



THE WINNING FINESSE

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December, 2013



President's Column by Roxana Tom. I'm writing this from Phoenix where we are playing in the North American Bridge Championships. It is a humbling experience since my name isn't Hinze, Koneru, or Hessel. However, the occasional successes are very exhilarating and we are having lots of fun.

I'm delighted to have the chance to serve on the board for another term, and honored to be the president of your unit for the coming year. One of my goals for this year is to find ways to entice rubber bridge players to try duplicate. They unfortunately have a lousy opinion of us and to have any chance to change that, I'll need your help. Please be pleasant and kind to any new players so they will think you are a wonderful new friend.

I want to thank Jeri Tribo for her dedicated service on the Board of Directors. Jeri took on two of the biggest jobs in the Unit---Mentor-Mentee Chair and Regional Tournament Chair. Although Jeri chose not to run for re-election to the Board, she has agreed to continue as Regional Chair, for which we are all grateful.

Our Winter Sectional will be held at the Omni starting January 17 thru 20 (Friday to Monday). It will be a great tournament, so I'll hope to see all of you there.

Election Results. The election of members of the Unit 172 Board of Directors was held in October. There was an excellent slate of candidates for the four open positions on the Board. Thanks to all the candidates. Those elected included **Roxana Tom, Steve Hoffman, Rebecca Brown, and Beverly Santos.**

Mentoring Program Expanded! In prior years, the Mentoring Program was open to players with 0-100 points, with a limit of two years participation. Mentors were paired with a Mentee. The Unit provided up to twelve free plays for the Mentor. All of these features will continue. Players wanting to have a mentor should complete an application form (available at clubs) or contact Debbie Schweiss, the new Chair of the Mentoring Program (210-696-2081). See page 2 for details.

Care & Comfort

Carmeline Squires sends get-well or sympathy cards for illness or death of members. Please notify Carmeline at 658-0249 .

Board Meetings.

Board Meetings. The Unit 172 Board of Directors meets at 5 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at Fiesta Bridge Club. Visitors are welcome.

Calendar

Winter Sectional & District 16 NAP Finals	Jan 17-20	Omni
GNT Unit Finals	Feb. 8	Fiesta BC
NLM Sectional	Mar. 7-8	Fiesta BC
Kerrville Sectional	Mar. 13-16	Inn of the Hills
Awards Day	Apr. 5	Fiesta BC
Sectional Tournament at Clubs (STaC)	Apr. 14-20	Participating Clubs
Fiesta Sectional	Apr. 24-27	BCSA

New Mentor Program

The Unit Board has approved an expansion of the Mentoring Program. This expansion is the brainchild of **Kathy Sinkin-Amor**. Kathy believes that there are many players who are not eligible for the traditional Mentoring Program who want to improve their game and to do so by playing with better players. So...a Tiered Mentoring Program has been established to encourage players from 100-1000 points to “play up”. Players who completed two years in the traditional Mentoring Program and who do not yet have 100 points are also eligible.

The program includes 6 “levels” of players based on their accumulated masterpoints:

Level	Masterpoints of Mentee	Masterpoints of Mentor
I	0-20	100+
II	20*-100	300+
III	100-300	500+
IV	300-500	1000+
V	500-1000	2000+

*May include players with fewer than 20 points upon their request
And approval by the Program Coordinator

Levels I and II constitute the traditional Mentoring Program. The Unit provides up to 12 free plays for the mentor in this program.

Levels III, IV, and V have not previously been eligible for the Traditional Mentoring Program. They are now eligible to play with higher ranked players in the Tiered Mentoring Program. A basic component of the Tiered Mentoring Program is that, if a player wants to play with a player in a higher category, the player must first play with a player from a lower level. The mentoring arrangements for these levels is not on an annual basis like the Tradition Mentoring Program. For Tiered Mentoring, the arrangement includes four games with the lower-ranked player and four games with the higher ranked player. When the games are played, each player pays his/her own entry fee. When the four-game “package” is completed, the mentor is given 4 free plays. If he/she wants to “play up”, he/she gives the free plays to his/her new “mentor”. This pattern could repeat itself (the second mentor could also choose to play up). If, at any point, the mentor does not wish to play up, he/she would keep the free plays for his/her own use.

FAQs:

How do I get started? Call Kathy Sinkin-Amor (210-846-6707).

Do I have any choice of mentors? Some choice, but not absolute choice. You may have a certain expert you want to play with, but he/she may already be taken or not be participating. You certainly don’t have to play with someone you don’t want to play with. Kathy will work with you to try to accommodate your preferences.

