



I/N the News

Bridge tips for the Intermediate/Newcomer

By Janet Andrews, I/N Unit Rep and Ronald Gagne

About the I/N Newsletter

Did you know that approximately 60% of ACBL members have less than 300 masterpoints? That's right, and that is why we are so important to ACBL and the bridge clubs. At ACBL we are called Intermediate/Newcomers (I/Ns). I was recently appointed to the Unit Board, following Marge Curvin, to represent you and to help integrate students and new players into the local bridge family. If you have just started playing at the local clubs, you may be like me and not know what the Unit is. ACBL has 300+ units whose objective is to supervise and promote bridge within their boundaries. Our Unit is # 356 and our boundaries are Southwest Arizona including Tucson, Green Valley, Serria Vista, etc.

So the purpose of this I/N unit newsletter is to help the new bridge player become more comfortable and feel more included, and to help the more advanced I/N bridge player improve their game and become more involved. Each issue will include short articles for new and more advanced I/N players, bridge etiquette and director tips, a list of I/N games, bridge classes and lessons, as well as tournaments and special events sponsored by the unit. The Unit Board and I are very interested in whether this newsletter is meeting your needs, so email your ideas and comments to inrep@southernarizonabridge.com.

Newcomer Nuggets

If you are a typical Newcomer to the ACBL you have been playing party bridge for years; and you want to step up your game; and you are nervous about looking like a newcomer when you go to your ACBL Club. Well misery loves company so here is some encouragement: Over 5% of the members in our Unit have no masterpoints yet; over 13% have less than five masterpoints; almost 25% have less than 20 points; and 1 member has over 34,000 points.

The ACBL site www.acbl.org has a wealth of resources for all levels of members. The following are excerpts from *The Exciting World of Bridge: An Introduction to Duplicate* www.acbl.org/learn/introDuplicate.html

Bidding Boxes are used at the games. The boxes are filled with cards designating every possible call, and any player will be glad to show you how to use them. Typically you will master their use in a couple of rounds, get overconfident close to the last round, and then dump the cards all over the floor, that is, if I am typical! The cards provide an instant review of the bidding and eliminate the possibility of mishearing an auction. Since multiple tables are playing simultane-

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Special tip

Your only *rea* bridge friend sits across from you at the table. Why offend that person with criticism or even frowns...praise them when possible.

Director please

by Ann Hinge

Call the director when an irregularity occurs. If your opponents do not call, then do it yourself. It might not be as bad as you think. With the new laws you have a better chance to recover from an insufficient bid, but you need the director and a filled out convention card to do so.

ously, keeping the noise level down is also a pleasant benefit of using the boxes.

Convention Cards are required to be filled out before you play. Your partner's card must be identical to yours. This sounds like a daunting requirement, but it is more so for advanced players than newcomers, because your card can be very basic. The card serves two purposes: It tells your opponents what you play and making out a card allows you and your partner to get your understandings straight. The standard convention card is an elaborate document which you may want to use after a few games to impress your friends. However, initially you may want to use the much simpler ACBL Standard Yellow Card. These are available at the Clubs when you go to play. The card can be filled out in just a couple of minutes and includes such items as your No-Trump opening bid point range, whether you bid weak twos, and the like.

Private Score should be kept by each player. The back of your convention card is designed for this purpose. In all games the North position is in charge of the boards and scores the Travelers after completion of each hand. The Travelers stay with the individual boards and are used to score the games. As a Newcomer, you should avoid sitting in the North/South seats until you are comfortable with scoring. Why should you keep a private score? Well it will help you to critique your game after the play. Also you will learn how to score. But mainly, it helps the Director to make sense of a Traveler that may have an erroneous entry – North is fallible!

Not Quite Life Master

We already noted that almost 25% of I/Ns have less than 20 masterpoints. At the other end of the I/N spectrum there are over 12% who are within striking distance of Life Master. These players have known the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.

While the Newcomers are focused on I/N games at Clubs and the bi-annual I/N Sectional tournaments, the more advanced players are more interested in Sectional, Regional, and NABC tournaments. In order to become a Life Master, certain pigmented masterpoints must be earned. The candidate must have earned at least 50 Silver points at Sectional tournaments and STaC games. Twenty-five Gold points are required which are earned at NABC tournaments. In addition a combination of 25 more Gold or Red points are required, the Red points being earned at Regional and NABC tournaments. Thus, as you progress up the ladder from Rookie to Life Master, your focus shifts from a fun afternoon at the Club to intense competition at tournaments.

Two Masterpoint Races sanctioned by the ACBL are: Ace of Clubs Masterpoint Race and the Mini-McKenney Masterpoint Race. Both of these are annual races and are stratified based on a member's rank at the beginning of each year. The Ace of Clubs race is based on masterpoints earned in Club games. The Mini-McKenney race is based on all masterpoints earned during the year. How did you do? If you would like to check results go to this link:

<http://web.acbl.org/UnitAwards/index.do> and look-up results for Unit 356.

