



# The Future Life Master



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Austin, Texas ACBL Unit 207

August-September 2010

## Regional Report



by Anita Albert

*This is the seventh in a series of articles written by newer duplicate players, kindly detailing some of their learning experiences.*

The Austin Regional Tournament was approaching and I planned to take advantage of all it had to offer. I formed a team with other novice players

and we agreed to play in all the Knockouts offered Tuesday through Saturday. We were ready to test our mettle with the “big” boys and girls. The big boys and girls were nice, patient and kind as they knocked us out first round of every Knockout game. I met many players from around Texas and the rest of the country. I chatted with one retired couple that travels around the country in their R.V. from bridge tournament to tournament.

We had better luck at Swiss team where we held our own and earned red points. Regional tournaments award “pigmented” points: gold and red. The gold points are the most elusive. You have to win at least two rounds in the Knockouts or score very well in the Open Pairs or Swiss teams to earn gold. I met several players who were at the tournament expressly to win gold points to fulfill that requirement to earn their Life Master status.

I also played Open Pairs which was challenging with the big boys and girls. They play fast and use many unfamiliar conventions, but are always happy to explain the conventions and teach them if there is time between rounds. On several occasions during the week I returned to the familiar folds of the novice open pairs which was a wonderful place to relax. One day after being knocked out, the rest of my team decided to call it a day. I still wanted to play more bridge and got lined up with a very nice partner, compliments of the partnership desk. I learned that many players travel to regional tournaments without a partner or teammates and are paired with other players for fun and often successful results.

The hotel was lovely and clean. They provided a

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## Every Hand...a Command Performance

In the last issue of this newsletter, “Defense is an Attitude” was the central theme...a must for players at all levels of bridge to be successful. Switching themes, yet still paying homage to the Skinner Rat, this [article focuses on the technique of basic declarer play...what to do every time when becoming the declarer of a contract](#). Declarer is also an attitude, one in which **“Every Hand is a Command Performance.”**

The [Encyclopedia of Card Play Techniques at Bridge](#), authored by Guy Leve, provides excellent insight into a staple of being a proficient declarer. As soon as the opening lead has been made, it is time to stop and think, to count winners and losers, to review the opposition bidding (or lack of it), to draw conclusions, to search for where the missing



**bra·vo** (brā'vō, brā-vō') Well done! Excellent! An exclamation expressive of applause. Used to express approval, especially of a performance.

missing trick(s) might come, and to decide what technique to apply. In short, declarer must plan a line of play.

In his story line, Leve offers these comparative thoughts. You do not set out in a car to go somewhere (**the contract**) without knowing which route to take (**the line of play**); otherwise you risk trouble ahead (**going down**). Sometimes, because of an unexpected incident, you must take a different route (**modify the line of play**). Just as a driver selects his route before starting the engine, a declarer must look ahead from behind the wheel of her contract. Bad traffic, construction and other road hazards might appear. So...be prepared!!!

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## Tournament Report (con't)

bridge players' special for lunch and dinner that was quick, delicious and reasonable. There are also several good restaurants a short walk or drive from the hotel. Everywhere I went I heard players discussing hands and examining hand records, Always speaking their own language and absorbed in their own world. We had other diners at Pappadeux ask us what we were doing. The Doubletree was my home away from home during the week of the tournament although I did not stay there.

The bookstore at the tournament was very impressive. There were so many bridge books and software titles available that it made your head spin. I found several interesting books to expand my knowledge and entertain me. If you have never been to a regional tournament, I recommend that you go and do as I did and try every event offered. You will learn a lot and have fun and make some new friends. I liked it so well that I have already booked a room for the Dallas Labor Day Regional Tournament. I am hooked.

## City Championship



The Unit 207 board of directors has voted to make the 2010 City Championship a **free** event. Held **Saturday, August 14** at the BCA, this is a two-session event, 10 am and 2 pm. A free, light meal will be served between sessions. You may play in just one session but must play in both sessions to be eligible for the City Championship.

There will be an Open game with A, B, and C flights and a separate Novice game limited to players with under 100 points. First overall winners in all four categories will have their names engraved on a plaque that is displayed at the Bridge Center of Austin.

Pre-registration is requested. You may sign up at the BCA or email Mark McAllister: [markmc888@gmail.com](mailto:markmc888@gmail.com).

### The Lone Arranger Game

**What:** A game sponsored by Unit 207 to match newer players with more experienced players, typically Life Masters. Think Pro-Am game.

**Why:** To give players a chance to meet new people and to provide the less experienced players with an opportunity to partner with more experienced players. Partnerships are randomly arranged at the start of the game.

**Where:** Bridge Center of Austin

**When:** **Saturday, August 28**, 1:30 pm

## Every Hand a Command Performance (con't)

An example...

	North
♠	A J 4
♥	J 5 2
♦	K Q 5 3
♣	Q 9 4
	South
♠	K 9 5
♥	A K 4 3
♦	A 7 6 4
♣	A 2

South plays 3 NT. West leads the ♦ 2.

Initial thinking, diagnosis and planning the play are immediate concerns of declarer. What is opponents lead convention? Their card indicates 4<sup>th</sup> best. A combined 31 points, yet there are only 8 sure tricks. One more must be found and there are several possible techniques to do this.

- Establish the 4<sup>th</sup> diamond
- Establish the 4<sup>th</sup> heart
- Lead up to dummy's honors in hearts and clubs
- Spade finesse
- Endplay an opponent
- A squeeze

Keep thinking. A "best technique" will come to light...

- Establish the 4<sup>th</sup> diamond. It is unlikely this will work as West's lead indicates four diamonds and the missing spots are better than yours.