Since I have been in the Traditional Mentor Program two years, I am no longer eligible for it. I have less than 100 points. Am I eligible for the Tiered Mentoring Program? Yes, as a mentee. Contact Kathy to let her know your interest. Players in Levels I and II do not have to be a mentor, but they can have a mentor.

Will mentors always be from the next highest level? In theory, no. They can be from any higher level. However, in actual practice, most mentor-mentee pairing will probably be from adjacent levels. There are good reasons for this. For example, suppose a player from Level III wants to participate. They would need to play with a player from a lower category. If all the available Level II players insist on playing with experts, then the system would break down. In addition, this whole system will be dependent upon higher ranked

players being willing to play with lower ranked players. We believe many will support the program, but it will not work to “overload” or “burn out” a limited number of the highest ranked volunteers. Can a player in Level I or II be in both the Traditional and Tiered Mentoring Program? Yes, if there are sufficient mentors, but priority will go to those not in the Traditional Mentoring Program. How could you have FAQs when this program is just being explained and no one has asked any questions yet? We are psychic.

I Coulda/Shoulda Thwarted Greg’s Crocodile Coup by *Ed Rawlinson*. In the first round of the Holiday Party, Prema and I were playing **Greg and Patty Hinze**.

♠-K1082			
♥-K92			
♦-953			
♣-J53			
♠-J3		♠-A965	
♥-86		♥-7	
♦-?J108		♦-?Q76	
♣-109842		♣-KQ76	
	♠-Q74		
	♥-AQJ10543		
	♦-42		
	♣-A		
N	E	S	W
	1♥	P	OL: 10♣
1♠	X	3♥	P
4♥	All Pass		

I won the Club Ace, cashed the A and K of hearts, and lead a spade to the Queen. Then a spade to J, K and A. West played the ♣K, which I ruffed. I can cash out for making four, but I’m mesmerized by a possible endplay...cash all the hearts, forcing East to come down to one diamond (hopefully the ace) and the 96 of spades. Then throw her in with the diamond to lead spades back to dummy. I’m encouraged when East throws the ♦Q on my last trump. I think about cashing out, but a combination of greed and the glory of endplaying East causes me to go for it (leading a diamond at trick 10). Alas, West rises with the ♦A to gobble up partner’s King (the Crocodile Coup) and win the last two tricks with the ♦J and ♣10. Besides the greed and lust for glory, I made a more basic mistake: not remembering who I was playing against. Against most pairs, West would have played the ♦J at trick 10. West would have won the king and been endplayed. Greg (who only has 12,500 points, despite being a young guy), not only knows about the Crocodile Coup, he knew what was going on. Not

only that, but if Patty had the AQ of diamonds, she was fully capable of throwing the Ace away. When she didn’t throw the Ace away, I shoulda realized Greg had the Ace and would rise with it. Then I coulda had a different kind of glory: cashing out to make four and then saying “No Crocodile Coup for you, boyo.” As it was, Greg said, “that’s my first Crocodile Coup.” They don’t come up very often.

Holiday Party Results. Thirty-four tables showed up for the annual Holiday Party at BCSA on Dec. 14. Co-hosts **Debbie Schweiss, Kathy Sinkin-Amor, and Gary AnZIANi** provided and solicited enough food for fifty tables, and the quality matched the quantity. Renowned consumer **Jay Thorne** was heard to remark prior to the official opening “It’s a sin to have anything left over; I’ll start early to make sure that doesn’t happen.” Kathy’s response: “Do your best; we knew you were coming.”

Winners included: **Bette Allen-Charlie Walker (1A), Terry Riely-Carolyn Riely (2A), Pete Voges-Susan Ohm (3A, 1B), Myong Young-Orpha Sears (2B), Karen Fillis-George Fillis (3B), Leslie Tramer-Marjorie Miller (1C), Victor Press-Sandra Press (2C), Geneva Johnson-Carol Lahser (3C), Ken King-Barbara Boren (299ers 1), Luann Cohen-Valerie Katz (299ers 2), Sandy Bernstein-Haiyn Naftali (299ers 3).**

GNT Unit Finals

Get your Flight B and C teams ready for the GNT Unit finals at the Fiesta Bridge Club on February 8. The 2-session event qualifies teams to play in the District finals in Dallas in May. Flight A and the superflight are automatically qualified. Those that win their flights at the District level will qualify for the national final.

A Tip for Intermediate Players by Ed Rawlinson.

