

# Pomona-Covina Unit News

April 2025

Pomona – Covina

by Tom Lill

[www.acblunit551.org](http://www.acblunit551.org)

<b>La Fetra Games:</b>	Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:45
<b>Individual:</b>	May 3, 10 a.m., Ontario
<b>Club Championships:</b>	May 20, 23, La Fetra
<b>Unit Team Game:</b>	?May 10, 11:00 a.m., Ontario
<b>Unit Pairs Game:</b>	?May 17, 11:00 a.m., Ontario
<b>Unit Board Meeting:</b>	10:15 a.m. before the game

The question marks in front of the two scheduled Unit games arise from the fact that our playing sight might not be available on May 17. As we go to press, I was still awaiting a definitive answer. Stay tuned to our “Bridge Alert” for further updates.

The team game last month was a HUGE success, but some people found it a bit long. The next one, May 10(?), will be a single-session event. No team game in April, there’s just too much else going on.

Who won the March team game? It was *very* competitive. Three teams won 5 of their 7 matches. The team consisting of Judy Mogharbel, Kiran Kumar, Duane Woodman, Linda Tessier, and Yours Truly came out on top, scoring 86 victory points. (Yes, we had a 5-member team.) Only 1 VP behind was the team of Lulu Minter, Fredy Minter, Stephen Andersen, and Gary Atwell. And only 1 VP behind *them* was the team of Ramona Hernandez, Nona Stokes, Eileen Finlay and Timothy Finlay.

Once again, the vagaries of the calendar allow us to report April’s game. In a closely contested game (three pairs scored over 60% - but not by much!), Richard Parker – Vic Sartor took first prize with 63.33%. Next up were Steve Mancini – Patrick Finley, then Kitty Moon – Thomas Cusack, Ramona Hernandez – Nona Stokes, and finally Clin Lew – Daniel Robinson.

We had a tie for first in the April Individual. Steve Mancini and Roger Boyar both scored 62.5%. There was also a tie for third! Dale Quasny and Steve Andersen managed this feat.

Well, Mr. Brilliant has done it again! Last month I was proud to report the leading masterpoint holders at our games. Not only did I omit the Unit game ... I *completely* forgot that the totals reported by ACBLScore are no longer accurate! Since the F2F clubs reopened, the ACBL has been applying a multiplier to those points ... to encourage F2F play. Thanks to Patrick Finley, here are the ACTUAL totals of the leaders:

## JANUARY

1	12.32	Caryn Mason
2	11.52	Fredy Minter
3	11.25	Patrick Finley
4	10.64	Vic Sartor
5	8.16	Lulu Minter

6	8.14	Mary Ann Wotring
7	6.47	Eileen Finley
7	6.47	Tim Finley
9	6.19	Steve Mancini
10	5.49	Nona Stokes
10	5.49	Ramona Hernandez

#### FEBRUARY

1	15.99	Patrick Finley
1	15.99	Caryn Mason
3	13.08	Mary Ann Wotring
4	9.64	Fredy Minter
4	9.64	Lulu Minter
6	9.43	Vic Sartor
7	9.18	Steve Andersen
8	9.17	Peter Kavounas
9	7.83	Gary Atwell
10	7.34	Nona Stokes
10	7.34	Ramona Hernandez

#### MARCH

1	20.80	Fredy Minter
1	20.80	Lulu Minter
3	11.79	Steve Andersen
4	9.60	Tom Lill
5	9.59	Vic Sartor
6	9.04	Mary Ann Wotring
7	8.74	Gary Atwell
8	8.09	Judy Mogharbel
9	7.29	Peter Kavounas
10	7.14	Caryn Mason

Only one promotion to report in March ... but it is a biggie. Caryn Mason is now ... drum roll, please! – a Life Master! Congratulations, Caryn. Unfortunately, the advice usually given to a newly minted Life Master is: “now, you learn to play Bridge!” No, I did not make that up.

We have not visited the Laurel and Hardy School of Bridge for a while, so here goes. We present to you, for your amusement (if not edification), the Auction from Pluperfect Hell. Or, at least Purgatory.

