

Albuquerque Bridge Player

Unit 374's Quarterly Newsletter

President's Column

For those of you who have not looked at 'Wall of Honor' board at DCBC lately, a few changes have occurred. I have scanned and digitized all the pictures and articles found in the scrapbooks from DCBC, Judy Tripp and Judy Randel. The result so far is to produce several posters which focus on bridge players who were active in duplicate bridge in Albuquerque in the Nineteen Forties, Fifties and Sixties.

I have also included a history of bridge in Albuquerque that Susy Law researched and compiled from newspaper clippings, scrapbooks and other bridge documents in our archives. I think it makes interesting reading.

One of the more novel features of our early history was an annual intercity tournament played between teams from Denver and Albuquerque. It was initially held in Raton, NM as a convenient mid-way point between Us and Them. Apparently the tournament started in the Forties and lasted for about ten years and then resumed again in the early Sixties for several years when Albuquerque teams won the title. Eventually a trophy was awarded that became known as the Maxine Jackson Memorial Trophy established by the husband of a bridge player of that era. This trophy was held by the winning team until the next contest. Tournaments like these were indicative of the interest in intercity and interstate bridge events and eventually led to the large number of sectional and regional tournaments that we have today.



Many of the individuals in the photos in the poster collages are not identified. I know who the people are and invite you to take a look to identify some of the current players who started playing in the Sixties (and before).

The parents of several current players are also depicted. Bob Tripp, Judy's dad, partnered successfully with John



STRONG TWO-SUITED HANDS

Most experts believe that strong two-suited hands are best opened with a one level bid. The idea is that opening two clubs makes it too difficult to show both suits adequately. There was a hand at Duke City which illustrates the point beautifully. Partner and I got to a grand slam, but on a very inelegant auction I won't repeat. But we were the only pair there because others must not have used adequate tools.

In first seat, South holds

- ♠AKQJ5
- ♥10 5
- ♦AKQJ108
- ♣Void

You can count 11 top tricks, and that certainly qualifies as a two-club opener. But hands with voids can be especially difficult, and all you care about is those two heart losers. You might not even make a small slam. Opening two clubs gets the hand to the 3 level by the time you have shown two suits, and you don't yet know about a fit with partner.

But there is an easy auction if you open one diamond, especially if your tools include a couple nice gimmicks.



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President's Column, from page 1

(Jack) Griffin II, the father of the late John Griffin III. (Mr. Tripp, a banker, arranged for the financing for our first clubhouse.) Joe Harris' parents are shown in several pictures. Nancy McCrackin, the mother of Tom McCrackin, was also a prominent player and won a NABC Individual event title in the Fifties. Although we hold an individual event once a year for our Friendship Game, Individual events are very difficult to win and are rarely scheduled in today's tournaments.

A few other observations – in olden days, bridge players actually "dressed" when they played. Men wore suits and women wore dresses (frequently with décolletage for the Mixed Pairs events) – or at least when they had their pictures taken. They also went to parties after the game (that still happens) and in one picture I found from an unnamed source, they went to boogy at a club in Juarez to celebrate after winning an event in an El Paso tournament.

There are also a few dignitaries – bridge and political – pictured. Senator Clinton Anderson from NM, whose personal physician was Dr. J.E.J. Harris (Joe's dad), is shown in one photo. Charles Goren was also seen at some nearby events.

Another important bridge player/promoter of a few decades ago was Bill Baldwin. He did much to publicize Albuquerque duplicate bridge as president of the ACBL in the Seventies and by securing the Summer Nationals for Albuquerque in 1982. He also brought Princess Grace of Monaco to New Mexico in 1976. All of these things make him a central figure in Albuquerque bridge and there is a nice article about him in one of the posters.

This is just a start; there is a lot more material to display. Let me know if you can add something from your own bridge history, I will be happy to include it in our display in the future.

-Bill Kass

2-Suiters, from page 1

I know, you are afraid that you might play 1 diamond if that's your opening bid. But look at the hand again. You have only 20 high card points, so there are 20 in the other hands. Moreover, there are lots of hearts and clubs out there. Do you really think the auction will go 1 diamond all pass? Not very likely.

So you open 1 diamond, LHO passes, and partner bids one heart. That's the first bit of good news. Next after RHO passes, you can bid 2 spades. That is a strong jump shift, forcing to game, and showing slam interest. Most of the time, it will be a hand like you hold, except you might well have a couple points less.