♠-KQJ10xx	N	E	S	W
♥-AQx	1♠	P	2♥	P
♦-xx	3♥	P	4N	P
♣-xx	5♠	P	5N	P
	7N			
♠-Ax				
♥-KJ109xxx				
♦-AQx				
♣-Ax				

Developing players generally believe that, in Blackwood or Key Card auctions, the player who “asks” is in charge and will set the final contract. While this is generally true, there is one circumstance in which the responder may set the final contract. The tip is that 5N is not just an asking bid (asking for kings). It also conveys information. It tells partner that the partnership holds all the aces (or key cards and the queen of trumps) and that the 5N bidder is interested in 7. North has a huge source of tricks with his spade suit. He should count 6 spades, 5 (or more) hearts, and two minor suit aces. Note that South must have the minor aces rather than one ace and a void, since he shouldn’t use key card or Blackwood with a void.

Used Duplicate Boards Available. The Unit has purchased several sets of new duplicate boards which are compatible with the pre-duplication of boards. Several of the older sets being replaced may be suitable for teaching situations or other uses. If you’re interested in a set, contact Steve Hoffman (316-5212 or shoffman@satx.rr.com).

Willson Davis, Jr. Election Sectional Results.

209 tables played in the Election Sectional at BCSA Oct. 10-13. Unit 172 members who placed in Pair Events included: Thursday AM: Carole O’Connor-Terry Rice (A1, B1), Pat Russell-Sally Armstrong (A3-4), Diane Olson-Donna McBride (A3-4), Linda Lawrence-Gary Larson (B3), Larry Levin-Jim Gorman (C1), Jim O’Connor-Debbie Schweiss (C2); Friday AM: Marilyn Arnold-Bill Walker (A1), Kathy Sinkin-Amor (A2, B1), Patty & Greg Hinze (A3), Ann Weaver-Dee Baker (B2), Steve & Stephanie Stevens (B3), Rebecca Brown-David Johnson (C1); Friday PM: Everette Lewis-Wayne Rauschuber (A1), Charlie Walker-Rich Lampman (A2), Larry Staton-Andy Williams (B2, C2), John Hilbig-Dolores Reiley (C3); Saturday AM: Chuck Jefferson-Forrest Gray (A1, B1), Ira & Ellen Hessell (A2), Dave & Donna Swarthout (A3), Bill McCarty (B2), Andy Villastrigo-Sisir Sharma (B3), Leslie & Jonathan Tramer (C2), Patty Moncus-Prema Durairaj (C3); Saturday PM: Chuck Jefferson-Forrest Grey (A2, B1), Dave & Donna Swarthout (A3), Patty Moncus-Prema Durairaj (B2, C1), Carol Ellis-Andy Williams (B3, C2), Leslie & Jonathan Tramer (C3).

Unit 172 members who placed in Team Events included: Thursday Swiss: Dave Swarthout-Donna Swarthout-Gary Anziani-Ed Rawlinson (A1), Terry Riely-Carolyn Riely-Jon Richard Ware (A2), George Fillis-Karen Fillis-Pat Prichard-Kay Laird (B2), Rebecca McCutcheon-Beth Gale-Tessa Bodnar-Bob Steidel (B3), Carole O’Connor-Pat Balhorn-Jim O’Connor-Debbie Schweiss (C1); KO: Terry Riely-Carolyn Riely-Brian Bankler-Hank Eng (1), Rich Curtin-Kay Laird (2); Sunday Swiss: Patty Hinze-Greg Hinze-Ira Hessell-Ellen Hessell (A1), Dave Swarthout-Donna Swarthout-Gary Anziani-Ed Rawlinson (A2), George Fillis-Karen Fillis-Larry Levin-Bill Walker (A3, B1), Robert Otis-Dolores Reiley-John Hilbig-Paula Wissman (B2, C1), Susan Spencer-Jo Neesvig-Billie Darnell-Brenda Johnson (B3).

Top Ten masterpoint winners included: Dave Swarthout (20.73), Donna Swarthout (20.06), Ira Hessell (18.91), Ellen Hessell (18.91), Terry Riely (15.67), Carolyn Riely (15.47), Bill Walker (14.62), Chuck Jefferson (14.31), Hank Eng (14.28), Gary Anziani (13.00).

