



# ACBL Director's Report

by Georgia Heth, Morton IL

District 8 Representative on the ACBL Board of Directors

Welcome to everyone from New Orleans! We are having a great time, both playing bridge and visiting at least one great restaurant every day.

The Board meeting went well. Some highlights:

- New-member retention rates have risen significantly.
- The marketing expenditure guidelines were changed to a range of 12 to 15 per cent, from a mandatory 14.5 per cent this year and then 15 percent thereafter, in order to present a budget that did not require any increase in club, sectional or regional sanction fees and still projects a (very) small surplus.
- Additional youth and junior events were added to the 2004 Summer Nationals in New York City.
- It was decided to start the Spingold at the NYC tournament at 10:00 am and 4:00 pm instead of 1:00 pm and 7:00 pm.
- A motion was presented that would determine your strata in a stratified event by averaging your and your partner's masterpoints. The motion was defeated.
- If you lose your ACBL Goodwill pin, you no longer have to pay for a replacement pin.

The motion nearest and dearest to my heart was the proposal to amend the North American pairs. A new method for awarding trips based on the level of participation at the club level was removed in committee from the motion presented to the full board.

The final decision was to retain the North American Pairs event in its current format, but to publicize it greatly and to reduce the club sanction fee from \$7.00 per table to \$4.00 per table. It was felt that the high sanction fee kept many clubs from running qualifying games. This special committee will next make a proposal about the future of the Grand National Teams.

I am also one of the trustees of the ACBL Charity Foundation. The trustees decided to increase the charity donation for several of the charity games by \$1.00 per table. Next year's charity of the year is the Alzheimer's Association, and the concept of a charity-of-the-year will probably end after 2004. We again confirmed our commitment to the concept of letting districts allocate the money that used to be donated to the charity of the year. We will work out the details next year. I was elected vice-president of the Board of Trustees of the Charity Foundation.

On a different topic, I would like to encourage you all to participate in the Grand National Teams District Finals next May 8 and 9 in Springfield IL. Let me just say right now that I know this may not be the best date, but it was the only date possible because of conflicts with other tournaments and site availability. The District 8 Board is planning to pick a standing date for this event (the North American Pairs are always the second weekend in November). One of the proposed dates is the first weekend in May.

Please let your Unit representatives on the District Board know if you have an opinion on this topic. Start forming your teams now and plan to play in Springfield next May. The travel awards from the District Board were greatly increased this year, so it is a good time to try this event if you don't regularly participate.

Finally, thanks to all of you who expressed your sympathy when Mom (Mardell Heth) passed away in October. Mom hadn't been able to play bridge for many years but she missed the game and her bridge friends very much.

See you at the tables.

## District Pairs Advance to Reno NAP

### District 8 North American Pair finals November 10 & 11, 2003 Interstate Center, Bloomington-Normal, IL

Congratulations to the winners and runners-up in District 8's annual North American Pairs. The two-day event, conducted in three separate flights, was open to all District 8 members who qualified in club-level NAP games earlier this summer.

The top two pairs in each flight won travel awards to Reno in March to represent District 8 in the national finals of their respective flights. The third-place pair in each flight also qualified for the national finals, but receives no ACBL travel award.

#### Flight A (Open Championship):

- 1 - Tom Oppenheimer - Milt Zlatic, St. Louis
- 2 - Carol Schaffer - Kenny Bland, St. Louis
- 3 - Mark Kessler, Springfield IL - Ed Schultz, Chesterfield MO
- 4 - Jack Bryant, St. Louis - Rod VanWyk, Alton IL
- 5 - Nancy & Alan Popkin, St. Louis



A1 - Milt Zlatic & Tom Oppenheimer



B1 - Cam & Donna Barbian



B2 - Eryk Gozdowski & Jason Clevenger



B3 - Jim Hudson & Mike Abarbanel

#### Flight B (0-2000 masterpts.):

- 1-Donna & Cam Barbian, Sherman IL
- 2-Jason Clevenger - Eryk Gozdowski, St. Louis
- 3-Jim Hudson, DeKalb IL - Mike Abarbanel, Belvidere IL
- 4-Georgia Heth, Morton IL - Lisa Sievers, Champaign IL

- 5-Margaret Ferguson, Peoria IL - Bob Sievers, Champaign IL
- 6-Carole & Ron Sholes, Springfield IL
- 7-Bob Shair, Champaign IL - Fred Crockett, Danville IL
- 8-Caryl Harrison, Canton IL - Carol Umbach, Havana IL
- 9-John Kessinger & Marci O'Brien, Decatur IL

- 10-Will Engel, Freeport IL - Michael Lee, Champaign IL
- 11-Marilyn Stickel, Lacon IL - Ray Russ, Henry IL
- 12-Debbie Avery, Champaign IL - Martha Leary, Urbana IL
- 13-John Seng - Pat Carrington, Champaign IL



C1 - Jeremy Williams & Tom Willson



C2 - Peggy & Larry McLaughlin



C3 - Glenda Piek & Stan Golab

#### Flight C (Non LM -- 0-500):

- 1-Tom Willson, Champaign IL - Jeremy Williams, Urbana IL
- 2-Peggy & Larry McLaughlin, Decatur IL
- 3-Stan Golab, Dupo IL - Glenda Piek, Edwardsville IL

- 4-Larry Wilcox, Springfield IL - Gene Wheeler, Chatham IL
- 5-Julie Hubbard - Frank Tirsch, Springfield IL
- 6-Bill Lindemann - Oyvind Tafjord, Champaign IL
- 7-Jonell & Leo Comerford, Charleston IL

- 8-Pat Bradley - Twink Baker, St. Louis
- 9-Steve Hawthorne, Bloomington IL - Eric Gettleman, Normal IL
- 10-Mary & Bob Johnson, Godfrey IL

**Photos by Mike Tomljanovich**

Get your team together for the

## District 8 Grand National Teams

May 8 & 9, 2004



UI Home Extension Building,  
State Fairgrounds, Springfield IL

♣ **Saturday, May 8 -- 1:00 & TBA -- 2-Session Qualifying**

♣ **Sunday, May 9 ---- 10:30 a.m. & TBA -- Knockout finals**

Trips to New York City - and regional-rated gold points - are featured in the 2004 District 8 finals of this national team event. Any team of four, five or six District members can enter in one of four separate flights:

**Championship:** Open

**Flight A:** 0-5000 masterpoints

**Flight B:** 0-2000

**Flight C:** 0-500 (non-LMs)

The winning team in each flight will receive a travel award from the District Board to play in the national finals in New York City in July.

