# THE WINNING FINESSE

Volume 17 Number 2

Website: <http://d16acbl.org/U172>

June, 2008

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** by Ed Rawlinson

Since the last Winning Finesse, the Unit has held a sectional tournament and (see separate article) a Unit Game. Thanks to Tournament Chair **Becky Mosely** and to the many volunteers who helped make the sectional so successful. Results are posted on both the Unit and the ACBL websites.

A special congratulations goes to **Terry Riely**, who recently became a Platinum Life Master, meaning that he has more than 10,000 master points. Terry is only the second "home-grown" Platinum Life Master in the history of Unit 172. Terry is a Past President of both Unit 172 and District 16. He also holds the all-time record for most wins (6) in the George Gray Award competition, awarded to the (male) member of Unit 172 who wins the most points in Unit sectional tournaments in a year.

Congratulations also go to **Sherry Johnson DiBaggio** and **Donna Watkins**, who were selected by the Unit Board of Directors as the Goodwill Players of the Year for 2007. This award goes to individuals who demonstrate thoughtfulness, tact, and kindness and who are "ambassadors of goodwill". Sherry and Donna certainly qualify, and the recognition is well-deserved.

By now the new Unit Directory should have arrived. Thanks to **Roxana Tom (Segunda)** and **Roxana Tom (Primera)** for all their hard work on this monumental task

As you will note, this issue of the Winning Finesse is bigger than usual (8 pages rather than 4). We are including some interesting hands and news about bridge happenings. Hope you like it!

**UNIT'S FIRST PRO-AM GAME A BIG HIT!!** It was a full house (35 tables) for the inaugural Pro-Am Swiss Team Game held at Turtle Creek on Feb. 16. Co-hosts Sherry Johnson DiBaggio and Becky Mosely did a great job decorating, soliciting volunteers (thanks to all of those) to provide desserts and snacks, publicizing the event and arranging teams when requested. The Unit provided over \$500 in door prizes to approximately 25 happy winners.

The pro-am format stipulated that no more than two team members could have more than 500 points. Once the teams were formed, the players could pair up in any partnership arrangement they preferred. Four six-board matches were played, and three teams finished undefeated. The team captained by amateur M. J. O'Connor, playing with her mentor (Ed Rawlinson), Anne Veitch, and Bill Walker finished with 61 Victory Points and won first overall. The other two undefeated teams finished with 58 VP's and tied for second. They included Chuck Jefferson-Judy Lewis-Betsy Berg-Margaret Leonard and Tony DiBaggio-Sherry DiBaggio-Cliff Jensen-Connie Matz. Dan Blaettler-James Lawrence-Sheryleen Grothus-Diane Olson had one loss, but also finished with 58 VP's and tied for second. Fifth place went to Carolyn Riely-Terry Riely-Carole Lee O'Connor-Pat Balhorn. Sixth place went to Grant Coon-Nancy Fisher-Chloe Johnson-Gary Larson.

The next Pro-Am will be held on June 21, with the location yet to be announced

### **Quarterly Calendar**

Mar. 29	GNT Unit Finals (Flight B & C) Turtle Creek DBC, 10 & TBA
Apr. 2	Senior Games-Bridge Lions Field Senior Center 10 & TBA
Apr. 10-13	Turtle Creek Sectional
May 17	Awards Day Unit Game Turtle Creek DBC; 11 am
June 21	Pro-Am Swiss Teams Site TBA

### **Board Meetings**

Unit Board Meetings are held at 5 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month at Turtle Creek DBC. Units members are welcome to attend.

### **Care & Comfort**

Members are reminded to please notify Carmeline Squires at 658-0249 with information of illness or death of Unit 172 members.