Fall Sectional Results. 228 tables played in the Fall Sectional at Fiesta BC Nov. 21-24. Unit 172 members who placed in Pair Events included: Thurs. AM: Bill Walker-Marilyn Arnold (1A), Ellen & Ira Hessel (3A), Tessa Bodnar-Leslie Tramer (2B), Paula Warren-Rebecca Brown (3B), Irene White-Jim Roff (1C), Polly McCamey-Richard Greenbauer (2C), Robert Otis-Mary Lou Daugherty (3C); Friday AM: Jon Richard Ware (1A), Fran Vanecko-Sheryleen Grothus (2A), Dave Herron-Steve Simpson (3A, 1B, 1C), Evelyn Berns-Jo Ann Manfredi (3C); Friday PM: George & Karen Fillis (1A, 1B), Janise Saul-Wayne Rauschuber (2A), Jay Thorne-Judy Lewis (3A), James & Barbara Thigpen (2B, 1C), Brian Bankler-Hank Eng (3B), Dave Herron-Steve Simpson (2C), Maria Groussman-Georgia Baron (3C); Saturday AM: Babu Koneru (1A), Gary AnZIANi-Ed Rawlinson (2A), Bill Walker-Marilyn Arnold (3A), Larry Levin-Jo Grabow (1B), Jeri Tribo-Fran Vanecko (2B), Beth Gale-Kathy Sinkin-Amor (3B), Steve Simpson-Georgia Baron (1C), Prema Durairaj-Judy Caroll Taquino (3C); Saturday PM: Hank Eng-Brian Bankler (1A,1B), Dave & Donna Swarthout (2A), Greg & Patty Hinze (3A), Larry Levin-Ronnie Burns (2B), George & Karen Fillis (3B), Sisir Sharma-Govindasamy Durairaj (1C), Steve Simpson-Georgia Baron (2C), Irene & Richard Parker (3C), Saturday 299er: Jan Wingate-June Reimer (1), Ken King-Barbara Boren (2), Fred & Christine Williamson (3).

Unit 172 members who placed in team events included: Thursday Swiss: Babu Koneru-Bill Walker-Marilyn Arnold (1A), Dave Swarthout-Donna Swarthout-Gary AnZIANi-Ed Rawlinson (2A), Jodie McMahan-Chuck Jefferson-

Beverly Santon-Dick Bragg (3A), Kim Carpenter-Steve Simpson-Georgia Baron-Prema Durairaj (1B), Dorthy Rippstein-Beula Mae Pearce-Jo Neesvig-Susan Spencer (2-3B), Linda Williams-Penny Smith-Ann Weaver-Dee Baker (2-3B), Marjorie Miller-Arleen Schafer-Bob Steidel-Stewart Windelar (1C), Jim Gorman-Rowena Gorman-Barbara Altgelt-Ruth Eilene Sullivan (2C); Knockout: Ken & Donna McBride (1A), Ira Hessel-Ellen Hessel-Patty Hinze-Greg Hinze (2A), Roxie Tom-Rich Curtin-Kay Laird-Pat Prichard (1B), Robert Otis-Mary Lou Daugherty-James Gardner-Myra Ribak (2B); Sunday Swiss: Ellen Hessel-Patty Hinze-Greg Hinze-Ira Hessel (1A), Babu Koneru (2A), Carolyn Riely-Terry Riely-Jon Richard Ware-Bill Walker (3A), Tom Trudeau-Phil Brown-Phyllis Giffin-Rebecca Brown (3A, 1B), George Fillis-Karen Fillis-Bill McCarty (2-3B), Steve Simmons-Dolly Simmons-Anne McCullough-Dorthy Rippstein (2-3B), Ann Weaver-Dee Baker-Linda Williams-Penny Smith (2-3B), Steve Simpson-Dave Herron-Ginny Littrell-Jacquelyn Fisher (1C), Debbie Schweiss-Steve Stevens-Stephanie Stevens-Georgia Baron (2C).

Unit 172 members who finished in the top ten masterpoint winners included: **Ellen Hessel (21.29), Ira Hessel (21.29), Bill Walker (21.07), Babu Koneru (20.56), Patty Hinze (18.84), Greg Hinze (18.84), Marilyn Arnold (17.23), Steve Simpson (15.31), Dave Swarthout (14.72).**

North American Pairs Unit Finals.

The NAP Unit Finals were held at Fiesta BC on Sept. 23. Winners in the 17-1/2 table two-session game included: **Jeri Tribo-Fran Vanecko (1A, 1B), Larry & Laurie Ann Levin (2A, 2B), Brian Bankler-Hank Eng (3A, 3B), Dolores Reiley-John Hilbig (1C), Rena Lunke-Carol Ellis (2C), Homer Payne-Bill Norvell (3C).** These winners plus several other qualifiers are eligible to play in the District 16 Finals to be held in Austin Jan. 4-5. At least three of the top finishers in each flight there will qualify to play in the National Finals in Dallas in March. Thanks to NAP Coordinator **Steve Simpson** and co-host **Steve Hoffman** for organizing the event and the hospitality.