Next good news is that partner raises spades. So now you have established the trump suit a level lower, and you can trot out your gimmicks. You want to know about partner's controls in hearts, if any, but high cards in clubs would be worthless. Exclusion Blackwood is the perfect bid for this hand. It is an unusual jump to the 5 level, after a fit is established, and is Blackwood (or RKC) but asks partner to disregard the ace of clubs. Lo and behold, after you bid 5 clubs, partner shows the ace of hearts (by whatever method you use). Now you know you are cold for six spades, at least.

What if partner holds the king of hearts, as well? Regular king asking Blackwood does not work, because the king of clubs would be useless. But if you play specific king responses to the king asking bid, you can find out. You bid 5NT to ask, and partner bids 6 hearts, which has to be the king of hearts, the king of the lowest ranking suit held, and denies holding the king of clubs or diamonds. Some partnerships play that the response to 5NT is the lowest suit WITHOUT the king. If partner responds 6 clubs, you can bid 6 diamonds



DUKE CITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS NEWS

We hope you agree that the Duke City Bridge Club is a pleasant place to play and learn bridge, and to make and meet friends. Enough of us enjoy playing here to make the DCBC the 31st most active club in the ACBL, out of over 3,000 clubs. That, of course, puts us in the top one percent. Our playing fees are some of the lowest in the country. This is because we are a co-op (most clubs are privately owned), and as such, our members own the building and perform most of the operations and maintenance.

Some of you may have seen our bulletin board posting a few months ago about the club's financial status. We are in pretty good shape, with \$40,000 in Certificates of Deposit and a few thousand dollars held as a cushion in our checking account. However, there is some cause for caution. Currently, our income of about \$150,000.00 a year does not quite balance our routine expenses, much less provide for periodic expenses such as replacing carpeting, repairing the roof, and resurfacing the parking lot. Therefore, the board of directors formed a long-term planning committee to examine our needs for major expenditures. Its findings led us to conclude that the most immediate need at present is to resurface the parking lot. Further delay will only increase the cost of repairs, and the worn striping is a safety issue. Consequently, we are in the process of contracting to do that, at a cost of about \$9,000.00. Replacing the carpet, worn and stained as it is, can wait a few years, but will cost about the same. We are thankful that the roof is probably good for ten more years, although there will be some repairs to it from time to time. So our conclusion is that our assets will diminish over time, but slowly enough not to cause distress. There is some light at the end of the tunnel. One of our major expenses is repaying the debt we incurred for the major renovation a few years ago. This is about \$32,000.00 a year. This debt will be paid off in 2015, which means that if there are no major disasters in the meantime, we should return to a comfortable "positive cash flow" situation at that time.

Keeping the club a pleasant place to play is an ongoing effort. Several things have been worked on lately, and you will find these listed in Russ Edwards' column in this newsletter.

Many individuals contribute to making the DCBC successful. A few deserve recognition for doing more than their share. Russ Edwards is invaluable in keeping the building properly maintained and functioning well. Felix Moore, along with being our "director of directors," is an important liaison with the ACBL and District 17. She is also active in our educational and player-development efforts. Finally, we should all appreciate the work of Hong Hai DuBroff, who followed the excellent chairpersonship of Lise Sullivan in directing our hospitality. Thanks to these people, and all the others who pitch in, for making the DCBC a wonderful place to play bridge.

Please remember to contact me at nrcliff5@q.com, 344-5606, or any other board member, about any issues that arise or suggestions that you have.

-Norman Cluff

2-Suiters, from page 2

asking if partner has the king of hearts (remember, spades is the agreed suit, so diamonds is not to play).

North's hand:

♠ 1092

♥ AKQ7

♦ 6

♣ 97642.

Okay, if you can't stand to open 1 diamond, there is still a good auction to the grand slam without using the gimmicks. The auction might go 2 clubs-2 diamonds; 3 diamonds-3 hearts; 3 spades-4 spades. South should raise spades, rather than bidding 3NT, because of the slow stop in clubs and the singleton diamond ruffing value for spades.

Now opener can continue by cue bidding 5 clubs, showing first round control of clubs (ace or void). Many partnerships play that cuebids show first or second round control, but that has led to many disasters by even expert partnerships. That practice can be useful if your only interest is in a small slam. North next cuebids hearts, and South can make a second cuebid in diamonds. South cuebids second round control of hearts (the king), and the grand slam can be bid.