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

2007 was a winning year for San Antonio bridge players. Following is a summary of all who achieved ACBL masterpoint ranks by category in 2007: JUNIOR MASTER (5+) - Rebecca Brown, Janette Kuzmich, Velta Roberts, Karen Leber, Viola Massie, Ann Dodson, Barbara Olsen, Marcia Pandjiris, Dolores Reiley, Cynthia Schwarz, Phyllis Davis, Carol Ellis, Kathleen Lothringer, Leslie Tramer, Sarah Butler, Helen Coronado, Edward Reese; CLUB MASTER (20+) - Pansy Blakely, Richard Curtin, Joannie Christopher, Barbara Davis, Jacquelyn Fisher, Peggy Baker, Luanne Cohen, Helen Turner, Evelyn Berns, Claudia Cowley, Karen Leber, Christine Menking, Marie Saleh, Susan Hernandez, Catherine Slaughter, Jewell Thompson, Mary Jane O'Connor; SECTIONAL MASTER (50+) - Ira Yount, Diana Rainey, Carole Lee O'Connor, Nydia Snook, Sharon Bishop, Claude Jacobs, Maggie McWilliams, Beth Gale, Susan Peterson, Bonnie Place; REGIONAL MASTER (100+) - Helen James, Nona Morse, Rosemary Netardus, Joan Seidler, Genevieve Vollentine, Glenna Whitmarsh, Barnet Bursack, Andrew Bailey, Rand Schmidt, Patricia Balhorn, Sally Burns, Bernadine Abend, Mary Meadows, Terry Rice, Stephen Simpson, Gloria Teston; NABC MASTER (200+) - Kimi Lambert, Gool Castleberry, William De Shane, Clifford Jensen, Sherry Johnson, Gary Larson, Connie Matz, Nadine Reineck, Janice Coley, Mary Hurt, Liane Tsai; LIFE MASTER (300+) - Bernie Malson, Jeri Tribo, Betsy Berg, Dan Blaettler, Don Mahoney, Pat Prichard, Jay Thorne, Andy Villastrigo, Paula Wissman, Rita de Hoyos, Jo Gayle Carter, Carol Cobler, Nancy Fisher, Kay Laird, Arline Rubin, Rebecca Tanner; BRONZE LIFE MASTER (500+) - Barbara Schmidt, Jerrold Harrington, Mike Huiatt, Patty Moncus, David Ewing, Virginia Wynne, Alison Andrews, Jo Gayle Carter, Nancy Fisher, Arlene Rubin, Paula Warren; SILVER LIFE MASTER (1000+) - Phyllis Giffin, Thomas Trudeau, Shirley Brooks, Phil Brown, Helen McCrae, Charlotte Wilson, Gail Turner, Betty Jo Buttersworth; GOLD LIFE MASTER (2500+) - Roger Boeka, Robbie Borchers, Marilyn Arnold, Al Lochli, Pat Russell, Judy Lewis; EMERALD LIFE MASTER (7500+) - Diane Olson; PLATINUM LIFE MASTER (10,000+) Terry Riely.

In addition, 2008 bridge players are continuing their winning ways. JUNIOR MASTER (5+) - Karen Fillis, Sue Perkins, Jason Weiss, Debbie Schweiss, Frances Stoltz, Dane Tune; CLUB MASTER (20+) - Tessa Bodnar, Rebecca Brown, Clara Brinson, Dolores Reiley; SECTIONAL MASTER (50+) - Esther Modliszewski, Susan Hernandez; REGIONAL MASTER (100+) - Polly McCamey, Charles O'Neil; NABC MASTER (200+) - Terry Bickerton; BRONZE LIFE MASTER (500+) - Jay Thorne; SILVER LIFE MASTER (1000+) - Roxanna Tom; DIAMOND LIFE MASTER (5000+) - Ed Rawlinson. Congratulations to all!

## Senior Games Duplicate Bridge

**Date:** Wednesday, April 2 @ 10am/TBA - 2 session  
flighted event

**Location:** Lions Field Senior Center, 2809 Broadway  
Going sound on 281, exit Hildebrand and make a left.  
At Broadway, make a right and go south 1/2 mile

**Registration: Online:** <http://www.saseniorgames.com/>  
Or call 210.302.6820 for a brochure.

## AWARDS DAY COMING UP!

The Unit will host the annual Awards Day game on May 17 at 11 at Turtle Creek DBC. In addition to bridge (a pairs game), we will recognize new Life Masters and winners in the Mini-McKinney, Ace of Clubs, and Horton-Gray races. There will be deserts, appetizers, and drinks, and it's FREE!

## GRAND NATIONAL TEAMS UNIT QUALIFYING SET FOR MARCH 29.

The Grand National Teams is an annual competition which starts at the Unit level for Flights B and C. The Unit GNT will be held at Turtle Creek DBC. It is a two-session event starting at 10 a.m. Teams should not enter unless they expect to play both sessions. About half of the field will qualify to play in the District Finals in Richardson May 24-26. The winners at the District level qualify to play in the Nationals to be held in Las Vegas in July. There is no obligation for qualifiers to play at the next level. The Unit qualifying event is free, and the Unit pays the entry fee for any qualified participants playing at the District Finals and the Nationals.

Flight C is open to non-Life Masters under 500 points. Flight B is open to players with less than 2000 points and who are Life Masters or non-Life Masters over 500 points. Players with 2000-5000 points may play in Flight A beginning at the District level. Any player (0 to unlimited) may play in the Championship Flight beginning at the District level.

