



THE WINNING FINESSE

Volume 18 Number 3

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

May, 2009



President's Message: *by Everette Lewis*

Plans for the Regional are running along smoothly. Becky Mosely and Pat Prichard are working with hotel officials and others and doing an outstanding job in delegating responsibilities to ensure great success. Becky is also assembling a workbook to aid future Tournament Chairpersons in organizing future tournaments. Thank you, thank you, thank you; and a big thank you goes out to her various chairs Jeri, Beverly, Sheryleen, Helen, Terry, Carolyn, Linda, Kay, Sherry, and Janise. All are listed with their responsibilities later in this issue.

To all members, please encourage all 'newer' players to participate in the tournament. When I say encourage, I mean ask them directly to participate so that they will feel more welcome. Tell them about the free mini-lessons that will precede each of their games. There will be a 299er game every day at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and every night at 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Kudos to Margaret Higgins and her daughter, Patricia Higgins, for running a successful tournament in Kerrville. Thank you, Margaret, for agreeing to chair the Kerrville tourney for at least two more years.

Kudos also go out to Kathleen Pigott and her daughter, Susan Johnson, for doing a great job hosting the recent tournament at the Bridge Club of San Antonio.

Marilyn Arnold and Donna Watkins and their crew are sure to do a great job hosting their tournament at the Turtle Creek Duplicate Bridge Club June 5th through 7th.

Very soon, a committee will be looking for members to run for the Board 2010. Please consider running and getting the opportunity to work behind the scenes to make Unit 172 successful. I can't tell you how much I've enjoyed the experience and grown as a person because of it.

How do you feel 'Zero Tolerance' has affected bridge? For me, I think it's great. The horror stories of yesteryear seem to have disappeared. When I took up bridge in late 1993, my dad said, "Once you berate your partner, you've lost your partner for the day." I try to keep that in mind when my partner trumps my trick or doesn't lead my suit.

Good luck in all you do.

QUARTERLY CALENDAR

June 4-7 Summer Sectional @ TCBC

June 29-July 5 SAN ANTONIO REGIONAL
at the Omni Hotel

July 18, Unit game at the BCSA Pro-AM Swiss

Aug 22 Luau and Annual Meeting BCSA

Sept 24-27 New Braunfels Sectional

Board Meetings

Unit Board Meetings are held at 5 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at The Bridge Club of San Antonio. Members are invited and welcome to attend.

Care & Comfort

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

299er Regional Events *by Jeri Tribo*

The San Antonio 4th of July Regional is just a few weeks away. If you have less than 300 MPS, we encourage you to play in the Marie Bailey Intermediate-Newcomer (I-N) games. You will be able to compete at your comfort level in a relaxed atmosphere, and get the “table-time” to practice what you learned in all those bridge classes you’ve taken. Plus, we have a line-up of expert speakers to give mini-lessons 45 minutes before game times of 1:30 and 7:00 pm. Daily door prizes will be given, and \$2 bills awarded to the winners in each strata. If these are not enough incentives to tempt you to play in the I-N games, there’s more! On Monday evening June 29, we will award free plays to the winners in each strata; and on Wednesday, July 1, at our special hospitality party, we will give 2 for 1 entry coupons to players with 0-25 MPS. If you need a partner, come to the designated I-N table one hour before a game, and our hosts will find you one. All the games are in an easily accessible location at the Omni Colonnade. This Regional that Unit 172 hosts comes to San Antonio only on alternate years, so take advantage of this opportunity to play in a major tournament in your local area.

San Antonio 4th of July Regional *by Becky Mosely*

Is this your first tournament? Mark your calendar and plan to join us. The San Antonio 4th of July Regional will be held from June 29-July 5, 2009 at the Omni San Antonio at the Colonnade. The first event, Win-an-Entry, will begin on Monday, June 29 at 7:00 pm. Jeri Tribo is Chairing the Intermediate/Novice Program. She is planning a very exciting time for all the bridge players that are new to duplicate tournaments. My thanks to my co-chair Pat Prichard and all committee members and chairs that have been working hard to make this a very successful tournament. They include:

Jeri Tribo.....	Intermediate/Novice Program
Bev Santos & Sheryleen Grothus.....	Partnership Chairs
Helen McCrae.....	Prize Committee
Terry & Carolyn Riely.....	Daily Bulletin Editors
Linda Lawrence.....	Registration Committee
Kay Laird & Sherry Di Baggio.....	Hospitality Committee
Everette Lewis.....	Caddy Chair
Janise Saul.....	Photographer

If you need more information, would like to volunteer your time, or need a partner, please refer to the flyer and contact us. Come and join us as we celebrate our independence with bridge games and social activities... and a great time to meet new friends.

Unit 172 at the Houston Nationals

Vanderbilt KO Teams 17-32 Ira Hessel - Greg Hinze
Silodor Open Pairs 31 Ira Hessel
Rockwell Mixed Pairs 5 Venkatrao Koneru
Lebhar Imp Pairs 2 Greg Hinze 3 Ira Hessel
Jacoby Open Swiss 7-8 Greg Hinze
Machlin Womens Swiss 9 Ellen Hessel

**The full Regional Schedule can
found in the May Scorecard
and online at**

[http://www.d16acbl.org/U172/
San_Antonio_July_Regional.pdf](http://www.d16acbl.org/U172/San_Antonio_July_Regional.pdf)

Observations of a Novice Duplicate Player *by Judith Hoffman*

We retired and my husband started rattling around the house wondering what to do with his life. We had always loved playing cards but, knowing no one who would play bridge with us, we joined a nearby bridge club in January of 2008 and started showing up.