**Directions:** The University of Illinois Home Extension Building is located inside the Illinois State Fairgrounds. From I-55, take the Sangamon Avenue exit and stay on Sangamon until you reach the fairgrounds. Turn in at Gate 11 and go about 3 blocks to the Extension Building (Building #30), which will be on your left. Turn into the driveway right before the building for parking. Parking is also available on the street. Enter the south door.

**Sunday side game:** The Bridge Center of Springfield will host an Open Pairs game on Sunday at 12:30 p.m. The club is located at 1305 West Wabash (phone: 217-726-9456).

**Local info:** Liz & Chuck Zalar -- (217) 793-8066 [zalar@insightbb.com](mailto:zalar@insightbb.com)

## Director, please

by David Stevenson, Liverpool, England



### Question (from Carbondale IL):

In our local club, most of the players are non-Life Masters but are eager to learn new systems and try new partnerships. Under these circumstances, what happens if a partner is not sure about the meaning of a particular bid, especially if the auction is complicated? Should he still alert and say that he is not sure, and that there may be several different explanations?

As such a situation has happened a number of times (the club does encourage and invite new players), I would appreciate a general answer as well as an answer to the specific case described below.

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1D	DBL
3C	3H	All pass	

3H went down 2 (-200) for a bad score for East-West. There was no alert and no questions during the auction. South meant 3C as a limit raise in diamonds (9 points, KJ1098 of diamonds, shortness in spades). North-South has an agreement that 1D-Pass-3C would be a limit raise, but they did not discuss the sequence above with the intervening double. North was not sure whether 3C was a limit raise or a weak jump shift or an invitational bid in clubs. Consequently, he did not alert and he passed (holding five diamonds).

East-West claimed they were damaged by the lack of alert. What should be the director ruling?

### Stevenson:

First, the general answer. If a call is known to be ambiguous and possibly alertable, the player will do best to alert it. Opponents have the right to know your agreements, and without the alert, they will just assume the call is natural.

In fact, the case you quote is an excellent example of what should be done. North should alert the 3C. If asked, his correct answer is, "We agreed that 1D-Pass-3C is a limit raise, but we did not discuss whether it applies when 1D is doubled". The advantage of this is that the opponents now know exactly what North-South have agreed, so they cannot claim any damage from misinformation.

On the actual hand you quote, it is not obvious how East-West claimed to have been damaged. What difference would it have made if they had been correctly informed? So my first instinct is there was misinformation, but no damage, so no adjustment. Perhaps I would change my mind if I saw the full hand.

There is a disadvantage in the correct approach: unauthorised information. If North had alerted and been asked, South would have heard the answer, and now would have had to do his best not to gain in any way from knowledge of this answer. The Director would just have to deal with that if it had happened.

Do you have questions about bridge laws, a ruling you received (or made) at a tournament or club game, how to handle an ethical dilemma? David, who is very knowledgeable on North American bridge, will explain laws and proprieties, share opinions on specific cases and offer advice on any aspect of game direction. You can submit questions on his [web form](#) or by email to [laws2@blakjak.com](mailto:laws2@blakjak.com). In your message, include a note that you're an *Advocate* reader from the U.S.

David maintains an archive of articles on laws and proprieties on his web site:  
[http://www.blakjak.demon.co.uk/lws\\_menu.htm](http://www.blakjak.demon.co.uk/lws_menu.htm)



# District 8 Solvers Forum -- December 2003

by Karen Walker, Champaign IL

## 1. IMPs, NS vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	--	--	1D
1S	2H	4S	???

What is your call as South holding: **S-A4 H-K D-AQJ532 C-QJ106** ?

The panel offered six possible solutions and several different ideas about the meanings of their choices. One of the most interesting discussions was about whether or not a pass would be forcing here.

**DODD:** "Pass. Given the vulnerability, I'll let partner clarify and then take my guess on the next round. Yes, this pass IS forcing!"

**HUDSON:** "Double. Pass wouldn't be forcing and 5D is too unilateral. Double is more discouraging than I really want to be with this rather offensive-oriented hand, but I must show some strength and no fit for hearts."

Eddie Kantar wrote an entire book on forcing passes. The quick version of his guidelines, as they apply here, is that for a forcing-pass situation to be "on", our side must have:

(1) Shown game-forcing values -- one partner must have made a forcing raise, a game-forcing 2-over-1 response, a splinter bid, etc. **OR**

(2) Issued **and accepted** a game invitation.

Neither of those conditions have been met here. It's not a forcing pass just because one of us has shown invitational values or because the opponents preempted.

Expert Richard Pavlicek has an even simpler guideline, which is that we're in a forcing-pass situation only if the **bidding** suggests that our side holds at least 23 HCP. That's not the case here, as explained by:

**FEILER:** "Double. The 5-level doesn't come with a guarantee, particularly since we don't yet have a suit to play in. Partner could have choked out 2H on a 6-card suit and 8 or 9 high-card points. If he has a good hand, he can bid on. He knows I'm not doubling on the basis of a spade stack."

Even if you play a 2-over-1 forcing-to-game system, partner's bid in competition doesn't show game-forcing values. If you pass and he has that 9-point hand, he'll have no reason to believe your side has any more than 21 or 22 high-card points.

The majority of the panel chose to take some action. A few bidders speculated that a pass might be forcing, but they thought it would put too much pressure on partner. If a pass **were** forcing here, this really isn't the hand for it. A forcing pass suggests your hand is suitable for offense, and partner is likely to interpret that as at least moderate support for hearts. A singleton -- even a good one -- isn't what he'll expect.