The Unit will provide snacks, sandwiches, beverages, and desserts at the Mar. 29 game. Co-hosts are Olivia Brown (494-1977) and Sherry Johnson DiBaggio (415-1159).

**NEAR-YARBOROUGH DECIDES SWISS TEAM EVENT!**

by Ed Rawlinson

A "Yarborough" is any hand that contains no card higher than a 9. Many players react to such a hand by deciding that it is worthless. However, a hand containing 854/8532/109/8753 determined who won the Swiss Teams in the January Austin Sectional. By way of background, both defenders playing the above hand were playing "upside down count and attitude". Many experts play "upside down" count and attitude signals, which means that the traditional meanings of "high-low" or "up-the-line" are reversed. In upside down carding, "high-low" means discouragement or an odd number of cards in the suit. Thus, to show count holding 854, you would play high-low. When doing so, you have some choices. You could play 8-4, 8-5, or 5-4. In general, you would start with the 8 (which will be clearer to partner that you are starting a high-low count. However, you must be sure that the 8 is "worthless". (Note: the same situation occurs in standard carding. Suppose you want to show count holding 9432. If you're sure the 9 is worthless, you should play it to make the high-low obvious. If there's a chance the 9 might be valuable, start with the 4).

S-A62		
H-KJ6		
D-A53		
C-A642		
S-QJ973	S-854	
H-Q109	H-8532	
D-KJ864	D-109	
C- Void	C-8753	
	S-K10	
	H-A74	
	D-Q72	
	C-KQJ109	

S W N E  
 1N 2D\* 6N All Pass  
 \* Diamonds and a major  
 Lead : QS

This was the next-to-last match. We were leading. I was West, playing with Babu Koneru. Our opponents were Patti Lozano (South) and Marilyn Arnold (North), so it was an all-San Antonio matchup. At trick 1, the play went spade Q, 2, 5, K. Patti had 10 tricks, plus one more if the heart finesse worked. Since I apparently had diamonds and spades, she decided to squeeze me in those suits. She played a club to the A; then a diamond to the Q and K. Since my HQ was always finessable, I decided to lead the H10. Patti won with the J, cashed the winners in diamonds and hearts, then ran the clubs. This produced the ending shown with one club to go. Babu had given me count in hearts and

S-A6		
D-5		
S-J9	S-84	
D-K	H-8	
	S-10	
	D-7	
	C-9	

diamonds, so I knew that Patti had a diamond, no hearts, and the blank S10. I had to keep the DK and discarded the S9. Babu won the last trick with the S8. At the other table, East signaled with the S8 at trick one. The play went the same, except that dummy's S6 won the last trick. So we set the slam, narrowly won the match and won the event, all because my partner knew not to waste the S8 at trick one. In the post mortem, another very interesting line emerged. Relying again on the knowledge that West has diamonds and spades, declarer can take the heart finesse, cash the club and heart winners, cash the SA, and throw West in with the third spade, forcing a lead away from the KD. BUT...West can overcome this by unblocking the S9 (see diagram).

S-A6		
D-A5		
S-J7	S-84	
D-KJ	D-109	
	S-10	
	D-Q72	

Now when declarer cashes the SA, West unblocks the SJ, allowing East to win the third round of spades with the 8 and lead through declarer's diamonds. Again, on either line of play, East must not waste the S8 at trick 1.

**TALES FROM THE TWILIGHT ZONE**

by Ed Rawlinson.

Bill Walker, Donna Watkins, Marilyn Arnold and I went to a recent sectional in McAllen, where some truly bizarre hands occurred.

West:	S-65	East:	S-QJ74	N	E	S	W
	H-10653		H-AK2			1D	2C 3D
	D-KQ72		D-A1085			3H 4D	All pass
	C-AJ2		C-75				Lead: H8

As East, I won the HA, pulled trumps in 3 rounds, and led a club toward dummy, expecting the KQ of clubs to be onside and providing a spot for my heart loser on the CJ. South inserted the CQ, and I ducked. South continued with a low club. I played the jack, losing to the king!!! South had played the Q from Q109xxx. As the cards lay, there was no legitimate way for me to make 4 (against proper defense), but South found a way to add insult to injury. On the very next hand, the same lady was South playing 1N.