It quickly became clear to me that playing bridge reflected other aspects of my life. Prime example: once I call a card from the board, I can't change my mind. I can try, but will be admonished by the people at the table with ten thousand million master points that said is as good as done - too bad.

I write my own rules on the ACBL card, but, when I forget what's on there, more admonishments come from the opponents that what I had bid or played was "non standard", whatever that is. When someone said to me, "That was a non standard lead", my response was "Which lead?" and they gave up in despair.

An A player called the director stating that we had reversed and therefore bid incorrectly after that. I kept asking him what a reverse was but he wouldn't answer. We looked it up in our Bible, "Bridge for Dummies", but still were unable to figure out why he was so upset. The director informed the A player that unless he had received his bridge teaching certification he should leave us alone.

My beloved partner and I made an agreement that we would not chide each other at the table but discuss the hand in a private spot after the boards were finished. When I chide anyway, which he never does, I have to apologize to the table but it doesn't fix a thing; just like the rest of our marriage.

If I make a really bad error, the opponents call the director, similar to my neighbors calling the police about our loud parties or barking dog.

Bridge, at least for beginner, seems to be a series of elations and despairs. We made a silver point at a sectional, in C players flight, for the first time scoring above 50%. We were psyched. We walked across the club parking lot high fiving each other. "We're on way - we've got it figured out now" we naively gloated. For two weeks after that, we were unable to get out of the twenties.

It's like your favorite sports team in a batting, scoring, or shooting slump. It seems like it never ends. In fact, our bridge slumps seem to parallel our beloved Spurs when they are unable to find the hole in the basket. When the Spurs can't shoot, we can't win a bridge game. I used to think that unless I wore my favorite Spurs' shirt and bracelet, they couldn't win. I think I'll blame my bridge slump on their lack of scoring in the playoffs this year. Fair is fair. They play better defense than I do, though.

We have made friends at the club. We like the directors all of whom take an interest in our daily percentage. We wish they wouldn't. I feel dumb as a rock when I trump my own good ace from the board. The nice opponents say, "Oh, we have all done that". I know they are lying.

The club started having 199er games once in a while. Some members told us to steer clear of them feeling that playing in the regular games with those who are much better will improve our game faster than playing with other beginners. We think they like having cannon fodder around to help their point production.

The slump continued so we decided to join one of those games to try to blast ourselves out of our gloom and doom. We got killed. We forgot that we have been playing for 6 months and have 11 or so points. Some of the others had been playing for 2 or 3 years and are almost at 200. Big difference in experience.

It reminded me of our son who graduated from college and started interviewing for a job. He called home and said, "They want me to take an ENTRY level job!" Imagine that. Experience counts for something we explained to him but forgot that the same lesson applies to bridge too.

Ugh, contracts. How many contracts have we had throughout our lifetime? Most recently, we have had contracts in the serial remodeling of our house. That has been going on for 15 years or so. We sometimes ended up in bad contracts with bad contractors and finally got it right in the last room - the laundry room. Oh well.

Bad contracting followed us into the bridge club. We had never seen a bidding box before and had to be shown how to take out the cards and stack them properly left to right in front of us if we dared to bid anything. It took several weeks before I quit reaching over to play the dummy myself.

So, we are putting in table time. This advice we get from everyone, including the bridge club owner, "You need to keep playing." I suspect that she may have a vested interest in this though.

After about a week and a half of the slump, my partner stated his wish to quit. Biig Al was the first director my husband met when he went to the club to check it out before we joined. Al was wandering around stacking boards and toting coffee so, I privately asked him to talk to my husband. I didn't want to have to find a new partner. I could see nothing but problems with that. Anyone whom I talked into playing with me would have to leave his concealed hand gun at home. This is Texas, after all.

Al talked partner into playing with him. That went well since husband/partner came home relatively intact with no bruises nor broken limbs. Al is a big guy. Plus, my partner has expressed willingness to continue playing with me as his partner. It gives me a nice sense of security about our marriage. I thrive on security. So why am I playing bridge at all? Great question.

Our percentage has crept back up into the 30s. We now know what transfers, Michaels, and preempts are. We use the bidding box like pros although usually ending up in the wrong contract. It's a work in progress - like life.

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

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San Antonio Sectional Tournament

June 5-7, 2009

Turtle Creek Bridge Club

2343 NW Military Hwy, San Antonio 78231
210-375-0500 **www.tcdbc.com**

Friday, June 5th

1 pm Stratified Open and 299er Pairs
7 pm Stratified Open Pairs

Saturday, June 6th

9 am 1 pm 7 pm KO Teams (Handicapped/Bracketed)
1 pm Stratified Open and 199er Pairs
7 pm Stratified Open Pairs

Sunday, June 7th

10:30 am and TBA Swiss Teams with meal

Chairperson: Marilyn Arnold 210-273-1128

Partnerships: Fran Vanecko 602-614-4910 cell or 210-455-9233 home

Hospitality: Olivia Brown 210-494-1877

Stratifications

Pairs: A 2000+; B 500-2000; C 0-500

Swiss Teams: A unlimited, AX if justified
B 1000-2000; C 500-1000; D 0-500

**Homegate Hotel, 11221 San Pedro Ave, San Antonio, TX, 78216, 1-866-502-5970,
Hilton San Antonio Airport 611 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78216 (210) 340-6060**