**MERRITT:** "5C. Double is a sure plus, but it doesn't look like we'll get rich."

**ATHY:** "5C. Still feeling around for a spot. This is a great 5-loser hand and the heart king isn't just any old singleton. Over 5D or 5H, I'll bid 5S."

Action	Score	Votes	% Solvers
Double	100	6	36
4NT	80	2	12
5C	80	3	22
Pass	70	3	15
5D	70	0	15
6D	60	1	0
5H	50	1	0

There's exuberance for you. Better not make a 2-level freebid on a 9-count if you're playing with Norm!

The problem with the 5C bid is that partner will think you have a 5-5 or 6-5 hand. That could land you in a Moysian fit, as he'll pass if he holds 3 clubs and 2 diamonds. If you want to show clubs, but more gently, this approach has merit:

**BIRDSALL:** "4NT. This normally shows the 6-4 type hand. I'm fairly sure of making a 5-level contract, and doubling 4S won't yield a big penalty."

**KNIEST:** "4NT, minor-suit takeout. Partner probably has at least 6 minor-suit cards. It seems the best we can get them for is 300 while we have a sure +600, and maybe more."

If you're going to insist on game, 4NT would be a handy way to show primary diamonds and secondary clubs, but only if partner reads it. There's a good case for playing 4NT here as Blackwood for hearts, and without a specific discussion to the contrary, that's probably how I'd take it.

I'm surprised that so many panelists thought they had a "sure" game on this deal. Some were convinced partner had a singleton spade, but at this vulnerability, my opponents never seem to need a 10-card fit for this kind of bidding.

The majority of the panel went for the "absolutely sure" thing:

**K.C. JONES:** "Double. This shows a good hand without a good fit for partner. He should know I 'live' in the minors, but neither suit warrants bidding it myself at the 5-level."

I think the double here covers all bases. Partner can see the vulnerability. If he has the hand you need for your "sure" game, he'll probably bid. If not, you'll collect your +300 or +500 and live to fight another day.

## 2. Matchpoints, none vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	1S	DBL	1NT
2C	2S	3C	???

What is your call as South holding: **S-Q5 H-J82 D-J963 C-AJ96** ?

Has Christmas come early? Or is there a trap here?

**ATHY:** "Double. I don't see how this 10-loser hand can be much help to partner in spades, and 3C might be costly. I'll double and hope to catch 300, put my second hope on +100, and apologize if it's -470."

**VONGSVIVUT:** "Double. I should get two or three club tricks on defense. If we can make 3S, they should go down at least two tricks. I plan to use the spade suit to force their trumps."

**STRITE:** "Double. I think I have to take a crack at this at matchpoints, even though partner is likely void. He'll rescue some of the times this is wrong."

This was Board #11 in the ACBL-wide Instant Matchpoint game held in September at local clubs. My partner, Lynne Feldman, didn't think long at all with this hand before she bid 3S. I held **S-J10xxxx H-AKx D-Qxx C-Void** and went down one against accurate defense. The good news was that 3C was making, so we survived with an average for our -50.

Was Lynne just lucky to catch me with so few high-card points and such long spades? Or was her action based on good judgment? Several panelists and a large percentage of the Solvers shared her view:

**KLEMIC:** "3S. I have a lot of points for this auction, so I suspect partner is bidding on distribution. Give him AKxxxxx of spades and an ace, and we're in the right spot. I expect we may beat 3C, but it will only be one non-vulnerable trick."

Action	Score	Votes	% Solvers
Double	100	9	46
3S	80	3	44
Pass	70	2	8
3NT	70	2	2

**RABIDEAU:** "3S. Beating 3C isn't going to happen very often. I'll go for the -50, -100 or occasional +140."

It's true that those are awfully good clubs, but it's unlikely they'll take more than two tricks (perhaps only one) on defense. So if you choose to defend 3C, you'll have to count on partner for at least three defensive tricks -- not a good bet.

Most panelists thought the opponents had a 9-card fit, which leaves partner with length in the red suits. That makes your paltry jacks look a lot better. They won't take tricks on defense, but they may be valuable fillers if partner declares.

A few panelists went for the gusto:

**DODD:** "3NT. It's tempting to double for the 'sure' plus (maybe even 300 or 500), but with my spade queen being a potentially solidifying card, all I need is AKxxxxx of spades and a red ace to score this up."

That decision doesn't work out at all on this deal, but I can see the appeal. There won't be many (any) other pairs wandering into this contract, so if you happen to hit that hand, you may score one of those rare tops across North America.

### 3. Matchpoints, none vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	--	--	1S
2D	Pass	3D	???

What is your call as South holding: **S-AQ9843 H-A965 D-2 C-K4 ?**

Cautious bidders get the top score here. It's hard to argue with their logic:

**STRITE:** "Pass. Partner didn't make a negative double, so we aren't missing much joy."

**RABIDEAU:** "Pass. Double could be right, but my high-card points (not much extra), position (in front of the stronger opponent) and shape (a doubleton in the suit partner is most likely to bid) all suggest the use of the green card. The auction isn't over."

**MERRITT:** "Pass. Partner can't make a negative double and I'm supposed to bid here? Am I missing something?"

You're missing matchpoint madness:

**KNIEST:** "Double. I'm pushing, but I have a little extra, and partner may be able to pass. Or he may have a weak hand with heart length. If he bids 4C, I'm a passenger."

**KLEMIC:** "3H. This is a pretty thin hand, but the vulnerability and scoring suggest competing. At IMPs, I'd pass with little thought."

**VONGSVIVUT:** "Double. If partner doesn't have four hearts or five clubs, he should have at least two spades and we'll land in 3S. With my singleton diamond, I have to try to compete."

Yes, this only a 13-count, but it's quick tricks and majors and a stiff in their suit ... and there's that little voice telling you that defending 3D will be a bad score. That's more than enough to elicit action from those who follow the "greed is good" (or at least "forgivable") philosophy of matchpoint play.

I admit that I would double here, too. The deciding factor for me is that if partner can't pass or bid hearts, my sixth spade offers us some safety. If partner holds five mediocre clubs and a doubleton spade, he may well choose to take the preference to 3S to stay a level lower.