Mentor-Mentee Championship by Jeri Tribo. The annual Mentor-Mentee game was a roaring success with 17 tables, thanks to the efforts of **Debbie Schweiss** who made numerous phone calls while I was in the British Isles. FYI, the game this year was extended to include novice players with 0-99 MPs, and they were paired with more experienced players. Both groups were eligible for MPs, but a free play coupon was given to **only the players in the MM group** who finished first in N/S and E/W in A, B, and C flights. The victors in A flight were **Ed Rawlinson & Fran Stoltz** in N/S and **Bill Walker & Dave Johnson** in E/W; B flight **Jeri Tribo & Lew Spurlock** N/S and **Gary Anziani & Luann Cohen** E/W; C flight **Carol Zuclich & Ken King** N/S and **Stephanie Stevens & Diana Kellerman** E/W. Winners in the overall game included: **Gary Anziani-Luann Cohen (1A, 1B), Bill Walker-David Johnson (2A), Diana Kellerman-Stephanie Stevens (3A, 2B, 1C), Bill Norvell-Fran Vanecko (3B), Ken King-Carol Zuclich (2C), and Tessa Bodnar-Sue Rodarte (3C).**

Many thanks go to **Ed Rawlinson and Roxie Tom** as my co-hosts. Roxie and I made a couple desserts which were really good, but Ed outdid himself as usual making most of the appetizers and desserts. He did not lose his reputation as a gourmet cook, and I'm sure he has many requests for some of his recipes.

I am retiring as the MM Chair and the SABL Board, but I will take names of those who want to be in the program as either a mentee or mentor for 2014 to pass on to the next Chairperson. I've enjoyed my 4-year tenure as the MM Chair and I'm grateful to have met a lot of really neat people in our Unit. I still plan to be active as a Mentor and, of course, play a lot of bridge.

Membership Matters.

We welcome the following new members and transfers: **Drew Cassidy, Dr. Jack Cassidy, Joanne Lenke, Janet Olsen, Keith Callaway, Jean Forsberg, Sue Green, Art Kessler, Martha Kessler, Thomas Klein, Sam Reagle, Francie Whittenberg, Marcia Livermore, Sue Perkins, Judy Vaughn, Dr. Barbara Bolten, Janina Kurza, Robert McCutcheon, John Nydik.** Congratulations to all those who received higher ACBL ratings: new Junior Masters: **Dr. Coleman Driver, Adele Strelchun, Beverly Fulton, Sue Rodarte;** new Club Master: **Bernean Deeter, Gerda Jacobs, Diana Kellerman, Art Kessler;** new Sectional Masters: **Linda Fisher, Dean Groussman, William Norvell, Kathryn Wandrisco;** new Regional Masters: **Prema Durairaj, James Thigpen;** new NABC Masters: **Ann Kuehler, Larry Levin;** new Bronze Life Masters: **Brian Bankler, Barbara Morgan, Carole Hall;** new Silver Life Masters: **Marian Gindler, Sally Sanders, Karen Fillis.**

The Winning Finesse
c/o Ira and Ellen Hessel, Editors
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San Antonio Winter Fun Sectional District 16 NAP Finals

Friday – Monday January 17 – 20, 2014

Omni Hotel 9821\ Colonnade Blvd 800-843-6664
Bridge Rate \$109 (book by 12/30/13)

Friday, January 17

Stratified Pairs 10 am & 7:30 pm
Stratified Swiss Teams 3:00 pm

Saturday, January 18

Stratified Pairs 10 am, 3 pm & 7:30 pm

Compact Knock-Out Teams #1 10 am & 3:00 pm
NAP Qualifying 10 am & 3:00 pm

Sunday, January 19

Stratified Swiss Teams 10 am & TBA
(meal served between sessions)
NAP Finals 10 am & TBA
(meal served between sessions)

Monday, January 20

Stratified Pairs 10 am
Imp Pairs 3:00 pm
Compact Knock-Out Teams #2 10 am & 3:00 pm
299er Games: Fri. Sat. and Monday 10 am & 3 pm (3 table min.)

A=2000+ B= 500-2000 C= 0-500

All Events will be stratified based on average master points
All KO events handicapped except teams with 5000+ average

NAP events must have qualified at Unit level

Entry Fee: \$11/person/session, \$13/person/session Sunday
(includes meal), Sunday Swiss \$100/team (includes meal)
\$3/session more for non or unpaid members

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