

Diamond in the Ruff: East Bay Unit 502, October 2020

By Larry Bowerman (lmjtbow@pacbell.net)

First and foremost, I hope that everyone is continuing to do well, staying safe and enjoying online bridge at BBO.

Second, we encourage everyone to keep playing in the EBCBC and Piedmont Virtual Club and Support Your Club games. If you need a refresher on the schedules, please visit the Unit 502 and EBCBC websites. Keep on playing to help keep our Clubs alive and well during the pandemic so that they'll be around when we can again play in-person bridge, whenever that might be.

Third, thank you so much for the positive feedback on last month's column. I must have "touched a nerve" for a lot of you, since I've never received anywhere near the number of comments on a column before. I really appreciate the feedback! Thanks again.

In the first paragraph of last month's column, I talked a bit about the BBO experience. Near the end of the paragraph, I made a somewhat facetious comment that BBO hadn't figured out how to eliminate mis-bids and mis-clicks. Little did I know that there actually are ways to minimize **mis-bids and mis-clicks!** One of our thoughtful readers (John Santibanes) sent me the following information:

In the September issue you remarked that so far BBO hasn't figured out how to eliminate mis-bids and mis-clicks. I would like to bring to your attention a column by Paul Linzwiler, the editor of the ACBL's *Bridge Bulletin*, which appeared in the August 2020 edition. In the last paragraph of Mr. Linzwiler's column on page 6, he writes:

"If you want to minimize the risk of misclicks, you can go to the Account tab on BBO and find the Settings tab. That menu contains options to "Confirm bids" -- you must hit an "OK" button every time you bid -- and "Confirm cards" which requires you to double-click each time you play a card. It's slower, but safer."

This helpful hint may address the concerns you expressed in your September column.

Thank you so much John. I had no idea that this was even possible!!

At a recent D21 Board Meeting, they decided to reduce publication of the “**Diamond in the Ruff**” newsletter from monthly to quarterly for the duration of the pandemic. It isn’t clear whether the next article will be published in October or December 2020. If October is the next publication, then this article will be the Unit 502 submission. If not, David Snyder will post it on the Unit 502 website anyway.

I’m sad to report that **Faith Hall passed away on September 14, 2020** at age 95! While I didn’t know her well, I did play against her many times several years ago. She was one of the nicest persons that I’ve met at the bridge table.

Unfortunately, **Lila Cerf also passed away recently (September 10, 2020)** less than a month from her 93rd birthday. Lila began playing bridge later in life, and she worked hard to become a better player.

Given the continuing nature of the pandemic, the **ACBL recently voted to cancel all tournaments in January and February of 2021**. Stay tuned for further developments.

As promised in last month’s column, it is now time to share the two of the three stories that I mentioned last month. As we all know, duplicate bridge is a wonderful game. It is mentally challenging, provides endless opportunities for continuous improvement and you meet many wonderful people. It also provides endless opportunities to make mistakes, which in retrospect seem amazingly stupid. But that is part of the game and everyone experiences it. I’ve titled the following story “My Worst Bridge Blunder.” It might also be titled “A Bad Start.” I hope you enjoy it:

“My Worst Bridge Blunder – AKA - A Bad Start”

On May 7, 2012 I was playing in an open club game in Piedmont. My partner was Michael Sasso. [As you can tell, the details of this story are seared into my memory forever.] On the very first board of the session, we were playing against very good (but sometimes aggressive) opponents. They bid to 6NT and I’m on lead. I’m looking at a good 5

card club suit headed by the AK, so naturally I lead fourth best! As soon as my low club hits the table, my face gets hot and I'm sure it turned several shades of red. It gets worse when opponents make their 6NT contract! Thankfully, no one at the table says a word. I'm embarrassed and mortified beyond belief and it takes me the next two boards to start to put this disaster behind me and try to regain my composure. Eventually, partner and I recovered enough to win first place EW!

My next story is "Card Counting Mix-up." Hopefully, it will make you smile.

Card Counting Mix-up

In February 2010 my wife, Meg and I were playing in an NLM game in Piedmont. On the last board of the session (luckily), Meg is playing 3NT, and at the half-way point she seems well on the way to making her contract. However, at about trick 8 or 9 our opponents notice that the dummy has two more cards than they do. The director is called, and a lengthy and complicated investigation ensues. It literally takes 15 to 20 minutes to resolve this mix-up. The initial investigation showed that my hand (the dummy) contained 15 cards and Meg's hand 11! While Meg and I were both in the habit of counting the cards in our hands, something obviously went wrong on this board! Further investigation revealed that the cards were "mixed-up" when they were put back into the board at the previous table. The director consulted the pair that last played the board and reconstructed the two hands based on their input. Eventually, the director ruled that 3NT makes. Our opponents were not pleased, pleading their case that declarer and dummy should have counted their cards and should be held responsible for noticing the discrepancy. The director's response was that the opponents also had an opportunity to notice the discrepancy and didn't. Thus, all four players shared the responsibility. For a couple of weeks after this game, several people gave us grief for not being able to count our cards. Thankfully, this kind of mix-up can't happen on BBO!

Welcome to new Unit 502 member Laurie Morrison. Also welcome to Leslie Crall who recently transferred into Unit 502! When you "see them" on BBO, please introduce yourself and welcome them to our unit.

Congratulations to the following members on their recent rank advancements: Nancy Rutledge to Junior Master; Leslie Delugach to Sectional Master; Carol Alliger and John McManis to Regional Master; Russ Kirschenbaum to Silver Life Master; Susan Boyers to Ruby Life Master; and Nadine Levine to Gold Life Master! Well done, congratulations and keep on playing! There is always another goal in front of you!

Marcia Wasserman will probably be writing the December column, so please contact her at (marciawasserman@gmail.com) if you have noteworthy results or other items to report. You can also send information to me and I'll forward it to whomever is writing the December column.