What I'm really hoping, though, is that partner can pass my double. My choice may be somewhat influenced by the growing tendency of my real-life opponents to make 2-level overcalls on junk. Even some fairly experienced players seem to think a 10-count and any 5-card suit will do. I figure if I don't take out the cannons on them every now and then, I'm letting them get away with murder.

Action	Score	Votes	% Solvers
Pass	100	8	36
Double	90	6	18
3S	70	0	15
3H	60	2	30

With half of our panel opting to charge back into this auction, it's surprising that none voted for 3S, which would be my second choice. There was a stronger vote for 3H, but this can create the same problem as a 5C bid in Problem #1. It will sound to partner like you have equal length in your suits, and he'll pass with two spades and three hearts.

**FEILER:** "Pass. I have an opening hand with a stiff diamond -- just what partner might expect."

There you go again ... destroying the all the bidders' fun with your pesky, bullet-proof logic.

### 4. IMPs, NS vulnerable

West	North	East	South
3D	DBL	Pass	4S
Pass	5C	Pass	???

What is your call as South holding: **S-KQ8763 H-J752 D-43 C-J ?**

What type of hand is partner showing with his 5C bid? Here are three interpretations:

**VONGSVIVUT:** "Pass. I have no first-round control so no hope for slam. Partner should have a good hand and a self-supporting club suit."

**STRITE:** "5S. No red-suit control to offer, so I've shot my wad. If all partner needed was good spades, he chose the wrong slam try."

**KLEMIC:** "5H. Partner doubled for a reason, so there's somewhere else to play. He'll know there's a length disparity in my major suits since I didn't bid 4D on the last round."

The majority of the panel agreed that if partner held a club one-suiter, he would have overcalled 4C or 5C instead of making a takeout double. Most also rejected the idea that he was making a cuebid for spades, since he has other, less-ambiguous ways to show a big hand with support. The consensus picture of partner's hand is best summarized by:

**KNIEST:** "5H. Partner's auction guarantees that he holds hearts and clubs -- probably 2-4-1-6 distribution. Rebidding spades is wrong. After two diamond leads, dummy may be endplayed -- or spades could go out 4-1."

If you follow this reasoning, you have to give partner the good news about your heart fit and resist the temptation to rebid spades. As this panelist points out, partner has probably already figured out you have a long suit:

**NELSON:** "5H. Partner knows I would never jump with only a 4-card suit when the auction starts this high. It's best to correct to hearts and not rebid the spades."

At least one panelist was disappointed that he couldn't do more:

**FOGEL:** "5H. I don't have enough to jump to slam, but I would if I held an ace ... or if I thought we really needed a board to win the match."

### 5. IMPs, NS vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	Pass	1C	1H
Pass	2C	3C	???

What is your call as South holding: **S-K83 H-AQ832 D-KJ5 C-104 ?**

The sane, conservative approach wins again. As in Problem #3, the panel isn't

Action	Score	Votes	% Solvers
5H	100	10	44
5S	80	4	26
Pass	70	2	30

Action	Score	Votes	% Solvers
Pass	100	7	32
3D	80	3	15



passing just because they're chicken. They back up their choice with simple but sound reasoning.

3H	70	2	25
4H	60	4	23

**K.C. JONES:** "Pass. My vulnerable overcalls at IMPs show good hands, and this one has nothing extra."

**BIRDSALL:** "Pass. Not nearly enough to double, and bidding here is just plain wrong. If it's correct, then partner will bid on after I pass."

So why are so many others pushing toward game -- or blasting into it? Several panelists explained their aggressiveness with comments along the lines of "vulnerable at IMPs, gotta bid game". It leaves me wondering if there are any bridge crimes that have been committed more frequently than those in the name of "vul at IMPs".

IMP scoring *does* favor bidding close games when you're vulnerable, but it shouldn't alter your basic hand-evaluation skills. To judge your chances for game, start with a picture of partner's hand, which is typically a 3-card limit raise (10-11 points with three hearts). If you had been the opening bidder and partner had shown you this hand, you would pass, quickly. The only difference here is that the opponents will probably make a better opening lead than they would have in an uncontested auction.

Several panelists opted for more flexible advances:

**KNIEST:** "3D. I have full values for my overcall, so I make a game try with 3D."

And all this time, I thought partner's cuebid asked if you had anything *extra* for your overcall. I didn't know it was checkback to see if you really had "full minimum" values for your first bid.

**HUDSON:** "Pass. This must be forcing to 3H, even if I made a light overcall. I would bid 3H here to show a weak overcall."

This is the opposite of the standard treatment after a cuebid raise. We aren't in a forcing auction. If partner thinks it's right to defend 3C, I certainly don't want to bid in front of him with a weak hand. Over RHO's bid, *pass* is the weakest call you can make.

**RABIDEAU:** "3H. An in-between bid for an in-between hand?"

This makes sense, although the only really "serious" in-between bid here is the 3D game-try. I like to treat the freebid of 3H as a "not-so-serious" in-between bid -- it still shows a not-interested-in-game minimum, but suggests some extra playing strength (a sixth heart or a singleton).

Here's yet another approach:

**MERRITT:** "Pass. Sure, I have a decent hand. Hopefully, partner can come in with something other than 3H, and then I'll bid game."

Finally, a panelist who's willing to let partner be the pushy one. That leads us to another important consideration: If you're still inclined to try for game with this hand, can you be sure you're the only overbidder in the partnership? Partner knows all about this "vul-at-IMPs" thing, too, and that may have motivated him to stretch a bit to make the cuebid. If you don't want to continually reach hopeless 13-opposite-9 games, one of you has to play the straight man in these auctions, and on this one, I think you're elected.

## 6. Matchpoints, both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	--	Pass	1D
1H	DBL *	Pass	2C
2H	Pass	Pass	???

\* (negative)

What is your call as South holding: **S-A5 H-104 D-AQJ106 C-K1083 ?**

Action	Score	Votes	% Solvers
Pass	100	9	48
Double	80	6	17
3C	60	1	15

This could be a world's record in this forum, with Pass being the top choice on three problems and a logical alternative on three others. Most of the panel saw this one as a "Partner Has Spoken" situation:

3D	60	0	13
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**FOGEL:** "Pass. Partner knows what you have and he elected to pass. It's unlikely to be your hand at the 3-level. Without extras, go quietly and wait for the next board."