Education for beginners

by Don O'Bryan, Education Rep

Each hand is a separate undertaking and has nothing to do with future hands. It serves no useful purpose to dwell on your mistakes (or your pards) after the hand is over. In fact the faster you can put it out of your mind the better you will be able to concentrate on the next hand.

Education for intermediates

by Don O'Bryan, Education Rep

A useful way to improve your game is to record the opening lead and the first round of bidding on every hand. Then, after the game, you and your partner can more easily review each hand. Most better players will be helpful in answering your questions, but please do so after the game and then for a limited time. Remember that no one can have an answer that always applies to every situation.

Rank note

See the Kibitzer for monthly Junior, Club, Sectional, Regional, & NABC Master Rank Advancements.

Contact us

If you want this newsletter we need your email address. If you have ideas for the newsletter or other ways we can help you, please contact us at inrep@southernarizonabridge.com

Ongoing I/N Sanctioned Games

Adobe Bridge Club, \$5, (520) 795-2441, www.adobebridgeclub.org

- Thursdays at 12:30 PM
- Saturdays at 9:00 AM
- Mondays at 5:00 PM, at The Lodge at Ventana Canyon, \$5 plus dinner at the Lodge with the other players, reservations required, (520) 270-4305 or kathy071314@cox.net **NEW**

Las Candelas Bridge Club, \$6, (520) 696-9101, www.lascandelasbridgeclub.com

- Wednesdays at 12:30 PM
- Mondays at 9 AM, Student Game in the Casita with Bob Hinkle, for new players **NEW**
- Tuesdays at 9:30 AM, in the Casita with Bob Simrak, \$3, questions & lessons after play **NEW**

Bridge Lessons/Classes

Adobe Bridge Club, (520) 795-2441, www.adobebridgeclub.org

Tuesdays (Beginning) from 9:30—11:30 AM and

Wednesdays (Intermediate) from 9:30-11:30 AM

Usually 6 week classes based on Audrey Grant's books

Instructor: Barbara Rosenthal, (520) 331-9444 call for schedule and price

Fridays at 9:00-11:00 AM

Random deals and supervised play, no reservation or partner needed, \$3/person, very educational,

Instructor: Dev De Luca

Wednesdays at 9:30 AM at Finisterra Club House, classes or lessons, Instructor: Bob Hinkle, email Ruth Houkom rhoukom@comcast.net for schedule and price

Thursdays at 9:30 AM, at The Lodge at Ventana Canyon \$10 plus lunch at the Lodge with the other players, supervised play of the hand, Instructor: Bob Hinkle, email Ruth Houkom rhoukom@comcast.net for reservation

Las Candelas Bridge Club, (520) 696-9101, www.lascandelasbridgeclub.com

Thursdays from 9:30-11:30 AM in the Casita, different topic each week followed by supervised play, \$5/lesson, Instructor: Bob Simrak

Desert View Clubhouse, Saddlebrook

Mondays at 9:00-11:00 in April, mini lessons and prepared hands

Instructor: Barbara Feeley (520) 825-6837, www.barbsbridge.com

Tournaments and Special Events, April-June, 2009

April 3-5, Sectional**, Chandler

April 14, Charity Game****, Local Clubs

April 16-19, Sectional**, Tucson Holiday Inn – includes stratified 199er games (red pts)

April 23-26, Sectional**, Colorado Springs – includes stratified 199er games (red points)

April 24-26, Sectional**, Las Cruces – includes stratified 199er games (red points)

May 3, Unit Game****, Adobe

May 4-10, Great Western Spring STaC*** Game, Local Clubs

May 13, International Fund Game#, Local Clubs

May 15-17, Sectional**, Phoenix – includes stratified 199er games (red points)

May 19-25, Regional*, Denver – includes stratified 199er games (red points)

June 5, World Wide Pairs##, Local Clubs (PM)

June 6, World Wide Pairs##, Local Clubs

June 7, Board A Match###, Las Candelas

June 14, Unit Game****, Las Candelas

June 22-28, Regional*, Las Vegas – includes stratified 199er games (red points)

June 24, International Fund Game#, Local Clubs

*Regional tournaments are held by the 25 ACBL districts and award gold and red points

**Sectional tournaments are held by the ACBL units and award silver points (red if 199 game)

***Sectional tournaments at clubs (STaC) are held by the clubs and award silver points

****Unit games are held by the unit, award extra black points, and competition is unit wide

*****Charity game, regular game except award extra points and minimum amount goes to a charity

#International Fund Game, supports a US team to compete internationally

##World Wide Pairs are played across the world simultaneously and a booklet with hands and commentary is given to each player

###Board A Match is a team event where each board is scored as a win, tie, or a loss, so every board is equally important