

Pomona-Covina Unit News

February 2024

Individual: February 3, 10 a.m., Ontario

March 2, 10 a.m., Ontario

Unit Game: February 17, 11:00 a.m., Ontario

Unit Board Meeting: 10:15 a.m. before the game

STaC: March 19 and 22

Well, I must have been *very* tired when I compiled the list of Palm Springs winners. I completely overlooked Richard Parker, who scored 20.20 points to top the list. He was 232rd overall in the masterpoint list. So add one more player and 20.20 to the total list. Meanwhile, Art Weinstein gathered rather more points than I indicated: 13.78. I must have let my eyes cross. Sorry about that, friends!

FYI: La Fetra handed out a list of dates that will not be available to us in 2024. If you didn't pick one up (they were handed out during the games in December), mark your calendars for these dates:

Friday, June 14 – La Fetra Center picnic

Friday, November 29 – Day after Thanksgiving

Tuesday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

Tuesday, December 31 – New Year's Eve

For the June and November Fridays, we'll plan on holding a game where we play the Individual and Unit games. Which site it will be depends on the expected attendance – we have to pay rent for the Unit game site, but not the little room (5 tables maximum) where we play the Individual. So we will be asking for advance sign-ups for those two dates.

The January Individual was captured by Caryn Mason with 64.58%. In second we find Nancy Stebbins, then Peter Kavounas, Kiran Kumar, and Your Truly to round out the top five.

In the January Unit Game, Steve Mancini – Vic Sartor top honors, with a 61.31% effort. In second were Caryn Mason – Nancy Stebbins, followed by Judy Mogharbel – Yours Truly.

We have only one promotion to announce again this month. Caryn Mason is now an Advanced NABC Master. (For those of you unfamiliar with this rank: she'd be a Life Master right now had she joined the ACBL some years earlier.)

We had quite a few big games turned in last month. The top four were all by Fredy and Lulu Minter: 74.86%, 70.83%, 70.81%, and 69.44%. Next in the queue we find Mary Ann Wotring – Caryn Mason, 69.05, and Vic Sartor – Steve Mancini, 67.36. That completes the list of winners in January.

For those of you who haven't gotten the news: WE HAVE DEALING MACHINE! So now all games will have hand records available. It's a long story. Come on and play and I'll tell you all about it. It's a used machine, somewhat cranky, but that fits in with our Director.

This month's interesting hand is totally whacko. I've included it strictly for laughs. Since this is not the April issue, you can be sure this really happened. It occurred on BBO, and shows that when things go wrong, they *really* go wrong! I was South, the dealer, with E-W red.

West was a human, East was a robot. You have to see the full deal to get the real flavor of what happened:

| | | |
|-----------|--------------|------------------|
| | Partner | |
| | ♠ 10 8 6 3 | |
| | ♥ J 9 4 | |
| | ♦ Q J 10 2 | |
| | ♣ 5 2 | |
| Human | | Robot |
| ♠ Q 7 5 4 | | ♠ J 9 |
| ♥ 7 6 5 3 | | ♥ Q |
| ♦ 8 7 6 | | ♦ A K 4 |
| ♣ K Q | | ♣ A J 10 9 7 6 3 |
| | Me | |
| | ♠ A K 2 | |
| | ♥ A K 10 8 2 | |
| | ♦ 9 5 3 | |
| | ♣ 8 4 | |

The auction started out normally, but went completely off the rails during the second round of bidding:

| Me | Human | Partner | Robot |
|------|-----------------|----------|------------------|
| 1♥ | pass | pass | 2♣ |
| pass | 2♦ ¹ | pass | 2♥ ² |
| pass | 4♥ ³ | pass | 4NT ⁴ |
| pass | 6♥ ⁵ | all pass | |

1. Well, LHO could have a constructive hand, with a diamond suit and a tolerance for clubs. That's how it appears at the moment.
2. Probably asking for a heart stopper, figuring West's 2♦ bid showed a real suit and some values, a fair number being outside diamonds.
3. Evidently, West did not see the opening bid, and thought the robot had opened 2♣. Wants to play in game in partner's "suit." At least, that's the only thing that makes sense to me.
4. This, I'm not sure about. Might be Blackwood, figuring partner to have a high spade card. Perhaps to play? Maybe the robot thought I had psyched?
5. Evidently, West still hasn't seen the opening bid.

Now you are asking, "why in Tarnation didn't that idiot South (i.e., me) double?" Three reasons: one, I didn't know how far down 7♣ would go (it would go down only three); two, I was so stunned by the auction, that I was partially paralyzed; three, I didn't think a double would make much difference at matchpoints (it didn't). Yes, I would double at IMPs.

I led the ♥K, which dropped declarer's bare Queen (remember, on BBO, the robot never declares when it has a human partner). Then I led the ♥A followed by the ♥2 over to partner's ♥J. Partner led a spade over to my King, whereupon I drew dummy's last trump. Now a club, whereupon declarer took ♣KQ and apparently forgetting there was still a trump out, the ♦AK. With 9 tricks gone, the situation was

| | | |
|---------|----------|------------|
| | Partner | |
| | ♠ 10 8 6 | |
| | ♥ none | |
| | ♦ Q | |
| | ♣ none | |
| Robot | | Human |
| ♠ Q 7 5 | | ♠ none |
| ♥ none | | ♥ none |
| ♦ 8 | | ♦ none |
| ♣ none | | ♣ A J 10 9 |
| | Me | |
| | ♠ A 2 | |
| | ♥ 8 | |
| | ♦ 9 | |
| | ♣ none | |

Declarer claimed (the clubs are good), but of course I rejected the claim. After a LONG huddle by declarer, I tried to claim only TWO tricks (yes, I had a TIA and forgot partner must have the ♦Q), but my claim was rejected! Declarer finally, after another huddle, played the ♣A. I ruffed, cashed the ♠A and led my diamond to partner's Queen. Partner had to surrender the last trick to the ♠Q, aw shucks. +700, a cold top. As a matter of passing interest, 3♥ makes. And yes, we get 800 defending 7♣X. So what?

I suppose it could happen to anyone. I've met the Human player on BBO before and (s)he is definitely not a Palooka. In fact, (s)he frequently beats us like a gong. Just one of those days, I guess. But it was a nice belated Christmas present for my side!

Quote for the month: "We pick politicians by how they look on television and Miss America on where she stands on the issues. Isn't that a little backwards?" (Jay Leno)