**STRITE:** "Pass. I think I've shown my hand already. I don't expect a good score, but I have to trust partner."

**HUDSON:** "Pass. I have no reason to expect a fit, as partner could be 4-4-2-3 with 6 points. If he had a 4-card minor, I expect he would have raised. I have only a little more than I've shown, so I'll abide by his decision."

Jim makes a good point about partner's likely distribution. Because there's a fairly wide range for your 2C rebid, partner will try to help you out if he can. He would stretch to compete if he had a fit, even with a weak high-card-point hand.

The doublers wanted to have one more go at it. They liked their quick tricks and good suits, and were hoping to find +200 in the cards:

**DODD:** "Double. Last of the big spenders. Even if partner passes with a 4-3-3-3 8-count, I like our chances of scrounging a set."

**KNIEST:** "Double. I have extras for both offense and defense, and the double pinpoints my distribution since I didn't bid 2S."

This is a nice opening bid, but since you might hold as many as 16 or 17 points for the 2C rebid, a 14-count -- even with three quick tricks -- might not be partner's idea of "extras". This probably won't affect his action here, as he's surely going to pass your double. All you have to do then is hope your cards are well placed and/or that you can maneuver a spade ruff.

The final word, from someone who's been there:

**ATHY:** "Pass. I've seen (and made) some pretty weak 1-level negative doubles, and I don't want to see one of them at the 3-level. By the way, I tried a 3D bid on almost this exact same hand in a rubber-bridge game a few years ago. Thanks to the 100 honors, I was able to get out for -400. Live and learn!"

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Thanks to all who sent in answers for this set. Thanks to this issue's guest panelists **Gareth Birdsall**, **Micah Fogel** and **George Klemic**, and congratulations to **Greg Berry** and **Robert Lambert**, who topped all Solvers. They're invited to join the panel for February.

Our bidding system is based loosely on [Bridge World Standard](#). You can use it as a general guideline for conventions, but you don't have to study it to answer the problems. Our focus in this column is on how auctions are popularly treated in mainstream play, not on what BWS dictates. When in doubt, just answer the problems as if you were playing with an experienced player and the specific situation is undiscussed.

The 2004 Solvers Contest begins with the next issue. I hope you'll all join in and try the six new problems for February (see below). Please submit your answers by **January 15** on the [web form](#) or by email to our February moderator:

**Scott Merritt** -- [scottmerritt@verizon.net](mailto:scottmerritt@verizon.net)

**Thanks to everyone** for reading the column and offering your suggestions. We appreciate your participation, and we hope you all have a wonderful holiday season and New Year.

-- **Karen, Scott, Tom & Tom**

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## How the Panel voted (Panel/Staff Avg. -- 526):

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Score
Norm Athy, St. Louis	5C	DBL	3H	5S	4H	Pass	480
Gareth Birdsall, Cambridge UK	4NT	Pass	DBL	5H	Pass	Pass	540
Kent Feiler, Harvard IL	DBL	DBL	Pass	5H	3D	3C	540
Micah Fogel, Aurora IL	5H	DBL	DBL	5H	4H	Pass	500
George Klemic, Bensenville IL	5C	3S	3H	5H	4H	DBL	460
Jim Hudson, DeKalb IL	DBL	DBL	Pass	5H	Pass	Pass	600
K. C. Jones, Euless TX	DBL	DBL	Pass	5H	Pass	Pass	600
Larry Matheny, Loveland CO	DBL	DBL	Pass	5S	Pass	DBL	560
Bev Nelson, Fort Myers FL	6D	3NT	DBL	5H	4H	DBL	460
Larry Rabideau, St. Anne IL	Pass	3S	Pass	5S	3H	Pass	500
Toby Strite, Hagendorn, Switz.	Pass	DBL	Pass	5S	3D	Pass	530
Arbha Vongsvivut, Godfrey IL	DBL	DBL	DBL	Pass	3H	Pass	530

## How the Staff voted:

Tom Dodd, Boerne TX	Pass	3NT	Pass	5H	Pass	DBL	520
Tom Kniest, University City MO	4NT	DBL	DBL	5H	3D	DBL	530
Scott Merritt, Arlington VA	5C	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	DBL	500
Karen Walker, Champaign IL	DBL	3S	DBL	5H	Pass	Pass	570

## Solvers Honor Roll (Average Solver score: 486)

<b>Greg Berry</b> , Sleepy Hollow IL	580	<b>Warren Bosch</b> , Elgin IL	520
<b>Robert Lambert</b> , Warsaw IN	570	<b>Tad Hofkin</b> , Aurora IL	520
<b>Jody Castillo</b> , Warsaw IN	540	<b>Doug Jonquet</b> , Decatur IL	520
<b>Mason Myers</b> , Chesterfield MO	540	<b>Don Mathis</b> , Florissant MO	520

<b>Rich Peer</b> , St. Louis MO	540	<b>Manuel Paulo</b> , Lisbon, Portugal	520
<b>Len Vishnevsky</b> , San Francisco CA	540	<b>Tom Rossow</b> , South Bend IN	520
<b>Steve Babin</b> , Normal IL	530	<b>Bob Shair</b> , Champaign IL	520

## Solvers Forum -- February Problems

### 1. IMPs, EW vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	--	--	???

What is your call as South holding:  
**S-Q943 H-AQ98762 D-108 C-Void ?**

### 2. Matchpoints, NS vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	--	1D	Pass
1H	1S	2C	Pass
2D	2H	Pass	???

What is your call as South holding:  
**S-109 H-A106 D-J63 C-A9865 ?**

### 3. IMPs, both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	Pass	Pass	1D
Pass	1H	Pass	2D
Pass	3D	Pass	???

What is your call as South holding:  
**S-J42 H-K D-AK9765 C-A93 ?**

### 4. Matchpoints, EW vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	--	1H	Pass
Pass	1S	Pass	???

What is your call as South holding:  
**S-Void H-AQ102 D-KJ953 C-A843 ?**

### 5. Matchpoints, none vulnerable

West	North	East	South
--	--	--	1NT *
Pass	2S **	Pass	3C
Pass	3NT	Pass	???