As dealer, with both sides vulnerable, as East I picked up this hand:

♠ 9 8 6 ♥ A J 6 5 4 2 ♦ 8 3 2 ♣ 4

Well, I suppose these days, many would open 2♥. Not I, said the cat. The suit is just too raggedy, especially vulnerable as dealer. I passed, and LHO opened the bidding with 1♣. Partner chimed in with 1♠. I might have raised – probably should have – but (shades of “Joe vs. the Volcano”) I must have been suffering from a brain cloud, and passed. LHO now called 2♣. Partner came in again with 2♦, and RHO ventured 3♣. Nothing wrong so far, right? Wait!

I figured, partner must have some shape over there, 3♣ might make, might go down not enough for us to show a profit. So I thought the logical choice was 4♣, intending it to mean “Partner, pick one of your suits, I have equal support for both.” *That* call got three strange looks from the table! LHO passed, and partner went – brace yourself! 5♥! What on Earth, Mars, and Pluto does *that* mean? Is partner 5=4=4=0? Not likely or her second call might (should) have been “double.” Hmmm. Should I pass? *That* was not appealing! So I got up, walked around the chair (re-entering the auction, so to speak), and bid 5♠, which became the final contract.

Lo and behold, partner was 5=0=6=2, and with ♦KJ bare onside, 5♠ rolled home. (According to Bridge Composer, that’s the par result, but we all know what *those* analyses are worth.) 5♦ would also make. Oddly enough, our +650 was worth an uncontested top! At the other tables, there were four – count ‘em – FOUR different results: 3NT by South (down 2), 3♦ by East (made 4), 5♣ by South (down 1), and 2♦ by East (made 6). No, I do not know how my hand became declarer is a diamond contract!

And I still do not know exactly, for sure, what 5♥ meant! Partner must have had the same brain cloud that I did, for she said she thought my 4♣ was Stayman! Eeek! I have to infer that she was cue-bidding the first round heart control, but why 5♥ instead of 4♥? Oh well!

As a bonus, here’s a nice hand that came up just before deadline. As is usually the case, it’s one of those semi-balanced hands I’m so fond of. It’s a “Hastings” = 1-0-6-6 shape, don’t you know? (No, it’s not funny if I have to explain it.)

Sitting East, both sides vulnerable, you find yourself looking at this collection:

♠ A J 10 7 6 2 ♥ 6 ♦ K Q 8 4 3 2 ♣ none

Walter the Walrus sees 10 HCP and passes, but the rest of us (I should think) see a 3-loser hand and open the bidding. 3-losers, I hear you ask? Yes, the AJ10 combination is undervalued by the basic Losing Trick Count – it counts for one loser, not two. If you don’t know why, ask me sometime. Or, better still, ask a Bridge player.

Anyway, I opened 1♠, of course, having no better way to describe this beast accurately. (2-suited hands are very difficult to handle after a 2♣ opening, and partner would expect rather more defense from 2♣ anyway.) LHO ventured 2♣, and partner went 4♠. Pass, pass, double(!), all pass. The complete deal (see next page):

	North	
	♠ 5	
	♥ K Q 9 7 3 2	
	♦ A J 5	
	♣ J 4 2	
West		East
♠ K Q 9 3		♠ A J 10 7 6 2
♥ J 4		♥ 6
♦ J 6		♦ K Q 8 4 3 2
♣ Q 9 7 6 3		♣ none
	South	
	♠ 8 4	
	♥ A Q 10 5	
	♦ 10 7	
	♣ A K 10 8 5	

Yes, the West hand is not quite your normal “weak freak.” But partner, knowing I had to be short in clubs, and also figuring N-S had to have a big fit in ONE of the red suits, bid the shut-out. I don’t know where South’s double came from, but since 11 tricks are on ice, I was happy to record +990.

Action at the other tables was even wilder! Here are the results (relative to N-S):

3♠, East	-170
6♥X, North	-500
4♠, East	-650
4♠, East	-650
5♠, East	-650
4♥, North (!!)	+620

As it happens, the only way to beat 4♥ is for East to underlead ♠ AJ10762, his ♠2 requesting a club back for him to ruff. Not easy to find! Maybe at IMP scoring ...

I happened to kibitz the auction for that last result. For reasons best known to himself, East opened 2♦! The spade fit was lost, and they ended up selling out to the making 4♥. That -500, BTW, is the par result according to Bridge Composer. FWIW!

**Quote for the month:** “Everyone thinks of changing the world but no one thinks of changing himself.” (Leo Tolstoy)