-Al Beebe

DUPLICATE BRIDGE

A Poem by Laverne Rison

*First rate minds fritter away**Irretrievable hours of a golden day**Playing at cards while the world goes to pot**Bidding their hands while bridges rot.**What strange fascination lies in a pack**A club or a heart; a king or a jack?**What strong compulsion powers each hand?**What instinct at work? I don't understand.**I have to admit I too play the game**I sit and I play and I feel no shame**I welcome a challenge, one I can meet**With the help of a partner. Victory is sweet.**But victory's the least of it. Note that we choose**To go back for more, and most often we lose**We might lose the battle, but still we survive**We emerge from the fray unbloodied and live.**Challenge and order, we find that I'm sure**And I think we seek justice, even-handed and pure**In everyday life we're hard-put to find**Virtue rewarded so if you don't mind –**Deal out the cards while we sit at a table**Where the players who win are the players most able.*

ELECTIONS

Elections will be coming up before the end of the year for the DCBC and Unit Board of Directors. Don't forget to vote!

ANNUAL MEETING

Don't forget the Unit 374 Annual Meeting October 16th, 2011 at 1:00 pm.

REPORT FROM THE DCBC PROPERTY MANAGER

The AT&T Cell Tower

The tower people have agreed to move their cables from the roof of our club, which would have interfered with the installation of a new roof in the future. Someone stole their copper ground wire, which cost over \$1,000 to replace.

The Roof

The roof has been carefully inspected and it has been determined that the surface is in excellent condition and should last another ten years. We have learned that the horizontal surface does contract as winter approaches. This causes a separation in small areas, where it intersects with the roofing material inside the parapet walls. In the future an inspection of the roof will be scheduled around the first of every year. Repairs, which won't be expensive, will be scheduled as necessary.

New Vending Machine

The Coca Cola's soft drink vending machine has been replaced because the vendor refused to offer a greater variety of drinks, and didn't share any of the revenue generated with the DCBC. The new company, Desert Vending, has agreed to provide the variety that our members desire, and will rebate 10% of the sales to the club.

New Automatic Flushing Valve Assembly

One of these assemblies has been installed on a urinal in the men's room. It has worked so well that the installation of a second assembly on the other urinal has been approved. This will eliminate the problem of water continuing to run and sometimes overflowing on to the tile floor, making it very slippery.

Cold Areas in the Northwest Corner of the South Room

The thermostat that controls the temperature in this area has been moved further away and insulated from the wall. The wall radiates heat when the afternoon sun shines on it, which we suspect may be causing the problem. The correction is currently under evaluation.

Landscaping and Clean-Up of the Property

Last week we employed a man to trim and remove all of the dead *Pyracantha*. All of the weeds, junk trees, and a lot of trash were also removed. The shrubs in front of the club received a well needed trimming. If you walk along the west side of the club, you will notice that many of the Cedar trees are gone. This was done to discourage homeless people from living behind these trees, drinking, possibly using drugs, and sleeping there at night. In the past a number of ladies were frightened when they encountered some of these people. About four months ago, when AT&T cleaned out the trash that had accumulated in their fenced area, they discovered a number of empty hypodermic needles.

Security System

The security system was tested on September 8th and is working correctly.

Parking Lot

The contract to repair, seal, and re-stripe the parking lot will be awarded very soon. We will lose the use of the lot for a day or two. Players will be advised well in advance of the schedule for closure. Other parking arrangements will be offered.

Thermostats

We continue to experience problems with individuals who attempt to adjust the temperature setting. One Monday afternoon someone set one of the thermostats in the southeast corner of the south room to 55 degrees. As a result, the A/C ran all night. When members of the board arrived for their meeting at 9:30 A.M. on Tuesday, the room temperature was at 55 degrees. In order to make the room comfortable, the furnace had to be used to warm the room. This probably cost the DCBC about \$20 and wasted a lot of energy. To those individuals who feel that they must adjust the thermostat, please use the bypass method. The method is explained in an easy-to-understand instruction that is posted on the wall to the right of each thermostat. I am always available to explain the correct method, and members are encouraged to ask the director to make any adjustments. If you see someone attempting to re-set a thermostat, remind them of the correct procedure for doing it.

Many Thanks To:

Suzy Law for cutting back the Russian Sage at the east entrance, and for organizing the club's storage room. Articles have been put into labeled plastic tubs, making things much easier to locate.

Ben Franz and Steve Markham for working on a problem toilet in the ladies room.

John Cannon for evaluating, cleaning up the mess, and eliminating our ant problem in the pantry.

Elier Varela for doing such a great job in cleaning up our property and making it look so nice. He doesn't have a regular job, and greatly appreciates any type of work. If you have a need, he can be reached at 435-3149.

Volunteering

If you identify something that needs attention around the DCBC, please take it on as a project. Your efforts will be greatly appreciated and acknowledged.