\* (15-17) \*\* Minor-suit Stayman

What is your call as South holding:  
**S-AQ3 H-1092 D-AK5 C-Q982 ?**

### 6. IMPs, both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1S	Pass	1NT	???

What is your call as South holding:  
**S-10543 H-AK82 D-K C-AKQJ ?**

Thanks to Kent Feiler for Problem #6.



# Pair Fare

News from Northwestern Illinois Unit 239

Editor: Dennis Ryan, 118 Glenview Court, Janesville WI 53545 [drchezmoi@aol.com](mailto:drchezmoi@aol.com)

## Bob Pooley, Life Master



Bob Pooley, one of Unit 239's latest life masters, can testify on the basis of first-hand experience to the lasting effects of our Unit's determined efforts to recruit members.

Bob started playing duplicate in December, 1992 in Marian Newell's and Betty Wade's game in Aurora. He had played rubber bridge, both in college and with a group of strong local players. He had even been introduced to duplicate, back in the 1960's, but it just never "took," partly because he lacked a partner for many years. Thirty years later, a banker friend introduced him to duplicate again, but could not play the following week. Without a partner, Bob felt insecure. "I probably would not have returned," he admits reluctantly. "But Marian and Betty were having none of that. Both ladies invited me to play with them the following week, so I went back for more."

"I like to 'nose into' other people's interests," Bob explains. "I like to learn the source of the fascination they find. And I think many newcomers stick their noses in the tent of bridge for exactly that same reason. Thanks to the warm welcome I received from Marian and Betty, I found a source of fun and entertainment that's lasted for years. I personally want to thank them for their hard work. I am living proof that their efforts pay off."

Bob made life master at the October regional in Rosemont, playing on a knockout team with Tom Burke of Aurora and with John Otto and Jim McKinney as team mates. He needed .01 gold points going into the event.

Bob is Aurora born and bred. He retired 25 years ago from his own construction firm, but has since held a part-time job as an appraiser for the township assessor. "I only get two kinds of complaints," Bob declares: "from my opponents when their scores are too low, and from the public when their assessments are too high."

Bob and his wife Mary Jayne have six children: Joan, of Bartlett, IL; Jean, of New York City; Margaret, of Aurora; Melissa, of Geneva, IL; Robert, Jr., of Chicago; and Dan, of Glenview, IL.

The next time you see Bob, you will probably also see a newspaper in his hand. He is an incessant reader of bridge columns, always covering two—and sometimes three—a day.

## Ray Wuebben, Life Master



Unlike Bob, who needed only .01 gold to become a life master, Ray Wuebben of Oregon has had all his pigmented points since 1994. He just needed points, and got them in the October Lake Geneva regional in a knockout event playing with Craig Bontjes and Bob and Kay Korte.

The event was not without trauma, however. "We qualified for the semifinals on Friday, but on Saturday before I left the house I got a severe nosebleed from a bloodthinner I take," Ray explains. "We scurried for a sub, and I went to the doctor. But the second I got home, my mother was rushed to the hospital."

Ray grew up in Sterling, IL, and received an associate degree from Sauk Valley Community College in nearby Dixon. When he got out of the Army (where he was a medical equipment repairman in Hawaii,) he went to work for what was then Commonwealth Edison. He worked at the Quad Cities Nuclear Station, and then at the Byron Nuclear Station. He has lived in the Oregon, IL area since 1978.

"Wu" and his wife Deb have two children: one son, David, is a junior at Augustana College in Rock Island, majoring in finance; another son, Matthew, is currently living at home, planning to attend Sauk Valley Community College in January.

Ray began playing duplicate when he was 19, in 1967, with Harold Steiner, who told him, "Watch out for these two old ladies. They use weak two's and other weird conventions."

Ray wants one thing very clear: "He introduced me to bridge briefly and dragged me to a duplicate game. I thank Harold to this day for all the enjoyment and heartache." And then there were those "friendly" bridge games at work. One of the foursome there was Craig Bontjes, Unit 239 Secretary, and one of Ray's favorite partners. The pairs has enjoyed considerable success, and one of Bontjes' favorite refrains to this day is, "Wuebben, Wuebben, I've been THINKING."

## The Changing Scene . . .

New Junior Masters: Carol Cue, Montgomery; Bernice Nesheim, Rockford.

New Club Masters: Mary Grandgeorge, Somonauk; Gordon Leibert, Elgin; Liz Leibert, Elgin; Diane Pauser, Dixon; Donald Pauser, Dixon.

New Sectional Masters: Rachel Campbell, Elgin; Linda Shaw, Geneva.

New Regional Masters: Joan Bailey-Murray, Rockford; Patrick Haverty, Woodstock; Chere Morrison, Poplar Grove.

New NABC Masters: Mrs. L. A. Jenkins, Rockford



# CIBA Digest

News from Central Illinois Unit 208

Editor: Karen Walker, 2121 Lynwood Drive, Champaign IL 61821  
(217) 359-0042 [kwalker@prairienet.org](mailto:kwalker@prairienet.org)

## In Memory: Sharad Chitgopekar

Central Illinois lost a special friend with the sudden death of Sharad Chitgopekar, 65, of Pune, India. Sharad died of severe head injuries at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, December 2 at Hardikar Hospital in Pune. He was hit by a motorcycle as he was crossing the street.

Sharad and his family lived in Bloomington from 1979 to 2002. During that time, he was a tireless volunteer for players throughout Central Illinois. He served as Unit President, District 8 Board member, club manager and director, tournament chairman and North American Pairs coordinator. He never turned down an opportunity to promote bridge and help his fellow players. He won the Unit Goodwill pin in 1988.

Sharad retired in 2002 from the Illinois State University Department of Management and Quantitative Methods. He and his family moved back to India to pursue volunteer work in rural education of women in western India. He established a charitable trust in India for this purpose.