## Every Hand a Command Performance (con't)

- Establish the 4<sup>th</sup> heart. This is possible if hearts are 3-3 or if the Queen is doubleton. Keep this line of play in mind.
- Playing towards dummy's honors. Yes, you only need West to have one of the Q, Q or the K. Three chances. Pretty good. Keep this one in mind as well.
- Endplay an opponent into giving you a free finesse. Stripping her exit cards in any given suit is first required. A possibility.
- A squeeze? Very unlikely on the surface. Initially, not an obvious choice.

Which technique is almost certainly the best? Experience helps in making this decision. All the evidence is there to avoid the road hazards in declaring this particular hand. Do you see what to do from stopping, thinking, planning before playing to the first trick? Which technique did you choose for this hand shown now in its entirety?

♠ A J 4

♥ J 5 2

♦ K Q 5 3

♣ Q 9 4

♠ 10 3 2

♥ 9 7

♦ J 9 8 2

♣ 10 7 5 3

♠ Q 8 7 6

♥ Q 10 8 6

♦ 10

♣ K J 8 6

♠ K 9 5

♥ A K 4 3

♦ A 7 6 4

♣ A 2

Did you mechanically without thought win the first trick? Assuming the 2 is an honest 4<sup>th</sup> best lead, the contract is cold by allowing East to win the 10 (ducking the first trick). This is the endplay technique. East is defenseless. Whatever she leads will establish your 9<sup>th</sup> trick. Counting is paramount in bridge and so is reading the spots. You know you cannot win more than three diamonds and East has only one diamond in her hand. Hence...the endplay as East has been stripped of her exit cards in diamonds. Try it!!! You will like the result as declaring this contract will be successful.

There is nothing magical about being a good declarer in bridge. It takes work. When you combine experience with insight, all roads lead to improvement and better results. Wait before playing.

**Article by Tom Clark, BCA Club Manager**



Kudos to these First Overall Tournament Winners :

**Austin Fourth of July Regional**, 299er games:

**Diana Apgar and Kate Monahan, Joseph and Elaine Bindo** (Tuesday morning)

**Gilda Reynolds and Genie Nyer** (Tuesday afternoon)

**Kay Dierks and Robert Auvenshine** (Wednesday morning)

**Jeanne Brown and Diane McFadyen** (Thursday morning)

**Anita Albert and Tom Sopko** tied with **Barbara Werth and Margaret Shilling** (Friday afternoon)

**Paul Johnston and Keith Boden** (Saturday morning)

**Robert Williams and Chuck Fatino** (Saturday afternoon)

**Unit 207 July Non-Life Master Sectional**

**Elizabeth Ling** (Saturday afternoon)

**James Hurst** (Saturday evening)

**Jo Pennington and Priscilla Baker** (Sunday Afternoon)

## Every Once in a Blue Moon...

... there's a fifth Monday in the month. Celebrate the fifth **Monday, August 30** with a special game at the Bridge Center of Austin designed just for players with under 300 masterpoints. We will have a potluck brunch before gametime at 10:30 am. After we feast and play, Diamond Life Master **Tom Clark** will hold a Q and A regarding the hands you have just played. Using handrecords and the BCA's remote scorers, you will know just how you did on a particular board and may (with Tom's assistance) figure out just what went wrong or perhaps...right. This is a special event with extra masterpoints that you will not want to miss. Bring a partner, or not. Everyone is guaranteed a partner!



## Fall Bridge Lessons

**Beginning Bridge (Club Series)** Tuesdays, September 7 to November 2, 7:00- 9:00 pm Jan Clark, \$90 (includes text.)

**Play of the Hand (Diamond Series)** Mondays, September 13 to November 8, 10:00 am - noon, Jack Lacy, \$90 (includes text.)

**Commonly Used Conventions (Spade Series)** Thursdays, September 30 to November 18, 7:00 - 9:00 pm Laura Delfeld, \$90 (includes text.)

**2/1 Game Forcing System** Tuesdays, September 26 to October 26, Tuesdays 7:00 - 9:00 pm, Scott Humphrey, \$65 (includes materials.)

*(All of the classes listed above are held at the Bridge Center of Austin. Call 300.2743 to register.)*

**Beginning Bridge (Club Series)** Tuesdays starting September 14, 6:30- 8:30 pm, Sally Sekac, Westlake High School. Call 732.9020 X20498 for more information.

## Tourney Calendar

### **Unit 207 0-200 Sectional, BCA**

**Saturday, August 21 and Sunday, August 22, 1:30 pm.** Partnership Chair, Mark McAllister, 257.2320 or markmc888@gmail.com

### **Unit 207 Fall Sectional, BCA**

**Thursday, September 23 through Saturday, September 26, 199er sections 10:00am, 2:30 and 7:00 pm.** Partnership Chair, Diana Rogers, 328.4710 or dianarogers@austin.rr.com

More information on these tournaments may be found on the Unit 207 website:

<http://www.austinbridge.org>

## Famous Bridge Quotes

**"The real test of a bridge player isn't in keeping out of trouble, but in escaping once he's in."**

**-Alfred Sheinwold**

**"We believe that contract bridge is particularly attractive to people with a scrappy disposition"**

**-Frank Perkins**

**"Where's the hand you held during the auction?"  
- A comment made when dummy hit the table.**

**-Jan Jamitsche**

**"I'd like a review of the bidding with all the original inflections."**

**--Eddie Kantar**

**"It is not the handling of difficult hands that makes the winning player. There aren't enough of them. It is the ability to avoid messing up the easy ones."**

**--Alan Sontag**

**"The Future Life Master"** is a semimonthly publication of ACBL Unit 207. Laura Delfeld, editor. Please forward information regarding Newcomer/Novice games or lessons to [delhan@swbell.net](mailto:delhan@swbell.net).