-Russ Edwards

THE CONTINUING PROBLEM IN THE PARKING LOT

There have been more complaints about careless drivers who are dinging other people's cars and not reporting it. Have the common courtesy and moral fiber to own up to your mistake and let the person who owns the car know you are responsible for the damage. And please, please be careful when you exit and enter your car, so your door doesn't smash into the car next to you. And when you park, leave enough room on both sides of your car for others to get in and out of their cars without hitting yours with their door.

Newer Players Page

CONVENTIONS

A conventional bridge bid is a bid with a special meaning which is different than a natural bid. Conventions are designed to solve certain bidding problems; they are a refinement of the bidding language. Since bidding is a communication process between partners, having an advanced vocabulary can improve your bridge game by allowing you to arrive at the proper contract.

If you've taken duplicate bridge lessons, you undoubtedly have been exposed to some conventions; Stayman, transfers, Blackwood, strong 2 clubs, and weak 2 bids are some you may have used. These conventions are frequently taught in introductory classes because they form the basis of the "Standard American" bidding system. These parts form a coherent whole; it is difficult to pick and choose among these conventions. In fact, it may be worse to play some of these conventions and not others, as they work together in synchronicity.

Most conventions solve a bidding problem. Even advanced players who use many conventions are faced with hands that are indescribable in their bidding system. Some advanced players use dozens of conventions. However, for beginning players, "conventionitis" is a serious problem. Conventionitis is an addiction to conventions; your bridge game can be negatively affected by learning too many conventions too quickly.

There are two major issues involved with learning a new convention. First, one must learn the entire convention before it can be used effectively. Never trust someone who says "that's easy, it's just...", as conventions have many details and responses which have specific meanings. If you are going to add a convention to your card, you should study it in detail, before adding it to your card.

Secondly, when you add too many conventions too quickly, they don't have a chance to "sink in", and you tend to forget them. As with all aspects of bridge, "practice makes perfect".

The problem with conventions is that they require a significant amount of your brainpower when you are

first learning them. One could learn the most complicated bidding system (some take thousands of pages) and still perform poorly at the bridge table. Declarer play and defensive play are equally important. I find that when I add a new convention, my focus on play of the hand is diminished.

Another problem is that conventions often affect other bids in your system; certain conventions are best learned in "packages" as they work together. Your bidding process may get worse as you add conventions, since some conventions work together to solve the bidding problem.

Inoculate yourself from conventionitis. Don't let your partners convince you to play too many new conventions too quickly. Add conventions slowly, and only when you feel the need to solve a bidding problem that you frequently see. Don't let adding conventions affect your play of the hand. Play fewer conventions, but play them correctly. If you are playing with a new partner, discuss which conventions you will play, but use the simplest convention card; don't try to convince someone to "play up" and use conventions they are not comfortable with.

As Eddie Kantar once said, "The road to hell is paved with good conventions."

-Bob Zipp

Changes in Unit 374 Membership

RANK PROMOTIONS

Club Masters

Carmelita C Pruett
Ann D Cole
Maureen Rizzoli
Tracy Woolever

Sectional Masters

Kathryn A Erdman
Helen Hale
Phyllis M Hendrickson
Helen C Long
Marilyn H Wilkerson
Mary C Neamen
Pat G Zick

Regional Masters

Egda Delaney
Michael Delaney
James Fisk
Maris Mason
Jean S Meehan
Dick Newkirk
Ginger Newkirk
Kat Tiano
Alice G Valdez

Life Masters

Russell E Edwards
Mary Udell

Bronze Life Masters

Russell E Edwards
Carl Fesler
Mary Udell

Platinum Life Masters

Clement T Jackson

New Members

Kathleen B Austin
Ella L Griffin
Patrick J Griffin
Connie Hale
Thomas N Haley
Sylvia K Kelly
Kathy A Magid
Mary D Milligan
Carol Nickell
Jenny T Robbins
Audrey Ross
John Thorson

Transfers into Unit

Nancy Bresenham
John N Milligan
Jim Sorenson
Sally W Stevens





c/o Susan Law
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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

UPCOMING UNIT GAMES SCHEDULE

Sunday games at 1:30p are hosted by Unit 374.

October

- 2nd: Club Appreciation Teams
- 9th: NABC Fundraiser Pairs
- 16th: Annual Individual Game
- 23rd: Club Appreciation Pairs
- 30th: NABC Fundraiser Pairs

November

- 6th: ABQ Sectional
- 13th: Pairs Championship
- 20th: GNT Qualifier (Teams)
- 27th: Unit Pairs Championship

December

- 4th: Unit Pairs Championship
- 11th: STaC Pairs-Holiday Party
- 18th: GNT Qualifier (Teams)
- 25th: No Game

UNIT 374 BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONTACT LIST

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