In addition to being an accomplished bridge player, Sharad was an active member of the McLean County India Association and the Hindu Society of Central Illinois. His volunteer activities included Walk for Mankind, American Diabetes Association, Illinois Heart Association and the Arthritis Foundation.

Sharad is survived by his wife, Suneeti; daughter, Anuradha Khanna; and son, Unmesh. Other survivors include his mother, a brother and two sisters who live in India.

**Services:** A tribute to his life service will be held at **9:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 6** at Illinois State University Felmley Hall, Room 133. Felmley is at the intersection of College Avenue and School Street. Parking will be available at the School Street faculty parking lot.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hindu Society of Central Illinois, 1309 Chadwick Drive, Normal IL 61761. The collection will be sent to Sharad's charitable trust in India.

For further information, contact Ramesh Chaudhari at 309-452-7737 or email [ramesh@ilstu.edu](mailto:ramesh@ilstu.edu)



## Goodwill Award Winner

Congratulations to **Mary Hickman** of Decatur, who is the winner of the 2003 Unit Goodwill Award. This annual award is given by the Unit President to a player who has excelled in bridge promotion and volunteerism.

Mary credits bridge with saving her sanity, if not her life, when she left her native state of Virginia and came to live in Decatur as a young bride. Next to her family, bridge has become the most important thing in her life and she has repaid the game with her many activities as a bridge volunteer.

Over the years, Mary, who is a silver life master, has promoted and taught bridge. In the past, she has been a club owner and club manager. She is currently a club owner and directs the Friday game at the Commodore DBC. Although she doesn't get out to tournaments much anymore, she handles the hospitality for our Soy City Sectional.

We are hoping Mary remains a force in Decatur bridge for many years.

- Jay Poling, Unit 208 President

## In Memory: Mardell Heth

We were saddened by the October 6 loss of **Mardell (Rose) Heth**, 69, of Morton. Mardell had been ill for several years and had not been able to play, but she was once a very active supporter of clubs and tournaments in the Peoria, Bloomington and Morton area.

Mardell and her husband John, who died in 1987, made bridge a family affair. For years, their standard team at Central Illinois sectionals was her and John and two of their children, Georgia and John III. She was an accomplished cook and was locally famous for the snacks and desserts she brought to tournaments.

Mardell will be remembered by many for her generosity, her sweet personality and her big smile. Our sympathies go out to her children -- John, Georgia, Alan and Helen -- and to her many friends throughout our Unit.

## Club Directors Update Course

If you're a club director, make plans now to participate in this popular -- and free -- ACBL course at the 2004 [Illini Regional](#) in Champaign.

This workshop will help you update your knowledge of bridge laws, alert regulations, effective use of ACBLScore and other aspects of directing games and managing your local club. It's designed for experienced club directors, but aspiring directors and other interested players are welcome.

The course will be presented from 8:30 to 12:30 on Friday and Sunday mornings (May 28 & 30, 2004) at the Chancellor Hotel in Champaign. Those who complete both sessions will earn continuing-education certificates **and** receive \$5 discounts on their Sunday Open Pair entries at the regional.

## Movin' Up: Congratulations to these Unit members who recently advanced in rank:

### New Junior Masters (5 pts.)

Steve Green, Goodfield  
Carla Heitzman, Urbana  
S. McGroarty, Normal  
Marilyn Winter, Mt. Zion

### Regional Masters (100 pts.)

Rosemary Dougherty, Springfield  
Layton Lamb, Springfield  
Mary Ann Young, Jacksonville

### Club Masters (20 pts.)

Gene Albrecht, Mt. Zion  
Linda Albrecht, Mt. Zion  
Jane Auby, Springfield  
Janice Badgett, Chatham  
Eric Gettleman, Normal  
Don Keith, Chatham  
Eugene McMahon, Canton  
Marlene Rinehart, Springfield

### NABC Masters (200 pts.)

Jonell Comerford, Charleston  
Beverly Harrison, Charleston  
Ruth Killen, Springfield  
Jim Melville, Springfield

### Life Masters (300 pts.)

Mel Porter, Illiopolis  
Ross Richardson, Springfield  
Jean Voice, Decatur

### Sectional Masters (50 pts.)

Cal Corbin, Champaign  
Mary Cralley, Normal  
Cindy Wheeler, Chatham

### Bronze Life Masters (500 pts.)

Don Strand, Normal  
Jean Voice, Decatur





# Greater St. Louis Bridge News

News from Greater St. Louis Unit 143

Editor: Julie Behrens, 662 Kirkshire Drive, St. Louis MO 63122 [jtbehrens@yahoo.com](mailto:jtbehrens@yahoo.com)

## New Life Masters



**Linda Brazier**

"It all started 40 years ago when one of our friends announced, 'We're going to learn to play bridge together. Now just go buy this Bridge Party Tablecloth. It has all the bidding requirements for opening and responding right in front of you.' However, five years ago when my friend, Barbara Simpson, invited me to learn Standard American, a whole new fun world was created. I had just retired from teaching, so this became a wonderful hobby, and my husband, Reid, gave me lots of encouragement.

"My first game and points earned were with Barbara at the St. Louis Regional in August 1998; and my Life Master goal was achieved there with her this past August, 2003. Besides Barbara, my favorite partners and teammates are Jean Srenco, Bob Wheeler and Mark Ludwig. Special thanks to Louise and Paul Ellebracht who have been very supportive."



**Arnie Schrier**

"I've been playing bridge since college when we would go to the Student Union to find a game instead of studying. For over 50 years Thelma and I have been playing bridge, at least we thought we were playing bridge. Several years ago Thelma took some lessons to learn modern conventions and techniques and tried to teach them to me. But it took Mark Ehret to actually drum this stuff into my brain - sort of.

"Actually it was Thelma's pushing, shoving, cajoling, coaxing and nagging to get me to enough tournaments to accomplish this goal.

"Probably the biggest incentive was the 'In Memoriam' in the Bridge Bulletin. I don't want to die without a star by my name. Now I can live and die a happy man."