	S-A965		
	H-10		
	D-Q1073		
	C-AK42		
S-Q108		S-K72	
H-K8764		H-AQJ	
D-86		D-9542	
C-1053		C-987	
	S-J43		
	H-9532		
	D-AKJ		
	C-QJ6		

Partner led the H6. I won the HA, Q, and J (declarer pitching 2 spades from dummy). Partner played the H8 under the J, which I took as suit preference for spades. I led a low spade to the J, Q, and A. South cashed the CQ, CJ, DA, DK, and led the DJ. At this point, I could see that South could cash all the tricks except the last spade. I showed her my SK and said I would win the last spade. She indignantly said that the play would not go that way. She was right. She won the DJ in her hand and led the H5. We cashed 2 hearts and 2 spades for down 1 instead of making 3. After these two hands, I realized she was hearing voices which directed her choice of plays.

On the following hand, I learned a couple of lessons the hard way:  
 1. Greed is a terrible thing (not the first time I experienced this).  
 2. Don't assume that your opponent (a good player) didn't make a REALLY bad play. NS was the best pair in the Valley. They won this event with a 77% score. As West I led a low heart to the 10, Q, 3.

	S-KJxx				
	H-J10				
	D-x				
	C-QJ10xxx				
S-AQx		Vul.-None			
H-Kxx		N	E	S	W
D-K987		P	P	3D	P
C-xxx		P	X	All pass	

East cashed the DA and led a low heart, declarer playing the Ace. It was now obvious that partner has the H9 (If declarer has A9x, she should win the first trick, ensuring only one heart loser). Thus, I unblocked the HK under the Ace, knowing that I could later lead the third heart to partner's 9 and get a trump promotion when partner continued with the fourth round of hearts. You guessed it!!! Declarer had the H9, and I was minus 470 instead of +100. If I had only been playing this against the "crazy lady", I would have known not to believe anything she did. There must be something in the water down there.

**The Winning Finesse**  
 c/o Ira and Ellen Hessel, Editors  
 2826 Barrel Oak  
 San Antonio, TX 78231

**PRESORTED STD  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 PERMIT 595  
 SAN ANTONIO TX**

## **Marilyn Arnold and Ed Rawlinson Win Horton-Gray Races**

The Horton-Gray Awards, named for Cisse Horton and the late George Gray, go to the female and male players who win the most master points in Unit 172 sectionals in a year. For 2007, Marilyn Arnold won the Cisse Horton Award for the first time, and Ed Rawlinson won the George Gray Award for the third year in a row. Final standings were:

	<b>Horton</b>		<b>Gray</b>
Marilyn Arnold	132.20	Ed Rawlinson	154.39
Patty Lozano	88.91	Bill Walker	119.98
Darlene Riely	81.24	Ira Hessel	83.63
Ellen Hessel	79.88	Venkatrao Koneru	71.23
Donna Watkins	75.37	Greg Hinze	62.45
Diane Olson	68.43	Terry Riely	60.67
Roxana Tom (Uno)	59.34	Ken McBride	60.09
Roxana Tom (Dos)	57.03	Everette Lewis	59.84
Sally Armstrong	55.08	Dan Blaettler	53.21
Sheryleen Grothus	54.96	David Mitchell	50.86

## **UNIT 172 WINNERS IN NATIONAL AND DISTRICT COMPETITION**

Unit 172 members who finished in the top 50 in various **national rankings** include:

**Barry Crane Top 500 in the Nation:** Greg Hinze (#40); Marilyn Arnold (#245); Ira Hessel (#322); Venkatrao (Babu) Koneru (#433); Ed Rawlinson (#472).

**National Mini-McKinney Races:** Terrence Rice (#46 in 0-50); Dan Blattler (#17 in 200-300); Jay Thorne (#22 in 200-300); Marilyn Arnold (#22 in 1000-2500); Greg Hinze (#6 in 5000-7500); Ira Hessel (#40 in 7500-10000).

**Points Won in Sectionals:** Ed Rawlinson (#14)

Unit 172 members who finished in the top 25 in various **District 16 rankings** include:

**Mini-McKinney Races:** Terrence Rice (#7 in 0-5); Jacquelyn Fisher (#15 in 0-5); Beth Gale (#25 in 5-20); Bernadine Abend (15 in 20-50); Dan Blattler (#1 in 200-300); Jay Thorne (#2 in 200-300); Marilyn Arnold (#1 in 1000-2500); Ed Rawlinson (#4 in 2500-5000); Greg Hinze (#1 in 5000-7500); Donna Watkins (#4 in 5000-7500); Ira Hessel (#3 in 7500-10000).

**Ace of Clubs Races:** Jay Thorne (#3 in 200-300); Dan Blattler (#4 in 200-300); Carole Price (#2 in 1000-2500); Marilyn Arnold (#5 in 1000-2500); Diane Olson (#2 in 5000-7500); Donna Watkins (#3 in 5000-7500).