

Pomona-Covina Unit News

August 2026

La Fetra Games:	Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:45
Claremont Bridge Club:	Thursdays 9:30
Unit Pairs Game:	September 19, 11:00 a.m., Ontario
Club Championships:	September 15, 18, 8:45 a.m., La Fetra
Individual:	September 5, 10:00 a.m., Ontario
Unit Board Meeting:	10:15 a.m. before the game

Yes, we have a new, improved web site, thanks to the efforts of Dan Robinson. You can find the URL above, next to my smiling face. I'll maintain both sites for a while ...

More good news: we're going to be getting some BridgeMate IIIs soon, followed (hopefully soon after) by a dealing machine that doesn't have to go to Sweden every time it throws a fit.

In the July Unit game, Fredy and Lulu Minter just snuck home with a 62.8% game. Breathing down their necks were Mary Ann Wotring – Vic Sartor. Yours Truly – Judy Mogharbel were a distant third, followed by Richard Parker – Art Weinstein and then Kitty Moon – Tom Cusack.

We had three promotions this month. Teresa Wray and Aeshna Mathur have advanced to Club Master. Caryn Mason is now a Bronze Life Master. Good work, and keep it up!

Our own Caryn Mason was on a team representing District 23 in the Grand National Teams at the Summer NABC. The team started off well, winning 3 of 4 matches in the first session. But then they seemed to stumble a bit, losing two of the final four matches, and ended up placing 10th. Alas, only eight teams qualify for the knockout stage. Still, not a terrible performance – they were less than 2 Victory Points away from qualifying. Wait 'til next year! As a consolation prize, Caryn brought home 22.87 masterpoints, and is now a Bronze Life Master.

I didn't see any other U551 members in the masterpoint list, but with well over 3,000 people scoring, well, my eyeballs got paralyzed after a while.

Thanks again to Patrick Finley, for collating the masterpoint statistics for July.

1	17.41	Lulu Minter
2	15.90	Fredy Minter
3	11.61	Vic Sartor
4	8.50	Caryn Mason
5	7.31	Mary Ann Wotring
6	7.17	Nona Stokes
6	7.17	Ramona Hernandez
8	6.83	Patrick Finley
9	6.81	Richard Parker
10	6.63	Art Weinstein

And at the Claremont Bridge Club:

1	2.83	Patrick Finley
2	2.18	Steve Mancini
3	1.48	Dan Robinson
4	1.29	Ramona Hernandez
5	0.71	Steve Andersen
5	0.71	Marjorie Preston

At La Fetra, once again six scores were over the magic 65% benchmark. Five of them were turned in by Fredy and Lulu Miner: 69.58%, 68.68%, 66.67%, 65.50%, and 65.44% - that last score good for only second place, however, behind Vic Sartor – Caryn Mason’s 68.43% game. The only other pack leaders were Nona Stokes – Ramona Hernandez.

Over in Claremont, three of the five game winners topped the magic 65%. Steve Mancini – Patrick Finley scored a monstrous 78.13%, while Dan Robinson and Olivia Esquibel turned in an impressive 70.83% effort. Patrick Rogers – Patrick Finley scored 66.67%.

As you may know, we (normally – when the Duplimate doesn’t have a hissy fit) use hands supplied by The Common Game, at both La Fetra and the Claremont Club. Several of our players had noteworthy placings in the national Common Game tabulations, in which the results of La Fetra and Claremont players are compared with some 300-500 Howell movement pairs playing the same hands in other parts of the country, and in a few cases, other parts of the world. The percentages shown below vary from the percentages won at the club, because in the Common Game each hand is matchpointed against a universe of hundreds of opposing pairs, not simply against one’s club opponents.

At La Fetra, Lulu and Fredy Minter finished fourth nationally with a 67.73% game on July 14, and Vic Sartor – Caryn Mason came in first nationally with a 70.04% game on July 31. Caryn Mason – Patrick Finley and the Minters also finished in the top 50 nationally on July 14 and July 28 respectively.

At Claremont, Dan Robinson and Olivia Esquibel came in 5th nationally with a 63.67% game on July 30 and Patrick Finley and Steve Mancini had a top-50 placing on July 23.

For our hand-of-the-month, I return to a topic I used a few months ago – but it was *so* much fun, that I figure if you liked it once, you’ll *love* it twice. Sitting in fourth seat, with only the opponents vulnerable, you pick up this nice collection:

♠ J 6 ♥ none ♦ A 5 4 3 ♣ A K Q 10 7 6 3

It’s three passes to you. Well, Chief, what’s your opening bid?

My thinking was, there are 13 hearts and 11 spades out there. Probably, no one has six of either, or they might have opened the suit, but I sure don’t relish competition when my long suit is (as usual) clubs. So I opened 3♣. Partner gave me the hairy eyeball, of course, then considered that maybe – just *maybe* – I had not gone brain-dead and had a decent hand. She called 3NT. Making 4, tie for top in a 7 table game. The results at all the tables:

3NT-W,	+430	(twice)
5♣-E	+400	
2♣-E	+150	
3♣-E	+130	
4♣-E	+130	
5♣-E	-50	

According to Bridge Composer, the par result is either 3NT, 5♣, or 5♦, 400 to E-W. Wheee! Don’t ask *me* how you would get to 5♦!

The full hand was

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

Finally, a **Rant**. (No, Tom would *never* do that, would he? No, never. What, *never*? Well ... hardly ever.). This will make more sense to you if you read the West L.A. column first ...

Playing solitaire on BBO, those &%^\$#@! robots committed the following atrocity:

It was the very first deal of the session. In fourth seat, no one vulnerable, I picked up (approximately)

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

The dealer to my left opened 2♦ (weak). My partner passed, RHO bid 4♦. What now? Well, there's this thing called the Unusual Notrump, generally showing the two lowest unbid suits, but at high levels, can be used to show two places to play. (With all three unbid suits, you can double, right?) So, 4NT it was. This was followed by ... brace yourself ... THREE passes. Yes, my brain-and-electron-dead partner apparently was not programmed for this basic sequence. When the opening lead was made, and that wretched (no holding back when *I* rant) robot put down two small diamonds, the next thing I clicked on was the X in the upper right corner of my browser.

Bah!

Quote for the month: "Not doing more than the average is what keeps the average down."
(William M. Winans)