**Debbie King**

"Unlike most players that attain life master in 5 years, it took Marvin 20 years to finally bring me to the point count needed to become life master. Thanks, also to Allyson Wolfe who stuck with me to attain those ever elusive silver points to put me over the top."

## Unit 143 Winners

**Springfield IL Sectional** -- October 10-12

Friday Afternoon: A4-Al Fisher - Fran Scheifler

Saturday Stratified Pairs:

A1-Jack Bryant - Milt Zlatic

A4-John & Shirley Dicks

A6-Alan Popkin - Tom Oppenheimer

Sunday Swiss

Bracket I - Alan Popkin, Marvin Shapiro, Larry Kolker, Tom Oppenheimer

Bracket II - Jason Clevenger, Bill Kauffman, Vernon Carver, Andrew Carver

**Louisville KY Regional** -- Oct. 7-12

1st side series: A3-Allyson Wolfe - Denny O'Connor

Thursday Open Pairs: B2-William & Sheryl Finkenstadt

Friday Open Pairs:

A5-Allyson Wolfe - Denny O'Connor

B5&C1-Thelma & Arnie Schrier

Saturday B/C/D: C3-William & Sheryl Finkenstadt

## Congratulations to winners at the St. Louis October 2003 Sectional.



**Friday Night Ft. A/X:** Mary Lou Weyerich & Rich Haacke



**Friday Night Ft. B:** Maxine Revns & George Jones

## Sunday Swiss



**Ft. A:** Nancy Popkin, Alan Popkin, Larry Kolker, Don Stack



**Flight B:** Don Weber, David Eckhardt, Cheryl Davis, Scott Davis

## Twin Cities Winter Sectional January 9-11, 2004

Interstate Center, Bloomington IL  
(west of I-74 & I-55 @ exit 160B, IL Route 9)

### Friday

1:00 pm -- Stratified Pairs  
7:00 pm -- Stratified Open Pairs  
99er pairs (if attendance warrants)

### Saturday

1:00 & 7:00 pm -- Two-session Stratified Pairs (single-session entries welcome!)  
Single-session 99er Pairs (if attendance warrants)

### Sunday

10:30 am playthrough -- Stratified Swiss Teams

- *Complimentary coffee and snacks all sessions.*
- *Dinner served on Sunday*

**Entry fees:** \$8 per person per session on Friday & Saturday.  
\$80 per team on Sunday (includes dinner).

**Strata:** A: Open; B: <1500; C: <Non-LM under 500

**Tournament manager:** Jim Moon (309) 661-8993 [jemoon99@hotmail.com](mailto:jemoon99@hotmail.com)

**Partners:** Mike Tomlianovich (309) 662-5832 [m@mt.org](mailto:m@mt.org)



## St. Louis Winter Sectional January 18-20, 2004

Blanchette Park Memorial Hall -- St. Charles, Missouri

### Friday, January 18

1:30 pm -- Stratified Open Pairs -- NLM-500, 500-1500, 1500+  
Stratified Intermediate/Novice Pairs

7:30 pm -- Flight A/X open Pairs -- 0-3000, 3000+  
Stratified B, C, D Pairs -- 0-200, 200-750, 750-1500

### Saturday, January 19

9:00 am -- Knockout Teams Round 1

1:30 pm -- Stratified Open Pairs (1st session) -- NLM-500, 500-1500, 1500+  
Stratified Intermediate/Novice Pairs  
Knockout Teams Round 2  
Side Game

7:30 pm -- Stratified Open Pairs (2nd session)  
Stratified Intermediate/Novice Pairs  
Knockout Teams Round 3  
Side Game

### Sunday, January 20

10:00 am & TBA -- Stratified Swiss Teams -- NLM-500, 500-1500, 1500+

- Terrific hospitality after all evening sessions
- Guest speakers -- Friday at 12:45 and 6:45; Saturday at 12:45
- Continental breakfast -- Sunday, 9:00 am
- Meal between sessions of Swiss Teams

**Directions:** From I-70, take 5th Street north 1.8 miles to Randolph, turn left, then 0.5 miles to park entrance on the right.

**Chairman:** Mike Carmen -- 314-872-8439 [macarmen@mail.com](mailto:macarmen@mail.com)

**Partnerships:** Mary Hruby -- 314-739-1574



## Soy City Sweetheart Sectional

February 14 & 15, 2004

Pride of the Prairie Center -- Decatur, Illinois

**Saturday, February 14 -- 1:00 & 7:00 p.m.**

Stratified Open Pairs  
99er Pairs (if attendance warrants)

**Sunday, February 15 -- 10:30 a.m. & TBA**

Stratified Swiss Teams

**The names of the winners of Saturday's Open Pairs will be engraved on the Commodore Cup and displayed at the Decatur Commodore Bridge Club.**

**Entry Fees:** \$8.00/session Friday and Saturday; \$80.00/team on Sunday.  
(Meal included with entry fee on Sunday)

**Stratification:** A = Open, B = 0-1500, C = Non-LM (under 500 pts.)

**Host Motel:** Baymont Inn -- Rt. 51 North at I-72 (next to the Cracker Barrel).  
**Reservations:** 217-875-5800. Ask for bridge rate (\$44 + tax).

**Directions:** Westlawn Ave intersects Route 121 on the northwest side of the city. From all directions, take I-72 to Exit 138. Turn left 0.8 miles and then turn left onto Westlawn. The Pride of the Prairie Center is at 3700 North Westlawn, in the Macon County Fairgrounds on your right.

**Bloomington/Champaign shortcut** -- Take US 51 south to Mound Road (2nd light past interstate). Turn right on Mound Road and drive 2.0 miles to Westlawn (just past Auto Auction). Turn left on Westlawn.

**Chairman:** Donn Miller -- 217-428-5058 [damel@insightbb.com](mailto:damel@insightbb.com)

**Partnerships:** Jay Poling -- 217-422-0095 [poling.jay@mcleodusa.net](mailto:poling.jay@mcleodusa.net)

Marciann O'Brien -- 217-429-0765



December  
2003

Published bi-monthly by  
District 8  
of the American Contract  
Bridge League

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Champaign IL



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Dennis Ryan, Janesville WI

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